FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICAL APPROACH TO H.G.WELLS’ ANN VERONICA ARNOLD BENNETT’S HELEN WITH THE HIGH HAND AND D.H. LAWRENCE’S WOMEN IN LOVE

Doktora Tezi

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Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Sema Ege

Tez Jürişi Üyeleri

İmzası

Adı ve Soyadı
Prof. Dr. Sema Ege
Prof. Dr. Oya Batum Menteşe
Prof. Dr. Belgin Elbir
Doç. Dr. Lerzan Gültekin
Yrd. Doç. Dr. Nazan Tutaş

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PREFACE

In this dissertation, titled “Feminist Literary Critical Approach to the Novels Ann Veronica by H. G. Wells, Helen with the High Hand by Arnold Bennett and Women in Love by D. H. Lawrence,” the images of women, men and women relationships, and power relations between the sexes are evaluated through the feminist literary theories of Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, Helen Cixous, and Luce Irigaray.

In the Introduction, the key words and basic assumptions of the “Woman Question” as a critical standpoint are put forward. The chapter also includes a social panorama of Victorian and Edwardian England.

In Chapter One, the feminist literary critical approaches are studied through the theories of Lacan, Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray.

In Chapter Two, Wells’ concept of the novel, and his Darwinistic attitude are discussed, and an evaluation of his novel Ann Veronica as a “New Woman” novel is made through the theories of Lacan, Kristeva, Irigaray, and Cixous.

Chapter Three studies Bennett’s concept of the novel, and his attitude of social observation in his novel Helen with the High Hand. The Chapter evaluates the relationships among the female and male characters mainly in the light of the power concept of Cixous, together with Irigaray, Kristeva, and Lacan.

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INTRODUCTION: THE WOMAN QUESTION

As the Victorian Age was a period in which England experienced a number of radical changes in its economic and social structure and accordingly came up against a variety of difficulties due to these changes, it is necessary to conduct a brief survey of women’s status in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, to consider the representation of the views of three prominent novelists, H. G. Wells, A. Bennett, and D. H. Lawrence on the woman issue as reflected in *Ann Veronica*, *Helen with the High Hand*, and *Women in Love*.

Parallel to the social and political problems of the Victorian Age, there was an underlying intellectual, political, and social uneasiness, which was a psychological need to question everything through scientific findings, which, in turn, changed people’s attitudes towards the developments in science and philosophy and in fact, every feeling or notion that circumscribed people. This also led them to reform and restructure their ideas. In one respect, in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, came a kind of “Intellectual Revolution,” a major development of which was the publication of several scientific works, which enabled the people to question the existing values in the Victorian Age. One of these major scientific publications was Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* (1859), in which “Darwin’s theory of evolution, based upon scientific observation, was expounded by many as proof of mankind’s ability to find a scientific explanation for everything” (McDowall, 1989:155). This work had a great influence on H. G. Wells whose visionary attitude towards social, economic and political life, including male and female rights, which could be gained only through change, development and improvement in the human mind, as he asserted in his work *A Modern Utopia*. In the words of Robin Gilmour,
“the issues of science, the questions it asks, the way it chooses to answer, then cannot be separated from the assumptions of the culture” (1993:42).

However, unfortunately, these numerous effective achievements in science did not revolutionize traditional attitudes towards women. Thus, women’s movements emerged as a significant political action and since the Victorian Age was a period in which everything could be challenged, it was a period of inquiry, a time when people began to be aware of their social and political rights. One of the issues that demanded immediate attention was the “Woman Question.” This question addresses the social, cultural and political problems of women and attempts to find answers, peculiar not to 19th century England but to almost all centuries and countries. However, for Adrienne Rich, this concept does not seem to have positive connotations. In her article, “Notes toward a Politics of Location” she claims that “we are not the woman question; we are the women who ask the questions” (Rivkin, 1998: 640).

This kind of uncertainty, related to the issue of women in the society, necessitated the emergence of a stable institution upon which a stable society could be based in the beginning of the Victorian era. This stable institution was the family, which was no longer a comfortable and peaceful refuge as it was before the Industrial Revolution. In this world of competition, economic and social crises, the Victorian man was under too much stress to recover effectively in his own terms. This led to the Victorian concept of the home as a haven or sanctuary. Due to the male population’s lack of a stable social standing, and having to submit to this rapid mechanization, the Victorian man was having his sense of manhood stripped away. His only means of protecting his identity was to maintain his position as the king of
the household where he clung to the notion of responsibility for guarding his queen from the perils and plights of the world outside. Therefore, women were kept in the house merely as a decorative object with no practical function in the social sphere or outside the home. These notions of different tasks to be fulfilled differently by the males and females respectively gave rise to the concept of separate spheres. Within this frame, John Ruskin invented “the doctrine of separate spheres” and proclaimed it “nature ... precisely to avoid the danger of sexual equality” (qtd. in Millet, 1973: 93). The notion of separate spheres implies that women and men have completely different characteristics. According to Ruskin, “they cannot be equals but just two extremities completing each other” (qtd. in Millett, 1973: 93). Ruskin's *Of Queen's Gardens* (1865), in which he talks about the “Myth of the Angel in the House,” is a kind of reaction to the discriminated position of women concerning male supremacy. He mentions that a woman's influence and responsibilities should not be limited to her domestic sphere, which is the house. He claims that a woman’s responsibility should extend to the wider world beyond the house, and for this reason, he talks about the “queenly power” which enables women to deal with some current political, social problems in order to enlarge their limits and spheres (Vicinus, 1972: 127). The emphasis on temptation is the real reason for the anxiety about women. Coventry Patmore's poem “The Angel in the House” gives the image of the ethereal angel-wife in the sacred home, but the frail woman, who had been the first to succumb to Satan’s seduction, was always potential prey to the same man who shielded her from the world in which man was responsible for governing and providing the woman with money. However, most women did not want to stay in their houses to be guarded by men who in any case often failed to carry out the responsibility of earning bread for
their families and protecting them.

Ruskin’s notion of separate spheres clarifies the opposition to women’s rights in the 19th century England. According to this concept, women were extremely emotional, and without any kind of sexual desire, which was described as an immoral drive in the Victorian Age. Therefore, women had to repress their sexual inclinations for fear of being outcasts as this would be the case if they were not sexually innocent. This was because one of the roles attributed to them was that of being an angel, pure and innocent and devoid of any thoughts of sexuality. However, this biological repression caused “an unconscious conflict” which is described by Peter T. Cominus as a “conflict between the highest part of human nature, conscience, and the lowest part of human nature, sexual instinct, or desire” (1972: 156).

In fact, all these notions were formulated to establish men superior to women. As the woman was the weaker and inferior sex, she was expected to be submissive to the man, a situation which was explicitly stated through the laws accepting women's inequality. To illustrate, women's being unable to vote, the impossibility of their divorce, and the inability to get the custody of their children, and the inability to have rights on their property were all enshrined in English law, until a series of acts of parliament, namely, the Divorce Bill in 1857, the Infants Custody Bill in 1839, the Married Woman's Property Act in 1870, which somewhat redressed the situation.

Apart from the legal system, women were neither happy nor satisfied due to poor opportunities in social life. Even if they could find employment, they would earn less than men who did the same job. Women also experienced a great number of difficulties inasmuch as their male partners described them unfairly. To illustrate, “women were depicted as ethereal beings, too pure to aspire to male ambitions, only
virtuous as long as they remained isolated from the world of paid labour and professional advancement” (Gordon, 1989: 120). However talented or intelligent, they were denied the use of their abilities. Teaching as a governess was one of the socially accepted jobs, but it was poorly paid, low in status; in effect, little better than being a servant.

For the woman, living in a world in which unmarried women lacked economic security, the only mission was to get married and take a position in the house, the symbol of shelter and safety, where she was supposed to take care of the household chores and deal with the education of her children. Although Wells, Bennett, and Lawrence were not yet born, Sarah Lewis’ Woman's Mission (1843), which points out that “women's salvation is best achieved by the faithful performance of everyday duties, and in which she urges them to remain at home” is essential reading, because the influences of these concepts can be traced easily in the works of these novelists as well as in their earlier forebears of the 18th and 19th centuries (qtd. in Helsinger, 1989: 6-7). In particular, although Wells and Bennett’s heroines Ann and Helen seem to be passive women who end up having to attend to their husbands’ personal comfort, and who begin as modern new women, they are successful and intelligent in that they are able to choose the man they loved for their own individual and physical comfort. Ursula, too, in Women in Love is ready to get married, and love her husband she has chosen though it seems to be at the cost of everything that she has owned throughout her life.

On the other hand, the system of education was of a conventional type in which girls were taught needlework, painting, music or poetry, and sewing, as these abilities were considered valuable for women. However, as time passed, in spite of
the fact that women were allowed to have professional writing careers and good education to a certain extent, (Cheltenhem Ladies College 1853, University of London, Cambridge, Oxford, 1848, 1869, 1879) their roles were certain to be daughters, wives or mothers and not beyond.

Actually, all the roles assigned to women have been the reasons for the lack of a sound definition of what women really are. Each critic has defined women in different terms, which, nevertheless, are all basically patriarchal in nature. Women have been given a restricted and unrecognisable status, which cannot be explained even by the men. With that point in mind, it is clear that man cannot define women, and therefore, he is afraid of a concept which he both likes and hates. Perhaps it is due to man’s inability to come up with a better analysis that women are not free from such stereotypical definitions as “the angel in the house, the fallen woman, the mad woman, the siren, the criminal” all of which, in reality, have revealed and reveal the needs and uncertainties of the Victorian male (Gilmour, 1993: 189).

Since it is not possible or appropriate to isolate any kind of artwork from the social life in which it was produced, the issues involving the status of women in the 19th century and changes in the society are reflected through the heroines in literature, particularly in the novel genre, which is often associated with women both as writers and as readers. In addition, being aware of the “Woman Question” enabled many philosophers and novelists to deal with the issue, which shows that at last, it had begun to be discussed freely, which was a good step to shift the emphasis from the woman, living at home with limited social and personal rights towards the woman as an individual. This led many people to ask questions about women and their lives, although there was no single correct and sound answer. This also led some critics and
novelists to acknowledge women as complete human beings with their individual and sexual rights. Between 1837 and 1897, some changes in the status of women occurred as they began to read, learn, work at schools, and postpone their marriages, even though the majority kept the traditional views. Despite those transformations in woman’s status, most of the betterments were in theory while some of them were even impossible to carry out. On the other hand, after some reforms in politics and education, the artificial ideal of the “womanly woman” or “perfect woman” changed, and in the 1890s, the concept of the modern woman, or the “New Woman” started to gain acceptance when women themselves started to challenge their subordinate and inferior social and political positions.

As Richardson and Willis argue, “early and mid-Victorian ideas on progress, passion, morality, femininity, domesticity, development and evolution are replayed and reworked by the New Woman” (2001: 3). Within the emergence of the concept of the “New Woman,” reforms in law, education, and professional institutions created opportunities, which were not available before, and due to those developments, there were discussions on sexual questions and surveys on women's place in the society. The “New Woman” refused to conform to the traditional roles, challenged all the accepted ideals such as marriage and maternity, chose to work for a living, demanded equality, and in a way followed a feminist cause. The “New Woman” preferred a professional life to matrimonial achievements, and regarded marriage as slavery. She demanded freedom from parental and legal control in choosing a style of life different in terms of social and individual life. H. G. Wells’ *Ann Veronica* is such a novel, in which the heroine is aware of her individual and political rights, and is no longer a passive and obedient girl who represses her
sexuality. Ann Veronica is a “New Woman” who refuses to conform to all the traditional roles attributed to women. In a way, novelists started to portray new and radical images of women, and, later on, the “New Woman” concept became a part of the late Victorian culture (1883-1900). This concept also marked an increasing interest among the novelists dealing with the woman question. Yet, a question still remained unanswered: it was not certain if the “New Women” were happy and able to achieve whatever they desired. Since they were not content with the established order and far too advanced for their environment, it is more likely that these women paid and will pay for their attempts at the cost of their freedom. According to Reynolds, “the new woman disturbed the Victorian consciousness of challenging dress and behavioural codes and so, blurring the neatly classified distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable representations of femininity” (1993: 10).

In the 1900s, there were clear signs of new and different approaches related to women, women writers, literature, and feminist literary criticism. It was the age of more visual, more anxious and more self-questioning novels together with some novelists who gradually abandon the traditional and conventional methods of writing in response to the demands of the middle class. Wells and Bennett, however, wrote in a traditional manner, although they also used modern and revolutionary concepts, and turned to more complicated, multi dimensional and psychological issues. This was especially true in the case of D. H. Lawrence, who attached importance to the inner thoughts and feelings of the characters, complexities, and anxieties of consciousness, and therefore plurality of worldviews in most issues, and particularly in male and female relationships. The final decades of the 19th century, and the early 20th century were critical in that they ushered in a new system of thought, and this
consciousness, as exemplified by such works as Freud’s *Interpretations of Dreams* (1899), and his id, ego, and superego concepts that control human psyche, Planck’s quantum theory, Einstein’s theory of relativity, Bergson’s theory of time, Jung’s concept of collective unconscious, and Saussure’s definition of language as a system of signs. All these works brought new understandings and meanings to life and literature, so the connection between the late 19th and the early 20th century is clear in terms of questioning all the established values both in human life and in literature. The early 20th century was also marked by hope, peace, and prosperity in contrast to the Victorian pessimism, hypocrisy, and prudery. However, these hopes and possibilities were not especially for the advancement of women.

The Edwardian period saw great creativity in what has been called “the invention of tradition” (Trodd, 1991: 3). The great Victorian realist tradition was exhausted, but still exerted a stifling influence over the young writers of the next age. For example, Woolf used Arnold Bennett as her prime example of the patriarchal realist novelist. The Edwardian insistence on the identification of literature with the national and imperial spirit, and the accumulation of institutions and forms and writing, expressing that identification, meant that literature was increasingly in a masculine context. This was a period when the voice of the masculine ruling class was particularly dominant in the culture. In the Edwardian period, Englishness, closely associated with masculinity and manliness, was in turn considered to be a dominant characteristic of English literature. The Edwardians were described as “full blooded, masculine men of letters, with sometimes coarse personalities. Their talk was concerned with love affairs, absurd adventures, society scandals, and jokes about women, money, and foreigners” (Trodd, 1991: 3-7). Edwardian literature also dwelt
on the theme of revolt in both Victorian idealism, and respectability and personal achievement. In the Edwardian period, the concept of the “New Woman” remained as another major theme in literature, “although it was an age when literature was defined as inherently masculine, the importance of understanding and representing the ‘unrepresented life’ of women nevertheless engaged many male writers” (Trodd, 1991: 61). Wells, Bennett and Lawrence are among those writers who dealt with the concept of woman in their novels, in which Helen, Ann, Ursula, and Gudrun rebel against their uncles and fathers who represent Victorian respectability in order to gain their personal fulfilment.

At the end of this period, Lawrence, one of the most prolific authors, concerned with the representations of human life and sexuality, produced the works in which he turned to the inward nature of his characters, as opposed to Wells and Bennett. In Women in Love, inner conflicts, tensions, and anxieties are reflected through most of the characters, especially in the love affairs between Ursula and Birkin, Gudrun and Gerald. Lawrence is also similar to Wells in that they both oppose all restraints on sexual life: for Lawrence this is necessary for individual happiness, while for Wells, it is important to create super human beings. Wells was also interested in human nature, since he grew up when Darwin was altering the outlook of the world through his The Origin of Species. In Ann Veronica, Ann has several experiences in her social and emotional life, like Helen in Helen with the High Hand, and their nature does not seem to be the same as in the beginning to a certain extent.

Although in the Edwardian period censorship barred serious treatment of sex and religion, it was challenged through the works of some novelists, and one of them
was Bennett who felt himself free to talk about divorce laws. Sexual freedom was beginning to be an issue in contrast to the terror of the previous ages, which had diminished all sexual relations and discussions of them. On the other hand, the first decade of the century is identified with Wells who “had established himself in the last decade of the nineteenth century as a writer of the scientific romances” (Robson, 1987: xiv). Even though the Edwardian period, full of new inventions and developments, seemed to bring hopes and prosperity in place of the Victorian pessimism, “there was still widespread poverty and diversity among the people. There were signs of hysteria and violence, as in the movement for Woman Suffrage and reaction of the authorities to it” (Robson, 1987: xiv). Everything was again open to question:

For it was to women, whose former position was most strenuously being called into question, and whose social roles were most rapidly changing to the enhancement of women’s sense of themselves and the accompanying bewilderment, resistance, and tentative support of their male counterparts that H.G.Wells endorses the emergence of the newly liberated woman, only to reincarcerate her within the confines of traditional male narrative. Wells positions his rebellious heroines on the brink of radical change. (Kaplan, 1996: xvii-xviii)

The women, who were described as chaste and passive women in the Victorian novel, gradually gave way to more sexual and sensual women who struggle to acknowledge themselves as complete human beings. Ann, Helen, Ursula, Gudrun, and Hermione all struggle to prove that they are complete human beings with their
individual, social and sexual rights. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to mention here that feminist criticism in fact stems from liberalism, with its emphasis on the individual’s development and fulfilment, and therefore it focuses on the question of individual rights rather than the woman question.

Feminist literary criticism is one of the major developments in literary studies which struggled for the recognition of women’s cultural roles and achievements through the discovery of women’s actual autonomous selves, challenging the traditions of the patriarchal society based on the premise of masculine authority as embodied in the notion of the father as the head of the family in any time and space. On the other hand, feminist literary criticism is a later phenomenon which has given the reader a chance to reevaluate former works in terms of phallocentrism with such key words as patriarchy, women’s oppression, repression, and sexual politics.

This dissertation aims at highlighting gender stereotyping as an important characteristic of any literary form, describing and evaluating women’s experiences in the novel genre, questioning the dominant male, phallocentric ideologies and attitudes and values through attacking them and tracing the true nature of women. By studying these issues, this dissertation proves an overt relationship between feminist literary criticism, literature and the patriarchal system, emphasizing literature’s essential role in challenging that system by analysing the “Woman Question” in these works. In this case, it is the novel, which serves as a code representing the mysterious and hidden truths of personal feelings and ideas of the novelists.

Within this frame, in Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love, the issue of male and female relationships, relationships between mothers, fathers and children, gender identities, power struggles between the sexes, sexuality
and its expression, love concept, images, and stereotypes of the female gender, the concept of the “New Woman” and the “Woman Question” will be analysed through the theories of feminist literary criticism. In this dissertation, within the light of these concepts, notions, explanations and works discussed so far, *Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love* will be analysed in chronological order in detail through the critical theories of such major French feminist critics as Julia Kristeva, Helen Cixous, and Luce Irigaray, together with the psychoanalytical theoretician Jacques Lacan, who had a profound effect on them. In the first chapter, feminist criticism will be taken up from the view point of the feminist theories and essential concepts of Lacan, Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray. In the following chapters, H. G. Wells, A. Bennett and D. H. Lawrence's social lives and literary achievements and their attitudes towards the concept of the novel and women will be discussed. Subsequently, the above-mentioned novels will be evaluated chronologically through these theories. This dissertation is unequivocally important in that feminism has generally been evaluated in the novels written by female authors, but has not been studied in relation to the works of three male authors, undertaken in this dissertation who are both similar to and different from each other in terms of the concept of the novel and women, and their attitudes towards them which provides the reader with different points of view, and styles. Thus, this dissertation not only aims at applying certain theories to certain novels, but also makes a comparative study of seemingly traditional writers like Wells, who has a visionary and Darwinistic attitude, and Bennett, who has an attitude of social observation, and Lawrence who deals with the psychologies of the characters. For this reason, considering each author’s concept of the novel and women, the objective of the dissertation is to provide the reader with
some parallelisms among the novelists and their novels. However, it should also be noted that, because of the narrow scope of this dissertation, only the novel genre, which is also limited to only three novels and three novelists in a limited space (England) and time (late 19th and early 20th century), and only Lacan, Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray’s theories will be analysed and evaluated.
1. FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM: DEFINITION, OBJECTIVES, AND THEORIES OF JACQUES LACAN, JULIA KRISTEVA, HELENE CIXOUS AND LUCE IRIGARAY

Feminist literary criticism is one of the major developments in literary studies. It aims to play its part in the struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements and of women's social and political rights. Its most important goal is to discover women's actual social and individual identities. It also seeks to challenge the traditions and conventions of a patriarchal society that is based on the premise of masculine authority as embodied in the notion of the father as the head of the family. Feminist literary criticism focuses on women's oppression as a theme coupled with the invisibility of women writers, in order to provide the reader with new and fresh methods and critical practices. Within these limits, it succeeds in highlighting gender stereotyping as an important characteristic of literature, altering certain perspectives of such images and stereotypes and discovering that female novelists are lost or ignored. In other words, it attempts to describe and interpret women's experiences especially as reflected in the novel by questioning the dominant male, phallocentric ideologies and attitudes and values while discovering the true nature of women, their feelings, and actions. One way through which feminist critics attempt to struggle against the oppression and repression of women is by examining the images, relationships, and the actual experiences of women as portrayed in various literary texts by women.

Besides, feminist literary criticism focuses on the relationships between literature and patriarchal prejudices in the society by putting a great deal of emphasis on literature's potential role in overcoming such prejudices. Several major feminist
critics attribute the important role of achieving the development of not only social attitudes towards women but also women’s attitudes towards themselves, and to literature.

Whilst dealing with the theories of feminist literary criticism, firstly, feminism, femaleness, and femininity should be clarified. In this respect, Toril Moi offers a distinction between these terms. In one of her interviews, Moi states that she finds “feminism as a political, indeed revolutionary movement, subversive and marginal to the dominant order and feminism is about the need to reconceptualize power, understand it differently, and see the creative potential in power” (1990: 94-109). On the other hand, according to Moi, “femaleness refers to a matter of biology and femininity is a set of culturally defined characteristics, and feminine and masculine represent social constraints patterns of sexuality and behaviours imposed by cultural and social norms” (1985:117-122).

Feminism has its origins in the struggle for women’s rights, which seems to have begun in legal terms late in the 18th century. However, the dual and mysterious attitude towards women is rooted even in the Bible, where the woman is sometimes inferior to her husband and at other times, one with her husband. Since women were responsible for all the miseries of humankind, God punishes Eve with childbirth, for Eve is responsible for the original sin, and she is the reason for the downfall of man. In addition, the Bible suggests that women should be “subject to their husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the woman, as Christ is the head of Church” (Ephesians: 22). In Genesis, God says: “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shall bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (3.16). The assertion that women are sinners
and they are the reasons for the downfall of man seems to be made evident in *Women in Love* through Hermione, who is represented as the Eve figure, attempting to bring about the downfall of Birkin. She also tries to “eat the apple” which represents the Tree of Knowledge which God forbade to man. She is associated with evil, described as a serpent who tries to know everything. On the other hand, Gudrun, who is not overtly defined as Eve, is responsible for Gerald’s downfall, even his death. In *Ann Veronica*, Ann’s sisters Gwen and Alice are turned into submissive creatures whose sole duty is to take care of their children.

Critics and authors have responded to the issues raised by feminism inasmuch as the notions put forward by them have contributed to the construction of gender identities. Wollstonecraft is considered to be one of the pioneering feminist advocates of women’s rights. She attached importance to women’s education, as it would enable women to be able to interact with the outer world and have self-confidence and autonomy. In her work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), Wollstonecraft points out that she “sees no fundamental difference between the sexes in terms of their capacity for reason and their potential for self development, adding that education must foster independence of thought” (1988: 26, 48).

In the early twentieth century, although Wells, Bennett, and Lawrence were not able to study feminist theories and criticism, there were several other significant works related to some fundamental notions of feminist literary criticism. For example in 1929, Virginia Woolf, in her *A Room of One’s Own*, attempts to explain the reasons why western literature is dominated by male authors. To Woolf, the basic reason for that domination and monopolism is that women do not have the principal and social opportunities that men are provided with:
In the first place, it is necessary to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound-proof room was out of the question...since her pin money depended on the good will of her father, was only enough to keep her clothed ... such material difficulties were formidable; but much worse were the immaterial...Write if you choose ... (2000: 60-61)

Woolf also anticipates later French feminist critics with her attempts to describe “a new form of feminine discourse” (Booker, 1998: 90). She suggests that male dominated or masculine literature is connected with the male dominated or masculine dominance of language, for any sentence that was acceptable was a man's sentence, or it was related to him. According to Woolf, a woman “was the other on which men were dependent, their awe only expressed their own powerlessness” (Nye, 1989: 83). Woolf, therefore, argues for the necessity of a woman's sentence although both masculine and feminine elements were of equal importance to her. Following the same path as Woolf, Cixous and Irigaray have emphasized the necessity of a new feminine form of sentences and expression that does not create the same stories and meanings as men. Woolf in fact aims at creating an androgynous mind, having both masculine and feminine qualities, and free from sexual self-consciousness.

In this respect, one of the early feminist critics, Simone de Beauvoir who concentrates on images of feminity which bring the female subject to the status of object, states in her work The Second Sex (1949) that “one is not born but rather becomes a woman” (1972:267). According to de Beauvoir:

Woman has always been man’s dependant, if not his slave; the two sexes have never shared the world in equality. And even
today woman is heavily handicapped, though her situation is beginning to change. Almost nowhere is her legal status the same as man’s and frequently it is much to her disadvantage. (1972: 10)

Simone de Beauvoir in her work demands that women should be aware of this situation and should try hard to reverse such roles, which limit her freedom as a subject. The idea of equality and similarity of all the human beings is to a certain extent essential to de Beauvoir’s feminism. To her, men and women have different virtues, and there are no absolutes for human beings since everything is apt to change. Men and women have different gifts, they have equal dignity and value, but it is not possible for them to be equal in everything. The first human beings, Adam and Eve represent the two types of humanity; masculine and feminine. Adam was responsible for labour and creation, and Eve for childbirth; both having different virtues and gifts through which to experience the happiness and sufferings of life. *The Second Sex*, embodies a significant feminist claim, namely that patriarchy is the universal authority in all political, social, and economic matters, and this male authority tries to establish oppression and power over women which for de Beauvoir must be corrected. To achieve this, it is necessary to change the society itself. Men and women should change themselves as well. She also points out that “we must use language, if it is used in a feminist perspective with a feminist sensibility, language will find itself changed in a feminist manner” (Clark, 1993: 43). Another important work that embodies feminist concerns is Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) which provides analyses of the economic, sexual, and psychological problems of the American middle class housewife. Friedan attempts to help women to be aware of their own potentials and autonomies by taking responsibility for their own
lives. Mary Ellman’s *Thinking about Women* (1968), which is a critique of woman's cultural, social, and literary identity, is a survey of such stereotyping of women in patriarchal society as formless, passive, unstable, confined, pious, materialist, spiritual, and irrational. In addition, Kate Millett's work *Sexual Politics* (1969) provides the readers with an understanding of the construction of gender and ways of patriarchy; it deals with the “sexual politics” in the history and literature in the 19th and 20th century western societies. In other words, the book lays down the first modern principles of feminist criticism. She deals with the operations of power and the subjection of women, and uncovers negative images of woman as sexual and submissive objects. She points out that the essence of politics is power and the most fundamental and pervasive concept of power is male dominance that males seek domination over females. She also criticises the negative treatments of women by male authors who have sexist assumptions in their texts, such as D. H. Lawrence, Henry Miller and Norman Mailer, and their fears and anxieties portrayed through women characters in the novels (Booker, 1998:95-97).

One of the other key texts in the historical recovery of women and their writing is Elaine Showalter’s *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), which describes the female literary tradition in the English novel from the generation of the Brontes to the present day and shows the development of this tradition. The book aims at “exposing sexual stereotyping in canonical texts and reinterpreting and reviving the work of women writers lost and forgotten in the past” (Showalter, 1977: 11). Another significant text of feminist criticism is *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) in which Gilbert and Gubar focus on the difficulties faced by women writers in a patriarchal society as both writers and women. It offers a new theory of women's literary
activities, stating, “the text's author is father, a progenitor, a procreator, an aesthetic patriarch whose pen is an instrument of generative power like his penis” (Gilbert, 1985: 36, 79). Lacking this phallic authority, the penis, the female's writing marks the anxieties of that lack and difference, and she also lacks the definition of the author. In Sexual/Textual Politics (1985), Toril Moi asserts that “feminist studies are to be a mature discipline that can withstand and benefit from a critique of itself like all mature disciplines” (1990: 7). She aims at “stimulating debate within feminism in order to achieve the principal objective of feminist criticism, which is to expose, not to perpetuate patriarchal practices” (Moi, 1990: 7).

In this respect, Wells, Bennett, and Lawrence, living in similar spaces and time, and sharing somehow similar concerns related to the gender issues are quite appropriate figures, for the influences of all these notions that can be traced in the novels Ann Veronica, Helen With the High Hand and Women in Love, in which the heroines try to free themselves from the discriminative societal values to achieve their autonomies. Overall, these critics and their works have been quite essential in the development of gender studies and feminist literary criticism. As there have been several feminist writings, literary criticism does not have a definite and unified theory. However, one of the basic assumptions is that Western culture is patriarchal and this male dominated society and culture is a threat to the female in many fields, and it oppresses the female who is referred to as a negative being and “other” or a “non-man” by her lack of a male organ. The masculine, on the other hand, is defined as “active, dominating, adventurous, rational, and creative in contrast to the feminine passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional, conventional, marginal, docile, and subservient to men's interests and emotional needs” (Abrams, 1990: 89).
Since there are several parallelisms between recent feminist criticism and psychoanalysis, it is essential to evaluate the work of the psychoanalytical theoretician Lacan as he had a profound effect on Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray, whose works are the most representative of the main trends in French feminist theory. Lacan combines Freud’s concept of the unconscious with Saussure’s structural linguistic terms such as the signifier, the signified and the sign, and language representing consciousness. However, dreams, slips of the tongue, blanks in speeches, hesitations and silences, confusions, poetic resonances, absent-mindedness, forgetting of names, and misreading represent the unconscious. Therefore, language is not a simple bearer of thoughts and information, and is not a means for communication. What causes communication to be defective is important. In this respect, in the novels to be studied, silences, pauses, and blanks in speech that might be read as language and a reaction to the rules of the Symbolic Order are detected. According to Lacan, “unconsciousness is in harmony with fundamental mechanisms of language, however, in some cases, in humour and slips of tongue, language may seem to be divided, but this case reveals the real discourse which is unconscious” (Lemaire, 1977: 188). Therefore, Lacan insists on the idea that the unconscious is essentially structural and linguistic. In other words, “it is structured like a language” (Sullivan, 1987: 14). The unconscious is a sliding of what he calls signifieds and signifiers, which is a mixture of fixed meanings and metaphors. Thus, “masculinity and femininity are constructs, metaphors; in some senses, a language” (Humm, 1994: 120). However, for Freud, the unconscious is the psychic realm to which the forbidden desires for the mother are consigned during the Oedipus complex, when the child accedes to what Freud called “the reality principle” – the realization that his
desires, if unchecked, would lead to disaster, because they would bring down punishment on him (Robbins, 2000: 111).

Lacan has evaluated human life and operations of the mind according to pre and post language acquisition and has divided life into three periods. For Lacan, in the human psyche there are three orders or dimensions: the “Imaginary,” the “Symbolic” and the “Real.” All three dimensions or others are equally important to the formation of subjectivity (Leitch, 2001: 1281). Each character in each novel enters the three orders in different spaces and times in their lives. The Imaginary Order originates early in human beings. The Imaginary Order is related to Freud's pre-Oedipal period and it is the world of the infant before he learns the language. It is also related to Freud’s pleasure principle, which is the “preverbal infantile stage of joyful fusion with the mother's body,” it is the primary locus of fantasies and images, rhythms which are the dominant means of perceiving the world, and is thus of obvious importance for the study of literature (Booker, 1998: 35). In this period, the infant considers himself to be a part of his mother and thinks that he is one with the mother. In this narcissistic world in which there are difficulties in a lack of physic separation from the m(other), any kind of feeling, emotion and concept is in the body of the mother for the infant (Booker, 1998: 35). Gerald, in *Women in Love*, for example, feels this lack; he does not seem to be a whole. The infant's personality as in the mirror reflection (The Mirror Stage) is the outside reflection of the infant. The first stage of our ego identity comes from the sight of ourselves in the mirror- an image, which in itself blurs subjectivity and objectivity. In the novels, each character sometimes acts as a mirror to the other. To illustrate, Helen is the mirror for her uncle’s reflection, Hermione in *Women in Love* actually has her own mirrors
through which she looks at herself. The wholeness of the self depends on the individual's sense of embodiment or unity between her/his body and mind. In psychosis or schizophrenia, however, the individual experiences a division between the body and the mind: “the inner or true self” is relegated to the disembodied mind, which becomes the detached spectator of the “false self” located in an atrophied, mechanized body especially his mother (Showalter, 1987: 227). This kind of personality does not belong to the person; consequently, it is imaginary which does not give correct information about the subject’s personality or identity. In other words, the subject's supposed image and ego in fact belong to someone else and it is imprisoned in someone else's image. As Moi suggests “in the Imaginary, there is no difference and no absence only identity and presence” (1985: 99). Because of the engagement between Lacan and Freud’s psyche concept, it is very significant to analyze Lawrence because of his attaching importance to the characters’ psychologies rather than their social lives.

In the Imaginary Order, ego is deceptive. There is no certain division between the object and subject or “I” and the “other,” and the infant is the other. While the infant looks in the mirror and identifies himself with the other in the mirror stage, in the following stages, the infant starts to discover the boundaries of his own body, starts to gain a sense of his existence as a separate entity, and forms another identity. Thus, “the subject becomes estranged, he becomes the prisoner of his identity, and becomes a member of a group and the child of his parents, and the bearer of his ancestor’s name defining him as an individual” (Sarup, 1992: 65). Within this fake identity that is formed through the desires and ideas of the other, a person acts in accordance with other people’s definitions made for that person’s identity and
personality, which results in people’s inability to form their own autonomies free from any external effect. The heroines, Ann, Helen, Ursula, and Gudrun, even the heroes, Birkin and Gerald, suffer from similar dilemma concerning their unreal, real or true identities and personalities. They do not have their real images, yet they are to a certain extent what their family members want them to be. They try to achieve unity between their bodies and minds as they struggle to solve this dilemma. Since the individuals analysed in the novels are in a state of dilemma considering their real (an individual’s own perception of his/her personality) and unreal (others’ perception of an individual’s personality) identities, it is of utmost importance to mention Lacan’s concept of Ideal Ego, related to how a person defines himself/herself and the Ego Ideal, which is related to how a person is defined by other people. What is achieved in the mirror identification is an imaginary perception of a self, opening up the pathway towards an eventual social identity. However, the cost of this is high: a radical split has occurred between the ideal imaginary identity and the actual self, which perceived that projected mirror ideal. Thus, for Lacan, subjective identity from its first intimations is constructed on a mirage, what he terms an Ego-Ideal (Morris, 1993: 103).

In the Mirror Stage, (between the ages of 6 to 8 months) noticed in the Imaginary Order, recognition is not clear and the infant only sees a reflected image, neither its own reflection nor itself. This image is not identical with the infant subject to be a human subject, in other words, a social being. The Mirror Stage ends with the child's successful separation from the Oedipal Period in which the father prohibits the child's disturbing the binary unity between mother and child by becoming much closer to the mother. So long as a child recovers from the oedipal conflicts, he may
form his real identity and become a real subject (Moi, 1985: 99). However, this is only possible through the Symbolic Order for the real acquisition of identity and hence subjectivity occurs only when the infant enters into the Symbolic Order of language.

The infant's transfer of this emotion towards language and his becoming aware of his limits lead him to enter the Symbolic Order, which is loosely related to Freud's notion of the reality principle that is associated with the use of symbols and symbolic systems. It is the second stage when we begin to use language to create our identity as “myself,” and “I” which is multiple, and always plural rather than single, a signifier that appeals to oneness, but which has infinite number of signifieds (Robbins, 2000: 115). The Symbolic Order is the realm of language as representation, associated with the Law of the Father, with which the infant makes connection within the limitations of the language and culture. The Father acts as the symbol of superego that forms the conscious moral values social regulations and rules in the society. Entry into the Symbolic Order is loss and acceptance of the infant's own limitations. It is the realm of consciousness, rules, order, differentiation, and logic power, in contrast to the imaginary realm of the unconscious with its anarchic and uncontrolled desires (Robbins, 2000: 115). Language is controlled by the law of the father: it is a masculine order, and female metaphors are outside the Symbolic Order. For example, Irigaray's remarks about women's exclamations and bubbles are outside the Symbolic Order (Robbins, 2000: 115). Since the law of the father is a masculine realm, it is a different experience for boys (who can both accept and identify with the father's law) and girls (who cannot directly accept and identify with the father's law and power). When a girl infant enters the Symbolic Order, this means that the girl
infant accepts the male authority and superiority. Nevertheless, the key notion for (boy or girl) each situation, the infant should give up his/her desire to be one with the mother. Lacan describes the entry into the Symbolic Order as castration not in the physical terms employed by Freud, but as the norms and rules of the society as superego (Cornell and Thurschwell, 1987: 146). Language both socializes and makes the individual a subject and also it gets him/her to obey the rules of the society and he/she is estranged at the same time. People are estranged and become alienated because the Symbolic Order in a way puts people’s sexual and aggressive instincts (id) on a normal level and makes people aware of their social and cultural identities. This is because of the fact that subjects are lost, and their lives are organized according to the traditional norms and people’s value judgements, ideals and notions. In other words, “the entry into language rips us away from nature. There is no possibility of reconciliation with a ‘real’ or ‘true’ self … we are split at the core, driven but with nowhere to go” (Cornell and Thurschwell, 1987: 146).

For Lacan, the penis has a symbolic status. It is real, but it is the symbolic phallus which is a signifier. In fact, the phallus, because of its role in signifying what is missing or lacking, becomes the signifier of signification. Thus, entry into the Symbolic Order shows the acceptance of the phallus as a signifier of the Law of the Father. The Symbolic is in turn characterized by phallogocentric (phallus: male power, logos: reason, the word of the God authoritative discourse) (Booker, 1998:35). In the Symbolic Order, as a social being, the individual tries to understand himself and his environment and tries to see himself as a subject and I. He regards everything as object and the other. In the novels to be dealt with females and males try to find those differences between themselves and their environments.
On the other hand, “the Real Order,” is related to deep and intensive lives such as death and sexuality that reaches to consciousness in the moments of short term or transitory enthusiasm and violence that Lacan calls “Jouissance” (Booker, 1998: 35). The Real Order cannot be represented and expressed; it may be approached but never grasped, and it is like an abstract language. Some female and male characters in the novels live through such enthusiastic moods as death and sexuality, become aware of some points in the Real Order, and try to make analyses of themselves. Subjectivity of the characters in the novels is created through these orders. They use their imaginations, they have love affairs, they experience semiotic modes, finding themselves gradually and eventually in the Symbolic Order. Some of the heroines and heroes seek out or avoid the Real Order. Some approach the Real Order but cannot grasp it completely, but some only momentarily enter into the Real Order.

The writings of Julia Kristeva, Helene Cixous and Luce Irigaray, strongly influenced by Lacan's and Derrida's post-structuralist-psychoanalytical and deconstructionist thinking respectively, are built on de Beauvoir's concept of “woman as other to man” and examine the opposites (or binaries) men/women, mind/nature and so on which represent sexual difference. Cixous and Irigaray aim to develop the positive representation of the feminine into a new language, which is often referred to as “écriture féminine” or women's writing, and “parler femme” women’s speech (Humm, 1994: 23). “Écriture féminine” refers to the specificity of female sexuality and the relationship between sexuality and literature (Humm, 1989: 59-60). They agree that language has been the “central mechanism” by which men have appropriated the world. The linguistic means by which men colonize women,
they argue, is that men devolve sensuality in favour of symbolism (Humm, 1994: 95). Since literature represents the unconscious and unsaid truths, motives, feelings and ideas, dreams and the unconscious, it is a kind of repertoire for subjectivity. Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray focus their attention on the production of female subjectivity free of patriarchy and traditions regulated according to masculine authority. Cixous and Irigaray also search out a feminine style of writing, which is composed of sex-specific rhythms and desires, a kind of musical and rhythmical form of expression and language as a woman's body should be written, even the silences can be read as a discourse, which represents the unsaid (Humm, 1994: 95). Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray oppose the phallic, which shapes Western thought and writing, and assert that female sexuality is a good deal more than a lack.

The well-known French feminist critic, Julia Kristeva points out that femininity is defined as either a margin or a border in the patriarchal order in that women are not only oppressed and feared; but also desired and feared. Further to this, Kristeva focuses on the maternal and pre-Oedipal in the constitution of subjectivity and she regards abjection as an explanation for oppression and discrimination:

The abject is as important to the constitution of the subject as its object. The abject is what the subject's consciousness has to expel or disregard in order to create the proper separation between subject and object. Another way of putting this is that the abject is still unconsciously desired and thereby transformed into something undesirable, filthy, and disgusting like the bodily processes for which it stands. (Leitch, 2001: 2167)

The prefix “ab” represents a movement from a site or condition and thus a
loss. However, a movement away from is also a movement towards a site or condition as yet unspecified- and thus entails both a threat and a promise (Hurley, 1996: 4). “The abject does not respect borders, positions, rules … disturbs identity, system, order” (Kristeva, 1982: 4). In other words, abjection describes the ambivalent status of the human subject who either accepts having an autonomous self-identity responding to any threat to the self, or accepts pleasures, and indifferentiation, thus experiencing jouissance. Since this model of human identity is based on binaristic understanding of male and female, or masculine and feminine; aggressive and destructive femininity and homosexuality are monstrous and abhorrent tendencies that are observed in Women in Love through the homosexual relationship between Gerald and Birkin and through the destructive and aggressive femininities, Hermione, Gudrun, and Mrs. Crich. Mrs Crich is the symbol of the abject that Gerald never knows how to feel and what to do. He has to expel or disregard it in order to create his subjectivity, and become a separate identity; however, he is not able to do it. Kristeva states that all signification is composed of semiotic and symbolic elements. Kristeva describes these two concepts as interdependent and inseparable, in the making of meaning. Because the subject is both symbolic and semiotic, no signifying system he produces can be either “exclusively” semiotic or “exclusively” symbolic, and is instead necessarily marked by an indebtedness to both. She calls the term “intertextuality” to refer to interaction of the symbolic and semiotic modes (Robbins, 2000: 129). “The Semiotic” represents the discharge of pre-Oedipal instinctual energies, and drives, within language (Leitch, 2001: 2166). The Semiotic for Kristeva (Lacan's Imaginary Order) refers to linguistic structures and imaginary to create meaning. The semiotic is associated with the
rhythms, tones, and desires and therefore it is associated with the body, while the Symbolic Order is the realm for the law of the Father. In this respect “a complete overthrow of the Symbolic would be anarchy … On the other hand, a complete repression of the semiotic leads to the tyranny of Symbolic law. Kristeva wants to avoid both of these extremes” (Oliver, 1993: 11). Rejecting the Symbolic Order which sustains social identity, a woman leaves herself unprotected and open to the full force of unconscious desire of which the most powerful is always “death drive,” it also leads to “non-sense or madness” (Morris, 1993: 148, 146).

Kristeva questions Freud and Lacan's notion of the paternal threat of castration that causes the child to leave the maternal body: to her, maternal regulation is the law before the paternal law. She suggests a new discourse of maternity that is subjective. The important point is that either as a woman or a mother, a woman is a social and speaking being, and abjection is an operation of the psyche through which subjective identity is formed through the interaction between the Symbolic and Semiotic Orders. This formation is achieved through rejecting any kind of threat to one's self. One of the most important threats is the dependence on the maternal body and maternal function. In order to form identity, firstly mother’s body has to be abjected. As opposed to Lacan who affirms that separation from the maternal body occurs in the mirror stage, Kristeva states that, this occurs even before the mirror stage. After the mirror stage, (in which the infant draws boundaries between itself and its mother then constructs his/her identity as “I”) the infant enters the Symbolic Order where he/she becomes a subject. Another point is that, the pregnant woman is a kind of threshold where “nature” confronts “culture.” Kristeva will not see the culture/nature debate surrounding childbirth as the binary opposition that some
feminists claimed it to be (Robbins, 2000: 121). The so-called “natural” process of childbearing is always ready, also a “cultural” process, since its “product” the child will become a subject in culture, and since the woman who gives birth inhabits both poles of the opposition of culture and nature in her very being (Robbins, 2000: 121).

For Kristeva, following Lacan, “the speaking subject in whom rationality and disorder coexist, is always a split subject, divided between unconscious and conscious motivations, inhabiting both nature and culture” (Robbins, 2000: 127). She feels that all the texts are usually double, open ended, multiple, and they already represent the Semiotic Order. She points out that

Like the text then, the subject cannot be fixed. The subject is not only split, but also a ‘subject-in-process’ … the subject is always in process in that s/he is not fixed, but always developing. The subject is always in process because s/he is always on trial being tested against the various contexts in which s/he has his/her being. (Robbins, 2000: 127)

Subjectivity is never completed because of the relationships between the self and the other. Subject-in-process promotes a fluid and multiple identity, which is different from the traditional concept of identity which is stable and proper. Through achieving recognition of the boundaries between self and other, the infant overcomes the binaries by affirming the m/other in him/herself. Consequently, women have multiple identities: they are not only mothers but also women and above all individuals, trying to achieve their autonomies. In the novels, some female characters, even some male characters try to assert their multiple and plural identities, autonomies, and subjectivities.
According to Maggie Humm, Kristeva opposes the idea that what constitutes the role of the subject in language is his penis or woman’s lack of one. To Kristeva, a subject is constituted before “the castration phase” in the semiotic – a space of privileged contact with the mother (1994:100). The Semiotic and the Symbolic are the two forms of language which a subject “speaks” or signifies with the semiotic which is a pre-symbolic language. Kristeva argues that the semiotic is a time when children have an all-encompassing relationship with the mother achieved through gestures, aural and vocal rhythms, and repetitive patterns. The semiotic occurs in literature as a pressure on symbolic language as absences, contradictions, and moments in a literary text. For example, poetry with its creative disruptions of grammatical rules, syntax, diction, and vocabulary, with its intensive emotions and feelings, functions in the Semiotic Order, and Symbolic Order as well. Ann and Helen’s dance Ann’s poetry function in the Semiotic Order. Kristeva focuses on the segmentation of sentences and syntactical ellipses and use of sounds, which resemble children's murmurs. This is the locus of emotion or where the semiotic will appear (Humm, 1994: 100-101). Kristeva’s answer to phallogocentrism is that any marginal position is feminine (she believes that feminine does not refer to biology but philosophical and patriarchal position and it is against the rule of the father). In her *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980), Kristeva lays down the differences between the Semiotic and the Symbolic Order, pointing out that all logical contradictions, blanks, and gaps come from the Semiotic Chora which is a blissful union with the mother. In the Semiotic Order “the world of the infant consists of an endless flow of rhythmic pulsion that Kristeva calls the chora-an essentially mobile and extremely provisional articulation constituted by movements
and their ephemeral states” (Booker, 1998: 93). Kristeva borrowed the term from Plato, who describes it as “an invisible and formless being which receives all things and in some mysterious way partakes of the intelligible and is most incomprehensible” (1982: 6).

Because of the fact that the Symbolic Order is identified with the father, language is also associated with masculinity, in other words in phallogocentric systems that deny women’s languages and experiences. However, Julia Kristeva summarizes her idea of feminism as a female intellectual under three items, “the demand for equal access to the Symbolic Order, the rejection of the patriarchal Symbolic Order in the name of difference, the rejection of the dichotomy between masculine and feminine as metaphysical” (Moi, 1990: 4). In “Women’s Time” Kristeva points out that all women must identify with the Symbolic Order to become social beings, the question of difference only becomes relevant at the point of entry into the Symbolic Order: Sexual difference - which is at once biological, physiological and relative to reproduction- is translated by and translates a difference in the relationship of subjects to the symbolic contract: a difference, then, in the relationship to power, language, and meaning (1986: 196). Kristeva accepts that women and men are alike. She does not accept sharp divisions between women and men’s language and both of them are to speak in the Symbolic Order, however, she rejects the male Symbolic Order in the name of the difference. She states that symbolic language can be disrupted through semiotic language, which is related to Lacan’s Imaginary Order. Kristeva insists on the fact that feminine or semiotic language is not related to biological gender but to some modes of thoughts and ideas that are not patriarchal. In Lacanian thought too, gender is not determined by
biological nature but by linguistic construct. To have the power of the phallus in the Symbolic Order, male writers must accept Lacanian castration, giving up the idea of access to the Jouissance of infantile fusion with mothers. If these male writers reject castration, they become feminine writers (1986: 196). Therefore, it is clear that this renunciation refers to oppositions to any kind of traditional authority. To Kristeva, all language should be within the system that she calls the Symbolic Order which she demands equal access.

In Lacan's Mirror Stage (Imaginary), the infant becomes aware of his self and other and enters a new phase of development. Kristeva labels this the “thetic” phase, which is completed as the young child enters the Symbolic Order. For Kristeva, semiotic elements that are repressed, obscured, and/or disrupted by Western thought are necessary and they make language more creative and imaginative, but language should and always will contain both symbolic and semiotic elements. She also does not believe in the validity of stereotyped and fixed gender systems. Supporting liberation from the rigid gender roles, she uses the term “androgyny” (containing the two; namely, andro: male, gyne: female) in order to describe the individuals that are free from the confines of gender roles, and being able to preserve their autonomies. This concept is related to her multiple identity concern. Within this frame, the idea of Kristeva’s Androgyny also recalls Jung whose “anima” forms the female side of the male identity; animus forms the male side of the female identity” (Stevens, 1994: 86). Kristeva believes in multiplicity of expressions, which include both semiotic (songs, rhythm ellipses…) and symbolic elements. Thus, a male writer will benefit from the semiotic and symbolic elements like a female writer. For example, Helen, Ann, Ursula and Gudrun have their semiotic modes referring to their fantasies, dreams,
and voices of love. However, none of the characters seem to reject the Symbolic Order, though they attempt to subvert binarism and patriarchal Symbolic Order. Ann and Helen seem to have subverted patriarchy at the very beginning of the novel while Gudrun and Hermione subvert patriarchal order through their destructive power; they subvert the binary opposition by being the victimizer instead of being the victim.

Another well-known French feminist critic Helen Cixous aims at deconstructing masculine structures of knowledge and she attacks patriarchal language and authority in order to challenge male authority and domination. Cixous makes use of hysterical figures speaking their bodies. For example, laughter functions as mockery and pleasure. Cixous’ definition of Jouissance operates outside the patriarchal order out, in the realm of the feminine Imaginary Order. She points out that language belonging to women should be free from male metaphors. She believes that the female space should be free of Symbolic Order, sex roles, otherness and the Law of the Father in which the self is still linked with what Cixous calls the “Voice of the Mother” (Guerin, 1992: 200). A woman is confronted with a given social reality, that is that men have penises and therefore power, but women lack it and will never have that power and, therefore, they have to substitute that lack with something else, for example, language. Even the words having similar meanings denote difference in gender for example “master/mistress, man/woman, and bachelor/spinster. Master implies dominance and control while mistress suggests a kept woman or sexual object. Even the adjectives are sexually coded; beautiful and fragrant apply to women not men” (Nye, 1989: 174-6). The problem is that women have different ideas, perceptions, feelings, emotions, but all these are expressed through a masculine language, therefore it is not surprising for a woman to have
difficulty in finding her own voice in such a male constructed and dominated language. For this reason, the focus of discourse for Cixous is “écriture feminine,” which is women's writing, specific to women and their bodies, emotions and the unconscious, which arises not from the Symbolic, but from the Imaginary Order “which sustains social identity a woman leaves herself unprotected and open to the full force of unconscious desire, of which the most powerful is always the death drive” (Morris, 1993: 148). This is what Kristeva is fiercely against as she believes that women and men are alike, and both of them are constrained to speak and write from the Symbolic Order, though she admits that “this symbolic language can be disrupted from within through the eruption of semiotic modes of language, related to Lacan’s Imaginary Order” (Booker, 1998: 91). In the “Laugh Of The Medusa” Cixous states that “woman must write herself, about woman ... out herself into the text, woman's imaginary is inexhaustible like music, painting, writing, their stream of phantasm is incredible” (1986: 224). She emphasizes the rhythmic and liberating elements of song and music. All the parts of women's body and sexuality should be put in the text in order to go beyond the current male discourse. Cixous describes a woman as a “text, a return of the repressed feminine that with its energetic joyful and transgressive flying in language and making it fly” which disrupts and challenges the male discourse (Leitch, 2001: 2050-1). In the “Laugh Of The Medusa” Cixous points out that “… flying is a woman’s gesture … we have learned the art of flying ... women take pleasure in jumbling the order of space, in changing around the furniture, dislocating things and values, breaking them all up, emptying structures and turning property upside down” (1989: 1098). Like Kristeva and Irigaray, Cixous describes women as “heterogeneous and fluid beings who are themselves sea, sand, coral, sea-
weed, beaches, tides, swimmneys, children, waves …” (Moi, 1985: 117).

Cixous’ work “Sorties” which can mean in French, “escapes, departures, outcomings” was originally published in La Jeune Nee (The Newly Born Woman) in 1975. In this work, notions are worked through oppositions such as “Activity/Passivity, Sun/Moon, Day/Night, Father/Mother, Head/Heart, Intelligible/Sensitive, and Logos/Pathos ....” (Lodge, 1995: 287). The Male/Female opposition is one of the most pervasive and hazardous ideologies, and it reflects the dichotomy of dominant active male and submissive passive female who is repressed, marginalized, and neglected. The fact is that logocentric structures were organized through these binary oppositions, in which the first term of each “is desirable and the other, shunned” (Lodge, 1995: 287). These series of binary oppositions are related to Man/Woman and Superior/Inferior and Culture/ Nature, in which the first term refers to men; positive and good, the second term refers to woman; negative, and bad. In addition, any kind of devaluing position is assigned to femininity and in philosophy woman is always on the side of passivity: that is, binary opposition underlines patriarchal ideologies. Cixous does not simply propose a simple equality in the system:

She proposes to rewrite the system, she does not simply privilege the female half neither, but she questions ... complexity of cultural realities of this ... she claimed that both men and woman could write ecriture feminine, ... opposition is not between female and male, ... between the logics. (Leitch, 2001: 2037-2038, V.III)

This binary opposition concept is not based on a relationship between A and
B, but on A and not A., which shows women’s position in the phallogocentric culture quite clearly: “Thus, in the opposition masculine/feminine, each term only achieves significance through its structural relationship to the other: ‘masculine’ world would be meaningless without its direct opposite ‘feminine’ and vice versa” (Moi, 1985: 105). Cixous tries to get rid of the opposition between masculine and feminine, and she attacks the classic concept of “bisexuality” which is squashed under the emblem of castration fear and along with the fantasy of a “total” being would do away with difference. She calls the “other bisexuality,” which is multiple, variable and ever changing, consisting as it does of the non-sex (Moi, 1985: 109). In Women in Love, Birkin’s last question shows that he is closer to Cixous’ view of bisexuality.

It should also be pointed out that Irigaray shares similar ideas with Cixous in her attacking patriarchal values, which diminish the qualities of women. They also feel that reversing this binary opposition is essential difference rather than superiority, neglecting the opposition between male and female. Cixous’ objective is to proclaim women as the source of life power and energy to subvert the binary opposition and patriarchy.

As opposed to Kristeva’s abject mother, Cixous’ mother figure is the “Good Mother: the omnipotent and generous dispenser of love, nourishment, and plenitude” (Moi, 1985: 115). In the novels, none of the mother figures serve as the image of Good Mother. In Western Patriarchal Society, if female experience is taken into consideration, it is not surprising that power and gender identity emerge as dominant themes. In the novels Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love, power structures are embodied in most of the characters who find themselves in power relationships which are in the form of domination and victimization. In Helen
With The High Hand, Helen makes her uncle Mr. Ollerenshaw do whatever she wants, although he tries to play tricks on his step-niece. However, his power is not as effective as hers is. In Ann Veronica, power structures are embodied in the male characters, whose behaviours are based on different patriarchal assumptions. In Women in Love, women turn out to be free individuals oppressing their male partners, and they try to assume “power over” men, which is in fact a male view. For instance, Hermione has power over Birkin. Similarly, Ursula oppresses Birkin with her traditional views of marriage and sexuality. Gudrun makes Gerald submit to her female power.

Although changing ideologies attribute different roles to men and women in different periods and places, the general judgement is that the difference between the sexes seems to be a valorisation of masculinity over femininity. Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love scrutinize power relationships between male and female characters. In this respect, it is suitable to refer to Cixous’ concept of “Power.” Cixous makes a distinction between good power (power to) and bad power (power over). To illustrate, “power to characterizes the feminine world that is constructive and seeks to create and to further pleasure for everyone” (Tong, 1989: 100-1). By contrast, “the kind of power that is the will for supremacy, the thirst for individual and narcissistic satisfaction ... is always a power over others ... whereas ... woman's power ... is a question of power over oneself, in other words a relation not based on mastery but on availability” (Moi, 1990: 124-5). Therefore, while “power to” is attributed to women, “power over,” which is a destructive power, is distributed to the masculine world of domination and destruction, which can accommodate only those values that serve it” (Tong, 1989: 100-101).
Another significant French feminist critic Luce Irigaray who is a prominent author in contemporary French feminism argues that

Women's oppression exists not only in the material, practical organization of economic, and social, medical and political structures but also in the very foundations of logos, reasoning and articulation in the subtle linguistic procedures and the logical processes through which meaning itself is produced. (Felman, 1990: 58)

Although Irigaray seems to refuse to define women like Kristeva, as an essentialist, who believes that women should be superior to and different from men, by being able to live in the Semiotic Order through her “parler femme,” fails to do that. Irigaray, sharing similar concerns with Cixous states that language is shaped by masculinity. To Irigaray, women's sexuality and body is a form of language, she aims at changing that male-constructed language structure. In her work, Speculum and This sex which is Not One (1977), “Speculum is a metonymy for language which is defined as a speculum- asexual reflector” (Humm, 1994: 104), which argues that Western Culture is shaped by patriarchy, she depicts negative attitudes towards women by male philosophers and writers. So as not to produce the same story, she tries to reject patriarchal language, believing that women should invent a language of their own. Women should learn to occupy the position of I and you in language through which women can be active subjects through Irigaray’s notion of “parler femme”, women’s speech, which speak to women, about women, by women, resisting the patriarchal mirror. She sees “parler femme” (which arises from the Semiotic Order) as necessary to break down the homosexuality of the discourses:
She concentrates on the idea that the mirror image is a signifier, and is therefore part of a system of representation as opposed to an immediate reality. It is the system of representation based on sight not reality itself that replicates sameness, which insists on the identification of image and self as the same. She argues that all the major representations of Western thought, based as they are on the seeing male I/eye, have constructed a logic of the same which she calls ‘homomosexual’ (homo Greek for same, homo Latin for man). In the logic of the same, male identity is sexed identity, and sexuality is therefore always the same thing, always one thing: a masculine thing. (Robbins, 2000: 155,153)

Irigaray states, “we look at ourselves in the mirror to please someone … rarely for ourselves and in search of our own becoming … The mirror signifies the constitution of a fabricated female other (Robbins, 2000: 164). Irigaray wants to break up this logic and find new languages to speak “in which women’s sexuality can be understood not as one thing, the lacking Other of male sexuality, but as many positive presences” (Robbins, 2000:153). She is also against binary hierarchies and points out negative representations of women common to Western Cultures.

According to Irigaray, women are multiple, plural, and they lack certain definitions:

She is neither one nor two ... her sexual organ, which is not one organ, is counted as no but woman has sex organs more or less everywhere, she experiences pleasure almost everywhere. Her lot is that of “lack,” ‘atrophy’ of the sexual organ and ‘penis envy,’
the penis being the only sexual organ of recognized value. (1985: 23)

Thus, she attempts by every means available to appropriate that organ for herself:

Through her somewhat servile love of the father-husband capable of giving her one, through her desire for a child penis, preferably a boy, through access to the cultural values still reserved by fight to males alone, therefore always masculine and so on ... she is to be the beautiful object of contemplation ... her sexual organ represents the horror of nothing to see. A defect in this systematics of representation ... she cannot be identified either as one or as two ... She has no proper name ... her maternity fills the gap in repressed sexuality ... she is indefinitely other in herself ... she experiences herself fragmentarily ... she submits to the dominant discourse of the father, to the law of the father while silencing her demand because of her lack of male sexual organ, penis. (1985: 23-70)

Women consequently present the lacking and repressed and they try to substitute that lack with a more spiritual value, motherhood, because they do not have any other choices apart from being kept at home and being nothing but mothers. Because of the uncertain definitions, women remain several and mysterious. Ann, Helen, Ursula, and Gudrun have quite enigmatic and mysterious personalities that require a detailed analysis.

Another important term Irigaray uses for women is the “hysteria rebellious outlet for the domesticated women” (Humm, 1989: 100). She uses this concept to
describe women’s acceptance and refusal of the organization of sexuality under patriarchy. Although a woman can be feminine, she refuses femininity in patriarchal discourse. This hysterical voice represents the woman’s language, created under the pressure of patriarchy, by representing feminine experience. The hysterical is caught between silence, mimicry, repressed desire, and language that belong to the father (Humm, 1989: 100). Irigaray’s ultimate objective is to find a possibility of non-hierarchical articulation between the sexes. As with her contemporaries, she challenges patriarchal authority, which deprives women of their imagination, sexuality, power, language and anything necessary to assert their identities. Nevertheless, the concept of hysteria is different in Lacanian terms: “hysteria is a form of neurosis rejecting a share of jouissance...the hysteric can sustain her desire” (Lacan, 1981:12). Hermione in Women in Love deprives both herself and her partner of Jouissance and finds satisfaction in sacrifice and she fails her partner too. She is unable to bring up the repressed with her unsatisfied desire; she denies being the cause of the other’s Jouissance. However, Ursula, Ann, and Helen are able to experience Jouissance with their partners. Irigaray does not agree with Lacan’s depiction of the Symbolic Order as ahistorical and unchanging. She believes that language systems are determined by power relations. To her, the phallus is an ahistorical master signifier of the symbolic order and phallus is Freud’s description of the world according to one sex model. The phallus as master signifier is evidence that the Symbolic Order is constructed and not ahistorical (Irigaray, 1985:69).

Irigaray’s work Speculum foregrounds her preoccupation with sexual indifference that underlies the truth of any science, and the logic of every discourse (1985:69). If female sexuality is conceptualized within masculine parameters as in
the case of language, nothing correct can be said about woman and she will go on being regarded as a “dark continent”; in contradiction even with herself. Freud, who has a biased sexuality in which he explains everything according to the male sex, asserts that the “little girl is therefore a little man.” Consequently, male and female roles are defined: “subject, activity, and possession of penis; object, passivity and the castrated genital organ” (Irigaray, 1985: 34). In other words, a woman is again described in terms of deficiency, the one who envies the possession of the penis and whose attachment to the mother must end in hate. Like her contemporaries Cixous and Kristeva, Irigaray refuses penis envy stating that woman’s sex is not one but multiple (1985: 34). Irigaray responds to this male conception of woman by becoming a “living mirror” and by replacing the loss and specularization with an ‘incendiary blaze’ while maintaining woman’s plurality (1985: 197). She also calls attention to the uterus, the vulva, the lips, the breasts, and the body for plurality of female genitals claiming sex organs more or less everywhere: “there would no longer be either subject or object. Oneness would no longer be privileged, there would be no longer be proper meaning, proper names, proper attributes” (Irigaray, 1985: 134). Though Irigaray’s concept of mother is similar to Cixous’ in that she is a nourishing and good mother, she argues that women should exist as autonomous beings and should attain a social existence separate from only the role of the mother: “if as Cixous and Irigaray have shown, femininity is defined as lack, negativity, absence of meaning, irrationality, chaos, darkness- in short as non-Being- Kristeva’s emphasis on marginality allows us to view this repression of the feminine in terms of positionality rather than of essences” (Moi, 1985: 166). In her work An Ethics of Sexual Difference, Irigaray mentions creative relations between female and male
which are not based on reproduction but on understanding differences between
themselves through accepting the other’s infinite capability of achieving love. If
male and female want to achieve ethical love, men must overcome nostalgia for the
womb, to develop their identities and open up a space for women to create their own.
In *Women in Love*, Ursula and Birkin achieve a harmonious love while Gudrun fails
in forming a genuine relation with Gerald. Helen also accepts Mr Dean as he is and
they live happily ever after. Ann also gets married to Mr. Capes, whom she loves a
lot, and lives happily expecting a baby.

To sum up, in this dissertation, the above mentioned theories of Jaques Lacan,
Julia Kristeva, Helen Cixous, and Luce Irigaray, in the light of the condition of
woman question and female and male relationships will be applied to *Ann Veronica*,
*Helen with the High Hand*, and *Women in Love*, which serve as codes, representing
the unsaid, repressed, mysterious and hidden truths about personal feelings and ideas
of the female characters, during their constitutions as subjects, while taking into
consideration that these female characters are created by male writers such as Wells,
Bennett, and Lawrence whose familiarity with feminist theory is restricted to the
period they lived in.
II. H.G. WELLS AND ANN VERONICA

This chapter will be devoted to feminist reading of *Ann Veronica* (1909). For a sound feminist reading, the reader should be well equipped with Herbert George Wells’ (1886-1946) outlook that is largely shaped by his scientific education in Imperial College, his study of Darwinism, his concept of humankind, his predictions about the future, his approach to the novel concept, and his approach to women. Feminist reading will focus on the application of Cixous’ “Power Over,” Lacan’s “Three Stages,” “Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal”; Kristeva’s “Androgyne,” “the Abject,” and Irigaray’s “Hysteria” theories and concepts to Ann Veronica, and her relationships with her father Mr Stanley, Mr. Manning, Mr. Ramage, Miss. Miniver, and Mr. Capes, and to some other minor female and male characters.

Being exposed to Darwinism, zoology and geology in Imperial College, Wells’ pessimism about the future of the humankind is unequivocal. He points out that humanity is ultimately doomed and that its prospect is not salvation but extinction regarding eugenics, the scientific discipline that studies for the betterment of the human race by improving conditions as to conception, gestation, and birth as a key to human salvation. Wells advocates favouring “the procreation of what is fine and efficient and beautiful in humanity-beautiful and strong bodies, clear and powerful minds … and to check the procreation of base and servile types … of all that is mean and ugly and bestial in the souls, bodies, or habits of men” (*War of the Worlds*; 1998:167-168). With a pessimistic outlook, Wells regards human beings as species, finding the individuals and their society useless. Thus, the individuals in the society will be either logical, creative, scientific, and reasonable or perish. Even the new women like Ann are doomed to fail, as they are not equipped with the abilities
to govern their will power, and they are not able to adapt to the society, inhabited with the persons blinded by their vanity either. In Ann’s case, the situation is the same: she perishes finally in Wells’ sense, as she is not able to have the necessary education and experience though she wishes a lot. However, even if she receives education, she will fail because of the inadequate education system itself, which is similar to the dogmatic and illogical religious system. As an individual less suited to the environment, she is less likely to survive and less likely to reproduce, even she reproduces, the child she gives birth to will be useless for the future of the human kind as well. Wells was aware of the fact that “his scenes of destruction could be the source of inspiration for morbid minds, or that man lacking in analytical thinking could see the humanly initiated horrors of his books as the absolute truths and the ultimate fate of mankind” (Ege, 1995: 728). In this respect, Wells’ such dystopias as The Time Machine (1895), which presents the longing of the Time Traveller that the machine should be controlled rationally, which is used as an instrument for delving into man’s future, The War of the Worlds (1895) in which the Martian invasion is expected to awaken people to the inadequacy of the contemporary values and attitudes, and The Island of Dr Moreau (1896), which portrays the Beast People’s reversion to more primitive forms so that inferior races would remain unchanged, all deal with unconventional themes, which are related to the future of the human kind, are intended to shock, hence, alter the views of the people about their place and role in the universe. With a propagandist attitude and social concern, he writes to improve the people’s conditions to encourage themselves to secure their future. However, Wells knows that man is a victim of his own weaknesses.

Within this frame, Wells defines himself a “prig,” as someone elected by
himself to lead the world. In some of his novels, he calls collectively the Prig Novels, which include *Marriage*, *The Passionate Friends*, *The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman*, and *The Research Magnificent*, “the characters are subordinated to the particular problems with which their lives are involved and sex plays a leading part” (Dickson, 1969: 211). Similarly, Ann Veronica has particular problems: she defies her father, not submitting to his domineering commands, she leaves his house, lives in lodgings, joins the suffragette movement, a hypocritical stockbroker lays her under monetary obligation, she breaks her engagement, and finally offers herself and her sexuality to a married man freely. As a “prig,” Wells makes discrimination between feelings and rationality in a rather harsh and intolerant way, mentioning the destructive effects of feelings and emotions, asserting that humanity should be well equipped with reason and rationality to grasp what is happening in the universe and not to become extinct, through Ann Veronica. As a “New Woman,” even Ann is a victim of her own weaknesses since she is the bearer of the defects of the society. She is responsible for reproducing in the culture that denies her needs. She is conventional at the end of the novel though she seeks political power, intellectual development, and personal emancipation. She is trapped, thwarted, and imprisoned by the patriarchal figure, the husband, who will replicate the father’s role.

However, Wells does not give up his efforts to encourage the people to struggle and change for a better future. In *Men Like Gods*, Wells sets his disappointment with the future of the human beings, mentioning the importance of scientific intelligence, education, order and organization, free, strong and rational individuals, asserting that the present world is a world of fear, weakness, infection, darkness, and confusion, where the people are all wasters (1923: Book II: I,II,II). In
The War of the Worlds, Wells pours out his pessimistic ideas about the future of the world and human kind as such:

Yet so vain is man, and so blinded by his vanity, that no writer, up to the very end of the nineteenth century, expressed any idea that, intelligent life might have developed there far, or indeed at all, beyond its earthly level ... this world is far gone in its cooling and this world is still crowded with life, but crowded only with what they regard as inferior animals ... It was the first time I realized that the Martians might have any other purpose than destruction with defeated humanity. (1998: Book I-II)

For a secure future, learning is of utmost importance for Wells: “we cannot have any weak or silly … the useless have to die … There’s books…we must get all the books we can; not novels and poetry swipes, but ideas, science books … Especially we must keep up our science … learn more” (The War of the Worlds; 1998: Chapter VII).

Wells portrays humanity that arises from its brief period of sleep, repentant and determined to set things right in one of his earlier novels, In the Days of the Comet. Leadford, the hero of the novel, is driven to desperation when his beloved Netties has a love affair with the upper-class Verrall. He sets out to murder both of them. At the moment of the murder-hunt, the apocalyptic comet affects a global change in human psychology and a new sense of wellbeing and rationality descends upon all the characters of the novel. In other words, they seem to be shocked and changed that Wells aims at in his fictional and non-fictional writing. The characters awaken and begin to see themselves as they are, and what they have been, and realize what their blindness, jealousy, and stupidity have led to (Wells, 1966: 8). Wells
points out his dislike of the irrationality and sentimentality of the people in the novel: “I wish at times... that comet of yours or some such thing would indeed strike this world- and wipe us all away, strikes, wars, tumults, loves, jealousies, and all the wretchedness of life” (In the Days of the Comet; 1966: 23). Ann Veronica somehow awakens after she changes her lodgings, and joins the Women’s Movement, which Wells finds useless. She is also mentally unfit for the society, which is full of blind and irrational citizens, although she wishes for a better future in which she is independent of any kind of authority in her life. She lives in a patriarchal society, and no matter how hard she struggles, she cannot salvage herself, and she seems to submit in the end. The idea of change in human nature itself is the main idea of Wells’ utopias, but such a change is not possible in his Darwinistic view.

Influenced by Darwin’s The Origin of Species, which he studied in Imperial College in Huxley’s class, Wells organizes Ann Veronica in such a manner that Ann chooses a socially inappropriate but fit mate to resist the society’s restrictions and pressures in order to achieve her biological responsibility. She rejects her father’s choice of mate, who follows Ruskin’s concept of separate spheres, mentioned in the introduction as it corresponds with Ann’s father’s Victorian type of fatherhood, and Mr. Manning’s idea of husband that describes women as queens, and angelic beings.

Ann Veronica is built on this expression: Ann’s activities bring her to the realization of this selection of partner for procreation. To Wells, all activities, domination, the subjection of women are all for the sake of breeding. Supporting the theory of evolution, and describing every species as being engaged in a constant and often brutal struggle for survival, and accepting that men’s being descended from animals, Wells points out the importance of motherhood:
We have to invent a sort of life where men can live and breed, and be sufficiently secure to bring the child up … the tame ones will go like all tame beasts, in a few generations they’ll be big, beautiful, rich blooded, stupid, rubbish! The risk is that we who keep wild will go savage- degenerate into a sort of big, savage rat … and we form a bond … able-bodied, clean-minded men … Able-bodied, clean-minded women, we want also mothers … (The War of the Worlds; 1998: Chapter VII)

Wells proclaims that the main purpose of the business of human life centres about reproduction and describes a childless life as essentially failure and perversion, and he furthers his ideas in Mankind in the Making as such:

Life is seen as essentially a matter of reproduction; first a growth and training to that end, then commonly mating and actual physical reproduction, and finally the consummation of these things in parental nurture and education. Love, home and children, these are the heart-words of life. Life no doubt is a fabric woven of births and the struggle to maintain and develop and multiply lives…motherhood is a great and noble occupation for a good woman for the continuation of the good species for the future of the human kind. (2006: 7-8,158)

In this respect, Wells may be said to have similar concerns with Irigaray and Cixous who regard motherhood as sacred. However, it should also be noted that through beauty, appearance, and dress, and of course, motherhood, women achieve a kind of sexual differentiation and attraction, which recalls the traditional concept of
female sex. Nevertheless, women are enigmatic and mysterious subjects, who are plural, the idea which goes parallel with Kristeva, Irigaray and Cixous’ notion of plurality of female identity, which is never fixed and stable, yet, unstable, changing and developing.

Having studied Wells’ Darwinism, his concept of human kind, and his predictions about the future, it is suitable to refer to his concept of the novel. Wells sets his approach to novel writing in *Tono Bungay*:

> My ideas of a novel all through are comprehensive rather than austere. I’ve found the restraints and rules of the art (as I made them out) impossible for me. I like to write, I am keenly interested in writing, but it is not my technique … do what I will I fail to see how I can be other than a lax, undisciplined story-teller. I must sprawl and flounder, comment and theorize, if I am to get the thing out I have in mind. (1912: 2)

Wells begins to experiment with the conventions of the 19th century realist novel tradition, in which the plot is based on cause-effect relationships including a character, an event, setting, resembling a model in everyday life, and which turns the readers’ attention to everyday reality. Related to his novel writing technique, Wells points out that he writes as he walks because he wants to get somewhere and he writes as straightly as he can, just as he walks as straight as he can. He refuses to play the artist believing that he is a journalist (*Experiment in Autobiography*; 1934: 623). Wells is a journalist in the sense that he writes essays of social criticism, similar to his novel writing. To Wells, as can already be understood from what has been said so far, the novel is a vehicle for the discussion of political, religious, and
social issues and ideas related to human life. Wells’ aim is to give a view of contemporary social and political system in England, with the intention of shocking and hence altering the people to save them from their idleness, egoism, and deficiencies, through the portrayal of the realities of life in which he believes that no change and progress is possible with such blind, sentimental and irrational people. Wells is similar to Lawrence in that he asserts that there is no absolute truth at all- at least for finite beings According to Wells, there is no final destination for a man of complex emotional drives as he believes that all philosophical ideas are complex and tentative, and therefore, there are no set rules and conventions which the novel as a creative and imaginative genre should conform to (Mankind in the Making; 2006: 3).

In addition, Wells’ novels share with modernist works “an emphasis on flux rather than status, discursiveness rather than cohesion. His richness of symbolism, imagery, and metaphor distinguishes him from Bennett” (Hammond, 1988: 23).

On the other hand, Wells’ ideas of women and relationships with them provide the reader with an insight into his general attitude towards women, which is largely shaped by his Darwinist cosmic vision. Wells’ ideas on women, sex, and feminism are put forward in the sixth chapter, entitled as “Women in a Modern Utopia,” in A Modern Utopia (1905). For Wells, who believes that the future of the humankind depends on women’s giving birth to children, intelligent, reasonable, able bodied, clean minded and interested in science, and who will govern the world in the future, marriage, the most complicated of utopian problems, is an important issue to the state in that marriage provides good births, good home conditions, and permanent unions. According to Wells, the economic disadvantage of women is one of the basic factors for women’s inferiority:
Women are to be as free as men. However, women may be free in theory not in practice, as long as they suffer from their economic inferiority, from the inability to produce as much value as a man for the same amount of work. It is a fact that almost every point of which a woman differs from a man is an economic disadvantage to her. Her incapacity for great stresses of exertion, her frequent liability to slight illnesses, her weaker initiative, her inferior invention and resourcefulness, her relative incapacity for organisation and combination, and the possibilities of emotional complications whenever she is, in economic dependence on men. (A Modern Utopia; 1995: 186-187)

In order to compensate for this disadvantage, they choose to marry, which is in fact an act of selling of a woman to a man for a seemingly better future. Wells asserts that “utopia will hold that sound childbearing and rearing is a service done, not to a particular man, but to the whole community, and all its legal arrangements for motherhood will be based on that conception” (A Modern Utopia; 1995: 190). Thus, it is the responsibility of the couples for the general welfare of the state: “the natural centre of the emotional life, the cardinal wills, the supreme and significant expression of individuality should lie in the selection of a partner for procreation” (Wells, A Modern Utopia; 1995: 183).

As a product of a poor and insufficient system, Ann is not able to progress, and she fails. She is the evidence that, with such individuals, neither achievement nor progress for the future of humankind can be expected. Her child is also going to be probably inferior, unfit, fragile and weak like Ann.
On the other hand, Wells’ unsuccessful first marriage affected his views on sexual morality. Wells’ second wife Catherine, had a great impact on his literary achievement and social life through her distinctive literary, logical, and reasonable personality like Bennett’s wife. (Wells, Experiment in Autobiography; 1934: 461). Catherine was his secretary, manager, and housemate: she typed his novels, managed his financial affairs, supervised his household, schooled his discipline and stabilised Wells and shielded him from any kind of threats or irritations. Wells commented about her: “she stuck to me so sturdily that in the end I stuck to myself. I do not know what I should have been without her. She stabilised my life” (Hammond, 1979: 13). Thus, Wells could not disregard positive and creative effects of her in his life, mentioning that “we are social animals, we cannot live alone...we must associate and group” (Mankind in the Making; 2006: 153).

Pointing out that economic equality was not enough for the freedom of women in marriage Wells states that his second marriage was based on mutual freedom. Wells believes that, in his own marriage as well, all people are individuals as long as they are free. For this reason, he makes use of some means to be happy and free in marriage. In this respect, for example, the search for a “Modus Vivendi” is a necessary phase of normal married life today. (Wells, Experiment in Autobiography; 1934: 439). “Modus Vivendi” is a temporary practical arrangement by which people who are opposed to each other or quarrel can continue to live or work together while waiting for their dispute to be settled. However, his choice of pet names for his wife seems to conflict with his idea of female freedom.
Within this frame, Bennett’s relationships with women are juxtaposed against the views of Wells:

Bennett was not so dependent upon women for his comfort and self-respect as most of us are, he was not deeply interested in them from that point of view … Most of the women in his books are sisterly persons … he seemed always to regard them as curious, wilful creatures to be treated with a kind of humorous weariness. There were pleasures in love but they had their place among other pleasures … having a mistress in France, it seemed to him right that … novelist should have a smart, attractive wife, a really well-dressed wife. He never gave the effect of being welded, even temporarily with the woman he was with. They did not seem temporarily with the women. (Experiment in Autobiography; 1934: 631)

In this respect, it is also important to refer to Wells’ idea of the equality of women:

A great deal of nonsense is talked about the natural equality or inferiority of women to men. But it is only the same quality that can be measured by degrees and ranged in ascending and descending series, and the things that are essentially feminine are different qualitatively from and incommensurable with the distinctively masculine things. (A Modern Utopia; 1995: 200-201)

Concerning masculinity and femininity, Wells also mentions “Aristotle’s idea of inferiority of slaves and women and Plato’s women who are to strip for
gymnastics like men, to bear arms and go to war, and follow most of the masculine occupations of their class, to have the same education” (A Modern Utopia; 1995: 200-201).

Free love and sexuality are among the most important concepts that Wells speaks out for as quite essential for the sake of the welfare of the society, although for Wells, free love is a feature of utopia, which does not bring bliss. In Ann Veronica, sex for Ann and Capes seems to be a kind of obsession not an accomplishment. Both Ann and Capes seem to forget all their responsibilities. To Wells, “at one time, love is the happy worship of Venus, the goddess of human loveliness, the graceful mutual compliment of two free bodies and spirits; at another, it is the sacred symbol of an intense and mystical personal association, a merging of identities prepared to live and die for another” (Experiment in Autobiography; 1934: 436-437). Free love is essential for the liberation of the individual’s sexual conduct from social reproach and from legal controls and penalties, although socialism neglects freedom though it was common in the 19th century to assume that sexual desire was a lower emotion, associated with animals, which human beings should evolve away from. He advocates utopian ideals related to social, political, and economic values, and male-female relationships, which are based on his drive for freedom. Wells propounds sexual values in his essays and novels, for example in Ann Veronica which is a modern love story in which the heroine is free to choose her partner and love him.

In this respect, Ann Veronica is such a novel, in which love and sex relationships between men and women constitute the basis of the themes. The key solution in any kind of male-female relationships is that each individual should be
aware of his/her personality. Like Lawrence, Wells attaches importance to achievement of a sexually satisfactory life in order to have a physically and mentally balanced life. Within that frame, Ann Veronica is quite appropriate for the application of feminist literary critical theory. Ann Veronica depicts the growing independence of a young woman and reactions of her parents and society, including the suffragist movement that is a close-up picture of a way of life.

Wells is against conventional stereotyped and rigid system of obligations and restrictions. Wells and Bennett believe that life should be a movement from imperfection towards perfection in every matter (Bennett, 1920: 12). Although Ann, Helen and Ursula’s natures at the conclusion of the novel do not seem to be the same as at the beginning, this change does not seem to be sufficient to constitute an arising from the period of sleep towards a determination to set things right for progress. They begin afresh but there is no revolution at the end. Although marriage is somewhat differently handled in Ann Veronica in which Capes and Veronica go off to Switzerland and experience physical and mental bliss though they are not married, the effect is not revolutionary.

On the other hand, H. G. Wells may be regarded as a spokesperson for women’s rights because of his expressions in most of his fictional and non-fictional works. In one of his novels, The New Machiavelli, Wells declares that “I want this coddling and brow beating of women to cease; I want to see women come in, free and fearless, to a full participation in the collective participation of mankind” (The New Machiavelli; 1911: 411-12).

Although Wells may be considered to be a spokesperson for women’s rights, and equality, he does not seem to present women as sufficiently educated and strong
entities, because of the fact that he himself is quite pessimistic about the future of the human race. They are victims of not only themselves, and society, but also of cosmic forces. In such a society, no women can harness their will power and they are not rational, but naive, sentimental and weak. The system is vain and since the individual is created by the system he/she is vain and inadequate as well. Thus, being aware of this, Wells is dissatisfied with Ann Veronica, even though he appreciates her aspirations. The root of the problem is that, not only Ann but also all the society represent a cultural malaise. Ann herself tries to function as remedy for the degenerated conditions of social life, such as her father’s mindless strictures, the system of education and religion, lacking in meaningful purpose. However, the outcome is that Ann Veronica is not aware of the insufficient nature of her education, which creates such people like Ann, and her father, who are ignorant, sentimental, aggressive, and irrational, the qualities that they have inherited from the system. To Wells, the real problem is sex, which is a bigger handicap to a woman than marriage. Believing that educated women do not tend to marry and play a major role as breeders, they seem to be desexed for Wells. To him, mere education is not sufficient for the freedom of women. Ann Veronica is a perfect medium for displaying this issue. She soon realizes that the education she has received at school does not help her to realize her ambitions. She does not have any chance to survive, since the education system itself is poor and insufficient to provide the people with freedom. Wells points out that “we give freedom, we do not give adequate knowledge, and we punish inexorably. There are a multitude of women, and not a few men with lives hopelessly damaged by this blindfold freedom. So many poor girls do not get a fair chance against the adult world” (Mankind in the Making; 2006: 156). Ann Veronica
is an effective medium displaying Wells’ desire to control women, having them end up as being traditional women in marriage.

In one of his works, H.G.Wells in Love: Postscript to an Experiment in Autobiography, (1866), Wells places women in the psychological role of his “Lover-Shadow,” a term for Wells’ ideal woman. He believes that everything in life is lived through the “Lover Shadow,” which is the fantastic embodiment of his ego’s dream with which Wells tries to realize himself:

This great shadow, so largely feminine, stood over me beside that expansion of myself, my persona ... even while I walked, as I have described, on a Sunday fifty years ago, in my shabby top-hat, with Isabel in Regent’s Park...That phantom dwarfed and dominated us ... (a) dream of inaccessible understanding and reciprocating womanliness. ( Postscript; 1946: 56-57)

Ann Veronica is his “Lover Shadow” who fails at the end of the novel because of the deficiencies in the social, economic and education system. This shadow may correspond with Kristeva’s androgyny concept, as Wells believes that if in relationships andro (male) and gyne (feminine counterpart) can be combined, relationships will be perfect and androgynous. However, most of his yearnings have been unfulfilled in his relationships, especially with his mother, as is the case with Lawrence. He always feels that his mother does not like him: “my mother did not like me because I grew liker my father everyday” (Wells, Tono Bungay; 1912: 6). Therefore, he projects these yearnings onto one woman after another with his secret shadow self.

In terms of female and male relationships, Wells, rebelling against all the
authoritarian constructs that deny the freedom of both sexes, is also against marital restraints including jealousy, and the domination of one partner by the other which is not based on reason and logic but sentimentality. He feels a strong and passionate love, a deep biological urge for women. To him, “woman is to provide erotic solace and recreation of a childish kind, and she can also be of use as a dedicated dogsbody to a busy man.” The first of these views is conveyed in a letter to his wife: “I want a healthy woman handy to steady my nerves and leave my mind free for real things” and he talks about “some sort of a body slave. “ I want a breast and a kind body” (Kemp, 1996: 92).

In addition, the whole length of Wells’ life and art testifies to his ambivalence to irrational states of passion as can be understood from his letters, and private life. In most of his novels, there is a bloody fight going on between head and heart, which reflects the tensions within his own personality. A woman, as an occasion for uncontrollable desire is also a conflict, therefore, an occasion for uncontrollable fear. Ann Veronica is portrayed as a woman who is in conflict with her head and heart. Although Ann seems to have chosen her head in the first part of the novel, she finally chooses her heart and sentimentality, which is in fact what Wells is against.

On the other hand, what makes Wells valuable for a feminist reading is that his tension within his own personality is common to many males who are in conflict with females either as the objects of fear or desire, or both. A woman is a kind of enigma and mystery that leads men to unsafe, unsettled, undone notions. It is not a personal issue but a social one. However, “female sexuality here is male sexuality, the male position and problem; woman as my other, she is the defining limit – the jouissance au dela, as Lacanians put it – of my horizon as man” (Jardine and Smith,
Ann Veronica, which carries the sub-title “A Modern Love Story,” is a means for Wells to argue against his male contemporaries’ sexist attitudes that women are the passive and subordinate gender, having no opportunity in men’s world that denies their talents and discourages them from asserting their identities. However, in the second part of the novel, Wells shares his male contemporaries’, Bennett and Lawrence’s sexist attitudes. As a champion of sexual freedom, he reflects his arguments about women, marriage and sex through the heroine Ann Veronica, who is bright, self-assertive, intelligent, determined in the first part of the novel. All of these qualities enable her to challenge the stereotypical representations that confine her role to that of a daughter and, later on, a wife. Yet the book’s date refers to the time which reaches to its peak when the arguments related to the woman question and suffragette movements reached their highest point. In such a period, as a rebel himself, Wells created the heroine Ann Veronica out of both personal and social necessity to break away from the limits of home, and masculine parental authority, and of course, the blind and irrational pressures of the male dominated society on women in the period of uncertainties and instabilities related to debates about the role and nature of the women. Ann Veronica is a kind of propaganda novel, which depicts the relations between men and women and social attitudes towards women, and the “New Woman” concept, which still may have a profound interest and relevance to today’s readers.

Ann Veronica is a portrayal of its title character, Ann Veronica, a young woman of twenty-one defying her father, who prevents her from going in Turkish trousers to a fancy-dress ball and attending biological courses. She leaves her house
and lives in lodgings in search of self-reliance and embarks on number of intellectual quests. Yet, through her lack of experience, economic independence and ignorance, her experiences in London lodgings are not pleasant and she finds herself at the mercy of a hypocritical and middle-aged broker, Mr. Ramage, who puts her under monetary obligation and tries to seduce her. She joins the Suffragette Movement and she is arrested. Finally, she breaks her engagement offering herself of her own choice to her unhappily married biology instructor Capes. The father and Ann Veronica are united four years after the liaison. The novel ends in a fairy tale manner in which Ann Veronica is pregnant and the couple live in a state of happiness.

Through the female protagonist Ann Veronica Stanley’s remarks and actions, the author puts forward his arguments about women, male and female relationships, power relations between the sexes, marriage, love, sexuality and its expression or repression, reproduction, and women’s movements. Her dialogues with her father, who is the representative of the society, show her rebellious and determined personality from the very beginning. She is eager to change her current situation and do whatever she wants to do:

She was wildly discontented and eager for freedom and life. She wanted to live. She was vehemently impatient. She did not clearly know for what- to do, to be, to experience. And experience was slow in coming. All the world about her seemed to be-how can one put it. (5)

This also portrays the father-daughter relationship in which the former is considered to be the law, while the latter is expected to obey that Law. Ann is “quite resolved to have things out with her father … this time she made it … she made up her mind” (3).
Although Ann is eager to join some friends on a weekend trip to London, which will also include a dress ball in a hotel, she is still in residence in a London suburb under the authority of her father. She feels she has to prevent her father from meddling with her affairs on her way to freedom: “It is either now or never,” she says to herself and repeats this again and again (4). If it is to be explained in Kristevan terms, she is speaking in her Semiotic mode, therefore she realizes herself and her feelings freely. Being quite sure of herself, and her ability to make a stand, she will not give up. She uses her discourse as a medium to reflect her female power. She tries to prove her difference in order to subvert the binary oppositions that underlie patriarchal ideology. She likens her coming experience to “wrappers in which the blinds were all drawn” (5). She is not sure what kind of experience she is going to have, whether she is going to be able to open the blinds, windows and doors, and if they are going to bring promise to her life. She rejects “wrappered” life and her old fashioned, unreasonably strict father. From the very beginning of the novel, in Wells’ terms, she tries to act as an “Open Conspirator,” who comments on the important issues of the day, men and women and their power relationships, sexuality, marriage and reproduction; and the one who is thinking of creative revolution, aware of her power, who tries to educate herself and broaden her outlook, who joins the woman’s movement, rejecting limited, traditional, careless, and stereotyped women (Wells, Experiment in Autobiography; 1934: 742-746). However, she fails to be an Open Conspirator, and ends up being a traditional domestic woman. Thus, she has proven that she is not the woman Wells depicts in his A Modern Utopia. Although she begins as a rebellious, forthright, and independent woman in the first part of the novel, in the second and the final part of the novel she is very content with her
domestic and dependent life. Yet, Ann is quite different from Nettie, portrayed in In the Days of the Comet, who is able to change and awaken from her sleep to a more reasonable, hopeful and determined future. She is, however, similar to Leadford’s mother who “had been cowed into submission, as so many women of that time” (Wells, 1966: 32).

Through Ann, a common issue of women is portrayed: she wants to enter the world, open the doors; she wants to be in what is called the public sphere equal to men, in the circle, and not being marginal, outside the circle. She wants to have her private world and voice, in Cixous’ words “Voice of the Mother” as opposed to the “Law of the Father.” Her mind and body try to be free from those uncertainties. Her future experiences are veiled in her mind. She feels she learned the world explicitly and knew what to do and what not to do in her school, but it is not all in real life. Wells points out the insufficient nature of education, especially for girls. Like Lawrence. Ann Veronica is aware of the fact that there are some other values in life, which are “love, getting married with certain attractive and amusing subsidiary developments, such as flirtation and being interested in people of the opposite sex” (6). Being aware of her body and her spiritual qualities, she uses the language coming from her female body: she is eager to go to the dance, opera, to study Biology: she becomes aware of her passion for Mr. Capes. As an intelligent girl, she begins to question those issues that are considered folly for girls as “Ann Veronica found it a difficult matter not to think of these things” (6).

Nevertheless, Ann Veronica decides to eschew these “undesirable topics and keep her mind away from them just as far as she could” (6). She wants to break away from the constraints of her own limited and functionless existence “varied by calls,
To Veronica, studying will solve everything and her limited life will be better, as she will reach perfection through her education in the public sphere. However, the poor and insufficient education system itself seems to create difficulties in reproduction and childbearing. If she goes to a university, she will less likely to marry, since education seems to desex women. She will also neglect her reproductive system. This issue is a vicious circle as it is certain that education will make Ann a better wife and mother, for only healthy and educated people can be good parents. On the other hand, in most of his fictional and non-fictional works, Wells wishes for a worldwide organization of dedicated “Intellectual Elite” to change the world. Ann Veronica here tries to act as a Female Elite who seems to be able to change the world. Wells believes that only educated people will be able to establish rational relationships. However, she does not succeed in changing the world. On the other hand, Ann’s father, the product of such a poor and insufficient education system, and who is the symbol of Western patriarchal society that denies women’s education and perfection, does not allow her to study and “he wants her to live at home” (6). Ann lives in the culture symbolized mainly by her father that takes a profoundly polarized, patriarchal view of gender and personality. In this culture, women should be the passive slaves, while men, the aggressive masters. Ann tries hard to subvert this notion of separate spheres.

In spite of the rows, and obstacles, Ann continues studying at school, reads the books voraciously prohibited by her aunt, she passes science exams, and majors in science, which Wells considers to be the only salvation for human kind. Thus, “she happened to have an acute sense of form and unusual mental lucidity and she found in biology and particularly in comparative anatomy interest” (7), since biology
refers to her awareness of her material existence. Although her father disapproves of her plan to further her studies of science, she wants to enter the Central Imperial College at Westminster, to study Biology, which represents the centre of the quest for knowledge and scientific education. Her desire to study Biology also corresponds with Wells’ notion of biological necessity that demands sexual expression to foster the species to create intellectual, rational, and creative beings: “the biological cause with its insistence upon heredity and physiological facts would also give the very best and gravest preparation in the world for the practical concerns of motherhood”. (Wells, Mankind in the Making; 2006: 173). Ann’s experience of both the sexual expression and pregnancy reflects Ann’s experimental spirit as well.

However, the education system and the members of that system are not up to the expected standards for Ann to enable her to realize her ambitions. Her becoming friends with the Widgetts family, who “went on from the high school to the Fadden Art School and a bright, eventful life of art student dances, socialist meetings, theatre, galleries, talking about work, drew Ann from her sound persistent industry into the circle of these experiences” enabled her to be familiar with some experiences that she has never had before (7). These girls’ asking Ann to join the Fadden dance, and her father’s refusal is the most important scene that helps Ann to challenge the values of patriarchal society. Nevertheless, Ann Veronica is quite resolved to have it out with her father, Peter Stanley, who is a “lean, trustworthy, worried-looking, neuralgic, clean-shaven man of fifty three with a hard mouth, a sharp nose” (8). She is a new woman seeking both political and personal power through her intellectual development and personal emancipation in her Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense. She functions as a figure alienated from Victorian traditional values, and suggests a
positive change. In this respect, Ann Veronica represents the climate of the day along
with the attitudes of the author.

Wells’ image of dance in the novel is quite significant in that it may help Ann
to liberate herself from the confines of socially constructed forces. Being aware of
her body, her fantasy or dream of dancing and having fun, and her desire to go to
that dance will make her fly which corresponds with Cixous’ notion that it is a
woman’s gesture. She seems to be in the Semiotic Order in Kristevan terms: her
fancy clothes, excitement and joy, which have become her body language, enable her
to subvert the patriarchal Symbolic Order:

The girl was flushed with excitement, bright-eyed, and braced for
a struggle; her aunt had never seen her looking so fine or so
pretty. Her fancy dress, save for the green-grey stockings, the
pseudo-Turkish slippers, and baggy silk trousered ends natural to
a corsair’s bride, was hidden in a large black-silk-hooded opera
cloak. Beneath the hood it was evident that her rebellious hair
was bound up with red silk, and fastened by some device in her
ears were long brass filigree ear-rings. (61-62)

Ann’s relationship with her father is not very different from the one between
Ursula/Gudrun’s and Gerald’s father in that it is not based on sincerity and
understanding. Ann has no parent except for her father, and her aunt; but none of
them have much in common to share and to talk about with each other. As a
traditional woman, repressed and oppressed by the patriarchal Symbolic Order, her
aunt solely carries out the tasks ordered by her brother. She does not have a word of
her own under his masculine control. As a member of patriarchal Symbolic Order,
her father’s ideas regarding his girls are quite limited: “they were creatures … too pure and good for life… women are made like the potter’s vessels either for worship or contumely, and are withal fragile vessels. He had never wanted daughters. He had planned brilliant careers for his two sons” (10). He wants the daughters to be in their mother’s care. As a symbol of masculine authority, he believes that his daughters belong to him as his “absolute property” (11). He assumes a kind of ownership that “seemed only a reasonable return for the cares and experiences of a daughter’s upbringing”(11). He feels that he is the only and sole authority, even in his daughters’ choice of partners. One of his daughters got married to a man he approved of, but the other girl’s marriage to the man he had not consented to, damages his authority in the patriarchal Symbolic Order. Her father describes the house as a shelter for his girls and wants Ann to submit to his authority, staying at his house, and being free from womanly and improper activities such as scientific ambitions, dances, and meetings. However, Ann Veronica is “discontented with her beautiful, safe, and sheltering home, going about with friends to socialist meetings and art class dances, and displaying a disposition to carry her scientific ambitions to unwomanly lengths” (11), and finds it a trap and an obstacle for her freedom, with her father, limiting her freedom as in the scene in which Mr Stanley points out that he will forbid her to go to the ball, which he considers as an exploit, saying “you have begun to get hold of some very queer ideas about what a young lady in your position may or may not venture to do” (12). In this scene, females and males have different perceptions of life, but this perception, in Cixous’ terms takes the form of assuming “power over” Ann Veronica by her father. He goes on to say that, this behaviour does not suit her and this will bring regret. He justifies his rejection with the idea of
However, Ruskin’s idea of separate spheres is quite clearly illustrated through this Victorian father assuming the patriarchal authority over his daughter. Ann Veronica is described as ignorant, naive, aggressive, sentimental, imaginary, emotional, and domestic who is discontented with her father’s limited point of view: she yearns to go beyond the current situation, and a better and promising life, which is not confined by the institution of marriage and obedience to a husband, a substitute for her father. As an individual in Edwardian society, she is against conforming to the rules of the society. From the very beginning, she is split between her inner and outer life, Ideal Ego (how Ann defines herself) and Ego Ideal (how Ann is described by the others) in Lacanian terms. In other words, she is split between the demands of her psyche and the demands of the society. Thus, she is the other in the society she lives in. There is a dichotomy between masculine and feminine values in the patriarchal society in which Ann lives in Cixous and Kristevan sense, which they are strongly against. These stereotypes of women are clearly seen through the eyes of her father, who assumes to have reason and rationality as opposed to the emotion and irrationality of his daughter. Within that frame, he does not correspond with Kristeva’s notion that men and women are alike, whilst corresponding with Irigaray’s essentialist notion that women are superior to men. For instance, one of the things her father neglects is that Ann Veronica too has her “sharp nose” (13). Mr. Stanley’s sole target is to marry off his daughter comfortably and happily, because he is the embodiment of patriarchal values. He wants his daughter to submit to the concept of Victorian womanhood, having virtues of duty and kindness towards her husband. Thus, Mr. Stanley wants Ann to transfer her bondage to another man, from
the father to the husband. However, Ann is ready to defy her father first in the dance issue, then for her own freedom at the cost of everything, feeling she has the power to do that. She does not want to be disgraced among her friends. Ann’s going to the station to go to London demonstrates her determination. On the other hand, Mr Stanley is also determined not to let Ann go and he even “flapped The Times at her with an imperious gesture” (15). In this scene, Ann’s “self-possessed” answers and her “extraordinary and confident” discussions with Mr. Ramage, who finds Ann “unusually clever,” also make her father surprised (17-18). She proves that she is able to argue any point, and she is aware of her feminine instincts. His daughter’s air of a grown-up woman makes Mr. Stanley, who classifies the feminine as “girls and women,” confused (17).

For Mr. Stanley, Ann’s wish to go to that dance is absurd as well a preposterous idea. He says: “it isn’t a suitable place; it isn’t a suitable gathering, out of order, it isn’t right, it isn’t correct; it is impossible for you to stay in a hotel in London – the idea is preposterous” (21). However, Ann is obstinate and tries to understand why it is impossible and she wants to prove that she can stand on her own feet, saying that “am I to be trusted to take care of myself or am I not?” (22). The answer “as long as you remain under my roof” clearly shows her father’s Victorian patriarchal views (22). Although Ann does not find this fair, her father mentions her lack of experience and knowledge related to life and its perils. Her attitude is a kind of subversive assertion of women’s perspectives under the shadow of men’s seemingly superior rationality. However, Ann wants to step out of her limited situation to gain new experiences. “I want to go to that because it is a new experience, because I think it will be interesting and give me a view of things. You say I know
nothing. That is probably true. But how am I to know of things?” (22). Yearning to
go beyond her narrow and limited horizons, she wants to learn as much as she can.
She wants to be an individual, “she does not want to be protected as something too
precious. For life, cooped up in one narrow little corner” (22).

Ann tries hard to be an Open Conspirator, considering herself to be a grown-
up woman. She wishes her ideas and personality to be respected and taken seriously
by her father, representing the male authority, and who wants to assume power over
Ann, ordering her to live in his house, following his rules and orders and doing
whatever he wants her to do in the house. Although Ann wants to improve herself by
going to science and biology classes, he tries to diminish her role to a mere domestic
girl at home, because the only thing she can do at home is dealing with the household
chores and waiting for a man to marry her. She rebels against the Law of her Father;
she wants the real image of herself, not the fake image that is imposed on herself by
others, especially by her father, whom she does not recognize as the powerful leader
of her physical and spiritual motives by means of his use of power over Ann. She
does not want to accept the loss and limitations in the patriarchal Symbolic Order in
Kristevan terms. She does not want to be castrated again. Although she is not
completely in the Semiotic Order, she tries to enter this order completely rejecting
the “Other,” her father. However, she seems to be in the patriarchal Symbolic Order
because of her father’s authority. She tries to disrupt the paternal cultural codes to
enter the Kristevan Semiotic Order, which is the opposite of the patriarchal Symbolic
Order. She wants to achieve her private voice in Cixous’ terms, the Voice of the
Mother. In Irigaray, Cixous and Kristeva’s terms, she is trying to form her female
subjectivity free of patriarchal Symbolic Order which represses and oppresses her.
However, her father is not ready to let his daughter enter the Semiotic Order which means refusal to obey the Law of the Father in the Symbolic Order. One of the other power relations between the father and the girl is observed in the scene when her cries satisfy Mr. Stanley: he feels powerful, thinking that he has defeated Ann. However, Ann will not give up. She wants to live and exist through her choices. Mr. Stanley, as an authority over Ann, will not give up either, he does not want to yield to his daughter’s “unreasonable” wish (24).

Ann Veronica’s wearing in her “pseudo Turkish slippers” to go to that ball, believing it to be her “duty” is one of the scenes in which power relations are observed (60-61). Mr. Stanley thinks that this is a “rebellion and obedience to him that is surely the first law. What can she put before that?” (61). However, she is determined to go but although her aunt and father have tried everything to dissuade her: she is locked in the room, “she had made her first fight for dignity and freedom as a grown-up and independent person, and this was how the universe had treated her” (65).

However, being determined to assert her subjectivity and autonomy at once, she defies her father; she does fly to London and does not care what will happen, her flight suggests her freedom in Cixous’ terms. She is resolved to face what is necessary although she does not know what to do, where to go, which hotel to go to as “she made plans, estimated means, and resources” (66). She is sure that she is going to find a job and earn money because of her intelligence and strength. In this respect, Ann seems to belong to one of the classes “The Poietic” that Wells describes in his _A Modern Utopia_. (1995: 266). She is a poietic: she possesses powers of imaginations that range beyond the known and accepted, and that involve the desire
for knowledge and recognition. Her London lodgings are not pleasant or hope promising. They symbolize the existence of materialistic and polluted urban life, which is dirty, crowded, and noisy. This dirty and crowded environment is the symbol of Ann’s lost innocence and happiness in existence. It is an alienating, materialist and polluted city life which Ann and her companions are part of. She finds herself followed in the city streets by a man, which reminds her of “supreme, ugly fact of a pursuit – the pursuit of the undesired and persistent male” (74). She is quite inexperienced; she had not learned those sides of life in the school. She lost her nerve, and there was no more freedom in London for her that night, “she was afraid people would follow her, she was afraid of the dark, open doorways she passed, and afraid of the blazes of light; she was afraid to be alone, and she knew not what it was she feared” (75).

In ugly, frightening, alienating, dirty, crowded, noisy, and materialistic London lodgings, Ann tries to act as a “Female Samurai,” a volunteer, who tries to challenge and control the world, leading a hard life, away from the excitements and temptations of everyday life. Through self-criticism, and self-examination, she tries to harden her spirits. Yet, all her struggles become futile for she submits in her marriage as Wells termed in his A Modern Utopia (1995: 258-317). Apart from her submission in her marriage, she lacks the qualities of a “Female Samurai”: she does not have sufficient education, intellect, wealth or experience. She is not able to control her fate. She is not able to have a profession either. She is eager to sing and dance although it is forbidden to a samurai, who is created by Wells to destroy the Semiotic of women; however, she is not able to control her passion, love, and sentimentality. Her rejecting Mr. Manning’s marriage proposal, and not returning
home show that she rejects all the limitations and rules of the Symbolic Order, including marriage, and home which deny her freedom in Lacanian and Kristeovan sense, stating that: “I want you to think of me just as if I was a man, and quite outside marriage altogether ... I want to be a person by myself ... so I am already no longer the girl you knew ... am a young person seeking employment and freedom and self-development” (77). However, she is not really outside the Symbolic Order: as she looks for a job, an apartment, wants to take steps like a man. To her, marriage seems to be a social castration in the patriarchal Symbolic Order. Because she lacks education, she does not have any other choice other than marriage. If she accepts her social castration and the law of her husband, she will never be able to be a Revolutionary, an Open Conspirator, an Intellectual Elite, and a Female Samurai in Wells’ terms.

In her search for apartments, she has another shock in that the property owners refuse and dismiss her for they “don’t let to ladies” (78). Her efforts to be independent and a person by herself do not seem to be bearing fruit easily. Her finding an apartment is the first step on the way to freedom. Her first guest is her aunt who brings Mr. Stanley’s orders. Ann’s reply comes quickly: “I don’t care what anyone thinks” (83). Moreover, her aunt describes Ann’s rebellious behaviour as “madness” (84). Even Ann’s aunt is sure that if Ann is completely out of the Symbolic Order, this will be a death drive, madness and nonsense in Kristeovan terms, as Kristeva states that “rejecting the Symbolic Order … is a death drive, it also leads to non-sense or madness” (Morris, 1993: 146). This idea recalls Foucault’s concept of madness as well: Foucault defines madness as the realm that constitutes the limits of Western culture in his preface to *Madness and Civilization* (Foucault, 1967: xiii).
Similarly, it is significant to define the norm of reason on which Western culture is founded. Masculinity underlies the norm of reason, therefore because of the construction of gender, madness and femininity seem to be related to each other. Madness is a means by which a female can protect herself from the limits of patriarchy, and to recover from imprisonment. It is a kind of rejection of stereotyped identity and it implies subversion of masculine authority, reason, discourse, culture and mind. Madness then becomes an expression of female consciousness. Gilbert and Gubar suggest that “the madwoman is a mirror image of woman-independent character who seeks to destroy all the patriarchal structures and can subvert patriarchy in fictional form” (1984:77-78). It is one way of expression of power against patriarchal authority. Although Ann seems to be logical and reasonable, she seems to go mad because of her obsessive passion for Capes. She enters the Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense, when she is composing poems: “A man can kick, his skirts don’t tear/A man scores always everywhere/His dress for no man lays a snare” (175), and she seems to be lost in her obsession with Capes. As she is not able to be multiple, forming an interaction between her semiotic and symbolic modes, her motives in Kristevan sense seem to be a death drive and insanity because she is totally under the control of her semiotic drives. Nevertheless, her rejection of male authority, her trying to be a person by herself through protecting herself from the limits of patriarchal authority and her refusal of stereotyped identities become a kind of madness through which she expresses her female body and mind in the Semiotic mode in Kristevan sense: “… the world of romance, the world of passionately beautiful things … hot blooded marriage or not” (45). She is trapped in her female body, and she feels herself constantly under the threat of male power politics. The
protagonist Ann enacts the dichotomy of being a woman. In this respect, similar to Kristava’s notion of madness, Elaine Showalter states that

Women were more vulnerable to insanity than men ... The instability of their reproductive systems interfered with their sexual, emotional, and irrational control ... theories of female insanity were specifically and confidently linked to the biological crises of the female life-cycle- puberty, pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause- during which the mind would be weakened and the symptoms of insanity might emerge. (1977: 55-56)

Ann seems to show the symptoms of insanity in her puberty, even before she gets pregnant, thus her female body seems to be intrinsically pathological, like her socially unfit brain as a result of the pressure of the patriarchal Symbolic Order.

However, Ann Veronica is determined not to come home, no sort of insults or contempt will dissuade her from the resolution to live her own life. Her father’s sole objective is Ann’s obedience but Ann’s is rebellion: “I won’t come home, I’d rather starve” (85). He cannot understand Ann’s motives and cannot help her to solve her problems. Thus, the father and the daughter are in binary opposition to each other.

Mr. Stanley tries to use his “power over” Ann in vain. She has already decided on her own line, the first thing necessary for her is to be able to go on with defiance of masculine authority: she defies her father and her brother who tries to remind her of Gwen and Alice’s poor and unpromising unimaginative lifestyles because they are totally under the control of the rules of the patriarchal Symbolic Order. To him, a girl must be at home to be away from the perils of the outside world: “a home may be a sort of cage, but still it’s a home … What you are after is too risky” (89). Her brother
mentions that the world is too hard for even a male, it is harder for a lonely girl and this is the rule and order of the world and nobody can change it, advising Ann to find a man to live on and be protected by as the only thing she can do. He finally advises her to go home since he thinks that her idea of freedom will not work. She will not succeed because she is neither an Open Conspirator, nor a Female Samurai, or an Intellectual Elite, since “the world isn’t ready for girls to start out on their own yet; … Babies and females have got to keep hold of somebody or go under –anyhow, for the next few generations. You go home and wait a century, and then try again. Then you may have a bit of chance” (90).

Marriage proposals which Ann received reveal the ideas of men and women in the patriarchal Symbolic Order, regulated according to binary oppositions, in which women are given the negative position. One of the minor male characters, Teddy offers Ann Veronica a formal marriage to enable her to escape from parental authority: “you want freedom … In Russia, just a formal marriage. Mere formality liberates the girl from parental control…You marry me … No further responsibility…” (30). This is a kind of a vicious circle which does not have a proper ending or solution. For Ann, marriage will make her transfer her submission from her father to her husband. What Teddy offers is a kind of fake solution to the problem that Ann Veronica does not see any point in kindly rejecting him. In addition, Teddy says that he will be available at any time and place if Ann alters her ideas, describing her as a dependent girl on patriarchal authority of father or husband.

Another male character, Mr. Manning, who is fond of beauty and beautiful objects, is mainly supportive of the Victorian idea of innocent, angelic, and beautiful women. His patriarchal power operates by attaching women to certain paradigms of
feminine identity. Mr. Manning also offers protection and shelter, assuming the role of the authoritarian husband who will shut Ann in a cage for the sake of protecting her from the perils of the outside life. He also assumes the position of the owner of Ann. In his letter, he says:

I wanted as I have never wanted before, to take you up, to make you mine, to carry you off and set you apart from all the strain and turmoil of life, for nothing will ever convince me that it is not the man’s share in life to shield, to protect, to lead and toil and watch and settle with the world at large. I want to be your knight, your servant, your protector … your husband … I can offer you a life of wide and generous refinement, travel, books, discussion, and easy relations with a circle of clever, and brilliant and thoughtful people. (40-41)

Having limited stereotypical ideas about women, Mr Manning on learning that Ann Veronica finds politics interesting says: “I’m curious. Perhaps because I don’t know. I suppose an intelligent person ought to be interested in political affairs. They concern us all” (36). He is surprised, as she is eager to be interested in politics, which is a masculine preoccupation to be in the public sphere equal with the men. Her interest in politics is also in conformity with Kristeva’s androgyny concept in that Ann has both andro (male) and gyne (female) tendencies in her nature. She does not have any confines of socially accepted gender roles. However, Mr. Manning says, “I don’t think they are to you … I don’t think women need to trouble about political questions” (36). As an old-fashioned man, he wants to keep Ann Veronica away from political matters. He prefers to talk to Ann about flowers; beauty and all the
trivial things that he believes are interesting and suitable for a woman. However, Ann Veronica is not the type of a woman he believes her to be. In his mind, he represents the masculine, and Ann, the feminine; thus, he regards Ann as “the Other.” Ann represents “the Other” who challenges the accepted patterns of the patriarchal society and who shows subversion and transgression against the authority.

Nevertheless, as a supporter of women’s issues, and trying to act as an Open Conspirator, Ann Veronica declares, “I want a vote” (36). Mr. Manning is shocked by her idea and he pours out his Victorian attitude to women:

> It jars. It jars with all my ideas. Women to me are something too serene, so fine, so feminine, and politics are so dusty, so sordid, so wearisome, and quarrelsome. It seems to me a woman’s duty to be beautiful, to be beautiful, and to behave beautifully, and politics are by their nature ugly. You see I – I am a woman worshipper. (36)

Ann becomes furious and does not understand why women are all responsible for beauty. As a socialist, Mr. Manning points out that: “It rests with them by the nature of things” (36). According to Mr. Manning, it is men’s duty to work for the women and keep them in their sheltered houses. Thus, Mr. Manning is not very different from Mr. Stanley. However, he avoids “power over” Ann in Cixous’ terms. According to him, “women do have far more power than they think, as influences as inspirations” (37). In order to stand on her own feet, being impatient for experience and adventure, Ann must work and therefore, she wants to leave her home, which is the symbol of domestic pressure. Mr. Manning, who sees a woman in her, becomes a kind of mirror which is also the signifier of the split self and alienation: the mirror
falsely captures people in a distorted image. She reflects her ideas and wishes through the mirror of Mr. Manning. The Mirror image blurs the subjectivity and objectivity in itself. “She became eager to explain herself to show herself … He was manifesting, exerting his mind for her, and she found herself fully disposed to justify his interest … She perhaps displayed herself rather consciously … she even touched … on her father’s unreasonableness” (58).

Mr. Manning is an example of the male who hinders the progress of women. He also shares Ann's and her brother’s views, saying to Ann: “you are like some splendid princess in exile in these dreadful dingy apartments” (91). He is also stereotyping Ann Veronica as all these male figures who describe Ann as too fragile and weak to go on her life alone. However, Ann Veronica is sure that she will overcome all the difficulties through her determination and courage. Therefore, her Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal are in conflict with each other. Ann is against being stereotyped as “angelic things, queens, and goddesses” (92). She adds “you men have, I know, meant to make up queens and goddesses, but in practice men look, for example, at the stream of girls one meets going to work of a morning, round-shouldered, cheap and underfed! They aren’t queens, and no one is treating them as queens” (92). As a male character, Mr. Manning, who avoids power, being well aware of the social order that prevents a girl from what she desires in her social and personal life says:

Think of the ordinary wives and mothers, with their anxiety, and their limitations, their swarms of children … our social order is dreadful enough … and sacrifices all that is best and beautiful in life. I don’t defend it but as a part of the social order that does
not believe in the possibility of women’s progress, asks Ann Veronica how she can help it by coming down into the battle and the mire. (92)

However, Ann, who is quite wise and witty, asserts, “I’m not trying to help it .... I’m only arguing against your position of what a woman should be” (92). Mr. Manning, in London, which is “dingy, foggy, wild, dirty and painful finds Ann too valiant in such poor, bad and ugly social conditions” to come to take her chance to work and earn her living (92-93). Mr. Manning adds that he loves and admires courage, describing Ann’s courage as a “great ugly, endless wilderness of selfish, sweating, vulgar competition” (93). And Mr. Manning’s real intention regarding the female is understood when he points out what he actually wants to do is to keep Ann out of such a battle and shut her “in a sort of beautiful garden close- wearing lovely dresses and picking beautiful flowers” (93). In other words, Mr. Manning denies all Ann’s personal qualities, and he just wants to reduce her to that of being only a fragile queen under the roof of a secure shelter, a home complete with protective parental authority with her father and himself as guardians which Ann finds quite insecure and futile. However, Ann insists on living in the Semiotic Order in Kristevan terms, in which she is able to achieve her ideals, desires, and dreams, free from any kind of masculine authority in the form of father, husband, or brother representing phallic authority. She refuses penis envy and tries to reject the “Other,” father or any male who tries to hinder her progress. She tries to exclude or negate them in order to exist. However, she is not able to exist because she is mentally unfit for such a dirty and ugly society, as it is composed of people having limited and unsystematic ideas.

Ann cannot solve the problem in gender hierarchies by sustaining her position
as a self-possessed and self-confident girl, perpetuating the Maternal Chora or Semiotic Order in Kristevan terms and reversed gender roles, substituting her story in place of history. She challenges masculine authority twice, first thinking of wearing a masculine suit, trousers, in particular, and insisting on going to the dance, which her father fiercely opposes. She feels that her mind is not “ordered and logical which will be able to decide upon the general relations of men to women, the objects and conditions of marriage and its bearing upon the welfare of the race, the purpose of the race …” (44). According to Ann, being possessed by a man is the natural outcome of marriage. This is what Mr. Manning proposes. Being sure of her sexuality, her body, and blood, she feels that through marriage not only her mind but also her blood and body will be her husband’s property. Ann Veronica considers marriage to be another world of kisses, touching, romance, and passion that she feels herself comfortable and free to think of. She is aware of her passion, which many people around her are hostile to. This shows that Ann is in conformity with Kristevan Semiotic mode: “she was aware of it now as if it were a voice shouting outside a house, shouting passionate verities in a hot sunlight, a voice that cries while people talk insincerely in a darkened room and pretend not to hear” (45). Being aware of her body, sexuality in Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray’s words, Ann thinks about Mr. Manning’s physical appearance to decide if he attracts her sexually or not. Although she describes Mr. Manning as a “tall, dark and handsome and kind and thirty five and adequately prosperous, and all that a husband should be” (45), nothing about him warms her. What she wants through marriage is quite contrary to the traditional Victorian ideal husband who is going to protect the wife from the dangers of outside in his sheltering house with his economic advantage. Ann realizes that Mr. Manning
will never love her as she is but only as his imagination conceives her. She loves Capes passionately, interestingly enough, she believes that she has to be secure through marriage as “Mr. Manning seemed more and more clearly indicated as a refuge as a security” (193). Mr. Manning is determined to make Ann his “Grail” (199). He believes “that there is something mystical and wonderful about all women” (199). He feels that “he shall do great things, splendid verse, mighty lines with Ann Veronica” (199). He says:

I want to be your city of refuge from every sort of bother. I want to stand between you and all the force and vileness of the world.
I want to make you feel that there is a place where the crowd does not clamour, nor ill winds blow… I want my life to be beaten gold just in order to make it a fitting setting for yours.
There you’ll be, in an inner temple. I want to fill it with fine and precious things … (201)

However, Ann Veronica says, “she does not love him and she has nothing that can be passion for him” (201). She proves that love and passion are of utmost importance to her, speaking out of her semiotic mode. Ann Veronica realizes that Mr. Manning acts as a “devoted lover, waiting only his choice to win her from a hopeless and consuming passion, and she tells him that he should not idealize her. She adds, “men ought not to idealize any woman. We aren’t worth it. We’ve done nothing to deserve it. And it hampers us” (208).

Ann Veronica is portrayed as a quite liberated girl who is not considering the sheltering advantage of having a husband. She looks for a “hot-blooded marriage or not” (45). Therefore, her marriage will not probably be a social contract in the
patriarchal Symbolic Order.

Sexual happiness is important for Ann Veronica as it is a step and awakening for her freedom in terms of feminist criticism. She feels that she does not love him, frankly expressing her desire and passion. She is the one who initiates the sexual relation. She refuses traditional heterosexual relationship, lacking love, desire, and passion, and embodying domination of the powerful male and his ideas about what a woman should and can be. In this respect, she is similar to the free woman, who has sexual freedom, as depicted in A Modern Utopia. Yet, she cannot solve her dilemmas because of her lack of education, experience, and economic independence. Nevertheless, no matter how assertive and struggling a female is, she feels that “marriage and mothering” are important parts of life (45). Through this statement, she proves that she is both in the Semiotic and the Symbolic modes in Kristevan sense. In this respect, in Cixous, Irigaray and Kristeva’s terms women’s bodies and sexuality are put in the text to go beyond the current male discourse. Ann is conscious of her body and bodily desires. Her language also comes from her body as Cixous states in her work “Laugh of the Medusa.” Feminist consciousness is in fact the consciousness of the body and its functions: “Capes came back into her mind. He haunted a state between hectic dreaming and mild delirium…all through the night an entirely impossible and monumental Capes confronted her” (175).

However, showing that she tries to be an Intellectual Elite, her desire to go to the Fadden ball is more important than everything in her life: “she meant to go, she meant to go, she meant to go. Nothing would stop her, and she was prepared to face the consequences. Suppose her father turned her out of doors! She did not care, she meant to go! She would just walk out of the house and go…” (45). She is ready to
risk everything for her desire to go to that dance. Her subjectivity is never fixed but she is plural and fluid, she is an active subject in Kristevan sense. The typically masculine mode of her father’s relating to the world by asserting his position as active subject acting upon Ann, the passive object by assuring himself of the value of such subjecthood by exploiting the principles of logic and reason is not acceptable for Ann Veronica. She wants that powerful subject position which is traditionally assigned to men. Even her choice of trousers to wear for the party proves this. She is striving to be her own master and she is also logical as a female, thus, she is challenging the assignment of roles and powers to men. She manages to dismiss any kind of authority, especially, that of her father from her mind. “She thought of her costume in detail and with considerable satisfaction. She was to be a corsair’s bride” (46). While she is thinking of her costume, she is dressing and re-dressing Mr. Manning in her mind as though he was a doll. First, she tries him a “crusader, then a dragoman and as a gendarme” (46). She is again reversing the roles of masculine mode of asserting active position upon passive female objects she might even recall temporarily Kristevan subject in process as she reverses the patriarchal gender roles. Mr. Manning seems to have become Ann Veronica’s passive object: even “a toy, doll that she can dress and re-dress” (46). In addition, it is interesting to point out here that through each dressing she devises a matrimonial refusal although each costume also reflects a patriarchal gender role which can be associated with power. Refusing traditional marriage models, she feels that she is not apt to get married according to any kind of norms either traditional or contemporary. She feels that she is not for that sort of life. Her refusal of the organization of sexuality and marriage under patriarchal rule challenges patriarchal authority: “I shall never marry. I am not the
sort. That’s why it is so important. I should take my own line now” (46).

Her “limited and unsystematic” ideas about marriage are because of her teachers and mistresses (46). To Wells, “whatever systematic intellectual training the developing citizen gets, as distinguished from his natural, accidental, and incidental development, is got in school or in its subsequent development of college” (Mankind in the Making; 2006: 95). Thus, Ann already fails because she lacks that type of education, which is poor and insufficient. Wells states that the school is one of the most important factors in making of almost every citizen in the state. In this respect, schoolmasters and mistresses are the means for training, supervision, guidance, the implanting of taste for the Best in literature, for the Best in art, for “formation of character” (Mankind in the Making; 2006: 96). However, general observation is not applicable to Ann’s teachers and mistresses: they are poorly prepared and trained. Thus, Ann cannot receive the proper education; and therefore, she can never be an Intellectual Elite. The teachers are also traditional, they are incompetent, and badly trained, lacking in teaching qualifications. Miss Moffat is an example in the novel. In Lacanian terms, the teachers and the mistresses are already in the Symbolic Order accepting the authority and the Law of the Father and any kind of masculine world as rational, suitable, important, and active subjects and who will lead their lives according to the norm of the Symbolic Order keeping their public voices, rejecting and repressing their private voices. They describe marriage as the most important thing in life without questioning anything. Therefore, they try to stamp Ann’s mind with that issue, convincing her that this issue must be evaluated with a great concern. Ann is quite indifferent to those people, with her notions and feelings about life and marriage. In fact, she becomes familiar with the term marriage only with Alice’s
marriage ceremony and the elopement of her second sister Gwen. Only the minor
details of the marriage ceremony are remembered:

Only one thing emerged with any reasonable clarity in her mind
at once, and that was that unless she was saved from drowning
by an unmarried man, in which case the ceremony is unavoidable
or totally destitute of underclothing, and so driven to get a
trousseau, in which hardship and trousseau would certainly be
ripping marriage was an experience to be strenuously evaded.

(49)
The image of drowning here functions as a symbol of the protagonist’s lost self and
of her return to pre-oedipal phase where there are no dualities but only wholeness.
She tries strenuously and desperately to free herself from such drowning as she does
not have a fixed and stable yet a multiple identity in Lacanian, and Kristevan terms,
and in the sense that Irigaray and Cixous put it. Ann’s dilemma can be explained in
Wells’ terms which he puts forward in A Modern Utopia. Although she wishes a lot,
being sentimental, ignorant, naive, and inexperienced, she is not able to educate
herself and broaden her outlook. Nevertheless, she seems to yield to the authority of
marriage. Therefore, she is not the rational, creative, imaginative, revolutionary,
Open Conspirator, and Intellectual Elite depicted in A Modern Utopia. Ann’s sister
Alice seems to have accepted male authority, being an ideal wife, and marrying
according to social norms: she describes her sister as:

very remote, domestic, and authoritative, having become tea
gown in command of Dr. Ralph’s home … She stood in the
shelter of his arms for a moment with an expression of satisfied
proprietorship. She had cried, Ann Veronica knew … perhaps marriage hurt. But now it was all over, and Alice was getting on well. It reminded Ann Veronica of having a tooth stopped. In addition, after that, Alice became remoter than ever, and, after a time, ill. Then she had a baby and became as old as any really grown-up person, or older and very dull … then four or more babies … she passed beyond the sphere of Ann Veronica’s sympathies altogether. (50)

Alice is gender distinctive pertaining to the public voice of the self defined by male ideologies. She becomes aware of the social orders and obeys those orders and her being a mother to more than five children makes her identity fixed and stable. Ann Veronica’s image of having a tooth stopped is relevant to Alice’s case as all her identity and autonomy is stopped or taken out of her body. She submits to the dominant discourse and Law of the Father, and husband. Her demand is silenced because of her lack of the male sexual organ, the penis. Her role is reduced to only being a mother. Her reproduction is the end of her beauty and femininity and it is a kind of oppression for Alice who is definitely under the control of the patriarchal Symbolic Order. In Kristeva’s words, she becomes other in herself. She experiences her fragmentation as she represents the lacking and repressed. Ann’s second sister, Gwen, unlike Alice, married without her father’s consent and offended her father: “she has married someone he could not approve of, and gone right away…Mr. Fortescue was an actor” (50-51). However, Gwen was tearful and resentful, and she was not happy either. In both cases, marriage did not offer good and positive feelings to either girl. Ann Veronica has those first-hand experiences of marriages at her
home. Other married women also seemed to be “dull and tied” because they submit to the established orders and laws, losing their autonomies, creativities and imaginations in the patriarchal Symbolic Order, in Lacanian terms (52).

Those two unpromising and oppressive marriages in which husbands try to assume power over their wives cause the shattering of Alice’s and Gwen’s self image and integrities as individuals. Their inability to form a unity between their bodies and minds leads to their downfall. Ann likens those people to “insects that have lost their wings. She imagines herself in a house under the shadow of Mr. Manning” (53). She does not want to live under the shadow of anyone else. She wants to fall in love:

Had romance to be banished from life? … she had never felt so acutely the desire for her free initiative, for a life unhampered by others. At any cost! ... Between her and the fair far prospect of freedom and self-development manoeuvred Mr. Manning, her aunt, and father, neighbours, customs traditions, forces. (53)

When Ann Veronica rejects what is called the Symbolic Order in Lacanian terms and tries to keep her place in Kristevan Semiotic Order, she creates her fantasies, desires and wishes. In Kristeva and Lacan’s words, Ann’s fantasies, desires, and dreams form the unconscious and the unconscious is structured like a language that can be read. Within the concept of “écriture féminine,” these are all feminine modes of expressions and they are all in the Semiotic Order, associated with rhythms and tones of a female and her body, which make the language more creative and imaginative. If Kristeva’s terms may be considered, the novel includes both symbolic and semiotic modes as in Ann’s case. Ann rejects the other, Mr. Manning being in the Imaginary Order in Lacanian sense, and Semiotic in Kristevan sense. Disrupting
paternal cultural codes, she achieves her private voice to become an active subject instead of a passive object in the Symbolic Order: she is logical, clever and calculating female in the male dominated society. Thus, she is both in the Symbolic mode with her masculine steps, and Semiotic mode, because of her passions, desires, imaginations and dreams. She is not weak, dependent, and sentimental in maternal chora: “she discovers herself for the first time … among dangers, hindrances, and perplexities on the verge of a cardinal crisis” (53).

She is ready to challenge all outside threats such as Mr. Manning, her aunt, her father, her neighbours, her teachers, mistresses, customs, traditions, forces, dangers, hindrances, and perplexities, which are like nets that suggest power over her. She starts to discover the boundaries of her own body, starts to gain a sense of her own existence as a separate entity, and forms another identity though this identity seems to be fake. She tries hard to free herself from her father’s defined roles for her, in other words, the Ego Ideal. Throughout the novel, she has tried to preserve her Ideal Ego, related to how she defines herself, not defined by others. Her supposed image and ego seem to be imprisoned in Mr. Stanley. She has to be free herself from Mr. Stanley, the symbol of male power. Ann’s forming another identity is going to be noticed when she becomes a member of the suffragette group. She tries to form her subjective entity rejecting all those external threats to her body and mind as she does not want to be controlled by others. She again acts as an “active subject” over the “passive objects”: “the Ralphs, and Mannings, and Fortecues … a new set of guides and controls, a new set of obligations and responsibilities and limitations” (53). Ann describes those people as the sources of limitations, obligations, and responsibilities, all of which refer to the symbolic order that Ann fiercely rejects. She
states, “I want to be a person. I will not have this happen to me” (53). She asserts her subjectivity consciously. With a settled mind, she is sure that she will not get married, particularly to Mr. Manning whom she does not love. She wants to go on with her studies at the Imperial College, which her father disapproves of, and she means to go to that Fadden Ball, which is not allowed by her father. She clearly expresses her desire to be in the Symbolic Order in Lacanian terms on equal terms with men. However, she is not sure of her father’s possible attitudes towards her because of her disobeying his rules. She imagines what he could do to her: “he couldn’t turn her out of doors … She was not afraid of violence, but she was afraid of something mean, some secondary kind of force. Suppose he stopped all her allowance, made it imperative that she should either stay ineffectively resentful at home or earn a living for herself at once…” (54).

Ann’s relationship with Mr. Ramage, like Mr. Stanley, is another irrational figure, who provides the reader with another power relationship. He points out that she is lucky to think over matters alone and away from home without any kind of pressure and inspection that “her mother couldn’t do” (55). Ann Veronica is for the movement and she is on the side of women. At this point, Ann Veronica seems to be described as a “New Woman” and the “New Girl,” who is clever, self-determined, and assertive, as she seems to have chosen the “head.” However, at the end of the novel, she will choose the “heart,” and the reversed binary opposition (Head/Heart) will be put into its real position: (Symbolic/Semiotic). However, Mr. Ramage points out that although he is interested in women more than anything else in his life, the new woman and the new girl put him in a flurry, saying: “If you had lived twenty years ago, you would have been called a young person and it would have been your
chief duty in life not to know, never to have heard of, and never to understand” (55). Ann says: “I suppose we are more free than we were?” (56). Mr. Ramage agrees with Ann, adding that there are girls breaking the limits and riding bicycles. However, as an intelligent girl and as a mouthpiece of H.G. Wells, she points out that: “… but we are bound all the same. A woman isn’t much freer in reality” (56). For Ann, a free world means that a woman must earn her living as a man can do, but “she is still on a string” in the Symbolic Order (56).

Even the economic advantage seems to be insufficient for independence since the society itself is evil and not ready to accept any women to its circle. No matter how hard she tries, patriarchal society itself is not ready for revolution and not ready to change its old fashioned and stereotyped descriptions of women. Yet Ann Veronica wants to be independent, “to own oneself,” saying “… a boy goes out into the world and presently stands on his own feet. He buys his own clothes, chooses his own company, makes his own way of living… a boy sails out into a trade or profession” (57). In this respect, Mr. Ramage’s ideas about femininity are important to note here: “I’m no believer in feminine incapacity, but I do perceive there is such a thing as feminine inexperience” (59). He finds Ann Veronica inexperienced and untrained and he says that he wants to help her, offering “freedom, power and adventure” (59). Cixous’ power structures are embodied in these three male characters, whose respective behaviours are based on different patriarchal assumptions. It is quite clear that through the disguise of friendship, Mr. Ramage tries to be “power over” Ann, as opposed to Mr. Manning, who avoids power, and Mr. Stanley who assumes a typical Victorian authoritarian role of the protective father is actually “power over” Ann.
The chapter entitled “Ideals and a Reality” overtly summarizes the situation of a lonely girl on the London streets. Ann Veronica begins to test her market value in London, but she cannot find a job for which she finds herself qualified. She can only be a “salaried accessory wife or mother, or a governess or an assistant school mistress,” which are the main avenues for a girl (95). She finds those jobs quite restricted and domestic. Other choices of jobs require experience which Ann Veronica lacks. Her inability to find a room and a job, combined with her brothers, father’s; and other men’s efforts to force her to return home frustrate her. Mr. Ramage’s trying to abuse and seduce her, her joining the women’s movements, and her being under arrest, her cold, beastly and stuffy prison room, make her a Female Samurai. However, her struggles prove to be for the sake of nothing. Therefore, the novel reflects women’s limited opportunities for jobs and money in the early 20th century. In her frustration, Ann starts to take part in Britain’s young feminist movement.

Ann’s asking Mr. Ramage, who is an effective medium to display power relations, for advice, shatters her position as a strong female person, and gives the opportunity to Mr. Ramage, who tries to exert his power over Ann. She points out that she needs a job to be independent. At this point, Mr. Ramage asserts some of the differences between women and men:

That’s one of our differences. We men are like children. We can get absorbed in playing games in the business we do. That’s really why we do them sometimes rather well and get on. However, women – women as a rule don’t throw themselves into things like that. As a matter of fact, it isn’t their affair. And,
as a natural consequence, they don’t do so well, and they don’t get on, and so the world doesn’t pay them. They don’t catch on to discursive interests, you see, because they are more serious, they are concentrated on the central reality of life, and a little impatient of its – its outer aspects. At least that, I think, is what makes a clever woman’s independent career so much more difficult than a clever man’s. (108)

Moreover, he finds Ann economically inexperienced, uneducated, unripe and young, yet grown up and the equal of any man: he seems to be “helpful but dubious” at the same time (109). Ann’s accepting Mr. Ramage’s money shows that she yields to the male authority for economic needs. However, she does not want to surrender and go home as she is resolved to go on: “I’m a human being – not a timid female. What could I do at home? The other’s a crumple – up – just surrender funk! I’ll see it out” (114).

Mr. Ramage draws contrasts between “a woman’s lot and a man’s, and treats Ann as a wonderful new departure in this comparison. Ann Veronica likes this relationship because it was an unusual one”. (120). Also, “he had, he felt, to create certain ideas and vivify certain curiosities and feelings in her” (121). Moreover, as an experienced man, he knows that women have a cold resistance to a man’s approach and to him, she is an enigmatic and mysterious character in Kristevan terms:

She had all the fascination of being absolutely perplexing in this respect. On the other hand, she seemed to think plainly and simply, and would talk serenely and freely about topics that most women have been trained either to avoid or conceal; and on the
other, she was unconscious, or else she had an air of being unconscious – that was the riddle – of all sorts of personal applications that almost any girl or woman, one might have thought, would have made. (121)

Mr. Ramage tries to call her attention to his quality and experience and her beauty and youth and to have a kind of relationship as “she responded with an unaltering appearance of insensibility and never as a young and beautiful woman, conscious of sex, always in the character of an intelligent girl student” (121).

Another power relationship is seen in the scene in which Mr. Ramage’s offer to go to the opera makes Ann Veronica happy to experience something that she has never been to:

Ann Veronica sat back feeling very luxurious and pleasant, and looked at the lights … the music took hold of her slowly as her eyes wondered from the indistinct still ranks of the audience to the little busy orchestra with its quivering violins, its brightly lit scores and shaded lights … she followed it now with a passionate and deepening interest. (137-138)

She is in her Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense. However, Ramage’s real motives become clear. When he puts his hand on Ann’s waist, each becomes aware of the Other. However, her mind is full of Capes, for whom she is full of sexual desire. She gets confused, intoxicated and “her head was swimming” (139). There seems to be no unity between her head and instincts, on which wholeness of the self depends. In addition, swimming not only symbolizes the protagonist’s loss of self but also wholeness in the pre-oedipal phase in which the infant is in a state of joyful
fusion with the mother’s body which is the cause of fantasies and images. She feels she is one with her mother in Maternal Chora in Kristevan sense. Mr. Ramage, assuming power over Ann Veronica, “abruptly gripped her wrist, saying, “I love you Ann Veronica. I love you with all my heart and soul … his expression was as it were rapaciously furtive” (139). When Mr. Ramage forces Ann to say that she loves him, is the moment, he is in the Semiotic Order in Kristevan terms carried out of his desire and passion for Ann. While Mr. Ramage strives painfully to assert his masculinity, Ann keeps him at a distance and by refusing to give herself to him reduces him to an object because she does not love him. Mr. Ramage wants Ann to forgive him, imagining that he has had “a fit of hysteria and that” (141). In Lacan’s terms, hysteria, which is a form of neurosis, should be pointed out. Mr. Ramage is a neurotic man with a divided subjectivity. Hysteria emphasizes the reality of sex and Mr. Ramage tries to live in the Semiotic Order, getting out of the control of the Symbolic Order. Mr. Ramage offers Ann to go to a private room to talk things out and his turning of the key has frightened her as she doesn’t know what to do, and “she felt she has stepped into a world of unknown usages” (144). He puts his arm around her, seizes her hand, and kisses her; he attempts to reduce her to a mere sexual object. Therefore, the sexual politics of Mr. Ramage emerge again as a matter of “power-over” Ann while he is making a sexual assault on Ann.

However, Ann tries her best to struggle with him: she shuts her lips hard, she wrenches her hand away from his grip and gets her arm between his chest, and hers and they begin to wrestle, becoming aware of the other as a body. She has understood that his entire brutal motive is to make love with her and having never been kissed before, she feels ashamed. Mr. Ramage on his part feels that he has been
used by Ann and therefore he could not be the master of his fate, as a member of patriarchal power, and he forces her to make love with him and warns her not to “go back into Victorian respectability and pretend you don’t know and you can’t think and all the rest of it, telling her that he has been dreaming of her body” (147). He is still under the control of patriarchal values. He gets furious when he learns that she has a lover as he assumes that he is the owner of Ann because he has paid for her and helped her. When he moves towards her, she steps back quickly with a wine glass threatening to smash the glass on the table, and she glances at the mirror “to discover a flushed and dishevelled disorder” (148). Mr. Ramage tells her that he hasn’t done all the things for the pleasure of goodness and asks her “do you really suppose a girl is entitled to live at free quarters on any man she meets without giving any return.” (149). “I thought, said Ann Veronica, you were my friend … friend! What have a man and a girl in common to make them friends …? And even with friends, would you have it all. Give on side all. Take on the other? …” (149). As a hostile person towards women, he reduces women into mere sex objects, saying, “hear me out. I’ll have that satisfaction anyhow. You women, with your tricks of evasion, you’re a sex of swindlers. You have all the instinctive dexterity of parasites. You make yourself charming for help. You climb by disappointing men… You are all dependants” (149). That night “… there was an ineradicable discord in life, a jarring something that must shatter all her dreams of a way of living that would enable them to be free and spacious and friendly with men, and that was the passionate predisposition of men to believe that the love of women can be earned and won and controlled and compelled” (150).

Being resolved to pay him at any cost, she begins to have doubts about her
freedom. Trying to act as a Female Samurai, she begins to question the manners she was brought up with and gets angry with herself:

For the first time … she faced the fact of a woman’s position in the world – the meager realities of such freedom as it permitted her, the almost unavoidable obligation to some individual man under which she must labour for even a foothold in the world. She had flung from her father’s support with the finest assumption of personal independence. In addition, here, she was in a mess because it had been impossible for her to avoid leaning upon another man. She had thought … this independence of women was but an illusion, which needed only to be denied to vanish. She had denied it with vigour, and here she was. (153)

She finds no alternative to going home; she does not want to admit that she had been beaten by going home. She finds the position of women unpromising. In Lacanian sense, she seems to come closer to the Symbolic Order, accepting the primary signifier of sexual difference, the phallus. She seems to admit that men have power and control by virtue of their penis. Women, on the other hand, do not have any position in the Symbolic Order except in relation to men as sexual objects that Kristeva is against who wishes equal share for both women and men in the Symbolic Order.

One of the female characters, Miss Miniver is a perfect medium for displaying Wells’ demand for women’s vote, masculinity, marriage and motherhood concepts. Miss Miniver “advocates the insurrections of women and many other
people who are busied with dreams of world progress of great and fundamental changes of a New Age that is to replace all the stresses and disorders of contemporary life” (95-96). She is described as “looking out on the world through large emotional blue eyes that were further magnified by the glasses she wore, and her nose was pinched and pink and her mouth was whimsically petulant… on her lapel was an ivory button, bearing the words votes for women” (25). She reflects Wells’ dislike of the suffragettes: she is not a beautiful woman, and is one who is not able to discuss any point with reason and clarity. Furthermore, she will not welcome any love affair with a man. To her, “men never have a reason. Never! And they don’t know it! … It’s one of their worst traits” (26). Ann summarizes her position in a few words “… I’m not to exist yet. I’m not to study. I’m not to grow. I’ve got to stay at home and remain in a state of suspended animation” (26). The reader is presented with her desire to enter the Symbolic Order on equal terms with men in Kristevan terms through existing, studying, growing, and being free of the image imposed on her by Mr. Stanley. Ann also points out that she will not choose to marry in order to escape from the house of paternal authority: “well I don’t feel like standing it.” She is able to balance her semiotic and symbolic modes. (26).

Furthermore, it is essential to point out Miss Miniver’s remarks about one of the most important issues of the period: “thousands of women have married merely for freedom. Thousands. Ugh! And found it a worse slavery” (26). Miss Miniver begins to speak as the mouthpiece of women and through her speech, she explains the woman question: “we live under man-made institutions, and that is what they amount to. Every girl in the world practically, except a few of us who teach or typewrite, and then we are underpaid and sweated – it’s dreadful to think how we are
sweated!... Until we have the vote that is how things will be” (27). Miss Miniver agrees with Ann Veronica on the economic equality for women by putting emphasis on that issue: “women have practically no economic freedom ... because they have no political freedom. Men have seen to that” (27). Wells believes that women should be freed from economic dependence on men though economic independence is not sufficient for women to be free. Miss Miniver calls attention to one of the other problems of women in economic and social life related to their inability to choose their own vocations, some of which are denied to women because of social and political prejudices: “the one profession, the one decent profession, I mean, for a woman – except the stage – is teaching, and there we trample on one another. Everything else – the law, medicine, the Stock Exchange – prejudice bars us” (27). When Ann Veronica reminds Miss Miniver of art and literature, Miss Miniver states one of the most important questions that paves the way for feminist literary criticism: “every one hasn’t the gift. Even there a woman never gets a fair chance. Men are against it. Whatever she does is minimized. All the best novels have been written by women, and yet, see how men sneer at the lady novelists still” (27). Miss Miniver then points out the most suitable role that is attributed to women “that is to please men” and she feels that maternity causes women’s downfall or ruin (27).

According to Kristeva, although women are reduced only to the position of mothers and reproduction is a kind of oppression for them, a pregnant woman is a kind of threshold where nature confronts culture. And for Irigaray, women try to substitute their lacking organ, the penis, for more spiritual value, maternity, which fills the gap in a repressed sexuality, and they have no other choices than to be at home. To Wells, motherhood is a good and noble occupation for women. In A
Modern Utopia, he uses the term “Endowed Motherhood,” in which the state pays a woman to become a mother. However, this system does not connote any kind of spiritual value for motherhood and reproduction; nevertheless, it is related to the benefit of British Imperialism. If it is to be explained in Kristevan terms, Miss Miniver’s fragmented sentences, segmentations of indicated arguments, thin voice all point out to the Semiotic Order, which occurs because of the pressures and limits of the patriarchal Symbolic Order in Lacanian terms. However, Semiotic is the locus of emotions. Her thin voice is the result of Wells’ objective to keep suffragettes silent since he believes in their narrowness and uselessness. She is sexless, and she is a freak in contrast to Ann Veronica’s healthy sexuality, a fact that the reader will realize by the end of the novel.

Miss Miniver is right in the points she asserts, but when she assumes a quite hostile attitude to men and makes sharp divisions between men and women, she is putting her right attitude at risk. She goes on in the same manner, pointing out the issue of maternity:

We are the species, men are only incidents. They give themselves airs, but so it is. In all the species of animals, the females are more important than the males; the males have to please them .... Only in men is the male made the most important. And that happens through our maternity. It’s our very importance that degrades us. While we were minding the children, they stole our rights and liberties. The children made us slaves, and the men took advantage of it. (28)

Miss Miniver wants to prove herself by giving examples from the earliest
periods in human life especially regarding the masculine gender. She points out that: “Originally in the first animals, there were no males. It has been proved. Then they appear among the lower things... inferior to the females. Mere hangers on... The primitive government was the matriarchate” (28-29). Miss Miniver then calls attention to women’s current position among the males: “and now, look at us! See what we have become. Toys! Delicate trifles! A sex of invalids. It is we who have become the parasites and toys” (29). Ann Veronica finds her statements right but she does not admit to being a toy and delicate trifles as she is against those stereotypical depictions of women. Another female character, Hetty, who shares similar concerns with Miss Miniver joins the discussion:

They’d better not. The point is we’re not toys, toys isn’t the word; we’re litter. We’re handfuls. We’re regarded as inflammable litter that mustn’t be left about. We are the species, and maternity is our game; that’s all right, but nobody wants that admitted for fear we should all catch fire, and set about fulfilling the purpose of our beings without waiting for further explanations. As if we didn’t know! The practical trouble is our ages. They used to marry us off at seventeen, rush us into things before we had time to protest …

We are partly human beings and partly females in suspense. (29)

When she mentions the inferior position of women Miss Miniver claims that the best solution for all these negative attitudes towards women is “the vote.” The girls in the room decide on developing strategies for the men, one of the best plans will be “refusing to be suppressed” (30). They will try to make the masculine world impotent by first taking the right to vote.
They are ready to form women’s movements in order to alter a world, which is against women. Ann is not able to exist in this world, because she is mentally unfit. Men and women whom she meets also “remained obstinately just others” (99). They discuss love and she meets the leader of the Fabian Society from whom Ann Veronica hears “implication of great and necessary changes in the world – changes to be won by effort and sacrifice indeed, but surely to be won” (103). She finds herself in the woman’s movement and at women’s meetings:

She feels she became more and more alive, not so much to a system of ideas as to a big diffused impulse towards change, to a great discontent with and criticism of life as it is lived, to a clamorous confusion of ideas for reconstruction – reconstruction of the methods of business, of economic development, of the rules of property, of the status of children, of the clothing and feeding and teaching of everyone; she developed a quite exaggerated consciousness of a multitude of people going about the swarming spaces of London with their minds full, their talks and gestures full, their very clothing charged with the suggestion of the urgency of this pervasive project of alteration. (103)

She feels that she is fighting against everything she has had to watch through closed blinds because of her father. She first resists and criticizes the ideas of movement and then embraces them; not because of the fact that “the world was in some stupid and even obvious way wrong, with which indeed she was quite prepared to agree, but that it needed only a few pioneers to behave as such and be thoroughly
and indiscriminately ‘advanced’ for the new order to achieve itself” (104). In that respect, she acts like a Poietic in *A Modern Utopia*.

Nevertheless, being in conflict with herself, Ann Veronica sometimes supports all the meetings, conferences, movements and efforts enthusiastically, yet, at times, she gets puzzled because there were moments when she doubted:

> Whether the whole mass of movements and societies and gatherings and talks was not simply one coherent spectacle of failure protecting itself from objections by glamour of its own assertions … She was stirred by the idea of the equal citizenship of men and women by the realization that a big and growing organization of women was giving form and a generalized expression to just that personal pride, that aspiration for personal freedom and respect which had brought her to London. (105)

From the very beginning, she rejects “wrapped” life with her father, and she wants to live the unlived, do the undone, and go to the ungone. Consequently, she is a Poietic who agrees in possessing power of imaginations that range beyond the known and accepted, and that involve the desire to bring the discoveries made in such excursions into knowledge and recognition in Wells’ terms (*A Modern Utopia*, 1995: 266). On the other hand, as a humanist and a materialist, Wells “equated the evil with ignorance and regarded universal scientific education as the answer” (*In the Days of the Comet*, 1966: 9).

Ann Veronica meets an exceptionally interesting man, Mr. Godwin Capes, a professor of biology, another of Wells’ idealized self-portraits, the skilled teacher,
the lucid thinker, the most varied person that she has ever encountered:

At times, he was brilliant and masterful, talked around and over everyone and would have been domineering if he had not been extraordinary kindly; sometimes he was irritable, uncomfortable … sometimes he overflowed with a peculiarly wit that played, with a devastating effect, upon any topics that had the courage to face it. Ann Veronica’s experiences of men had been among more stable types – Teddy, who was always absurd; her father, who was always authoritative, and sentimental; Manning, who was always Manning. In addition, most of the others she had met had, she felt, the same steadfastness. In addition, Mr. Ramage … air of avidity, knowledge, and inquiry, the mixture of things in his talk … But one could not count with any confidence upon Capes. (117)

Capes, who is regarded as being unique compared to other men, attracts Ann Veronica. In addition, she feels that she is falling in love with him, thinking about love tremendously. Through him, she realizes that love is a problem, and a great part of a woman’s life, pointing out that: “a young man comes into life asking how best he may place himself; a woman comes in life thinking instinctively how best she may give herself” (125).

Throughout the novel, in every situation, she thinks in terms of binary oppositions between males and females. Ann Veronica thinks that “the biological laboratory, perpetually viewing life as pairing and breeding and selection, and again pairing and breeding seemed only a translated generalization of that assertion” (125-
126). She is aware of her female identity and feminine subjectivity and she is resolved not to keep herself from thinking about love any longer, and she finds love “the supreme affair in life. It is the woman’s one event and crisis that makes up for all other restrictions, and I cower as we all cower” (126). She finds her declaration of independence as all nonsense and a joke, and she realizes that for the sake of emancipation, she is not free to talk about love. However, Ann Veronica talks about love to Miss Miniver who points out that she has never yet met a man whose intellect she could respect. Ann Veronica, aware of her sexuality and body, calls attention to the importance of the body. In fact, Kristeva, Irigaray, and Cixous all agree that women should speak about their bodies, and not being ashamed of their bodies and their sexuality. Her statements correspond with Cixous Irigaray and Kristeva’s notion of the female body. She says, “we pretend bodies are ugly. Really, they are the most beautiful things in the world. We pretend we never think of everything that makes us what we are” (127). Unlike Ann, Miss Miniver opposes that idea fiercely. She considers body and all bodily desires filthy and disgusting, in a quite hysterical mood: “no, she says, you are wrong. I did not think you thought such things. Bodies! Bodies! Horrible things! We are souls. Love lives as a higher plane. We are not animals. If ever I did meet a man I could love, I should love him … platonically” (127). Although Miss Miniver is against the patriarchal Symbolic Order in Lacanian terms, with the social and cultural order in which the persons live as conscious and gendered subjects, she is revolting against the patriarchal power that attaches women certain paradigms of beauty. She is rejecting her own body as well. In other words, she seems to be against her own bodily existence. She seems to conform to Wells’ idea that passion and obsession are irrational feelings, which might bring
hopelessness to the world. However, as a female, she also stereotypes males. She also points out that “we don’t want the men … with their sneers and loud laughter. Empty, silly coarse brutes … They are the brute still with us! Science some day may teach us a way to do without them. It’s all the woman matter” (127-128).

She refers to Tolstoy:

who sees through it all. The Higher Life and the Lower. He sees men are defiled by coarse thoughts, coarse ways of living, cruelties. Simply because they are hardened by bestiality and poisoned by the juices of meat slain in anger and fermented drinks – fancy! Drinks that have been swarmed in by thousands and thousands of horrible little bacteria … they are blinded to all fine and subtle things; they look at life with bloodshot eyes and dilated nostrils. They are arbitrary, unjust, and dogmatic and brutish and lustful. (128)

This statement is associated with Peter T. Cominus’ idea mentioned in the introduction, which points out the conflict between the highest part of human nature, conscience, and the lowest part of human nature, sexual instincts, or desire. Thus, the woman represents the highest part: the man, on the other hand, the lowest part. However, although she tries to define men, Miss Miniver herself does not have her real identity because “the mirror is all blurred” (128). This mirror image blurs both the subjectivity and objectivity of Miss Miniver.

At college, one of the students, Miss Garvice, who is doomed to be passive and submissive in the patriarchal Symbolic Order, pours her ideas about the image of women: “women were not made for the struggle and turmoil of life. Their place was
the little world, the home, that their power lay not in the vote but in influence over men and in making the minds of their children, fine and children … Women should understand men’s affairs, she said” (155-156). The world runs in a different manner for men and women: “… how things are. Women are not in the world in the same sense that men are – fighting individuals in a scramble. Every home is out of the world of business and competition in which women and the future shelter” (156). Ann finds the world a little pit and a little prison and she feels that no man can understand the prison that women are living in and no man treats women fairly, and women are not free as they are taught to believe and, therefore, women are living in a world of illusion of freedom, and they are frustrated: “we are taught to believe we are free in the world, to think we are queens … Then we find out, we find out no man will treat a woman fairly as man to man – no man. He wants you, or he doesn’t; and then he helps some other woman against you …” (156). Moreover, men always think that they are the authority and feel that they have the right to intervene and not to let a woman have even a slightest idea in their minds for themselves in the world: “women are marked, whenever they try to take hold of life, a man intervenes” (156), thus, “she was sore with the perplexities of her preposterous position. She was sick of herself, of her life, of everything” (157).

Ann becomes aware of Capes’ presence, as she has never been aware of any human being in her life before. She also becomes aware of his physical qualities and body, “his ear, muscles of his neck and the textures of the hair that come of his brow; she perceives all these familiar objects as though they were acutely beautiful things… she felt him as something solid and strong and trustworthy beyond measure. The perception of him flooded her being” (130). He arouses her sexuality as she
finds herself excited and trembling at his presence and, thinking persistently of Capes. The first stage of her ego identity comes from the sight of herself in a mirror or image which itself blurs subjectivity and objectivity. Her personality, as in the mirror reflection, (The mirror stage) is the reflection of outside beings and she has her imaginary personality which does not give the correct information about her personality and identity. The mirror signifies the constitution of a fabricated female other. The mirror is Capes’ symbol of the split-self and alienation because it falsely captures Ann in an objectified and distorted form. In the Imaginary Order, there is no division between the subject and the object or I and the “Other.” Ann looks at the mirror and identifies herself with the other in the mirror. In the following stages, Ann will start to discover the boundaries of her own body and gain a sense of her existence as a separate entity. She is able to balance her semiotic and symbolic modes.

Her love for Capes becomes clear. She becomes unconscious of herself: “she wanted to think of him as her beloved person, to be near him and watch him, to have him going about, doing this and that, saying this and that” (132). As she has some fantasies and dreams about Capes. In Kristevan terms, she is in the Semiotic Order pouring out her desires of her body and mind: “to think of him as loving her would make all that different. Then he would turn his face to her, and she would have to think of herself in his eyes. He would require things of her, and she would be passionately concerned to meet his requirements” (132). In spite of being a clever and intelligent girl, she seems to be lost in the idea of love, passion and being with Capes, forgetting her self and all other matters. It is a marvellous state which makes people believe that women know love by their instincts. Due to her strong passions,
she will also be able to get married to the man she desired, thus, she is able to act between the semiotic and symbolic modes, though rationality is the only means for the salvation of the world for Wells’ Darwinistic vision.

She believes that a woman’s life is an affair of chances: “but a woman’s life is all chance. It is artificially chance. Find your man that is the rule. All the rest is humbug and delicacy. He is the handle of life for you. He will let you live if it pleases him” (160). However, Ann is not ready to yield to this idea. She begins to think of some ways to alter the position of women, to stop all the limitations that women have been facing so far. She believes that there must be a way to let women stand on their own feet and have equal rights with men. She remembers the suggestions of the socialists “on the vague intimations of an Endowment of Motherhood, of a complete relaxation of that intense individual dependence for women which is women into the existing social order” (160). She believes that “unless women are never to be free, never to be even respected, there must be a generation of martyrs… Why shouldn’t we be martyrs? There’s nothing else for most of us, anyhow. It is a sort of blacklegging to want to have a life of one’s own” (160). She thinks of “Endowment of Motherhood” again: “suppose in some complex yet conceivable way, women are endowed, we are no longer economically and socially dependent on men” (160). Since “Endowment of Motherhood,” is a system in which the state pays a wage to a woman to become a mother, the state will have the “power over” the women and they seem to be reduced to being only breeders. Thus, it does not offer so many utopias for women.

Ann Veronica feels that she needs to be free to love Mr. Capes and believes “that a little from him would be enough” (161). At one time, she wants to kiss his
feet to feel the texture of it and suddenly her spirit rose in revolt. “I will not have this slavery,” she says. She then cries, “whatever you are, wherever you are! I will not be the slave to the thought of any man, slave to the customs of any time. Confound this slavery of sex.” She says that she is a man. She will get this under if she is killed in doing it!” (161). She points out that “women mean something. They mean everything that women can mean – except submission. The vote is only the beginning, the necessary beginning” (161). She comes to a resolution that she will start from the scratch. In addition, though she is in love she also tries to learn about the women’s movement of Bond of Freedom. They believe that “this is not going to be mere sex antagonism when women get justice” (165). However, “there was something holding women down, holding women back, and if it was not exactly man-made law, man-made law was an aspect of it” (165). For them, “the vote is the symbol of everything. … If only we are not divided, if only we work together, we will achieve a lot of things” (166).

Ann’s describing herself as a man also corresponds with Kristeva’s androgyny concept which refers to combination of male and female values in a person, as she does not accept fixed personalities and characters. Ann’s statements about women and their freedom can be seen as examples of Kristeva’s concept of multiplicity of identity. Ann has different perceptions and feelings that change according to specific situations. Ann has not ONE but MULTIPLE aspects: she is a lover, a rebel, an intelligent woman, a daughter, a wife, a mother, and so on. Thus, she is an enigmatic character whose struggles to subvert the patriarchal authority indicate that she is trying to remain in the Imaginary Order, rejecting limitations and rules in the patriarchal Symbolic Order in Lacanian terms.
Even in the prison, where the rules and regulations are exercised, she is obsessed with her passion for Capes, she never stops thinking about Capes: “she visualizes him as in a policeman uniform and she says, “we are the music and you are the instrument, we are verse, you are prose.” She begins to form a couplet to address Capes: “for men have reasons, women rhyme/A man scores always, all the time/A man can kick his skirts, don’t tear ...” (175-176). This verse comes from her unwilling brain. Her real discourse and her unconscious are revealed. In fact, it is her Semiotic which speaks from the Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense. She forms her real language in fact. She thinks of unifying her feminine and Capes’ masculine self in order to be a mental and spiritual whole. She speaks to herself about the Victorian values and images attributed to women:

Women ought to be gentle and submissive persons, strong only in virtue and in resistance to evil compulsion. My dear – I can call you that here, anyhow I know that. The Victorians overdid it a little, I admit. Their idea of maidenly innocence was just a blank white – the sort of flat white that doesn’t shine. But that doesn’t alter the fact that there is innocence. And I’ve read, thought, and guessed and looked- until my innocence – it’s smirched ...(176)

She gets confused since her brain is not clear. Because of her confusion, ignorance, and sentimentality, she can be neither an Open Conspirator nor a Female Samurai, nor an Intellectual Elite. She seems to have stable personality as Wells’ construct. She feels that she is not a good specimen of a Victorian woman. She has got a streak of the male:
Things happen to women – proper women – and all they have to do is to take them well. They’ve just got to keep white. But I’m always trying to make things happen. And I get myself dirty … I’m not gentle … I’m not coarse – no! But I’ve got no purity of mind – no real purity of mind. A good woman’s mind has angels with flaming swords at the portals to keep out fallen thoughts.

(177)

She constantly questions herself and her position: “how shall I put the question? What am I? What have I got to do with myself?” (178). Self-examining and questioning, she seems to be an Open Conspirator in this scene, however, she cannot keep her role of open conspiracy constantly because Ann is not allowed to live her Semiotic mode in such roles. She believes that there is no explanation for all those questions as she is not experienced enough to answer them. She does not understand why she craves for and thinks about Capes. She certainly needs her spiritual state. By describing herself as dirty, though temporarily as a subversive character, she may recall Kristeva’s “abject other” theory. The “abject” is what the subject's consciousness has to expel or disregard in order to create the proper separation between subject and object. Ann seems to have deviated from the normal and she needs to be excluded for she threatens the social order. “Dirt” in Kristevan terms is described as nonconformity, out of the dominant system, something which upsets the stability. Ann finds herself dirty and impure mentally. She is portrayed as a subversive subject who is treated with hostility or fascination, desire or attraction. In Kristevan terms, Ann, the abject, is an ambiguous character. She is literally dirty and must be expelled from the society and she is arrested. However, she is not going
to be expelled but welcomed when she enters the Symbolic Order, accepting all social norms and rules, or else she will inspire women in new subject positions.

However, she soon changes and begins to think more steadily and finds herself in a phase of violent reaction against the suffragette movement. She puts forth her ideas about women and men; she becomes the mouthpiece of the real problems lying behind those feminist movements as Irigaray mentions in her work An Ethics of Sexual Difference. To Irigaray, understanding is based on realizing the differences between the couples, and men and women themselves, and accepting the other’s infinite qualities is important since male and female have different perceptions: Ann points out that

One of these was classifications of women into women who are and women who are not hostile to men. The real reason why I’m out of place here is because I like men. I can talk with them. I’ve never found them hostile. I’ve got no feminine class feeling. I don’t want any laws or freedom to protect me from a man like Mr. Capes. (180)

Although she sets out to get a “beautiful, free, untrammelled life, self development, without counting the cost either for herself and the other, her little flag of pride must flutter down with the rest of them” (182). She utters the real objectives of living in a world, forming sound relationship with men and women. She is rather pessimistic and she feels she will be dead and finished if there is no change. She realizes her destiny:

A woman wants a proper alliance with a man, a man who is better stuff than herself. She wants that and needs it more than
anything else in the world. It may not be just, it may not be fair, but things are so. It isn’t law, nor custom, nor masculine violence settled that. It is just how things happen to be. She wants to be free- she wants to be legally and economically free, so as not to be subject to the wrong man; but only God, who made the world can alter things to prevent her being slave to the right one. “And if she can’t have the right one? We’ve developed such a quality of preference! ... Oh, but life is difficult ... when you loosen the tangle in one place you tie a knot in another ... before there is any change, any real change, I shall be dead. (180)

She seems to be ready for her social castration in the Symbolic Order, accepting the superiority of men and the Law of the Father in Lacanian terms like a conventional woman. She discovers that life is many-sided, complex and puzzling, which is the real texture of life. Every kind of civilization has a kind of difficulty. She feels that “this is not a world for an innocent girl to walk about in. It is a world of dirt and skin diseases and parasites. It’s a world in which the law can be a stupid pig and the police stations dirty dens. One wants helpers and protectors and clean water” (181). She becomes more reasonable and tamed from Wells’ point of view. She is not the same as she was at the very beginning of the novel. She is sure that she will not be able to achieve anything for her freedom in such a world full of dirt and violence, which is closed for a lonely innocent inexperienced and uneducated girl. In Lacanian terms, she seems to be ready to enter the Symbolic Order which she has constantly rejected so far through her understanding and acceptance of the authority
of the society and Law of the father, and her desire to find a better man, although she believes that this is not the custom.

In such a society, full of biased masculine attitudes towards the image of women even a minor character such as Ogilvy, points out that men have to limit women’s freedom for their goodness: “what interests me is that our young women nowadays are running about as free as air practically. With registry offices … but I think we ought to teach them more or restrain them more. One or the other. They’re too free for their innocence or too innocent for their freedom” (20).

Ann Veronica cannot have her real image because of her father and then Teddy, Mr Manning, Mr. Ramage, Ogilvy. Therefore, she is to a certain extent what her father and other people want her to be. She attempts to achieve unity between her body and mind and she struggles to solve this dilemma throughout the novel. In Lacan’s terms, Ann’s Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal are in conflict with each other as Ann also points out that there are many other girls like her, having modern personalities and appearances, which the society is not ready to welcome quickly: “there are so many girls nowadays who are quite unrepresentable at tea, with their untrimmed laughs, their awful dispositions of their legs when they sit down, their slangy disrespect… they have the flavour of tobacco” (33). Her wish to yield to any kind of authority, being lost in irrational fits of passion, her weaker initiative, lack of experience, incapacity of organization and combination, emotional complications, lack of sufficient scientific education, economic dependence on men, and her resourcefulness all make her give up what she has struggled for. She does not have any other choice but to accept the Law of the Father and Law of the Husband in marriage and Law of the Society both in marriage and in childbearing. She was for
some time a revolutionary subject though it does not seem to be long lasting in such an insufficient society in terms of education, religion, and so on, in Wells’ sense. Thus, she is not able to be an Open Conspirator, Intellectual Elite and a Female Samurai. Her letter to her father shows that she has accepted his authority. Her letter says “all these experiences have taught me a great deal about life and realities. I see that compromise is necessary … I see clearly that as things are a daughter is necessarily dependent on her father and bound while she is in that position to live harmoniously with his ideals” (184). With her wish to come home and be a better daughter to her father, she is going to enter the Symbolic Order and she is ready to be a good daughter who is going to accept her father’s law in Lacanian terms while repressing her semiotic mode. She will return to the shelter of her father’s roof. She has lived and learned, and her father will not object to her studying at the Imperial College, which is in fact supposed to be man’s field, to keep her busy as long as she keeps in harmony with things at home. Even as a rebellious and transgressive character she remains in the Symbolic Order where her subjectivity is constructed.

On the other hand, Capes has been for her merely a symbol for passionate love, “a mere idol at whose feet one could enjoy imaginative wallowings ....” (182). Without any spark of shame, and not repressing her sensual and sexual inclinations like a Victorian woman, who is afraid of being a social outcast, Ann is determined to love Capes who is socially inappropriate. Capes is married and therefore he is in the Symbolic Order in Lacanian sense, since he cannot be free from that institution easily, because it is the society which makes the rules. However, Ann Veronica is sure that his being married will not prevent her from loving him, and she resists any kind of authority. Capes says, “a man ought to be labelled. You see, I’m separated
from my wife but she doesn’t and won’t divorce me. You don’t understand the fix I am in” (216). Ann Veronica says, “a man is a mixed creature, a modern girl does not understand these terms. Mr. Capes offers his personal idea common to many men in Western patriarchal society “a man has more freedom to do evil than a woman.” (218). Ann Veronica is ready to accept all his mistakes finding him a real person with all these mistakes. Subversion of patriarchal binary opposition is seen when Ann finds him sexually exciting. She believes that she will have her salvation only through Capes. Being aware of her bodily desires, she says:

I want you to kiss me … I want you. I want you to be my lover. I want to give myself to you. I want to be whatever I can to you … You are the one person I can understand and feel right with. I don’t idealize you … There is something living and understanding in you … I’m making a mess of my life – unless you come and take it … If you can love me, there is salvation. (220-221)

Thus, she lives jouissance as she subverts the Symbolic Order. As a married man, Capes feels that it is wrong to elope and live together disregarding the rules in the Symbolic Order. However, Ann is ready to love him at all costs. To have him is all important to her. She is not afraid of anything, “scandal, difficulty, struggle …. adding that she rather wants them” (223). Mr Capes quits his teaching post and decides to go to Switzerland. He gives up all his burdens, his job, and his marriage in the Symbolic Order in Kristevan sense. Ann’s new life is now about to start and she becomes concerned about the coming “catastrophe that she was about to precipitate upon her father and aunt” whose attempts as Victorian parents, who assume
authority over and shelter for her to teach her to keep a man at a distance, to protect her, have been all futile (225).

Leaving their jobs, families and hometowns, Ann and Capes feel like newborn beings and come to Switzerland to the Alps to climb. They have enthusiasm and joy together that Lacan calls jouissance, and become aware of themselves for a short time. They approach the Real Order in Lacanian sense. It is a new, fresh bright experience for her. In the words of Cora Kaplan, the hills that Ann and Capes climb in their search for a new world form a Freudian metaphor of woman’s function and place as all giving mother. Ann becomes the breast that feeds both the body and mind of Capes (1996: 44). She never forgets her father feeling that “she had treated him badly. She had hurt him and her aunt. She had done wrong by their standards, and would never persuade them that she had done right…” (235). She also talks about the problems between children and parents. She thinks that they can never understand each other. There is no strong natural affection between parents and children. She says, “father worshipping sons are abnormal – and they’re no good. One’s got to be a better man than one's father, or what is the good of successive generations. Life is rebellion or nothing” (237). She wishes that some day the old will understand the young, “there won’t be these fierce disruptions. There won’t be barriers one must defy or perish … It is salvation then” (237). Mr. Capes feels that life is a burden:

Life is morality. Life is adventure. Adventure rules and morality … Morality tells you what is right and adventure moves you. If morality means anything, it means keeping bounds, respecting implications, respecting implicit bounds. If
individuality means anything, it means breaking bounds – adventure. We’ve decided to be immoral… We’ve deserted the posts in which we found ourselves, cut out duties, and exposed ourselves to risks that may destroy any sort of social usefulness in it. (237-238)

Therefore, both of them seem to live in the Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense as they have their private voices and reject all the conventions, rules imposed on middle-aged men in the Symbolic Order. A married middle-aged man and a girl flee which is against the rules of the social order. They give up everything that is socially accepted: homes, jobs, and hopes in career. Both of them rescue themselves from the lives that they are not happy with. One is not happy with his marriage and the other is not happy with her current situation. Capes is also against any kind of rules that limit their lives, but eventually he will accept all those rules in the Symbolic Order in Kristevan terms: “the rule’s all right, so long as there isn’t a case. Rules are for established things, like the places and position of a game. Men and women are not established things. They’re experiments” (239). Ann accepts the rules in the Symbolic Order in Kristevan sense, she also reveals her desire for Capes to fulfil her bodily instincts and desires to satisfy which is rather subversive:

I know now what it is to be an abandoned female. I’m not ashamed of things I’m doing. I want to put myself into your hands. You know I wish I could roll my little body up small and squeeze it into your hand and grip your fingers upon it. Tight. I want you to hold me and have me so...everything. Everything. It’s a pure joy of giving to you. I have never
spoken of these things to any human being. Just dreamt—and 
ran away even from my dreams. It is as my lips had been 
sealed about them. And now I break the seals- for you ... (239-
240)

One of the things that most surprised Capes in Ann was her capacity for blind 
obedience. She loved to be told to do things. She is enclosed in the domestic 
structure that she has escaped so far: “she respects him as if he was her master” (243). 
Since they love each other, Ann’s marriage is not a social contract. They find their 
relationship splendid and they are pleased with one another. She is happy to have 
chosen her man for: “he stood over me like a cliff. The thought of him nearly turned 
me aside from everything we have done. He was the social order, he was law and 
wisdom” (257). She confesses her desire to have children: “I want children like 
mountains and life like the sky… We have had so splendid a time, fought our fight, 
and won… Great time is over and I have to go carefully and bear children… and take 
care of my hair, and when I’m done with that, I shall be an old woman… We are 
successful at last” (258). The conclusion shows that Ann is to become a mother and 
she reconciles herself with her father. Ann is ready to lead her life in the way that 
tradition and authority allow. She is aware of her role in the evolving history of the 
human race. Even though she seems to be satisfied with the roles available to her, she 
seems to suffer from disparity between her Ideal Ego, the private sense of herself, 
and Ego Ideal, the public wishes on herself in Lacanian terms. Since Ann does not 
act in accordance with other people’s definitions made for her identity and 
personality, she is able to form her own autonomy free from external effects. After 
she has defined her Ideal Ego with great difficulties, she chooses the Ego Ideal that
seems to be related to what “the Other” wants Ann to be and to do: she chooses her partner, she gets married, so, she is a successful subject, she says:

Do you remember the mountains? Do you remember how we loved one another? How intensely we loved one another! Do you remember the light on things and the glory of things? ...

Oh! And love! We’ve had so splendid a time, and fought our fight and won. And it’s like the petals falling from a flower. Oh, I’ve loved love, dear! I’ve loved love and you, and the glory of you … We are successful at last! Successful. (257)

In conclusion, Wells’ writing, as Bennett and Lawrence’s, offers feminist criticism invaluable material about the female experience in the Western patriarchal society from a specifically female point of view. Power, male, and female relationships, and gender identity emerge as the dominant themes and issues in the novel. Changing ideologies of gender assign different roles to men and women in different periods of history; however, the general assumption is that men are superior to women. Besides, no matter how hard a woman tries, she is not free from social castration. The novel also gives some clues of what it means to be of the masculine self and the feminine self in a society, which is already based on the basic signifier, which Lacan calls “the phallus.” Furthermore, Wells deals openly and truthfully with sex. His heroine Ann Veronica does not avoid talking about her love and desire towards the man she loves passionately. Ann Veronica starts as a new woman but settles down as a traditional woman who is married and who is going to bear children, accepting domesticity. She accepts her husband as the sole authority in her life. Therefore, she transfers her submission from her father to her husband. Thus, she
enters the Symbolic Order through her Semiotic mode in Kristevan sense. Through separation from his wife and being with a woman that he loves a lot, and giving up all the rules related to social order, Capes enters the Semiotic Order for a short time in Kristevan terms. Similarly, by giving up her studies and leaving the house of shelter and her father’s authority and in her Semiotic mode, rejecting Mr Manning who is not sexually attractive to her, and being in women’s movements as an individual, being a strong and logical woman, and eloping with a married man, whom she desires, Ann enters the Semiotic Order for a short time. Because neither of them can solve their problems in the Semiotic Order, both of them feel obliged to get married in the Symbolic Order so as not to cause much more scandal and difficulty under the society’s pressure and norms. Since they both know well that they cannot go on like that, they enter the Symbolic Order and remain there in Lacanian and Kristevan terms. Ann becomes a multiple subject who is composed of semiotic and symbolic modes; thus, both Ann and Capes are able to avoid both of these extremes. Ann’s attempts to reverse the binary opposition seem to be vain in Cixous’ sense. Ann’s marriage serves the hierarchization to subordinate the feminine and masculine order, which is fixed in relation to the primary signifier, the phallus. Ann accepts that the phallus is the signifier of sexual difference, which signifies power and control which Ann is never able to have. However, she becomes a conscious and gendered subject though she is limited by law and social institutions. Even though Ann Veronica is sexually responsive and high-principled, she seems to become a domestic character. However, although sexual desire excited in women is not natural and acceptable, Ann Veronica struggles for a degree of personal and sexual freedom which is beyond the scope of the suffragettes, who are depicted as sexless and as
man haters due to their narrow, prejudiced sexual orthodoxy. However, Ann is not against men, but their perceptions of women and marriage. Wells is prepared to reject the family not for feminist reasons but for his idea of Endowment of Motherhood. To him, women should be free to mate with suitable males to give birth to children and by so doing; women will be freed from economic dependence on men. As Ann craves for motherhood, she seems to correspond with both Irigaray and Cixous’ concepts of motherhood as a great and noble occupation for a woman and Wells’ cosmic notion that motherhood is a great and noble occupation for a woman because it provides scientifically educated, able-bodied, and clean-minded healthy generations for the salvation of the future of the humankind.

Wells is sentimental about women, their freedom and love. Free sexuality is an accomplishment for both Ann and Capes. Even the struggling Ann Veronica seems to collapse into a dutiful wife; however, subversion lies here in the fact that their marriage is not a social contract, but a personal compromise though her free love may not seem to lead to something desired other than a traditional marriage. Rebellion and independence give their places to laws of motherhood and wifehood. Blind passion, obsession with sexuality, and irrationality are the basic reasons for the downfall of both the individual and the society, in Wells’ sense. Ann Veronica herself is finally plotted into a conventional marriage after being, rebellious, forthright, and independent, in the first part of the novel. However, Ann Veronica becomes content with her traditional future in the second part of the novel. In fact, in Wells’ point of view, even his spirited modern women are failures because of his Darwinistic vision. However, what Ann has done so far, and eventually choosing the man she finds sexually attractive can be a first step and awakening to develop a
feminist consciousness as a woman.

In Wells’ sense, as a courageous and daring person, Ann Veronica symbolizes Wells’ concept of “Lover-Shadow,” the ideal woman, the author’s own fantasy of human relationship, which fails in the end as Ann is not an ideal individual completely: she has the limited roles of the society to which she is alien and therefore, she is an enigmatic (Other) who is the product of Wells’ self which he himself tries to define. Ann seems to lead a life with the help of a man, Capes, and through her marriage. Wells has always feared women’s Medusa-like power, and the only way to respond to that power is to create seemingly powerless women as in the case of Ann. To Wells, women may be free, but only in theory, so there is not much utopia for women since the fundamental factors for women’s inferiority are economic equality, lack of education, and irrational passions. Ann abandons all her ambitions and becomes involved with Capes. As a new woman, Ann Veronica needs to break away from the constraints of home and parental authority. That freedom cannot be achieved fully without economic independence, which is not enough for Ann Veronica as she is mentally unfit for the society, since women’s movements are not sufficient for women to be free. In order to compensate for the lack of freedom, women have no other choices than to get married to the state for breeding children which fills the spiritual blank in a woman’s life. Ann functions as Capes’ salvation, and happiness in her marriage, in which she is told to do everything that reflects the male fantasy of a tamed wife and mother responsible for reproducing. However, in Kristevan sense, through her pregnancy, Ann is a threshold and she inhabits both poles of the opposition of culture and nature in her very being. Ann Veronica represents in Cixous’ terms “woman’s voyage: as a body” (Sorties). On the other
hand, in Kristeva, Cixous and Irigaray’s sense, Ann Veronica is intertextual, androgynous, and a complicated character who has an enigmatic and mysterious personality. She meditates on many concepts throughout the novel. Her enigmatic nature is in conformity with Wells as well: “women would be enigmas and mysterious and maternal dignitaries that one would approach in a state of emotional excitement” (A Modern Utopia; 1995: 203).

Ann Veronica’s experiences, which seem to be against the constraints of society and her perspectives, are the appeals of feminist literary criticism. Ann Veronica seems to have achieved independence and authority relatively although her lack of education and experience and her unsystematic and limited ideas prevent her from getting a job. Both Capes and Ann accept social castration accepting their limitations, being able to balance their symbolic and semiotic modes. In Wells’ perspective, because of the fact that she ends up being a domestic and submissive woman in her marriage, lacking sufficient scientific education and economic independence, her wish to yield to any kind of authority, being lost in irrational fits of passion, her weaker initiative, lack of experience, incapacity of organization, and combination, emotional complications, her inferior inventions and resourcefulness all make her give up what she has struggled so far, and fail. She proves that although she seems to be an Open Conspirator, Intellectual Elite, a Female Samurai and a Poietic, she is not able to preserve those values. She cannot salvage herself. She seems to have awakened, nevertheless, she is not able to create change as she is not rational enough to work for revolution, progress and change. However, in terms of contemporary feminist literary criticism, she is able to construct her subjectivity in the Symbolic Order, and balance two poles of modes, rejecting only the patriarchal
Symbolic Order which tries to oppress and repress women. Further to this, her fight for the equality between men and women, her rejection of Mr. Manning as an ideal husband in conventional sense, her awareness of her bodily instincts and desire, and her choosing of Mr. Capes, a married man as her lover and husband later, to whom she discloses her love and desire, can be regarded as a subversion of the patriarchal Symbolic Order which is however, only a step, a beginning to develop a feminist consciousness for social transformation to create a world for women beyond simple social equality.
III: ARNOLD BENNETT AND HELEN WITH THE HIGH HAND

This chapter will be a feminist reading of Helen with the High Hand (1910) which will focus on power relations and the principle of otherness, opposition, and difference. Cixous’ “Power To,” Lacan’s “Three Stages,” “Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal”; Kristeva’s “Androgyny,” Irigaray’s “Hysteria” concepts will be applied to the characters and their relationships between each other, namely, those between Helen and her uncle James, Helen and her mother, Mrs. Proctor who uses Emanuel, James and Mrs. Proctor, Helen and Emanuel, and Helen and Dean, which are all based on power relationships, on domination and submission in the novel. While applying these theories, the writer of the novel, Arnold Bennett’s (1867-1931) outlook, which is largely shaped by his preoccupation with observation of the individual and the society, his approach to the novel, and his experiences of women are going to be evaluated. In that context, in order to get a clear idea about the writer, as an artist, first of all, his attaching of importance to observation should be noted. Bennett in his work The Author’s Craft states the importance of observation to realise all physical phenomena, adding that “if when having comprehended that the role of observer is not passive but active, we determine by an effort to rouse ourselves from the coma and really to see the spectacle of the world. Good observation consists not in multiplicity of detail, but in co-ordination of detail according to a true perspective of relative importance …” (1914: 11, 14). Preoccupied with the habits of observation of the environment and the people that are associated with the techniques of the realist, thus, influenced by French Realism, Bennett believes that the novel should reflect whatever the situation is in the society. In one of his letters to George Stuart on 24th April, 1914, he gives hints about his conception of the novel: “I believe in details. It
is the only way to create atmospheres” (1968: 9). Hence he approaches the characters and their actions in a traditional and realistic manner, depicting ordinary lower middle class people in ordinary everyday reality. To him, “observation also sharpens the sense of beauty … the observer must never lose sight of the fact that what he is trying to see is life” (The Author’s Craft; 1914: 18).

For a sound feminist reading of Helen with the High Hand, the reader should be well aware of Bennett’s concept of the novel and style to have a clear notion about the depiction of male and female characters and their relationships. To quote Swinnerton, Bennett’s novels belong to three orders: “the realistic studies of men and women in their appropriate environment, -the sensational or extravagant presentations of men and women in environments wholly fantastic, - the humorous comedy of character and circumstances” (Swinnerton, 1961: 19). Being a novelist born in the Potteries, he clearly and realistically draws the provincial life of which he is a part he knows well, but he adds humour as well. He is tolerant of defects, faults, deceit, treachery, spitefulness, and censoriousness, and describes life with its both tragic and comic points with real people, living in time and space, and who can be seen everywhere and anytime in our daily lives, as he does in Helen with the High Hand, combining both realistic and humorous studies of men and women in their appropriate environment. (Swinnerton, 1961:21-22). However, through that type of portrayal, he aims at teaching people to laugh unlike Wells, who he is pessimistic. Drawing cause and effect relationships and detailed descriptions in Helen with the High Hand Bennett uses traditional methods as opposed to modernist writers.

Bennett clarifies his concept of the novel that he actually learned from French realism in the Journal (1897):
The novelist of contemporary manners need to be saturated with a sense of picturesque in modern things. Walking ... I observed ... men and women each totally different from every other, and all serious wrapt up in their own thoughts and ends these seemed curiously strange and novel and wonderful. If only one can detach oneself, casting off all memory of use and custom and behold it for the first time; in its right, authentic colours, without making comparisons. The novelist should cherish, burnish this faculty of seeing crudely, simply, artlessly, ignorantly; of seeing like a baby or a lunatic, who lives each moment by itself and tarnishes the present by no remembrance of the past. As a successful novelist he was able to do it: that is to present the matter paying attention to presenting manner and style, not to the presented material, keeping to the fact that beauty is in fact is hidden in the presentation skills. (Allen, 1948: 44)

Describing the novelist as the one “having seen life and being so excited by it that he absolutely must transmit the vision to others, choosing narrative fiction as the liveliest vehicle for the relief of his feelings,” Bennett also points out the attributes that may be taken for granted in the novelist as in every artist, the first is the sense of beauty. Whatever kind of life the novelist writes about, he has been charmed and seduced by it, he is under its spell- that is, he has seen beauty in it” (The Author’s Craft; 1914: 37,41).

As mentioned earlier, having a sense of beauty, and attitude of observation, Arnold Bennett, in his novels, deals with life in the Five Towns, and attaches
importance to the environment as one of the major factors conditioning the personalities of men and women brought up in it. Helen, her uncle and their motives may not be evaluated disregarding their environment. In this respect, in one of his works, *The Human Machine* (1909), Bennett states that all individuals, other than one’s own, are part of one’s environment:

> The evolutionary process is going on all right, and they are a portion of it. Now, that individual is the consequence of his mother and his environment, and his father and mother of theirs and so backwards to the single-celled protoplasm. That individual is a result of the cosmic order, the inevitable product of cause and effect. (*The Human Machine*; 1913: 21, 13)

Coming from the lower middle class, like Wells, Bennett is the product of his parents and environment: “he led a poor and difficult life…injustice was a tremendous actuality to be faced and accepted, he was a protesting idealist” (Allen, 1948: 31). This idea is a key to Bennett’s view of life, which incidentally, is a view that D. H. Lawrence harshly criticizes in Bennett as it makes him a complete conformist, enduring everything. Like Wells, Bennett, in his books, attempts to make the reader accept life as it is. He is well aware of the economic and social forces which determine and distort the shape of people’s lives. However, he does not aim at reflecting the politics of his society. He generally deals with lower middle class people who are preoccupied with money. Helen and her step uncle, whose personalities are moulded in their environments, are obstinately and fiercely preoccupied with money and property. In *Helen with the High Hand*, fear of poverty and failure constitute a major part of the theme of the novel. To Bennett:
Money is not the principal factor in happiness, but it is of twentieth rate importance... The financial question cannot be ignored. If it is true that money does not bring happiness, it is no less true that the lack of money induces a state of affairs in which efficient living becomes doubly difficult. (The Human Machine; 1913: 31)

Helen and her step uncle have discussions on money throughout the novel, and through it, each of them tries to claim authority and power over the other.

Whilst analysing Bennett’s approach to the novel, one of the most eminent figures of that period, H.G.Wells’ influence on Bennett cannot be disregarded. In a letter on 24th August 1903 Bennett writes to H.G. Wells: “I think your criticisms are usually tonic and wholesome for me. And you impress me fearfully sometimes- it may be your matter or your manner- I don’t know which” (Letters of Arnold Bennett; 1968:179). Wells, in An Experiment in Autobiography also refers to some similarities between Bennett and himself in that

We were both about of an age ... we were both hard workers, both pushing up by way of writing from lower-middle class surroundings, where we had little prospect of anything but a restricted salaried life and we were pushing up with quite surprising ease and both were ambitious, both had sharp family memories of poverty and failure, both had sexual and marital difficulties, and both supported each other. (1934: 627)

Wells states that Bennett’s success “was to be attained straightforwardly by writing sound clear stories, lucidly reasonable articles and well-constructed plays.
His pride was in craftsmanship rather than in artistic expression...he was ready to turn his pen to anything provided it could be well done” (1934: 626).

Having discussed the similarities between Wells and Bennett in terms of their social background and concept of novel, Bennett’s concept of woman should be clarified and his experiences of women should be taken into consideration in analysing his understanding on view of women in the novel in that he could be inserting his first hand experiences into his fiction. He points out that he likes Paris where “sexual matters undiscussable in England are discussed even between the sexes” (Young, 1975:10). Bennett was described by most of his friends and relatives as an uneasy person to live with. He was not a person suitable for marriage and sharing his home with a woman: “he was obsessed by order, precision and regularity, as a travel addict, he did not take his wife with him to trips, they communicated by letters living in the same house, he was not created for marital domesticity” (Young, 1975: 14-15). Although his wife Marguerite did her best to make him happy in their marriage, they could not achieve a harmonious marriage.

Like Wells, and Lawrence, Bennett is sensitive to the nature of women and the relationships between men and women, and to the problems of individual, economic, and social forces all of which have a great effect on a person’s life. Such an atmosphere is clear in his novel Helen with the High Hand which offers an analysis of male -female relationships. The inner nature of Helen is pondered and she does not avoid living romantic sexual passion, and neither do Mr Ollerenshaw and Mrs. Procktor. Moreover, Bennett’s heroines are either “comfy or wayward, his cocottes, of whom he presents quite a few, are on the whole comfy” (Young, 1975: 18). Helen is both “comfy and wayward” and Mrs. Procktor is a cocotte in the novel.
It is inevitably clear that Helen and her personality are the result of her environment and the people around her. Bennett is also aware of women’s social and psychological problems related to their oppression. He supports the progressive causes of the suffragettes, dealings with such themes. His novels are not as tragic as Hardy’s. However, according to Bennett, his characters learn from what they have experienced: “his people always shake down in the end, and they learn to live with their own and their society’s inadequacies. Struggling against these is useless; what is valuable is the wisdom, which comes with experience. This is what Bennett understands by maturity” (Stubbs, 1979: 196). In Helen with the High Hand, James, Helen, and others yield to the society’s wishes of traditional, and settled marriage life in the end: however, Helen is able to marry the man she desired and loved from the very beginning though he has more modest means. Although she likes luxury, she resolves to accept this life for the sake of her love. Similar to Wells’ heroine Ann, Helen chooses the heart, instead of the head. According to Bennett, she seems to have failed, though Bennett does not find it as tragic as Wells. In Bennett’s sense, it is not so much a source of danger rather one of humor. Though heart is, of course, more preferable to head, it is just the matter of choice. Though she tries to discipline her brain with her reasoning faculty, her failure seems to be inevitable as the heart is the enemy of progress. Within that frame, Bennett states in his work The Human Machine that:

When the reason and the heart come into conflict, the heart is invariably wrong … the result of the brain’s activity on society is always more advantageous than the result of heart’s activity … Passion (the heart) is responsible for all crimes.
Indeed, crime is simply a convenient monosyllable which we apply to what happens when the brain and the heart come into conflict and the brain is defeated … the heart hates progress.

(1913: 32-33)

Attaching importance to the conflicts between heart and reason in the relationships, Bennett, like Wells and Lawrence, states that one of the reasons for failure in relationships is women’s multiple, mysterious and enigmatic personalities. In one of his letters, he states that “part of him recognized that women could be, and often were tough, independent and efficient, but at the same time he never quite relinquished a romantic image of them as something quite apart from everyday reality” (Stubbs, 1979: 203). Further to this idea, it is important to point out here that although Bennett supports women’s rights for economic independence and fair pay, going so far as to attack the economic slavery of married women, he never regards them as equals like Wells. He regards marriage as the final chance to have fulfilment for women and the acceptable type of woman is the one who is submissive and kind. In Helen with the High Hand, a powerful and self-confident woman Helen ends up in a traditional marriage institution with the man she loves. Thus, Helen is quite suitable to be analysed in terms of Lacanian Symbolic Order and Kristeva Semiotic Order, and in Kristeva, Irigaray, and Cixous’ terms, as she is multiple and active throughout the novel.

In order to apply feminist theories to the novel that involves an analysis of the relationships between and the nature of men and women, Bennett’s approaches towards women should be known. In this respect, it is important to mention Bennett’s work Our Women (1920), subtitled as “Chapters on the Sex Discord,” in
which his arguments coincide with Ruskin’s doctrine of separate spheres for women and men which, as mentioned in the introduction, alleges that the two sexes have complementary but essentially different psychologies: aggressive/affectionate, rational/irrational, outgoing/domestic. Bennett adds that two great springs of conduct exist in the individual. One is reason; the other is sentiment: they are complementary. A world without them would be inhabitable adding that there is no known method of deciding whether reason is superior to sentiment, or vice versa, and that the question will never, never be decisively settled (1920:117-120). He states that women unlike men represent sentimentality. Men are reasonable and intellectual. Surprisingly enough, he confesses his belief that women are inferior to men: they seem to be incapable of the highest artistic or scientific achievement, and they love to be dominated. (1920:112-116). However, Helen is not the type of a female character who seems to be incapable of having the faculty of reason although she chooses passion (the heart) at the end of the novel. Yet, no matter how hard she struggles, she seems to fail as she chooses sentimentality and passion. Bennett furthers his ideas that “in creation, in synthesis, in criticism, in pure intellect, women even the most exceptional and the most favoured, have never approached the accomplishment of men” (1920: 114). The work also outlines women’s domestic responsibilities. Bennett’s ideal wife is a graceful hostess in a tea gown carefully schooled in cooking, the principles of comfort, taste, and the decor, accounts, the management of the servants, and the principles of infant education. Helen is also aware of her domestic responsibilities. To Bennett, who has traditional views about women, women are the “natural creatures of the domestic machine and their primary function is to soothe the troubled male mind” (1920: 56-73). However, he furthers his ideas stating “however
I do believe that women are superior to men in two respects: will power, and tenacity or perseverance but they fulfil themselves as much as they may, women will never get beyond the function of being the complement of men” (1920:123,129-130). The heroin Helen begins as a domestic figure in the novel, carrying out her responsibilities. Though there is no information about what kind of a wife she is going to be, as a step-niece, she carries out the duties of a conventional woman: she cooks, she manages the house, the servant(s), the accounts, she is a great hostess, and she is interested in the decor of the house and so on. She does all these everyday chores to realize her ambition of having much more comfort related to money and physical environment. Hence, she is in correspondence with Lacan’s Ideal Ego (private sense of herself) and Ego Ideal concept (public wishes for her), and her struggles to improve her economic and physical situation will be analysed in Cixous’ Power to terms.

Bennett, like his contemporary Wells, is preoccupied with female sexuality with a fairy tale plot, in which modern girls have affairs or are thought to have affairs with the first unaccepted or “Mr Wrong” and eventually find and fall in love and live with “Mr Right”. Like Wells, Bennett believes that “women have adult sexual desires that they ignore at their peril” (Squires, 1990: 64). The fact that sexuality needs not to be suppressed is explained in the novel through Helen who does not suppress her sexual desires. These modern females are aware of the fact that they will lose their sexuality and individuality if they have relationships with Mr Wrong since they are intellectual and active. Though Helen is intelligent, manipulating, and calculating, not only Helen, Ann in Ann Veronica but also Ursula in Women in Love who read and study a lot, on finding Mr Right, settle down as married women in the
Symbolic Order in Kristeva’s sense, balancing their semiotic and symbolic modes.

In this respect, Helen corresponds with Bennett’s idea of feminism as well. Because of the fact that to Bennett, “the root of modern feminism is of course the desire for money, freedom can’t be real unless it comprises a measure of economic freedom” (Squires, 1990: 136,162). However, for the sake of her love, she settles for life as a married woman living in a smaller house with a similar position to the one she had at the very beginning. Her intellectual, emotional and sexual liberation seem to be in theory only and the male phantasy comes true with Helen, who gives up her struggle and subordinates herself to her husband’s needs. However, all of Helen’s attempts for love are considered great since she is able to marry the man she desired. Related with the idea of love in *Books and Persons*, Bennett states, “love is the greatest thing in life, saying that the public wants love, beauty, luxury, thrills and heroism” (Mylett, 1974: 79-83). Likewise in one of his letters in 1895, he describes his experience of love as such:

I have never been in Love (wish to God I had, when I am struggling with a love scene) but I imagine that the joy of the artist when he first knows that he is an artist is similar to joy of the lover when he first knows that he is in love and loved ... However, he also does not believe that love is woman’s whole existence, but it is the major part, he thinks that sexual love and love of children are important. (Drabble, 1974: 73)

His varying attitude towards women is detected as he refers to them as “species,” not individuals. In the novel, Helen is sometimes an individual but sometimes a domestic species who is waiting for her ideal man to marry her. On the other hand, Bennett’s
Journalism for Women is a kind of attack on women:

He wants women to be in their private and safe places, homes, being aware of their inefficiency and weakness, not only physically but also intellectually. He points out that women journalists as a body have faults ... they are due, not to sex, but to the subtle, far-reaching effects of early training ... the female sex is prone to be inaccurate and careless of apparently trivial detail ... but some women are as accurate to details as the most impeccable men. (2005: 6,9)

This attitude proves that most men, including Bennett himself, may not be so sure how to describe women because of the uncertain male concerns about women as he is split in terms of women and their characteristics. His varying attitudes towards women are also realized in his marriage to Marguerito Soulie. He really wants a “docile, subservient, self-effacing housekeeper of a wife, he also wants an approving, uncensorious, glamorous, intelligent wife and he cannot get both at once.” He defends the rights of women, education, and their right to work, yet he is haunted by the idea of the wife “beautiful, well-dressed, precious, intelligent, yet servile, a kind of secretary, housekeeper, a companion, all rolled into one” (Drabble, 1974:151-164). While half of him wants, the other half does not want his wife Dorothy Cheston to be an independent and career-minded woman, to succeed in her career. He feels that D. Cheston is a supreme housekeeper and she is submitted to Bennett in terms of both domestic and sexual services, while being an adventurous and independent woman standing on her own feet at the same time. Half of him wants to see women as innocent foolish creatures; the other half is attracted to women if they are
adventurous and independent. There are several similarities between Bennett and Wells’ concept of feminism. Both of them are in conflict with the women that they know and live with and what these women can be and what they expect them to be. In this respect, Helen corresponds with Bennett’s ideal female model, though she is not the only example. Anna, in *Anna of the Five Towns* is another example of such an ideal female character who is both domestic and spirited; she is also a complex character, who “had never permitted herself to dream of the possibility of an escape from the parental servitude, she had never looked beyond the horizons of her present world, but had sought spiritual satisfaction in the idea of duty and sacrifice ...” (Bennett, 1988: 37, 81). The relationships between Helen and her uncle, who are both strong and stubborn characters, offer a lot for feminist criticism. This also implies that there will be an inevitable battle of wills which will be evaluated through Cixous’ power concept. Drawing an ideal female model, Bennett’s notable point related to the male and female issue is that “with particular scrupulousness that a momentous change was occurring in the grass, imbalance of opportunity between the sexes. Of course, this takes the reader to the issue of conflict between masculinity and femininity that appear as evolving, dynamic constructs in his fiction, rather than as the changeless bases of identity” (Squillace, 1977: 15). To Bennett, “women have advanced, they will continue to advance until a period of stability has been reached, which period is assuredly not yet, but women have not advanced a single step without a definite fight ... mutual rivalry” and this fight will probably go on forever (Squillace, 1977: 100). *Helen with the High Hand* depicts such a fight between male and female characters, offering feminist criticism invaluable material about female experience in a patriarchal society, examining what is to be feminine and masculine.
Within the light of those notions, *Helen with the High Hand* portrays an elderly, witty, and miserly man, Mr Ollerenshaw, and his estranged young niece, Helen Rathbone. Both characters are strong and stubborn, and discover an affinity and affection for each other. The crafty and tricky niece moves into the miser’s house and what follows is an enjoyable battle of wills between the two characters who have multiple identities in Irigaray, Kristeva, and Cixous’ words. In the novel, power, the basic determinant, is a force that shapes individuals and the society that circumscribes them, determining the relationships between the individual and society. Thus the novel may be said to function as a perfect medium to which Cixous’ power concept is applied. This leads the reader to the use of power, entailing a reference to patriarchy which offers a lot in feminist criticism. In Western Patriarchal society, power and gender identity emerge as dominant themes. In the novel, power structures are embodied in both characters who find themselves in power relationships that are in the form of domination and victimization. Power is the basic element through which individuals’ motives and attitudes towards the others can be explained. To study this point, it is helpful to refer to Cixous who makes a distinction between good power (power to) which characterizes the feminine and constructive world, and bad power (power over) which characterizes the masculine and destructive world. Bennett offers in this novel a vision of a human society in which money and property are of utmost importance. To Bennett, money is the signal for power as well. The novel questions hierarchical differences between the sexes in Western society, which valorise men over women, and the logos over pathos in Cixous’ words. Power in the novel is not destructive, but takes the form of playing mutual tricks to get the step niece or step uncle to act and do something, to triumph
over each other, and trying to overcome social and economic difficulties and prove themselves as individuals. In this respect, Bennett asserts, “our brains are capable of performing certain useful tricks, and that if we do not compel our brains to perform those tricks we shall suffer” (The Human Machine; 1913: 4). Power attributed to women in general does not have negative connotations. Thus, Cixous’ “power to” concept which is constructive and positive is applicable to Helen. Nevertheless, Helen is not the only one eager to have power to since Mr. Ollerenshaw also sometimes attempts to achieve “power to” Helen. Power tried to be held mainly by Helen and sometimes by James is not a ruinous agent, but a tempting and teasing one. To find and talk about differences between the power held by women and men is again a symbolic division made between the sexes by the society.

In order to understand the power relationships in the novel, first of all, Helen should be evaluated. Helen, in trying to diminish the masculinity of the male characters, especially James, corresponds with Bennett’s idea of women. Such themes that feminist literary criticism apply as her desire for economic, sexual and emotional liberation, her power relations with the male and female characters, her final destination, and marriage, will be analysed. Helen as a young woman proves that she is a determined woman from the very beginning. She is described as “resolved and not to be deterred from doing it by the caprices of other people” (4). She is also determined to do whatever she wants, she is free to choose: “she had chosen” (4). Being a determined woman, and doing what she wants will have a great effect on James’ masculinity. The young woman chooses the bench she is going to sit on: “I meant to occupy that bench; it would be absurd on my part to change my mind” (4). Mr. James has taken one corner and the young woman will take the other,
therefore the bench seems to be a pair of scales. At the very beginning, Cixous’ power concept seems to be applicable to both Mr James and the young girl equally, although Bennett never believes in equality between the sexes, as he points out in his *Journalism for Women*. However, which part of scales will be much heavier and who will be more powerful will be realized at the end of the novel. The pair of the scales image might recall Cixous’ opposition to the binary oppositions, which put the female on the negative side and the male on the positive side, though she is not simply privileging the female. Here, there seems to be not a binary opposition, but a linear compromise. However, in Kristeva’s sense, Helen and her uncle are alike, and Helen does not want to be superior to the uncle, which may create another opposition as in Irigaray’s essentialist belief that women are superior to men.

She proves her mental capacity and determination when she is described as a young girl who earns her living as a teacher and “brings all conventions to the bar of reason and forces them to stand trial never thinking of changing her mind” (4). To Bennett, freedom cannot be real unless it comprises a measure of economic freedom: Helen is free as she earns her living. According to Bennett, who confesses that the modern girl is a complete mystery to him, asserts that there are four assertions about the modern salary earning girl as represented by Helen: “first, she is so mature ... second and third, she has opinions about everything and is ready to talk about everything ... fourth, she is so sure of herself” (*Our Women*; 1920: 144-145). Helen’s being described as “a stylish piece of goods” is a kind of stereotype used for women by male authors, which Cixous, Kristeva, Irigaray and all feminist authors and theorists are fiercely against (4). This idea also reminds the reader of Bennett’s feeling that “women constitute a spectacle” (*Our Women*; 1920: 82). At the very
beginning, it is clear that patriarchal power operates by attaching women to certain paradigms of feminine identity. However, Helen is able to overcome those paradigms. Having described the young girl as “a stylish piece of goods,” and then as a courageous, resolved and brave girl reflects the author’s conflicting attitude towards women.

Thus, Helen is androgynous in Kristevan terms and she proves that she has not one but multiple personalities with no confines of gender, she is not static but fluid. If Helen is to be described in Cixous’ terms, this young girl subverts the binary oppositions which valorise men over women: “she was a tall girl, formed with a complexion between fair and dark ... twenty-five, with no outward sign of fear, irresolution, cowardice” (5). The issue of gender as the central problem for a female individual struggling for an autonomous selfhood and identity is portrayed in the novel. Because of her not wanting to blush in front of a man; her not speaking either so as not to seem weak, she should be interpreted in terms of masculine qualities. She strives to be logical. In other words, she is masculine in her way of thinking, speaking, and acting to have power to survive psychologically in a world dominated by masculine authority and discourse in other words, she is androgynous in Kristevan sense. According to Cixous, essentialist dichotomies, which the masculinist system of domination is based on, have their foundation in the dichotomy of men and women. In other words, gender is the primary organizing principle of all power structures. Kate Millett also postulates, “the male-female relationship is the paradigm for all power relationships” (Tong, 1989: 95). Viewed from this perspective, in the novel, the issue of gender as the central problem for a female, who struggles for an autonomous selfhood and identity, is portrayed through Helen whose name connotes
the words “aristocratic and expensive” and her relationship with Mr. Ollerenshaw whose stepbrother dies and leaves a daughter, Susan, Helen’s mother in the novel (9). Susan earns little money, and is rude to her step-uncle who protests against her marriage. In other words, she rejects her step-uncle and his wishes as the symbol of male authority in order to be independent. There has never been reconciliation between them as Mr. Ollerenshaw’s property has been one of the factors, which threatens Susan’s independence as he wants to use that money to rule Susan and her affairs.

Helen’s uncle Mr. James, towards whom Ann tries to be assertive undergoes changes, and at the same time, his masculinity is both affected and diminished through the relationships with cunning and scheming women. These are, firstly, the female protagonist Helen, and then another woman, Mrs. Proctor. James’ physical appearance is the signifier of his male power, and assertion of himself:

Mr. James Ollerenshaw’s age was sixty, but he looked as if he did not care. His appearance was shabby ... he carried his hands in the peculiar horizontal pockets of his trousers ... These pockets were characteristic of the whole costume ... The general expression of his face was one of suppressed, sarcastic amusement. (2-3).

When it comes to his personality, “by the town he was respected. His views on cottage property, the state of trade, and the finances of the borough were listened to with a respectful absence of comment. He was one of the few who had made cottage property pay ... it was said, after Ephram Tellwright, he was the richest man in Bursley” (4). An interesting point to make here is that “he had never got within arm’s
length of a woman” which seems to be a foreshadowing of the women he will have to meet (4). Mr. Ollerenshaw is described as sitting on the nearest bench in Bursley Park waiting for his opponent. It is from then on power relations begin when a young woman comes to the park and sits on the bench.

Helen’s arrival changes not only Mr. Ollerenshaw’s masculinity but also his life: “he was very illogical that afternoon, he threw over the principles of a life time … he had objected to the expensive and the aristocratic, he was a plain man with simple unostentatious taste for money” (9-10). However, throughout the novel, what he dislikes will in turn be what he has to live with through Helen. Being a man who never gets within arm’s length of a woman, James has the joy in sitting next to a pretty and well-dressed woman, and in a way he likes her company. She corresponds with Bennett’s idea of women, proving that, she is complementary and she will go on being complementary to his existence with her femininity. This statement also corresponds with Irigaray and Cixous’ notion that women are historically limited to being sexual objects for men. If explained in Irigaray’s terms, Helen with her beauty and femininity gives pleasure to James. Helen’s appearance serves as a mirror of male gaze and her body presents the plurality of her sex organs in Irigaray’s terms. James becomes sure that he will learn many things from her, “she felt maternal towards him” (10). To James, Helen seems to be enclosed, unattainable, and womblike, in Lacan’s words. He feels himself in joyful fusion with his mother in the Imaginary Order in Lacanian in the Maternal Chora in Kristevan sense. Helen experiences (which is also common to nearly all women) a biological lack, the penis, and so, along with the rest of her gender, is eager to substitute her lacking organs with maternity, something more spiritual and cultural. In this case, psychologically in
Irigaray’s words. Helen indeed likes him like a mother. Helen creates a sense of positive identity for women and herself when she claims to be wiser than him, and believes that she can teach a great deal to him. In a way, she subverts Ruskin’s idea of separate spheres in which a woman is described as negative by masculinist gender ideology. Helen feels that the quarrel between her mother and her step uncle makes him unhappy and he becomes “solitary, unfeminised and bachelor” which makes her unhappy as a good mother nurturing him that recalls Cixous and Irigaray’s concept of mother (10). James needs the other part of him to be a whole but he fails to accomplish it. On the other hand, Helen from the very beginning is able to identify herself in a male constructed world with her femininity. In the greater part of the novel, Helen’s achievements and possession of many qualities show that she keeps her femininity with her power based on the renunciation of the wishes and orders of her step uncle as the symbol of masculine culture.

The first thing Helen wants to do to assert her power is to move to James’ house to realize her ambitions. However, Helen also has come to like him:

- Because he was old and dry; because he had a short laugh and a cynical and even wicked gleam of the eye that pleased her,
- because there was an occasional tone in his voice that struck her as deliciously masculine, ancient, and indulgent; and
- because he had spoken to her first; and because his gaze wandered with an admiring interest over her dress and up into the dome of her sunshade; and because the skin of his hand was so crinkled and glossy. (17-18)

His wrinkled hands make Helen feel that he might be a baby or a very old man. In
both cases, she is sure that she is going to be able to control him, and his house, and “power to” him as a mother or a niece. Helen likes her step uncle’s dry, cynical personality, and she does not dislike being gazed at by him. Although he is a male, she does not regard him as a threat to her femininity. James likes Helen as well: he describes Helen “as an extremely agreeable little thing” (11). On the other hand, Helen is in binary opposition to her step uncle: “she was a complete contrast to James Ollerenshaw, sure of herself” (18). She is a kind of mirror for Mr. Ollerenshaw, and the mirror is the symbol of his split self and alienation. He sees his reflected image in Helen. Helen, in other words, finds out his Semiotic mode that he is afraid to live.

Being and living in Longshow as a teacher, Helen is never content with her current situation, because “she always likes a change” (18). She wants to improve herself in the masculine realm constructed in logic. Being a teacher with a low salary does not enable her to go beyond her feminine limits. Helen teaches, “everything, she knows sewing, cookery, mathematics,” which are the qualities attributed to Victorian women (19). However, she is more than a Victorian woman, and James is “struck all of a heap by the wanders of the living organism” (19). From the very beginning of the novel, Helen tries to assert her willpower, her identity, and her masculinity in that masculine world. This desire is overtly seen first in the bench scene, her moving to James’ house, and later on her wasting money without informing her uncle, playing tricks to the servant, and so on. Though James tries hard to keep his masculinity, he is the one whose masculinity is destroyed while Helen asserts her masculinity. James, through extraordinary and amazing Helen, the mirror symbol, realizes how ignorant he is of the world although he considers himself to be a wise and experienced man.
Helen offers James a kind of magic mirror, which enables him to be free from that reflection which shows him as captured, objectified and split. Being aware of her domestic qualities, Helen points that there are many intelligent girls like her who know how to make omelettes and simultaneous equations, but the problem is that those girls are not accepted by masculine order easily. For example, James tries to undermine Helen’s abilities, saying that those girls “may be seen in the streets and lanes thereof about half-past eight in the morning and again about five o’clock in the evening. But the fact is not generally known” (19). In fact, James seems to try to make Helen feel ordinary. Surprisingly enough, there are some men who are against intelligent girls, since intelligence is not accepted to be in accordance with the nature and the biology of women. However, despite the fact that James belongs to the Symbolic Order where the language and culture is controlled by the Law of the father, he seems to be split, objectified, and ignorant of the world. Helen, who is in the Semiotic Order as a rebellious girl seems to be much closer to the Symbolic Order in Lacanian and Kristevan sense. Here, the feminine and the masculine roles are reversed: Helen seems to be much more masculine and James seems to be much more feminine than masculine. There is the fundamental paradox that women are accepted as being masculine and at the same time feminine, because they want to partake in the Symbolic Order in Kristevan sense.

Being a member of a masculine society, James is ready to examine the abilities of a female; he constantly struggles to control his manliness, trying to diminish her qualities. He tries to test her knowledge on mathematics. However, Helen says, “I’ll bet you a shilling I can. In addition, I’ll bet you one shilling against half a crown that I do it in my head, if you like. And if I lose I’ll pay” (19). Helen
assumes a male quality and offers a bet and it is she who decides on the amount of money. Helen’s androgynous nature signifies her freedom of fixed gender roles. Although Mr James does not accept the bet offer, “he had struck his flag” (20). Therefore, his having struck his flag is the key for the power theme, because he will always have to do that throughout the novel. Helen strives to be powerful in that world to reverse the old masculine statements and behaviours through her attempts. Although James has the phallus, which is the signifier of sexual difference, his phallus does not signify power and control in the Symbolic Order in Lacanian sense. Helen is portrayed as more powerful than James in most situations despite her lack of penis. However, this portrayal will change when she meets Mr. Dean. For Helen, “it was painful to be compelled to reinforce the old masculine statement that women have no sense of humour” (20). Although Helen knows that James has given in, she is eager to attack him psychologically in order to have power over him and gain victory over him. After Helen’s victory, James learns of Helen’s ability to play the piano and teach it to children as well, but she is happy neither with her job nor with the money she earns, as Helen looks beyond the horizons of her present world dominated by patriarchal order. When her step uncle wants to pull her leg “Helen protested firmly” warning him “don’t try to tease me. I never joke about money. Money’s a very serious thing” (20).

This shows that Helen, who wants to prove that she is a new woman, is preoccupied with money and she is quite aware of the fact that economic advantage is of utmost importance to a woman in the masculine world if she is able to assert her autonomy, and she describes money as the first serious step towards autonomy. She also points out that she hates her job; she does not want to deal with the assignments
of stupid children, as she is an intelligent person with a reasoning faculty. She does not find it funny, she prefers to enjoy herself, to “read, play the piano, pay visits and have nice clothes” (21). Although she hates her job, she needs it to earn her living. When James learns that she earns more than thirty shillings a week and spends most of it on her clothes, as a man, who is not capable of thinking of the issues, women deal with and attach importance to, he is surprised because he does not waste that much money. This is the male voice of both the writer and the narrator. As an androgynous character in Kristevan words, apart from her masculine qualities, Helen is feminine in terms of her desire to have and wear good and nice clothes. For James, it is nonsense and funny to waste so much money on clothes. However, it is also the conflicting attitude of a male towards a female since it is Helen’s attractive appearance and clothes that make Mr James interested in and attracted by Helen. Nevertheless, Helen does not let Mr James, or any man, speak to her in that manner, telling him that her mother also has similar interest in clothes, and that this is one of the attributes for women in a patriarchal society by those who attach women to paradigms of feminine identity.

Helen is not the victim of female paradigms of wearing nice clothes due to her courage and intellect. James is able to solve this paradox by accepting the differences between men and women about different occasions. “he realized, further, the great universal natural law that under any circumstances-no matter what they may be- when any man-no matter who may be- differs from any pretty and well dressed woman-no matter who she may be-he is in the wrong” (22). James seems to be ready to yield to the power of femininity, particularly Helen, and he finds it a universal rule to obey. Helen’s “power to” James becomes “power over” in his mind.
because he thinks that he has been wounded because of Helen’s duel and victory. He feels as if he has lost a war and he has been defeated. He imagines himself in the hands of a female oppressor, Helen, and that brings about his consciousness: “James’ dignity bled freely; he made strange to say, scarcely any attempt to stanch the blood” (24). He seems to be bleeding like a female in her menstruation period.

It is unequivocal in the novel that James and Helen try to form his/her real identity free from social constraints and his/her Ideal Ego in which an individual, forms his/her identity, which is independent of the Ego Ideal in which the society tries to form an identity on the individual which is in fact fake. Helen tries not to act in accordance with other people’s definitions of her; she intends to form her autonomy free from any external effects. Nevertheless, to a certain extent, she seems to settle in the way society members wish her to be.

There are a number of occasions where James’ male authority begins to diminish. Since the novel is mostly based on power relationships between the sexes, another power relationship is easily detected when Helen comes to James’ house, which happens to be the oldest house, with a certain individuality and distinction. As a young and intelligent woman, Helen comes to his house to change and create a new lifestyle for James. James’ trying to open the door but his inability to do it: “he never succeeded in opening his door at the first attempt” shows that he is not able to make even small changes in his life. It also creates a binary opposition to Helen’s basic objective in her life, which is to make a change (28). This corresponds with Bennett’s idea stated in his work The Author’s Craft, (1914) in which he points that change is needed even if it is not a radical change, or at least belief in change is needed though he accepts the people as they are. At home, “the sitting room was a
crowded and shabby little apartment ... on the table was a full-rigged ship on a stormy sea in a glass box, some resin; a large stone bottle of ink, a ready reckoner” (28-29). This full rigged ship on a stormy sea in a glass box represents Helen’s future fantasies about her uncle and his house: she will create a storm that runs the risk of James’ ship’s sinking, both economically and psychologically. That glass box, which reflects James’ personality in a distorted form, will reflect his true nature through Helen later on. Where Helen sits in the house is to be mentioned here she is “sitting on one that had not been sat upon for years and years” (29). She chooses the unused one and she is going to manipulate James to do things that he has never done for years and years by using her feminine and intellectual power. In this scene, the feminine Helen is not portrayed as a negative state but a positive state; she seems to be the one who must be submitted to. She is in the Semiotic Order (Thetic Phase) in Kristevan words. Helen, from the very beginning of the novel, substitutes her biological lack with her manipulative power. She acts according to her wishes. She assumes a subject position within language. Helen’s reversing the hierarchy of Penis/Lack of Penis is important and it corresponds with Cixous’ concept of subverting binarism and patriarchy.

Ruskin’s notion of the separate spheres is also subverted. From that moment, they begin to play tricks on each other. Not only Helen’s, but also her uncle’s battle of wills and power commences. For example, Helen asks James if he has a good servant or not. James says yes but he lies by saying that the servant is not at home at the moment, although “he has caught a glimpse of Mrs Butt’s figure” (30). Helen adds that “but of course one can see at once that no woman lives her” (30). Although James asks how she can understand that there is no woman there, Helen only says
that she can understand, she is not overtly explaining what she means: “such astonishing virtuosity in the art of innuendo is the privilege of one sex only” (30). This is a kind of superiority on the part of the female sex. Though Helen is manipulative, she is not supporting the superiority of the female sex over the other sex. When they begin to talk about James’ eating habits, as a clever girl, Helen understands that James does not like the meals he eats: “I have what I call my meals here ... I have what I’m given” (32). James has become quite mechanical; leading a monotonous life, even eating becomes a duty not a pleasure. Helen then tells her step uncle that she has never seen a servant who can cook tasty meals and she adds that she hopes her step uncle has such a good servant. James does not really understand Helen’s motives. To Cixous, the male is the winner and victory is on the side of the active, while the defeat is on the side of the passive and the female is the loser. However, even as an active person, it is probable that James is going to lose, and Helen, already on the passive side of the binary opposition seems to be the winner. Thus, the roles may change according to the situations because of women’s potential to be mad and assertive though they seem to be passive. Consequently, binary opposition risks being subverted for the benefit of the female, and James points out one of the problems related to the servants in that if one likes something once, servants believe in the fact that he/she will like the same thing for years. For example, he says “I used to like kidney; but it is more than three years ago” (33). It also shows a lack of communication between James and his female servants.

The moment that is planned by Helen, and of course by James, in order to challenge each other’s gender roles is detected when Helen shows her desire to cook him a delicious kidney, pretending that there is not a servant in at that moment. One
of the types of power relations is operated in the cooking and domestic abilities of Helen. Giving and receiving nourishment is the basis of human relationships. It begins with the breast-feeding in which the infant and the mother become a whole. Helen, from the very beginning assumes a maternal control over her Uncle James, considering him to be a young and helpless child who needs her for nourishment in Cixous’ and Irigaray’s sense. Cooking is one of the tasks through which she calculates, she can reduce James to a consumer, the nurtured, while she becomes the cook and the nurturer. Her ability to produce makes her powerful; James has already lost his control because Helen is not only the manager of the kitchen, but also of the entire house. In addition, James gives in once more; power is in the hands of Helen again. Through her ability to cook, she already creates an authority over James. As a domestic female, she can find all the necessary materials of cooking. Helen has chosen the “blue and a white cup and saucer” (33). She chooses them just because she likes them. She then in a moment chooses to look at the scullery “with a bewitching supplication” she says that “she will not touch anything, and servants are silly. They always think one wants to interfere with them, without waiting for James’ permission, she enters the scullery” (33).

Though a minor character, the scene in which the servant, Mrs. Butt, goes out of the house, is necessary to mention here, in order to portray Helen’s power on her, too. Mrs Butt has been there and Helen’s witchlike attitude can be noticed easily when she exclaims that there is no one. It seems that she pretends to be planning all, showing off her domestic qualities. In addition, James, who has pretended that he has not seen Mrs Butt at home, says, “it is Mrs Butt, we thought you were out” (34). Having eavesdropped on Helen’s conversation behind her Mrs Butt reacts to both
James’ and Helen’s ideas about her and she goes out of the house with a rebellious and courageous attitude. Mrs Butt’s role is finished here because of Helen’s tricky plan, but, having a quite thick waist with her apron, having a hairy face for a woman, her appearance seems to have duality: she is a female servant wearing an apron, but in fact has a masculine appearance. She has womanly domestic qualities and a masculine appearance and rudeness as well. She apparently lacks feminine qualities as Helen has. She does not want to stay in a place where her womanly qualities are insulted.

Helen’s arrival has been the turning point for James, who has experienced many things which he has never lived through before. Helen’s use of power over James begins to be felt. He has been insulted by Susan’s childish daughter, and much worse than being insulted, nothing has happened to the insulter. He has also cancelled his customary bowling match because of a woman. He is sure that he is going to experience some unexpected events, too: “this afternoon was drawing to a close in a manner which piled thrilling event” (35). Although Mrs Butt miscooks the meals, James misses her. Because he cannot do without a woman’s help, as he is dependent on a female substitute for the abilities he lack, such as cooking, washing, and cleaning. Without a female, his subjectivity and self is not completed. Helen’s remark that “I am going to get our tea”, with the word ”our” being one of the things that James is not used to hearing, is one of the incidents through which his masculine hierarchy is shattered again (36).

In the power relationship between Helen and James, Helen is drawn as a witchlike woman who furthers her motives under a witchlike and detective attitude: “she spies out the riches and the poverty of establishment” (38). She begins to assert
her identity and she insists on her uncle’s going for a walk, she starts to be an authority over her uncle in his own house. Whenever he rejects her wishes, she changes her attitude and wish. Since he does not feel like going out for a walk, she suggests that he go to another room: James gives in again and obeys the rules of a woman. He is forced to go to another room, trying to listen to Helen’s movements in the kitchen. From the very beginning, it is observed that Helen is a bright assertive and self-determined person who uses her power to manipulate her uncle for different purposes and James always gives in. He is apt to be manipulated by a female and he cannot have authority over Helen, though he never forgets her insulting him in the park. Moreover, this is important in that the danger of being insulted by Helen once more arouses the male in him. He wants to be a male control or authority over a female, Helen. However, Helen does not yield to his patriarchal authority. Although he believes that Helen is quite a skilful girl, whose ability to calculate mentally he is proud of, he wishes that Helen would come and confess that she cannot find all that she wants to cook the meal and will ask where the necessary things are.

This reflects a common conflicting attitude of a male to a female, which includes the male’s desire or fear and like or dislike, to insult or to be proud of, victimize or exalt. Helen’s uncle tries to have “power over” her; he wants her to be compelled to humble herself before him. This idea has given him pleasure and he knows that Helen will not be able to have tea without the tea leaves that he keeps locked in a tea caddy, and there is no tea at home. “Shamefully delighting in the imminent downfall of a fellow creature that a woman, James went into the front room as he had been bidden” (37). James wants to be the winning side in the fight with Helen. He has a negative attitude towards the piano that Helen likes to play a lot.
However, music reflects her Semiotic power. It is her language that she expresses herself. It is certain that a man whose Semiotic mode is under pressure cannot enjoy music and the piano which is an instrument that Helen has a complete “power to.” In one way or the other there is a power struggle between James and Helen. Watching Helen’s cooking, he never understands what Helen plans to do. He becomes disturbed because Helen has not told that she cannot make tea without the tealeaves, which he has hidden when he has noticed the steaming teapot. He felt insulted and he has lost the battle again, Helen becomes the winner and she has triumphed over her masculine counterpart once more. He is a loser and victim in the fight with calculating and intelligent Helen.

In this respect, it can be said that Helen once more subverts Ruskin’s idea of separate spheres, as she has womanly and domestic qualities such as wearing good and nice clothes, cooking good dishes, and making tea. However, she is not passive, timid, confined, emotional and stable: it is James who is made passive, timid, confined, emotional, and stable by a female who is trying to form her subjectivity. The patriarchal figure in the novel is not the universal authority in western society: the matriarchal figure seems to hold all the authority, which might belong to the masculine. It can be said that through James’ personality that patriarchy is devalued and attacked in the novel. Helen, having feminine qualities holds a great “power to” James, whose authority is being diminished day by day. Therefore, with her femininity, Helen is able to define herself. Her femininity and sexuality can never be suppressed and devalued. The power struggle is also noticed when James is again insulted when the milk is put first then the tea although he feels himself authority on that matter. Even his little authority on the subject of the tea is rejected and Helen
chooses her own way. In addition, for the first time he has tasted an omelette, he has liked and he has been ravished. His mechanical eating habits are revolutionized because of Helen “he was a greedy man whose evil passion had providentially been kept in check for over a quarter of a century by the gross unskilfulness, the appalling monotony of Mrs Butt” (42). James has never believed that such a woman could exist. He has been suppressed by Mrs Butt’s unsuccessful domestic qualities and dullness, but now he has a great cook and a fascinating exotic and extraordinary female in Helen. It does not matter what qualities a woman has, James has always been compelled to humble himself before the women: first, Mrs Butt, then Helen.

An incident in which James’ authority as a male is shattered is when he notices that Mrs Butt had stolen China tea although he had tried his best to lock it. To him, “the illusion of half a life time shattered” (44). James had always considered himself more intelligent than Mrs Butt; however, actually, he is not since he had been living in an illusionary world that he had created for himself. This discovery enables Helen to manipulate James not to hire her, pointing out that she is ready to stay here, cook his meals, and give up her teaching position. She wants to be the only person at home, having all the authority in reality. Unaware of her intentions, James likes this idea very much but hides his emotions. Thus, secrecy is reflected through the relationships between Helen and James who do not share their feelings and ideas overtly: They have secrets, concealed thoughts and schemes. They are unknowable to each other as subjects. They just pretend and play tricks on each other. They tell secrets to reveal discrepancies between public and private selves, and Ego Ideal, and Ideal Ego in Lacanian sense. When Helen asks her uncle if he likes the omelette, he again represses his emotions, he is not able to live in the Semiotic mode. He says:
“he paused as though reflecting whether he liked it or not, Ay he said judicially, it’s none so bad, I could do a bit more of that” (43). Those changes may be some kind of repressed desires for Uncle James and the reader is going to examine if the return of the repressed will help him to be conscious of his own identity.

Apart from secrecy, scheming is another key word for both James and Helen, in their relationships. James “had deliberately schemed to get rid of Mrs Butt by means of Helen Rathbone” (45). With the thought of getting rid of Mrs Butt, James encourages Helen to talk about the servant on purpose, pretending that Mrs Butt is not at home, thinking that although Helen is a very smart girl she has not suspected the game. He has some fears about the expenses of Helen but feels that he has managed so far and can continue to manage her. This is again a dilemma of a male towards a female in that he feels both desire and fear for such a girl, and this is what feminism is concerned with. James is not sure whether he can manage her or not, but he wants her to stay at home because he likes her and her delicious meals. He is afraid of losing her, and James in fact does not have his real image, he has had his fake image, which has been created by the other people so far. His supposed image is now imprisoned in Helen’s image. He is what Helen wants him to be, he sees his self through Helen. This fake identity is formed through desires and ideas of Helen and he is not free to form his autonomous identity that he seems to try hard to accomplish.

In a way, it can be detected that Helen assumes male power and authority here, and James assumes the female, the emotional, the tempted, and the dependent; for example, he gets upset when his music is not praised. His identity seems to be trapped by not only his uncertainties and dilemmas but also Helen’s intellectual and scheming attitude. This female quality makes him androgynous in Kristevan sense,
he does not seem to be a type that performs his defined roles, and thus, he keeps his individuality.

Helen’s objective to diminish James’ masculinity is also clear in her letter to her mother saying “I saw the servant in the scullery, but uncle thought she was not there. He was not silly in fact, and I wanted to get rid of the servant, I did it he did not suspect” shows clearly that the two of them are attempting to play tricks on each other, but Helen has the greatest plan which is to move into a larger house at Hillport and spend his money on herself, because she does not have any intention to stay in this house (45). “In such a manner comes Helen Rathbone to keep house for her great step-uncle” (45). Uncle James’ schemes do not seem to be as efficient as Helen’s. Helen is determined to live with her uncle and change his life thoroughly even though he is a very traditional man who is not ready for such changes. Helen looks beyond the horizons of her present world.

Power struggles between James and Helen are also detected in the scene when James notices that Helen has meddled in his cash box and has taken some money. Actually, Helen has been meddling with everything related to James. Unaware of the trick played upon him, James learns that she has spent some of the money because she needed money urgently to go shopping, and solely for this reason; she had not waited for him. It makes James furious because he is once more not respected, he feels insulted and his authority is defeated. After the loss of James’ China tea, this is the second loss in which his property is stolen. He discovers it, however, as a male, he will either accept the existence of an independent centre of consciousness with his claim to autonomy or cast out the offender, nevertheless, he cannot do the latter. He recognizes another centre of consciousness and understands
the limitations of his power and perception. As a possessor, he has no right to possess; he is possessed by his male power.

Though James is determined to be the master in his house, Helen is determined to be the master in his own house as well, thus, “conflict was imminent” (46-47). The striking thing is that, Helen is self-confident and more comfortable than James in James’ own house. Helen’s self-confidence and comfort is revealed by means of her room, which has a peculiar style with Helen’s belongings such as hats, brushes, and manicure tools. She herself has chosen to stay in this particular room which shows her determination to have a room of her own, to be independent. This also shows that Helen is aware of her Lack, knowing that being a woman is quite different from being a man in terms of physical appearance, style and discourse though she does not want to be a toy in the hands of masculine brutality with her feminine fragility. This corresponds with Bennet’s notion that two sexes have complementary but essentially different psychologies: Sentiment/Reason, which is also in conformity with Ruskin’s doctrine of separate spheres for men and women. In spite of the binarism that puts the women on the negative side, Helen struggles hard to subvert this hierarchy of Man/Woman, Penis/Lack of Penis, and holding “power to” her uncle. Further to this, Helen has come there to capture her uncle. Helen summarizes the power relations between herself and her uncle: “I am not out of the wood yet, well you see, uncle and I haven’t quite decided whether he is to have his way or I am to have mine; we were both thinking about it when you have happened to call ...” (52). Organizing everything, Helen points out that “I have always lived in a small house...but not because I wanted to. I like room. I dare say that uncle and I may find another house one of these days” (55). Helen seems to have repressed the
idea of living in a big house which is revealed as her scheme gradually.

James’ question of her for not asking him for the money makes Helen pour out most women’s emotions and ideas about money. She says, “I hate asking for money. All women do” (47). This is a quite contemporary issue: James wants Helen to submit to him for economic needs. However, Helen does not seem to be a person who will submit to men for money. Nevertheless, it is essential to note here that Helen has given up teaching and does not earn money and does not have any economic opportunities that will guarantee her future either. This situation draws a contrast between her wishes and desires. She wants to be the master of herself and another person’s house, she is obsessed with the idea of being powerful, ordering and organizing everything and everybody, including her uncle, according to her wishes and desires. She is not a type of Victorian womanhood imbued with the nineteenth century female virtues of duty, submission and kindliness. However, she seems to be an ideal wife for Bennett because of her domestic qualities. In this respect, she seems to be an angel in the house. Relying on men for financial means is traditional. However, these same domestic qualities are a means for her to realize her ambitions in the future. In spite of her seemingly economic disadvantage, she is able to turn it into something advantageous. With her powerful and intelligent personality she actually seems to be an enigmatic character offering some kind of ambiguity. She seems to be stuck in between the Imaginary Order with her private voice, rejecting and giving up her job, the representative of the Symbolic Order in which she may accept the Law of the Father out of economic necessity. In this case, James acts as the symbol of superego limiting her drives and wishes according to social norms. In addition to this concern, “Helen was employing a tone that might be compared to
some fiendish instrumental device of a dentist” (47). Helen is attributed a Victorian female quality, being a demon or Satan, using a satanic device of a dentist. Through to the end of the novel, Helen begins to be much more mysterious. Extraction of James’ tooth refers to his phallic and his masculine authority, which is in danger that is a castration symbolism: “James Ollerenshaw did not wish his teeth stopped nor yet extracted. He had excellent teeth” (48). Helen has the power to get the phallus to gain freedom and masculine power in spite of her economic disadvantage: Although James is the owner of the house and money, it is Helen who has the power and authority over James: He cannot do anything, he seems to have lost the connection between his body and mind and he is split in personality. He was in the Symbolic order until Helen arrived, but now he happens to experience his Semiotic modes of anger anxiety, and wonder: “he stood up and raised all his body. Helen Rathbone! Such was the exordium but it was destined to remain a fragment” (48).

However, James is not able to do anything, he just tries to get used to the novelties that Helen creates in his life. Helen and her friend Sarah’s reunion is another experience for James that he is not used to seeing. To James, these two girls are fashionable women with a different manner of sitting down and they start conversation immediately, there are no silences or signs of being modest, bored or shy. “Gloves, frills, hats, parasol, veil, flowers, scent fills the room” (48). In other words, femininity comes for Uncle James’ house. Sarah tells James that it must be a great change that Helen stays in his house and James admits it. These two fashionable and fluffy women ignore James. It is another novelty for James to have such visitors and such clothes in the house. He feels that his security line is passed; his authority is diminishing much more day by day. He also feels that under the
pretence of marketing, Helen wastes too much money, which seems to be fantastic to him, feeling with his masculine intellect that it should be stopped as quickly as possible even in a hysterical mood, which is a female’s voice in the man’s world, in Irigaray’s sense. James regards Helen and her behaviours as dangerous. His habits, manners and notions about money are fixed, nevertheless, Helen is plural and multiple in Irigaray, Cixous, and Kristevan sense: “she was exquisitely fresh and candid, so violent and a complete contrast to James, so absurdly sagacious and sure of herself” (18). Helen’s barefaced theft and her defence of herself disturb him and he has imagined himself with an angel who is a great cook; however, this notion turns into something negative. He becomes happy about having caught Helen many times, but, not being a real man, he is not sure what to do and how to manage all these things neatly. He does not like the idea of losing ten pounds for the sake of an omelette with kidney. However, Helen’s laughter is heard as the symbol of hysterical language in Irigaray and Cixous’ words, in the Semiotic Order. Helen does not avoid showing her bodily desires; even her teeth are seen while laughing. It is her trick in man’s world where “the wisest plan would be to laugh” (12). This hysteric language reminds the reader of Freud, Lacan and of course Kristeva’s idea that “there are no such things as men and women but split subjects who have elements of both. Women as well as men are masculine in so far as they enter the symbolic realm” (Cornell and Thushwell, 1987: 151). That point also corresponds with the androgyny concept that will be observed in the novel later on. Helen, from the very beginning uses her own female discourse (Semiotic) instead of masculine (Symbolic) in Kristevan sense. She speaks from her body, through her little yet cunning tricks. Being able to choose and use her discourse, Helen offers a promising future for feminist critics through her
capacity to subvert and undermine existing power structures. Cixous employs the terms masculine and feminine to denote the possible roles of response to social, cultural, political order. Seen from that angle, Helen now assumes defensive masculine positions, and later James will assume emotional and weak feminine positions to show that these markers can be exchanged in order to be free from the confines of gender roles.

James is not able to understand women, especially, Helen, her motives, and ideas: she is rather a mysterious and magnificent creature for him. James wants to speak to Helen about that marriage issue but he needs receiving tactics rather than giving since tactics are the basis of these two stubborn persons’ relationship. However, Helen’s absence makes him feel himself an individual of no importance. As a man who attributes to women only domestic qualities such as cooking and managing the house, he gets angry that his breakfast is not ready. He also feels that “he could not give way to righteous resentment. Diplomacy! Tact! Forbearance!” (64). This shows the nature of his relationship with Helen. James thinks that his life has been turned upside down and his life is out of order. The servant problem contributes to Helen’s plan of moving to a bigger house so that servants have their own rooms. She goes on teasing James, saying that if servants do not sleep in the house where they are working, they will probably be late. Helen is unmoved that the breakfast, which is of supreme importance to James, is late. As it is one of the very few things, which he feels, he is still in power. However, she is not to be assimilated into the traditional, domestic and submissive role of women; emotional and hurt easily by any kind of trouble especially by a man.

The battle of wills, the major point through which Bennett enables the reader
to see what determines the masculinity of the female and the femininity of the male, is observed in the scene, where Helen and James talk about money matters. Helen is able to understand how James collects the rents, how he invests the money, how much he has saved so far, all the things generally dealt with by men. She is familiar with the business world like a man in the Symbolic Order. James is both surprised at and pleased with Helen’s capacity for reasoning. However, her calculating the rents, asking him how many houses he has makes him feel himself trapped again. Helen’s conduct seems to be dangerous, she tries to be bossy over James and his money affairs, she learns the rent of his small house, and the money allowed for Mrs Butt by James as well. Her giving back the money she gets from James saying that she can stand on her own feet by herself, proves that she does not want to be weak and indebted to James, or any man, She never feels an obligation to James. James has lost the battle again without saying a single word about Emanuel. In this scene, being in the Imaginary Order in Lacanian sense, and in the Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense, she is once more the winner over a man, rejecting his authority, and even giving the money back. Helen knows the rules of the Symbolic Order as if she was a man as she is a very manipulative person.

Helen’s suggestion of going with her uncle to show him Wilbraham Hall at Hillport is another trick that Helen plays on him, and patriarchy. However, James does not like even the idea of moving: he is not ready to change his traditional lifestyle, the change means new expenses for him and Helen’s offer makes him feel insecure again. As opposed to Helen, who is ready to alter her position at any moment, James is pleased with his fixed, traditional, physical and spiritual condition. Nevertheless, he does not want to create tension or trouble, and because he both
desires and mostly fears the feminized world of the women in his life, he thinks that he needs to find the middle way. He is not authoritative any longer. Thus, being in the Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense, she tries to shake James’ security and authority in the Symbolic Order. She is both in her Semiotic and her Symbolic modes in Kristevan terms.

James’ authority is diminished once more when he wants to humour Helen, asking “what about that house as you have so kindly chosen for me? When she replies, “you have seen it” (88). When James tries to make fun of Helen, he is ridiculed in fact with Helen’s manipulative answer. She goes on teasing James and she points out that James has to buy this house to please her, adding that his present house is not good or big enough for her; moreover, he has to leave his money to her too. Making use of all her tempting skills, she pours out all her feelings. Helen is able to substitute her biological lack with her witty remarks, she is aware of her femininity and domestic abilities. She challenges the Law of the Father with her own voice and discourse:

Do you suppose I gave up my position at school in order to live in a poky little hole at eighteen pounds a year? What do you think I can do with myself all day in Trafalgar Road? Why, nothing. There’s no room even for a piano, and so my fingers are stiffening every day. It is not life at all. Naturally, it is a great privilege ... for a girl like me to live with an old man like you all alone, with one servant and no sitting room. But some privileges cost too dear. The fact is, you never think of me at all ... you think you’ve got a cheap housekeeper in me ... but
you haven’t. I’m a very good housekeeper ... especially in a very large house, but I’m not cheap. (89)

Through these sentences, she points out all her desires and wishes, stating that she is not that cheap twice. She feels herself restrained by the small structure and size of the house, and she reminds him of her quitting the job in order not to live in such a hole and on small money, calling him a miser who does not provide her with the privileges of a bigger and a larger house with a room for the piano and a sitting room and some other rooms for more than one servant and of course much more money. She is well aware of all these social forces, which determine and distort the way of her life. She feels herself trapped between her individual desires in the Semiotic Order and those economic and social restraints in the Symbolic Order. She sees her uncle as a threat in the way of her progress as long as he does not fulfil all the duties that she asks him to. She wants to control her destiny and wants to challenge the patriarchy through her uncle, using her power and authority on him and his traditional life style, which does not promise any kind of achievement and improvement on the part of Helen. Shocked by all these points put forward by Helen, James is sure that she has never lived in a big house.

Helen tries to give the impression that she is in fact helping her uncle who is wounded again. In order to realize her ambitions, she is ready to go on playing tricks on her uncle and next morning she announces that she is off to Canada which is another scheme to decide to whom the authority and power belong. James seems to have already lost the battle of power because of his addiction to Helen’s cooking and Helen has realized his addiction from the very beginning. He has thought that Helen’s cooking is worth the price of Wilbraham Hall. Instead of exposing his real
feelings, he tells her “If you’ll stop you shall have your Wilbraham Hall; he has told
her that I am sorry to lose these my girl, but what must be must” (91). They start to
play games with each other again. James starts to play the trick of taking advantage
of her being a money grabber, he points out he will leave some money to Helen and
her mother. “He considered that he was gradually winding in his line with immense
skill” (92). When Helen wants to learn the amount of the money, James is sure that
“he was going to beat her as eggs” (92). Helen says to herself “all this means that
he’ll give in when it comes to the point” (92). James becomes happy and feels
himself free of the menace of Mrs Butt, and he is also cheerful to be with Helen’s
delicious meals and to walk around the streets with a beautiful and attractive young
girl. James says to himself that this is all because of his diplomacy and tactics. Helen
will not risk the loss of the large fortune that her step-uncle will leave. Helen has
transformed James’ life into a wonderful one. He wants to possess Helen, he has
even consented to buying a new piano, but Helen’s falling silent seems to be a
reaction to the rules of the Symbolic Order: “In her way, Helen reckoned herself
somewhat of a diplomatist and a descendent of Machiavelli ... It’s a funny thing if I
can’t bring him to his knees with a tasty supper just to make it clear to him what he’ll
lose if he loses me” (95). Both characters try to take advantage of each other’s
weakness to win the game. Helen makes use of every simple method to realize her
ambitions in order to create an emancipated female selfhood.

James is well aware of the fact that it will be foolish to persevere further in
his obstinacy against Helen, who is very intelligent. James has never thought of his
income and leaving any money to anyone. What he has said has been an excuse for
not losing his money. However, both his money and authority will be diminished
sooner than he thinks. For the first time, James begins to think about his death, which is the deepest and the most intensive experience in the Real Order and it reaches James’ consciousness for a short moment. He believes that he will exchange Wilbraham Hall for Helen, who has proved to be capable of managing a bigger house and its cost is not too much when compared to his income. James plays another trick by ordering a porter to label the luggage for Crewe when Helen asks her uncle to accompany her to Glasgow. However, Helen confesses that “she had labelled the trunks for Crewe ... you were silly to imagine that I was going to leave you. But I thought I’d just leave nothing undone to make you give way. I made sure I was beaten. And now you are goose enough to toss, and you have lost” makes James get furious (107). He has been deceived once more. Throughout the novel, his failures make him less self-assured, therefore less masculine, less threatening and more vulnerable. Helen feels an affinity with the deficient masculinity of James, which makes him feminine as far as femininity, is the failure of masculinity. She has been playing for high stakes. On this occasion, both characters scheme to achieve the same outcome which is to ensure that the niece will miss the boat to Canada that will remove her from her uncle’s life.

Thus, Helen’s rejecting her socially accepted job and trying to be away from the social and economic restraints of the Symbolic Order through her fantasies and dreams of a new and more comfortable and privileged life make her live in between the Symbolic and Imaginary or Semiotic Order. She both rejects and tries to appropriate the Symbolic Order. Thus, she should control her fancies and dreams in her Semiotic mode, so as to balance her two modes not to cause anarchy and nonsense and to be able to enter the Symbolic Order to become a subject. If it does
not happen, she will be probably uneasy and unhappy. She has realized her ambitions: she becomes the mistress of Wilbraham Hall which she wanted greatly: owning a house is symbolic enough and enters the Symbolic Order in Lacanian and Kristevan sense through her tactics. She also achieves her private voice; she dominates and controls the other, her uncle. She achieves her desires in the Semiotic Order, and owns a house in the Symbolic Order. She is no longer unhappy and uneasy. This is a new beginning for James too, and he has got rid of many of his possessions apart from “the full-rigged ship and tempestuous ocean in a glass box” (109). Helen goes on assuming power for everything in the house; she does not let James hang up his most precious possessions, so as not to disturb the central decoration of the place. She disrupts the paternal cultural codes and never wants to be disrupted by any man. James’ only possessions the ocean and ship have been broken and his force has been diminished as well. Helen becomes happy with the broken pieces of ship and ocean, which will not suit the decoration of the room, as they are the reminders of the masculine authority and traditional values. James has lost all the things that remind him of his past. He is now like a baby trying to form a new life for himself.

One of the themes that feminism applies is the relationships of mothers and children. In the novel, the mothers do not offer sincerity and joy either: Mrs. Procktor is a step mother and her treatment of her step son is not of an affectionate one. On the other hand, Helen’s mother whom Helen does not like is a powerful woman who is the figure of the abject what the subject’s consciousness has to expel or disregard in order to create the proper separation between subject and object in Kristevan terms. In order to form identity, first of all, the mother’s body is to be abjected. Helen leaves the maternal space and through this separation, she constructs her autonomous
subjectivity and later on in the novel she will alter her position in the Symbolic Order through marriage. Helen also points out that “I’m always in the right, and mother is always in the wrong” (14). This can be seen as a binary opposition between the two female characters, mother and daughter, but Helen assumes the first part of the binary opposition, which is the positive powerful and the right one and she uses her “power to” her mother. Helen finds her mother’s falling in love funny. To Helen, love does not offer a bright future for a woman and she regards her mother as a simple creature: “yes said Helen, mother fell in love. Don’t you think it was funny” (12). Helen admits that love is not a sophisticated and valuable part of life, but her ideas will change at the end of the novel.

Helen, who calls her mother “horrid mean thing,” does not seem to be attached to her mother sincerely and deeply (12). Helen is unable to progress during the pre-oedipal happy bond with her mother in the Maternal Chora in Kristevan sense. She is not able to offer physical or emotional nourishment for her daughter as a good mother in Cixous, and Irigaray’s words. Helen talks about her mother’s future husband as an example of a man whose male authority is usurped by her mother who has “power to” a man. This gives a hint about the positions of James and other male characters in the novel.

Not having a joyful fusion between herself and her mother, Helen tries to persuade her mother to marry in order to be independent and reach her objectives. She uses “power to” her mother again: “I reasoned with her ... I tried everything I could.... I’d made up my mind. I arranged things ... I got her into the register’s office” (16). It is important to point out that she is able to use I. As a self determined young girl, she reverses the roles of mother and daughter, she is sure that she is not
going to live with her mother on a farm in Manitoba. She says “no, I don’t see myself on a farm” (16). She wants to separate herself from her mother; both her body and her soul must be free of her mother. She has bigger motives in her life. Now she is free to achieve whatever she wants to do because “she has certainly got less to take care of now than she had, she feels that she knew all about life and the world” (16-17).

Despite being a major character, Helen certainly cannot be the sole influence on James. Hence, there needs to be another character, an unmarried woman, who can affect an unmarried man. Although Mrs Procktor is not a major character, her being a very scheming woman offers a possibility to analyse James’ gender problems. She will assume “power to” James who is captivated by that woman, he is struck motionless and speechless by the extraordinary sight of Mrs Procktor: “he was James; he was even Jimmy, but he was also a man, very much a man, though the fact had only recently begun to impress itself on him” (57). As a woman, Helen also made him feel like that. Mrs Procktor is also a female object in male dominated society whose various parts of it are described in detail with adoration: Mrs Procktor is described as “a dowager, partly, possibly fussy ... slightly comic ... younger than James, with her rich figure, her excellent complexion, her carefully cherished hair and her apparel, she was a woman to captivate a man of sixty, whose practical experience of the sex extended over nine days” (57). James’ flattery and his confusion and anxiety belie his fear of women, as represented by Mrs Butt, Helen, and now Mrs Procktor. He shuts the door, as if he is shutting a bird in a cage; he tries to use his power to that captivating woman. He also searches for something else to do while he is collecting his power, he does not want to seem powerless, he draws
the blind, and lights the gas although it is not dark yet. His idea to light the gas has a symbolic value: he wants to prove that he has the sparks of life inside and he is not as old as he seems. He wants to attract the woman through his masculine qualities since he feels that his masculinity is always weakened by Helen. As a rich widow, she is comfortable, and she has a sardonic smile “she was stout and magnificent in her silk and ribbons, he felt that he preferred stout women to thin” (58). What he is looking for is someone stronger. He is actually searching for his own self that is supposed to be stronger to form his identity; in Lacan’s words, the first stage of his identity comes from the sight of himself in the mirror. Not only Helen but also Mrs Procktor acts as a mirror for James and his reflection. However, James’ personality does not seem to belong to him.

Thus, this is an imaginary personality which cannot give correct information about his identity. Although he does not want to be in the midst of women, he needs them. Mrs Procktor, who has captivated James asks him if his niece is in but, “there was a conspiratorial accent” in her question (58). She tells him that her step son Emanuel is a fool, assuming authority and power to him, adding that Emanuel and Helen are courting each other, which is another novelty for James who has always had a quiet and unworried life, who is now in the midst of women and fools. Now it is Mrs Procktor’s turn to manipulate and have power to him. Mrs Procktor is not beating about the bush and adds that “it is not because I think your niece isn’t good enough for Emanuel; it is because I think she is a great deal too good ... I am a purely selfish woman. I am the last person in the world to stand in the way of my poor step son getting a better wife than he deserves” (60).

Because James is a masculine authority, who represents the Law of the Father
in the Symbolic Order in Lacanian sense, he has a common prejudice towards women. He describes Mrs Procktor as the “serpent of serpents” and her plan as a dangerous game (61). When it comes to Helen, he does not change his attitude and he inevitably sees Helen as a Satan too. This proves that he is a very traditional man, not only because of his way of life but also because of his notions about women. Mrs Procktor believes that Emanuel should marry a foolish girl, who is as foolish as he is, feeling that Helen is the most intelligent girl in the town. However, at present, she points out that, “she’s smitten by his fancy waistcoat. But she would soon see through the fancy waistcoat- and then there will be a scandal” (61). In fact, this does not turn out to be the case as Helen does not seem to be carried away by her fancies for a man throughout the novel: she is ardent, wayward, and comfy. Besides, Mrs Procktor’s being stingy in money matters shows the similarity between the two sexes. James and Mrs. Procktor are alike. This similarity reminds the reader of Bennett’s statement: “she was no better than him and no worse. In truth, she was very like him” (Our Women; 1920: 264). Having a plan against Helen is something that makes James feel guilty about for the first time in his life. Although James believes that Helen must not marry Emanuel, he feels that Helen does not have the slightest intention of doing that, but mentions his uncertainty towards women by stating that “and yet girls” (63).

Mrs. Procktor, though not a major character also serves one of the appeals of the feminist literary criticism: she is the vehicle through which the marriage issue is discussed in the novel. Mrs Procktor considers marriage to be the only mission for women for economic security, and patriarchal shelter in which they are supposed to take care of the household chores, deal with children, and attend to their husband’s
personal and physical comfort. Pointing out the issue in terms of equality, she states that if couples suit each other, they can/will have a harmonious relationship. Mrs Procktor regards marriage as a destiny for every girl, and tries to take measures against Helen and Emanuel’s relationship and prospective union because she thinks it is not proper. However, Mrs Procktor does not correspond with Irigaray’s notion that couples can lead a harmonious and peaceful life only if they understand and accept the differences between themselves and they feel affection towards each other as Irigaray points out in her work *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*. In this scene, Mrs Procktor offers a union based on materialistic gains. Thus, Mrs. Procktor does not correspond with Bennett’s notion that couples should accept each other as they are.

In spite of being a woman, she also acts as a member of Western patriarchal society, which reduces women’s roles merely to wives and mothers, what Cixous, Irigaray and Kristeva never agree on as they are supporting women’s multiple roles. Mrs Procktor goes on to say that Helen is going to make her step son sorry and admits that being a free and determined woman, she is able to leave the house if she has made a mistake, although doing so might lead to a scandal which will ruin her fame. She also explains her plan to James that she wants him to praise Emanuel and force Helen to marry him. Mrs Procktor is convinced that Helen will never do something if she is forced even if she wants it very much.

Power relations are also seen in the scene when Mrs. Procktor plans to throw her stepson Emanuel and Helen together. She is also in a constant struggle to be an authority over both her stepson and James, and even Helen. Helen’s refusal to comply with James’ wishes and attend Mrs. Procktor’s party is the signifier of her challenging the patriarchal authority in the Symbolic Order in Lacanian and
Kristevan sense. However, her acceptance alters that view for a short time, and James feels that he has won one of the battles of wills and has had power to Helen. He feels satisfied and recovers from one of his wounds.

Acting as a “power to” James in Cixous’ terms, Mrs Procktor’s schemes are detected when she wants James to tell a lie. She is able to manipulate James in the way she wants, and she uses her power to James taking advantage of his personal weakness, money. Mrs Procktor says that her stepson Emanuel will live on his niece and James’ money. This statement immediately provokes James to persuade Emanuel not to buy Wilbraham Hall. However, Helen says that Mrs Procktor will not buy Wilbraham Hall, for Helen was the first who has persuaded Emanuel to give up the idea. Helen is so intelligent that nothing goes as James and Mrs Procktor have desired as everything is manipulated by Helen.

Apart from James, though he is not the major character, another male character Helen assumes “power to” is Emanuel, the androgyne. Having feminine traits such as gentleness, and dressing like a woman Emanuel is introduced, at the door, “in a beautiful suit ...who was an impeccable young man; and the avowed delight of his tailor, whose bills were paid by Mrs Prockt or” (52). An example of the power struggle between Helen and Emanuel is given when Emanuel puts the blame on the female pianist although it is a failure of his ability. This event foreshadows Helen’s verbal attack on him, when Emanuel is humiliated and publicly disgraced, and his career as a singer ends with insults and laughter. Therefore, the novel is generally premised on the reversal of the hierarchical binary oppositions in patriarchal ideology, which valorises femininity by devaluing masculinity. Emanuel does not have the qualities of activity, success, intellect, and reason that are
attributed to males. Therefore, he is a defective male too. However, he creates his own individuality free from socially accepted roles. Helen, who assumes “power to” victimizes not only James, but also Emanuel. Helen goes on confusing James: James is totally bewildered by Helen’s enigmatic nature when he thinks that Helen is in love with Emanuel, but he has seen Helen wink at someone else. One of the other scenes in which Helen’s mysterious personality is detected is when Helen dances with every man except another seemingly minor male character Andrew, and Andrew, with everyone except Helen. Music and her dance make her fly in Cixous’ terms to liberate from the confines of the body. She experiences jouissance; she is in her Semiotic mode. In Cixous, Irigaray, and Kristeva’s words, she speaks from her body. However, Andrew and Helen’s dance and her fainting on the grass is another puzzle to be solved about Helen. In addition, powerful and tricky Helen’s crying makes her uncle feel that from then on she will not make him do anything and he will able to hunt Helen. For the first time, he feels satisfied that he will have “power to” Helen, who keeps James off. However, her nature becomes more complex day by day which is one of the appeals for feminists, who assert that women do not have stable personalities; they are apt to change. Helen’s being unaware of Emanuel’s deficient characteristics makes James confused and unhappy. James remembers the ten-pound note that Helen had stolen and has restored to him with an honourable attitude, having given it back. Helen tries to prove that she is running the house on her own money, which breaks James’ heart once more.

Using her power, Helen becomes the winner over not only Emanuel and James but also Andrew, as all three of them have in one way or another accomplished what Helen has wished for so far. Andrew and Emanuel’s inevitable
dispute over Helen and their carelessness results in breaking of the only possessions that James has bought from his past as the signal of his authority. These possessions are the items which Helen does not want in the new house, as she continues her quest to be power to and authority over James. In other words, in this scene, Helen has made Andrew and Emanuel diminish James’ power. Emanuel’s being pushed into the water (later it is learned to have been by Andrew) symbolizes that his self, which is about to be lost is saved since he is not drowned. She goes on giving orders to James, and when he is ordered to sit down he thinks “how simple it ought to have been for him to exert authority over Helen, to tell her fiercely that he had no intention of being talked to like that, and that if she persisted in such tactics, the front door was at her entire disposal! She had no claim on him. Yet he ate his humble pie and sat down” (122). James has nothing to do apart from yielding to Helen’s authority.

Helen plays another trick when she says she likes Emanuel and finds Mr. Dean a bully. However, Helen again threatens James’ masculinity and authority when she confesses that her love for Andrew Dean is her real reason for having come to Bursley. Although she has her chequebook, her piano, and everything, she has desired so far, she points out that she has come here just for the sake of her love. She talks about the affair between her and Dean, and Dean’s engagement to a girl, who is beneath him, and she describes that engagement as having been imposed on him by the society and not by his personal desire and, most importantly, choice. She is thoroughly feminine in her admiration of Dean. The marriage concept is mentioned again, pointing out that couples, who are compatible with each other and accept each other as they are, make harmonious marriages. To Helen, her marriage with Andrew Dean will be suitable. For the first time, Helen pours out her ideas about marriage
and love. It becomes quite clear that while achieving everything socially and economically she has had only one thing in her mind that is her love in her Semiotic mode, and if she gets married, she will enter the Symbolic Order in which she will accept the Law of the Father. On the other hand, Helen has proved her autonomy and power to James, but it is not certain if she is going to use her authority on Mr. Dean, a very rude person, who has not been able to rebel against family and other peoples’ wishes which have forced him to be engaged to a person that he does not feel anything for. James, who has always craved for a quiet life, is now full of wars and worries because of Helen.

Another hint about Helen’s complex personality and her relationship with Dean is given in the letter scene. Being used to giving orders to men and servants, it is not certain how Helen will react to the letter she receives: “I must see you by the water tonight at nine o’clock. Don’t fail or there will be a row-A.D.” (149). As it turns out, she goes on dealing with her household chores as if nothing has happened. Helen has felt herself responsible for reconciling James to the new life style in Wilbraham Hall that she has created: “she had to make him swallow the butler, and the page, and other servants, and the good piano” (152). Now it is James and his wife’s turn to play a trick on Helen when she learns that Mrs. Procktor carried out a plan to get married to Mr. Ollerenshaw secretly and the new scale of existence has been definitely accepted not only by her uncle but also his wife.

Helen’s decision to go to Wilbraham water, obeying an order from a man, marks a change in Helen also demonstrates that her nature is not the same as in the beginning. A.D.: (Andrew Dean) confesses that he has broken off his engagement and therefore, he becomes free of all the constraints of the Symbolic Order and he is
now in the Semiotic Order in Kristevan terms. However, Helen keeps him at a distance, and by refusing to give herself to him reduces him to an object. It is important to point out here that their meeting by the water is also the symbol of sexuality, because fountains, rivers and floods are all associated with women’s liquids in Cixous’ terms. It reflects the inner life of the body not controlled by symbolic values, and now sexual passion and desire are free to flow. Mr Dean and Helen’s sexual passions become clear when Mr Dean rushes at her, seizes her in his arms, and kisses her saying that women are strange and incalculable creatures. Mr Dean uses her femininity through his masculine power and superiority. Sexual power politics in the novel emerge as a matter of “power to.” Helen becomes a weak feminine as opposed to Andrew’s masculine strength. However, she does not repress her sexual inclinations as a Victorian woman who is afraid of being a social outcast. She only waits for the right time and space. Such an active, intelligent and successful girl remains passive and silent because of her love, and she is ready to accept Mr Dean as she disregards his rudeness, and the couple decide to keep their love to themselves as Five Towns people are not ready to hold too much love. The novel chronicles two romances. Both James Ollerenshaw, Mrs. Ollerenshaw, and Andrew Dean and Mrs. Helen Dean are married to suitable partners. Andrew and Helen Dean are now close, masculine and feminine selves are put into a mental and spiritual whole. Although James would have preferred a smaller place, Mrs Ollerenshaw settles in Wilbraham Hall as the new mistress. Rebellious and powerful individual Helen settles as a married woman with more modest and traditional terms. Helen has found her real man. She seems to accept the rules of the society, yet she chooses love and realizes herself, and fulfils her desires. Her subjectivity occurs
when she enters the Symbolic Order of language, in Kristevan terms. Both Andrew and Helen become social. Their sexual aggressive instincts are put in normal level. Their lives are organized according to the traditional norms, people’s value judgements, ideals, and notions; however, their marriage which seems to be a social contract is in fact an individual choice.

In view of all these notions, *Helen with the High Hand*, which is a social observation, portrays male and female relationships in a realistic manner in their appropriate environment through some humorous situations and characters. It also asserts that discord exists between the sexes: it has always existed, and it will always exist. In the novel, financial question, power and love are the basic forces shaping individuals’ personalities and their environment. Each person tries to assume power to each other, but it is generally the female who has the power to the male. Helen defends herself against any traumas through her power. Love in the novel is not the whole existence of any character but it is a major part that changes the lives of the characters; marriage seems to be the ultimate end and a final choice for even self-determined, assertive, bright, tricky, and powerful characters, such as Mrs Procktor and Helen Rathbone, who are comfy, wayward, and rebellious women in Bennett’s terms. Although Helen starts as a modern woman asserting her autonomy, she has not settled as a free woman but a married woman with much more humble conditions. Though she has always wanted to change and climb socially, she seems to have come full circle to where she was at the very beginning. All she has done seems to be just for the sake of her love. She chooses her heart, which is invariably wrong in Bennett’s sense, for it seems to bring the downfall of the heroine. However, at the same time, Helen comes to terms with herself in the end, she appears to have gained
wisdom and learns to live with both the inadequacies of the society’s which she is shaped by, and her own inadequacies. She brings out the repressed in her body and mind that is love and sexuality. She chooses marriage, an individual compromise rather than a social contract, for her fancies of love and passion for Andrew Dean, the man she loved and desired though she seems to have been assimilated towards the traditional role of a woman. Helen has a multiple and enigmatic personality: she is free/adventurous or dependent; individual/traditional or submissive; powerful or weak which is one of the appeals for feminists. She is also a perfect medium for Kristeva’s intertextual subject who balances her Semiotic and Symbolic mode: she is content in the Symbolic Order in which she loves her husband: “Helen and Andrew Dean were satisfied with a semi-detached villa in Park Road … Helen is perfectly satisfied with one servant. But she dresses rather better than ever”(156).

On the one hand, Helen seems to have destroyed patriarchal authority and domination, although she eventually settles as a traditional Victorian married woman. On the other hand, at the end of the novel, loving and admiring a young man, Helen lets herself be dominated by the powerful male and his ideas and wishes related to what a woman should and can be. Helen’s marriage seems to shatter the self-image that she has preserved so far. However, at the same time, the novel demonstrates the feminist desire and need to create a space that can lead to emancipated individual subjectivity. This causes the possibility of redefinition of a woman as other than “the other” and “non-man.” Thus, the novel inscribes the concept of the multiple self, which is one of the central subjects of feminism. At the very beginning of the novel, Helen rejects any kind of male authority but at the end, she tries to appropriate male authority by entering the Symbolic Order through marriage. She obeys the public
voice of the self-definition by male ideologies. Helen seems to be the prisoner of the signifier, and her Ego Ideal. In the Symbolic Order, she accepts the laws of the father, and her loss, deficiency and her limitations and her social castration that include social norms and regulations in the society. In this order, as a social being, Helen tries to understand herself and her environment, she tries to see herself as a subject and I, and her public voice becomes more important than her private voice. However, the difference between men and women are based on their perceptions of the world. Bennett’s renunciation of complete equality between the sexes is unequivocal. His uncertainty whether to describe women as delicate and submissive beings or adventurous individuals as in Helen’s personality is also clear. She has carried out all the deeds of the patriarchy: she is manipulative, tricky and calculating; she is familiar with the business world, money, investment, owning property like a man, therefore, she is already in the Symbolic Order, where she is socially limited, but content at the same time, and she has experienced her Semiotic modes as well, including the passion she feels for her husband.
IV. D. H. LAWRENCE AND WOMEN IN LOVE

This chapter will dwell on David Herbert Lawrence (1885-1930), to whom feminists mostly refer, in terms of his literary career, his concept of the novel, and his private life, in which his outlook is largely shaped by his experiences with women, especially with his mother, and male/female relationships in general. This reference to David Herbert Lawrence will provide the reader with a good base for a much more sound feminist analysis. In this feminist reading, such theories and concepts as Cixous’ “Power Over,” “Other Bisexuality,” Lacan’s “Three Stages,” “Ideal Ego/Ego Ideal,” Kristeva’s “Androgyny,” “Abject,” and “Subject in Process,” Irigaray’s “Hysteria” will be used in the discussion of the female characters, namely, Gudrun-Ursula, Mrs Crich and Hermione, to the relationships between Mrs Crich/Gerald/Mr.Crich, Ursula/her father, Hermione/Birkin, Gudrun/Gerald, Gerald/Minnet, Birkin/Ursula, and Birkin/Gerald in Women in Love (1921).

Since the dissertation is on feminist literary theory and its application to the novel, Lawrence’s novel concept should be studied. To Lawrence, the novel portrays the most important beings, people, in every situation, and it gives man completely as a whole in all respects. He believes that it is only in the novel that the disembodied thinking mind can be reinserted within the stream of life. For where philosophy tends to present a part of man, the novel will restore his integrity. The novel is also the genre that expresses the relationships between people. Within that frame, Lawrence states that “the business of art is to reveal the relation between man and his circumambient universe at the living moment within the creative flux” (1978: 525). In the novel, everything is true in its own time, place, and circumstance. All emotions, including love and hate, and rage and tenderness to go to the adjusting of
the oscillating unestablished balance between two people who amount to anything (qtd. in Ingram, 1990: 74, 49). In Women in Love and in most of his novels, Lawrence explains the reasons of his writing, putting a great deal of emphasis on relations between men and women. In a letter dated 2nd May 1913 to Edward Garnett, Lawrence says: “I can only write about what I feel pretty strongly about, and that, at present, is the relations between men and women. After all, it is the problem of today, the establishment of a new relation, of the readjustment of the old one, between men and women” (1993: 546). He believes that the great relationship for humanity will always be the relation between man and woman, the relation between man and woman will change forever, and will forever be the new central clue to human life (1978: 531). Like Wells, who wishes the world to change and get rid of the stupid and unreasonable persons for the welfare of the society, Lawrence is also well aware of the fact that the society is sick and full of falsities, and through his writing, he aims at changing people in terms of individual relationships. In one of his letters to his friend Mcleod in 1913, Lawrence talks about his concept of the novel as such: “I do write because I want folk- English folk to alter, and have more sense” (1993: 544).

Although he is a modernist author, he does not use stream of consciousness as his contemporaries, Joyce and Woolf do, but the novelty is the content. He does not aim at changing in the narrative or structure of the novel, but giving a message, putting emphasis on the link between nature and people and people’s relations with each other, and their spiritual and physical lives. While he is doing this, he is sure that he is doing something that has not been tried before. Thus, Lawrence’s works are so unique that they defy easy definitions. The most important novelty is to add sexual drives, dealing with the psychologies of the characters: “he takes us right
inside his characters; we apprehend them instantly through the force of his intuition. He captures, it seems the moment of life itself, both in men and women and in the physical world of nature. There is a delighted, immediate, intellectual response to everything alive” (Allen, 1976: 359). Nevertheless, as a novelist of character with complex emotions, drives and impulses, Lawrence somehow resembles Wells.

Dealing with the inner natures of the characters, for Lawrence, all real emotions are equally valid. Two important concepts love and sexuality are depicted in his novels through the characters’ struggling for love and sympathy. Sexuality and therefore bodily instincts cannot be neglected in a love relationship, as body and soul are of equal importance to each other. For Lawrence:

The reality is the synthesis of the body and soul. He believes in the organic unity in the universe, nature, and self. For a healthy relationship, women and men need to form a perfect balance between soul and body, emotion and intellect. And only through this, they can achieve organic unity and individual freedom. (Kantarcıoğlu, 2004: 333)

For example, Birkin and Ursula are able to form this organic unity or individual freedom. Their love does not lead to murder, suicide, alienation, but to a sexual relationship. Although Lawrence advocates free love, not all is sex he says, but he wants people to describe sexual love as clean, beautiful, the most important and highest expression in the union of female and male which will bring liberation and creativity, which will in turn enable them to form a new life. In his essay titled “Love,” Lawrence explains what kind of union he seeks in his concept of love in his dualistic vision of world:
But the love between man and a woman, when it is whole, is dual. It is the melting into pure communion, and it is the friction of sheer sensuality, both, in pure communion, I become whole in love. And in pure, fierce passion of sensuality, I am burned into essentiality. I am driven from the matrix into sheer separate distinction. I become my single self, inviolable and unique, as the gems were perhaps once driven into themselves out of the confusion of earths. (1978: 154)

In Women in Love, Lawrence advocates “extreme differentiation even outside a conspicuously sexual climate, and he repeatedly insists on such separateness, as always he proclaims the superiority of independent existence over mass humanity” (Dorbad, 1990: 26). Lawrence proclaims the need for privacy. Love and individuality should be balanced. Ursula in Women in Love is able to balance her spiritual life and femininity.

Lawrence treats the novel concept as a literary forum uniquely suited to all his specific needs and concerns:

Right and wrong is an instinct: but an instinct of the whole consciousness in a man, bodily, mental, spiritual at once. And only in the novel are all things given full play, or at least, they may be given full play, when we realize that life itself, not inert safety, is the reason for living. For out of life itself, not inert safety, is the reason for living. For out of the full play of all things emerges the only thing that is anything, the wholeness of a man, the wholeness of a woman, man alive, and live woman.
Most of Lawrence’s works are based on male and female relationships in which there is not any taboo or inhibition of sexuality. For instance, *The White Peacock* (1911), *The Trespasser* (1912), *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The Lost Girl* (1920), *Aaron’s Rod* (1922), *Kangaroo* (1923), *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928) are only some of these works.

*The Rainbow* (1915), a story of the sisters’ family, which depicts the characters’ relationships in social changes, mainly the male-female relationships, and *Women in Love* were intended to be one book under the title of “The Sisters.” The main theme of the book was going to be women’s supreme importance of becoming individual, self aware, and responsible, taking their own initiative. In both novels, the female characters turn out to be free individuals, oppressing the men when necessary. *Women in Love*, (1921), continues the story of the two sisters, Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen, who first appeared in *The Rainbow*. The sisters are residents of the coal-mining town of Beldover, and their relationships dominate the novel. As can be seen, Lawrence is mostly preoccupied with love, sexuality, emotional and physical relationships between women and men, conflicts of individuals within themselves and their partners and their search for self-fulfilment, and meaning. Sharing similar concerns, *Women in Love* is an important novel for feminist critical analysis. In the above-mentioned novels as in most of his novels, Lawrence rejects the ancient idea that the body is accepted to be the place for satanic feelings, danger, and immorality of women’s sexuality. Lawrence is against the people who describe sex and touching as ugly words to be hated and not talked about and discussed freely. However, to Lawrence “sex and beauty are one thing, like flame and fire...sex and beauty are
inseparable like life and consciousness” (Aldington, 1981:14). To him, sexuality is not a pleasure source, much deeper, and it is religious and moral.

In this feminist reading, Lawrence’s relationship with his mother should be mentioned as it provides the reader with a notion about his views on women and feminism. His mother Lydia Beardsall, with whom Lawrence was obsessed all his life, was a teacher from the bourgeoisie, and had a profound effect on Lawrence, who deals with males and females through love and hatred, based on his parents’ constant fights due to their socially different backgrounds. Mrs Lawrence was a great authority on Lawrence’s life, even on his love relationships, onto whom Lawrence projected his self-defeating sexual anxieties. In a letter dated 3rd December 1910 to Rachel Annond Taylor, Lawrence describes his parents and his relationship with his mother:

My mother was a clever, ironical, delicately moulded woman of good old burgher descent. She married below her. My father was dark, ruddy, with a fine laugh. He is a coal miner. He was one of the sanguine temperament, warm and hearty, but unstable, he lacked principle, as my mother would have said. He deceived her and lied to her. She despised him- he drank. Their marriage life has been one carnal bloody fight. I was born hating my father as early as ever I can remember. I shivered with horror when he touched me. This has been a kind of bond between me and my mother. We have loved each other, almost with a husband and wife love, as well as filial and maternal. We knew each other by instinct. (1958: 7)
As is disclosed, this relationship seems to go beyond the bond of conventional mother and son love. Mrs Lawrence, on the other hand, explains her relationship with Lawrence as follows: “he has seemed to be part of me; we have been like one, so sensitive to each other that we never needed words, it has been rather terrible and has made me in some respects abnormal. I think this peculiar fusion of soul never comes twice in a lifetime. It doesn’t seem natural” (1958: 7). Thus, as a victim of the Oedipus Complex, Lawrence knew that he had an incestual relationship with his mother, but he found it impossible to get out of. Because of such an abnormal relationship, Lawrence could not be happy in relationships with other women, feeling that his mother was the only woman who could understand him and who had his soul. Lawrence was devoted to her: he was in love with her as a lover not as a son. Thus, most of Lawrence’s lovers are failed maternal substitutes. Birkin and Gerald in *Women in Love* struggle to get out of that devouring destructive mother figure. While Birkin is able to get fulfilment through his struggle to achieve the separation of his soul from that destructive mother image, Gerald is beaten by devouring mother and beloved Gudrun. Although Lawrence needs love relationships to compensate for his mother’s absence, he is not successful in his relationships even after his mother’s death. The bond between the mother and Lawrence ends when she dies. Gerald in *Women in Love* is not successful either since he is not free from the image of Mrs. Crich. After Mr. Crich dies, he seems to be victimized both by his mother and by Gudrun. Though it pains Lawrence a lot, after the death of his father, he thinks that his father is not such a bad and valueless person to deserve to be hated. Surprisingly enough, the more he feels affinity with his father, the less he begins to like his mother and then he begins to blame his mother for this obsessive relationship, and
mothers’ meddling with the affairs of their children. In this respect, Lawrence does not see any use in giving birth to hopeless and unhappy children. Thus, Lawrence points out that the personalities of women and men are formed not by the father but by the mothers who feel themselves superior to their partners. In Parent Love in the “Fantasia of the Unconscious” (1922), he accuses the mothers of forming a psychological incest between themselves and their sons through love that should be directed to their husbands. Mrs Crich in Women in Love is an example of that type of mother. It results in disaster because the sons cannot form healthy relationships since the mothers are obsessed with their children. He insults mother love, and challenges the supposed mothers who are trying to conquer their sons' souls.

Having experienced all those dilemmas mentioned above in both fictional and non-fictional works, the search for mature sexual love relationships is an important theme for D. H. Lawrence. As it appears from his letters, he is clearly connected with the personal problems in his relationships, first with Jessie Chambers, later with his wife, Frieda. Not only his mother but also the women he is involved with plays important roles in Lawrence’s life, in similar fashion to Bennett and Wells. Frieda is one of those who has the most profound effect on Lawrence. In his relationships, being affected by his mother, he searches for protecting care, while trying not to lose his autonomy. Lawrence’s relationship with Jessie is not successful because of his obsession for his mother; the couple have also some sexual problems. Everything is frustrating for both Jessie, who is afraid of sexual intercourse, and Lawrence, who is not free from his mother yet. Lawrence has many other lovers but Frieda, older than Lawrence, is not like the other women. She is German, and married with three children; aristocratic, independent, and free to have any kind of sexual intercourse
with Lawrence. They are quite different from each other in terms of class, age and nationality. In other words, he is socially inferior to that woman, and he depicts this experience of inferiority in the novels. In a letter dated 14th March 1919 to Koteliansky, Lawrence writes about Frieda and her dominance over him: “she really is a devil- I feel as if I would part from her forever ... I have been bullied by her long enough..”(1993: 337). In a letter dated 5th December 1918 to Katherine Mansfield, Lawrence pours out his ideas related to Frieda’s destructive mother image:

Beware of it- this Mother- incest idea can become an obsession ... at certain periods the man has a desire and a tendency to return unto the woman, make her his goal and end, find his justification in her. In this way, he casts himself as it were into her womb, and she, the Magna Mater, receives you with gratification. This is a kind of incest ... in a way; Frieda is the devouring mother... (1993: 301-302)

Lawrence most of the time accuses Frieda of being a very pitiless mother. Devouring or destructive mother representation is also offered in a letter dated 3rd June 1918 to Cynthia Asquith: “the phenomenon of motherhood, in these days, is a strange and rather frightening phenomenon” (1993: 247). In this respect, Lawrence may be said to be in opposition to Irigaray, who attaches importance to women’s maternal qualities that fill in women’s spiritual blank in their social and individual lives, declaring her disapproval of women’s roles as only mothers. (Moi, 1985: 166). Lawrence has always looked for a woman who will serve his comfort, and whom he will love with his soul and body. In one of his letters, dated 17th January 1913 to Ernest Collings, Lawrence writes: “it is hopeless for me to try to do anything without
I have a woman at the back of me. I daren’t sit in the world without the unknown in which otherwise I am a bit lost” (1993: 503 V. 4). However, to Lawrence, Frieda is what he is looking for despite her negative image. In other words, she is like his mother and now their relationship is not a sin, they do not need to repress their love or hatred. However, she, too, is Lawrence’s failed maternal substitute at times. Nevertheless, Frieda follows her liberated sexual crusade and has affairs with other men. In a letter dated 19th August 1912 to Mrs. S.A. Hopkin, Lawrence writes, “Frieda and I struggled through some bad times into a wonderful naked intimacy, all kindled with warmth, that I know at last is Love” (1958: 32). She also encourages his studies. Her sexually liberated mind causes Lawrence to develop his philosophy in his strong belief in the necessity of liberation in a new and pure world for both the society and the individuals. As a very liberated person too, similar to Wells, Lawrence hates every kind of authority and the power of the father in particular putting pressure on human beings. In Women in Love, both female and male characters strive to be free from any kind of authority and standarts.

In terms of human relationships, Lawrence also points out that the relationship between a man and a woman is important and “marriage for life is the relation necessary for the deeper desires” (Leavis, 1978: 49). In the novel, Ursula and Birkin get married in order to achieve transcendental physical and emotional desire and bliss. In “A Propos of Lady Chatterley’s Lover,” Lawrence asserts that:

The greatest contribution to social life of man made by Christianity is marriage ... it is marriage perhaps, that has given man the best of his freedom, given him his little kingdom of his own within the big kingdom of the state ... man and wife, a
king and queen with one or two subjects, a few square yards of territory of their own: this, really, is marriage. It is a true freedom because it is a true fulfilment, for man, woman and children. (1986 :3)

In a letter of 14th May 1912 to Frieda, Lawrence writes “...it is my marriage and a great thing- not a thing to be snatched and clumsily handled” (1958: 23). Love is of supreme importance to Lawrence, it is the happiness of the world, the unifying force. In one of his letters, on 2nd November 1915, Lawrence talks about the importance of love and personal freedom together: he writes to Lady Cynthia: “love is the great creative process, like Spring, the making an integral unity out of many disintegrates factors” (1993: 424, V II). In a letter of March 1920 to Godwin Boynes, he declares, “one has to learn that love is a secondary thing in life. The first thing is to be free, proud, single being by oneself: to be oneself free; to let the other be free ... love isn’t all that important: one’s own free soul is first” (1993: 478, VIII). Lawrence regards love as sacred and he talks about the importance of separateness between a man and a woman each of whom seeks his/her own identity through the other. In other words, wholeness and separateness at the same time create a balanced love between the individuals.

Lawrence also distinguishes (real) love from (mere) passion, a more narrowly sexual feeling and compares the effects of the latter to those of a “powerful stimulant,” suggesting that it is an unhealthy and in the end debilitating condition. It belongs to a kind of relationship in which, on the surface, the man is dominant and the woman no more than an instrument for his gratification; however, Lawrence insists that appearances are misleading and that, on a deeper level, such relationships
testify to a deep masculine fear in the face of the feminine, a “deep inner dread” arising from the weakness and insecurity endemic among men in certain societies. Realizing unconsciously that the woman’s withdrawal would leave him empty, like ash, such men feel threatened by feminine independence and set out to destroy it, reducing their women to mere functions of themselves (Milton, 1987:12). To have a healthy love relationship, Lawrence appreciates the importance of touch not only for physical but also emotional connotations to form a healthy self. Lawrence believes that “we find people without touch lost and alone and some people mistakenly want to be isolated” such as Hermione in Women in Love. She tries not to touch others, for she wants to be “invulnerable, unassailable, she is tortured; her desire to go untouched leaves her with no real knowledge. She is filled with illusions and sham spiritually. Finally she is alone” (Walterscheid, 1993: 118-119).

Equality, necessary for a healthy relationship between men and women, is another important concept in his novels. Lawrence claims the importance of equality in a letter of 16th July 1915 to Bertrand Russell, saying, “there must be women governing equally with men, especially all the inner half of life ... the women’s share must be equal with men’s” (1993: 365 V II). For Lawrence, a woman’s having the right to vote and having an equal voice with men related to marriage and children are worthy causes. In fact, for Lawrence, not only a woman’s soul but also a man’s soul should be free and he asserts that a woman must be herself. But the situation is that, if women live according to male theories, trouble will be inevitable. However, women are intelligent, and they have what men have, they should not bear the roles assigned by the men. To Lawrence, “when a woman is hysterical, it is because she does not quite know what to be, which pattern to follow, which man’s picture of
woman to live up to” (Aldington, 1981:19). He adds that

A man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in his
skirts, as an angel, a devil, a baby-face, a machine, an instrument,
a bosom, a womb, a pair of legs, a servant, an encyclopaedia, an
ideal, or obscenity; the one thing he won’t accept her as, is a
human being, a real human being of the feminine sex. (Aldington,
1981: 20)

Lawrence draws female characters who can redefine themselves and who are trying
to have men in their power. Hermione is an example. However, being a conservative
man, he also wants women to be submissive to men. This is because of his
submission to his mother all through his own childhood, although he is sensitive to
the spiritual and sexual problems of women. However, although he attaches
importance to women’s freedom, he is anxious about liberated women and thinks
that they will no longer love their partners. In Women in Love, Mr. Crich keeps his
wife as a hawk in a cage in order to limit her freedom, not allowing her to do
anything but love and submit to him. However, after his death, Mrs. Crich begins to
enjoy her liberty gradually. Lawrence also believes in blood, which he describes as
the bodily and sexual instincts, and he terms it blood consciousness to distinguish it
from mind consciousness. He mentions in a letter of 17th January 1913 to Ernest
Collings, “my great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the
mind” (1993: 503, II).

Lawrence’s duality notion is the fundamental for male and female
relationships because he believes that there cannot be a perfect relationship without
conflicts and dualities. Love is a relative concept in which men, and women’s
perceptions are quite changeable. Therefore, there is nothing absolute in life, in love and marriage either. Everything, including the male and female relationships, is based on contradiction and opposition. In most of Lawrence’s novels, sexuality is represented against the cosmic background of not only Solar but also Lunar energy, which represents the power of man and woman respectively. Therefore, although the sexual struggle embodies this Solar and Lunar energy opposition, it also includes complementary sources, of which the male represents, in Lawrence’s words, will to motion, and the female, will to inertia. Lawrence, in his essay “Of Being and Not-Being” in Study of Thomas Hardy offers a definition for that duality and opposition concepts:

The dual Will we call the Will-to-Motion and the Will-to-Inertia. These cause the whole of life, from the ebb and flow of a wave, to the stable equilibrium of the whole universe, from birth and being and knowledge to death and decay and forgetfulness. And the Will-to-Motion we call the male will or spirit, the Will-to-Inertia the female. (1978: 448)

Thus, the binary opposition concept is seen almost everywhere in the novel. *Women in Love* displays these kinds of relationships and especially Birkin’s quest for true love. Images and representations of women which form the basis of feminist criticism also form the basis of *Women in Love* through its definitions of what a woman is.

Living in an age of doubts and hesitations, and being interested in the psychology of human beings, Lawrence’s life is shaped by different perceptions. In *Women in Love*, Lawrence exhibits apocalyptic characters that experience painful
transitions, crises, sex, patriotism, mystery, and death. “Ursula comes to the end of her line of life, Birkin believes in the death of England, when he and Ursula buy the old chair, Birkin rolls naked in the pine needles in the flow of death and life, Gerald dies and makes a death journey to Gudrun’s bed” (Clarke, 1969: 213). Lawrence twines the full force of his apocalyptic vision in *Women in Love*, which “he saw as the personal and political betrayals and failures of understanding of the early years of war, the violence of which he internalised, as he said, in the characters, instead of locating it in the battlefield” (Hyde, 1990: 9). Instead of an actual battlefield, there are a great war of sexes, violence, domination and death in the novel. Unlike Wells’ cosmic vision, and Bennett’s social vision, Lawrence’s preoccupation with his characters’ psychological tensions and the inner worlds and conflicts within themselves and the society make him and his works more difficult and complex to study. For example, on the one hand, he wants to live individually; on the other hand, he wants to share his life with groups of people. This is what Lawrence asserts in the male and female relationship as well. He points out that couples should love each other but they should remain individuals. He also believes in the deep friendship between males as deeply as he believes in the deep and sincere relationships between males and females. He reflects these feelings in most of his works. In *Women in Love*, too, there is a deep and sincere relationship between Birkin and Gerald. He is a misogynist celebrating the phallus at one moment; at another, he has empathy with women. This attitude is also apparent in his marriage life, too:

While he could strike Frieda and furiously demand her submission, he simultaneously thrived on her ability to fight back and not cave into his demands. He needed her fierce self-
assertion. He could rant ludicrously about male mastery, yet he actually valued her feistiness and was dependent on her toughness and tenacity. He did not treat his wife as a slave or domestic servant on the contrary, he defied conventional male working class roles by doing his own cooking, sewing and cleaning ... he enjoyed these domestic, traditionally female activities, just as he enjoyed the company of his female friends.

(Schapiro: 1999: 14-15)

In the words of Hilary Simpson in D.H.Lawrence and Feminism (1982), gender infuses the whole of Lawrence culture:

For Lawrence, everything is sexed; it is the fundamental division.

The Hardy Study is permeated with a sense of sex-designated opposites. Maleness comprises Knowledge, the Spirit, Motion, Love, the Hub, Doing, Separateness, Consciousness, Individuality, timelessness. Thought, and the Religion of the son; Femaleness is Nature, the Flesh, Stability, Law, the Axle, the Being, Monism, Unconsciousness, Oneness, the Moment, Feeling, and the Religion of the Father. (Williams, 1997: 67)

Approaching the characters and their actions in a psychological manner, Lawrence is also grouped with Freud and his psychoanalytical criticism. Since the scope of this dissertation is limited, that topic is not going to be dealt with. However, it is important to point out that Lawrence knows and has read Freud and has written several works such as Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (1921), Fantasia of the Unconscious (1922) and Studies of Freudian Psychoanalysis, and so on. Within that
frame, dealing with the human psyche, Lawrence is sometimes with Freud, sometimes against him. This makes Lawrence’s novels and works appropriate for the application of Lacan, influenced by Freud, and his concept of Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal, and his definition of unconsciousness as the language, reflecting all the repressed emotions, silence, forgetfulness, and inner spaces of the characters. In the words of Lewiecki, some Neo-Freudian theories depend on the same kind of paradoxical relation to the phallus as does Lawrence’s work. Jaques Lacan, for example, emphasizes the “scandal” of phallic symbolism, (it is everywhere; the phallus is the Transcendent Signifier). Lacan also analyzes the cultural construction of gender (through language). Some feminists influenced by Lacan, such as Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous, or Julia Kristeva discuss the “phallic” nature of all Western culture created by the structure of patriarchy inherent in language itself (1994: 114).

Lawrence, who is against any kind of sexual inhibitions and taboos, believes that men and women should experience sexuality freely and think about sexuality honestly and cleanly without being afraid of it. Hence, he creates such characters in his novels. He finds sexuality creative; it represents a voyage of self-spiritual discovery. This is what Lawrence tries to point out in his life and works: “he sees sexual repression as the root of much of the unhappiness and strife in modern society; he puts emphasis on sexuality and on the need for sexual liberation as a prerequisite for all other significant forms of liberation” (Roplowski, 1993: 30). Like Wells in Ann Veronica, and Bennett in Helen with the High Hand, Lawrence in Women in Love is preoccupied with female sexuality. “Lawrence’s original intention was to trace the progress of the modern jeune fille from childhood, through school, work and the affair with Mr Wrong, to marriage with Mr Right. This is the Modern Girl
Plot” (Squires, 1990: 66). Ann Veronica, Helen With the High Hand, and Women in Love break the taboos of the time and culture; Bennett’s heroines are clear from politics, Wells’ heroines are seen at the heart of feminist political activities being interested in the suffragette movement, Lawrence’s heroines are liberated enough to have sexual intercourses with their partners. For these three novelists, even though love is absolutely essential, it is not the major concern, but recognition of the self which love creates is another major concern. Lawrence’s woman is liberated through finding her sexual self. In Lawrence’s novels, sexuality causes both adventure and growth on the part of women and men, with a long adventure to the unknown; it does not end always with honeymoon, marriage, and familial consensus of Ann Veronica and Helen with the High Hand, which have modern girl patterns, but with questions, break-ups, suicides, deaths and equivocation. On the other hand, Lawrence is one of the most explicit authors who depicts sexuality, for individual happiness, while for Wells, sexuality is important for social concerns.

In many of his novels, female characters assert their autonomies against men who are the mouthpieces of Lawrence’s demand that women submit to male authority. Although he has such a view in his mind, women’s final assertions such as leaving their jobs, defying all the authorities, having sexual intercourses freely are of supreme importance in his works. For example, in Women in Love, Lawrence “associates his major male characters with death, he depicts the women as wholesome, their unanswerable criticisms of male authority are presented as intrinsic to a healthy will to survive rather than the deadly female will” (Siegel, 1991: 10). In one of his articles, “We Need One Another” Lawrence points out that “the relation of man to woman is the flowing of the two rivers side by side, sometimes even
mingling, then separating, and travelling on” (Siegel, 1991: 188).

Through his versatile angles and perceptions in the relations between men and women, his misogynous intentions, celebration of the phallic, sexually explicit writings, depiction of discrepancy between male and female views, perceptions, and emotional needs, his writing for women as the embodiment of resistance and submission to the masculine, his valuation of female sexual fulfilment, his sympathy with women’s direct expression and rage against men, his insistence on the unimportance of procreation, depiction of women as active and angry individuals who forcefully determine the courses of their lives through their choices certainly comprise a perfect medium for the application of feminist theories. Within this frame, *Women in Love*, is of supreme importance to the concerns of feminist literary criticism in that female and male relationships dominate the novel. Ursula, a teacher, is in love with the school inspector Birkin, who is involved with a dominating lady Hermione, with whom he is not happy. Gerald, a friend of Birkin is ruined by the deaths: firstly of his brother (which he accidentally causes) and his sister (by drowning), he puts the blame on himself for both deaths. Gerald takes over the running of the mine from his father but his strong position is weakened by his relationship with Gudrun. While Ursula and Birkin are happily married, Gerald and Gudrun are torn apart by sorrow and the latter’s flirting with another man in the Alps while the four central characters are on holiday together.

The presence of such potential for friction and struggles for power in the setting of the novel combine to suggest that a feminist reading of *Women in Love* will focus on the limitations of gender stereotyping, images of women, the individual and social limitations that are in the hands of men, power relations and the principle
of otherness, opposition, and difference. In the novel, all types of relationships, namely: love relationships, parent-children, husband-wife relationships, and those between people and animals are all based on power relationships, and on domination and submission relationships with the “Other,” in order for the individuals to form their relationships to something perceived as negative, ugly, and threatening. In the relationships, this “Other” constantly tries to show subversion and transgression against the authority. Sexual power politics emerges in the novel as a matter of power–over, which is a negative force in Cixous’ terms. Since one of the major themes that feminism addresses is the images of women and their ideas and feelings about such topics as marriage, childbirth, love and sexuality, the characters such as Gudrun, Ursula, Hermione and Mrs Crich are all created to portray female images, and tensions.

The conversation at the very beginning of the novel reflects the ideas of marriage, resistance and doubts, regarding its advantages and disadvantages, childbirth, the blank future for unmarried women, roles of women as both wives and mothers in terms of both biological and social traps. It also points out a lack of faith in conventional marriages, confusion regarding freedom, fear, and uncertainty, and the girls’ conflicts of dependence and independence. The result of all these factors for the girls is an overwhelming sense of loss and anxiety in a male dominated world. The girls receive no relief from what they are talking about, neither marriage nor childbirth nor heterosexual relations. The future lives of those women possibly seem to lack power to control and determine the place of heterosexual relationships in their lives. However, this resistance towards marriage, although it is ambivalent, is a major step for feminist criticism in that many women, especially Gudrun and Ursula
fight for their freedom in a social environment which they both find empty and unpromising. It is clear from the beginning that the text will offer the theme of “compulsory heterosexuality whether it is desired or not, chosen or not through offering an autonomous sexual continuum for women” which echoes many heterosexual feminists dealing with political problems of women’s struggles (Kelsey, 1991: 153).

In this respect, the girls’ views on marriage and heterosexuality differ greatly from the accepted norms. One of the appeals of feminist criticism is its preoccupation with the difference between men and women, even between women in terms of their biological, social, psychological dissimilarities as there is no longer one absolute principle in the universe. Gudrun believes that her sister Ursula “will be in a better position than she is in now if she gets married” (7). However, Ursula, who has rejected many lovers, regards marriage as “the end of experience” (7). Gudrun seems to be ready to accept offers of marriage as she regards marriage as “the inevitable next step,” feeling that an individual should be bound somewhere which foreshadows her manipulative use of Gerald and later Loerke (9). While Ursula is “tempted not to get married, Gudrun hopes for a man to come along” (8). However, when the issue of childbirth is discussed, both of them “get no feeling whatever from the thought of bearing children” (9).

It is extremely important to evaluate Gudrun, one of the major female characters, who gives hints for the analysis of a female soul. Her personality can be drawn easily because of the fact that she is an artist. She likes to categorize the things and the people; her worldview is also noticed in her dealing with small things, birds, and tiny animals. She likes to look through the wrong end of the opera glasses, and
see the world that way (42). Her art reflects her queerness and she is able to create whatever she wants. As a result, she feels that she is able to control the people around her. Through her artistic view, she realizes those around her; she wants to describe them as finalized identities. This feeling satisfies her desire for power and control over the people around her:

Gudrun watches them closely with objective curiosity. She sees each one as a complete figure, like a character in the book, or a subject in a picture, or a marionette in a theatre, a finished creation. She loves to recognize their various characteristics, to place them in their true light, give them their own surroundings, and settle them forever as they passed before her along the path to the church. She knows them; they are finished, sealed, and stamped and finished with, for her. (15)

Gudrun, described as “the restless bird” who is not content with her life asks the most crucial question for the appeal of feminist criticism: She cries, “what it is to be man” (104). She replies, “the freedom, the liberty, the mobility! ...you’re a man, you want to do a thing, and you do it. You haven’t the thousand obstacles a woman has in front of her” (52), she adds, “I want to swim up that water. It is impossible, it is one of the impossibilities of life, for me to take my clothes off now and jump in. But isn’t it ridiculous, doesn’t it simply prevent our living” (52). In this respect, Gudrun struggles to be in Kristevan Semiotic Order, free from all the laws and social institutions which are fixed in relation to the primary signifier in Lacan’s terms, the phallus, which embodies both authority and power. On the other hand, Gudrun’s statement has parallels with the Freudian attempt to define woman as little man, by
asking the question what women want. In “Femininity,” Freud explains, “throughout history, people have knocked their heads against the riddle of the nature of femininity... Nor will you have escaped worrying over his problem- those of you who are men; to those of you who are women this will not apply – you yourself are the problem” (1953: 33). This statement corresponds with the idea of not only Lawrence, but also Wells, and Bennett who are also looking for a way to define women. This also recalls the reader Adrienne Rich’s remark that “we are not the woman question; we are the women who ask the questions,” as mentioned in the introduction (Rivkin,1998: 640). In the novel, Gerald asks the same question to Birkin: “what do women want, at bottom?” (552). Puzzled and confused, Birkin answers: “some satisfaction in basic repulsion ... they will never be satisfied till they’ve come to the end. Loerke joins the discussion: “what was it after all, that a woman wanted? Was it mere social effect, fulfilment of ambition in the social world, in the community of mankind?” (549). Consequently, it is quite obvious that neither women nor men have the real images of women.

Another important event related to the image of women is observed when Gudrun and her sister walk near the mines. They hear the insulting voices of two male workers. Through the language which is used for Gudrun’s attractive stockings in the man’s world, in the world of miners, coal dust and heavy work conditions, the sisters are reduced to sexual objects. Through the men’s discourse of supply, demand and economic tendencies are revealed by their asking the price of the stockings. So the stockings of the women’s world are transformed into the world of men and their perception of the women as commodities that can be bought for money. The elder man asks the young man “the price that she’ll do, and says I would give my week’s
wage just for five minutes” (127). The men discuss the value of the two girls while they go on “shovelling the stones” (128).

Gudrun is free to criticize the machines, dirt, alienation, and heavy conditions of that work, which the workers are not free to challenge against through the effect of her stockings on the male workers. In this scene, male gaze is overtly noticed. The theory of the gaze was first described by Laura Mulvey in “‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’, the gaze is voyeuristic since most films are made by males; there is the gaze of men within a film narrative which is structured so as to make women objects of their gaze” (Humm, 1989:84). Silent gaze of men reflects their envy:

Envy at not being able to wear those stockings which, for the women, serve as both a form of bodily and mental protection and as a linguistic weapon against the signifying coal dust itself; effective to the point of enabling the women to break the newly created universal relations established between individual and work, individual and home, individual and sex. Universals, moreover, which many of the local inhabitants have internalized as forming part of the natural order of things. (Kelsey, 1991: 61)

In fact, the challenge of her stockings signifies power relations in terms of economy between the sexes; the silent watching represents the world that the men will never be able to join, they first watch the women silently, and then they talk about them, through diminishing their values. This distances them from their own repressed desires and lack of economic power, and since these men are aware of their otherness and economic inferiority to these women, they find comfort in throwing
stones at those women. This element of traditional masculinity explains the silence then rejection and reestablishment in the discourse and actions. Gudrun as a woman from a powerful and dominant position must be reduced to a position of weakness and fragmentation. In this instance, a sexual object lets the men lose a sense of rationality, which confirms their superior status and qualifies their sex to continue fighting in the masculine world of aggression and competitiveness. Gudrun and Ursula are clothed by colours which serve to challenge the material forces of oppression and to protect them from the effects of traditional masculine behaviours embodied in the labourers’ attitudes that try to threaten women. Clothes, colours, socks, and dresses raise the sisters to sureness of speech, the discourse they use soothes, unites, and leaves them in ecstasy. The language reflects all of the women’s feelings, thoughts and it binds both their body and soul. Therefore, the colour is a kind of new discourse, and the sign of sexist ideologies. The use of colour provides women with a struggle to change the status of women in patriarchal societies. Gudrun seems to be a rebel trying to fight against the men’s world; the girls try to find refuge from that male dominated world: they go to the lake to find tranquillity and peace which is also destroyed by the sound of a car.

Gudrun, who is aware of her glittering stockings, realizes that:

This is the world of powerful, underworld men who spend most of their time in the darkness. In their voices, she can hear the voluptuous resonance of darkness, the strong, dangerous underworld, mindless, inhuman. They sound also like strange machines, heavy, oiled... (128)

In fact, what Gudrun craves for is dominant masculinity. In Lawrence’s world,
a woman can’t be sexually fulfilled unless she yields completely to a man. Gudrun, incapable of this, “has a fantasy in which she experiences the ecstasy of subjection yet is herself the controlling force, making the man an instrument of her satisfaction. She has a great need to have power over anyone with whom she is intimate” (Adelman, 1991: 70). However, Gudrun has only destructive relationships. Therefore, her power over Gerald is going to lead their relationship towards a disaster.

Furthermore, Gudrun also seems not to yield to anyone as a wife. She does not believe in marriage and she is against anything that hinders her liberation in the patriarchal Symbolic Order. She shares her opinions with her sister Ursula:

> When I think of their lives- father’s and mother’s, their love, and their marriage, and all of us children, and our bringing up ... would you have such a life … as a matter of fact one cannot contemplate the ordinary life .. with you, Ursula, it is quite different. You’ll be out of it all, with Birkin. He’s a special case. But with the ordinary man, who has his life fixed in one place, marriage is just impossible. There may be, and there are, thousands of women who want it, and could conceive of nothing else. But the very thought of it sends me mad. One must be free, above all, one must be free - one must not become 7 Pinchbeck Street- or Somerset drive - or Shortlands. No man will be sufficient to make that good - no man! To marry, one must have a free lance, or nothing, a comrade-in-arms, a man with a position in the social world - well, it is just impossible. (422)
However, though Gudrun is against the idea of getting married to an ordinary man whose life is fixed in one place, she is attracted to Gerald physically. Since feminist consciousness is to be conscious of the body and its functions, descriptions of not only the female but also male bodies are common in the novel. In the novel body images are used to transgress the boundaries that surround the female and male body in a patriarchal society and break its norms. For example, Gudrun, attracted to Gerald, watches him with great admiration for the very reason that there could be a quality attractive:

There was something northern about him that magnetized her.

In his clear northern flesh and his fair hair was a glisten like sunshine refracted through crystals of ice. And he looked so new, unbroached, pure as an arctic thing. Perhaps he was thirty years old, perhaps more. His gleaming beauty, maleness, like a young, good humoured, smiling wolf, did not blind her to the significant, sinister stillness in his bearing, the lurking danger of his unsubdued temper. ‘His totem is the wolf’ she repeated to herself. ‘Her mother is an old, unbroken wolf’ ... A strange transport took possession of her, all her veins were in a paroxysm of violent sensation ... I shall know more of that man. She was tortured with desire to see him again, a nostalgia, a necessity to see him again ... she really felt this strange and overwhelming sensation on his account ... (15-16)

Gudrun envies him and his male power a body without bond or connection anywhere, fluid, mobile, and free. Gudrun attempts by every means available to
appropriate that organ for herself. She is “the other” in herself, and she experiences herself fragmentarily. She is not able to substitute that lack with motherhood since she is against even the idea of being a mother and having a child, as she asserts at the very beginning of the novel. She is attracted to him because he projects an ideal image of the “Other.” He is an ideal, an idealized other who reflects an image of an ideal self. As such, he will also be the object of envy, anger, and fear; the deficient self both desires the power of the idealized other and dreads being overwhelmed by it. “Even this momentary possession of pure isolation and fluidity seemed to her so terribly desirable that she felt herself as if damned, out there on the high road” (52).

Lawrence’s emphasis on women’s vision then turns feminism’s gendered world upside down. Lawrence emphasizes the power of women’s eyes. Cixous’ traditional binary oppositions are reversed “she reigns in the former camp rather than the latter-the agent of light, logic, looking” (Williams, 1993: 45). As a male chauvinist, Lawrence tries to put the male instead of the female in the Semiotic Order, therefore, he becomes essentialist like Irigaray who puts the female in the Semiotic Order to be superior to the male recalling the concept of the male gaze which is dominating and repressive. Gudrun looks at Gerald, with a masculinized desire for the male object:

Her breast was keen with passion for him, he was beautiful in his male stillness and mystery. It was a certain pure effluence of maleness, like an aroma from his softly ... she loved to look at him. For the present she did not want to touch him, to know further, satisfying substance of his living body ... she only wanted to see him, to feel his essential presence ... Now he had
let go, imperceptibly he was melting into oneness with the whole. It was like pure, perfect sleep, his first great sleep of life.

He had been so insistent, so guarded, all his life. But there was sleep, and peace, and perfect lapsing out. (199)

One of the most eminent critics, Jessica Benjamin discusses how, for both boys and girls, the father’s lack of recognition and the failure to establish an identificatory bond with the child can lead to “masochistic fantasies” of surrendering to the ideal man’s power. Those fantasies comprise one dimension of Gudrun’s relationship with Gerald. Gudrun has a masochistic desire to submit to a ruthless unyielding masculine control to the beloved one and to be recognized in one’s bodily, passionate being has mutated into a fantasy of passionate submission to an overpowering and idealized other. (Schapiro, 1999: 110). Gudrun has the desire to be ravished by the ideal masculine “Other.” When Gerald looks in the mirror, at one point, “the falseness, the utter inauthenticity of his self experience is vividly conveyed.... “(261). Sharing both masochistic and sadistic tendencies, Gudrun and Gerald indeed mirror one another “they were the same kind” (Schapiro, 1999: 110-1).

After Gerald loses his father, he looks for a bond to form; however, he is successful neither in his relationships with his mother, nor with Gudrun, since the lack that he looks for is the joyful fusion between mother and child.

Within that frame, one of the themes that feminism addresses is the psychic relationships of parents and their children, which has a profound effect on the children and their social and emotional lives: this theme is elaborated through Gerald’s mother, Mrs Crich. Mrs Crich, who is a queer person, is the cause of her son’s lack of peace and happiness. Gerald does not have a real bond with his mother
based on love and affection. Mrs Crich’s wounded narcissism and depression affect Gerald’s identity and relationships with others, particularly women: “she is a queer unkempt figure...she looks like a woman with a monomania, furtive almost, but heavily proud” (15). It is precisely the reality of the mother’s fragmented life and subjectivity in Kristevan sense. She wears different masks to have a place in the patriarchal Symbolic Order.

Gerald’s mother, from the very beginning of the novel, does not seem to be a kind of mother that can form a healthy and promising relationship between herself and her son. Mrs Crich is a figure of the abject, and Gerald has to expel and disregard her in order to create his subjectivity, yet, he is not able to do that. He is not able to construct his autonomous subjectivity as he cannot abject the mother’s body. This relationship also has an appeal for both feminist and psychological criticism. Gerald’s deranged mother, Christiana, sometimes wonders if people are in a conspiracy from which she has been excluded. Kristeva claims that as subjectivity is constructed with the exclusion process, human civilization is also based on excluding the abject (Leitch, 2001:2167). Mrs. Crich threatens the unity of the Symbolic Order. She disturbs identity, system and the order. Mrs. Crich also personifies a devouring mother image. She is a possessive mother figure who wants to absorb and subjugate Gerald. She evokes both horror and revulsion. Therefore, she has to be excluded or rejected. She herself excludes the people all around her. She says”: that there they are whether they exist or no ... I only know that I can’t be expected to take count of them all” (27). As an abject other in Kristevan terms, her exclusion from the world is unequivocal:

She recoiled away from this world ... exclusion fastened round
her heart, her isolation was fierce and hard, and her antagonism was passive but terribly pure, like that of the hawk in a cage. As years went on, she lost more, and more count of the world... she would wander about the house...staring keenly and seeing nothing. She rarely spoke; she had no connexion with the world. And she did not even think. She was consumed in a fierce tension of opposition, like the negative pole of a magnet. (244)

Mrs. Crich’s sons-in law, even her own children, are vague to her. She finds it weird to be called mother by different mother’s children. Her social acquaintances are impositions and she cannot remember their names. Gerald, who has killed his brother accidentally, seems to be alone. Seeming a good mother, his mother says: “I should like him to have a friend. He has never had a friend” (28). Mrs Crich answers the questions without listening to the asker, she replies automatically “for she is perfectly indifferent to the questions” (30). People are of no importance to her since she has lost a sense of her own reality. She seems to be split and she experiences herself fragmentarily, there is no connection between her body and mind. She is, on the one hand, a traditional female in the novel who plays a role of mother, wife and so on. On the other hand, due to the oppression, she even does not take any trouble for her children. Even her husband is afraid of her motives, a figure of abject, and mystery, and darkness:

She indeed was like the darkness, like the pain with him. By some strange association, the darkness that contained pain and the darkness that contained his wife were identical. All his
thoughts and understandings became blurred and now his wife and the consuming pain were the same dark secret power against him ... the dread was his wife, the destroyer, and it was the pain, the destruction, a darkness which was one and both. He was frightened of her. She has such a strong temper ... he was sorry for her, her nature was so violent and impatient ... but now his pity with his life was wearing thin .... (241)

It is interesting to note Mrs Crich’s reaction to her husband’s death. Through Mrs Crich, acting like a modern Medea, motherhood is figured through abjection, the signs of bodily and mentally chaos fail in sensitive and affectionate matters. Her queerness infects the whole house. She warns her assembled children in the presence of her husband’s corpse: “don’t let it happen again- a cry of almost Delphic ambiguity that certainly seems a warning against one sort of modern marriage” (378). She asserts:

Beautiful as life life had never touched you … a beautiful soul … none of you look like this when you are dead! Don’t let it happen again. It was a strange, wild command from out of the unknown ... her children move together…blame me if you like … then there came in a low tense voice: If I thought the children I bore would like looking like that in death, I’d strangle them when they were infants…pray for yourselves to God, for there is no help from your parents… (377-378)

Mrs Crich is most of the time criticized by her son Gerald, as well. He says: “she only wants something more, or other than the common run of life. And not
getting it, she has gone wrong perhaps, after producing a brood of wrong children
(234). Mrs Crich is also described as a hawk in the cage. She is associated with the
wild bird image that flies in order to describe her and to help her liberate herself from
the confines of her body: “strange, like a bird of prey, with the fascinating beauty and
abstraction of a hawk, she had beat against the bars of his philanthropy, and like a
hawk in cage, she had sunk into silence....” (242).

Another important point related to Mrs. Crich is that she is one of the female
characters in the novel, who is attributed traditional submissive Victorian qualities.
However, she is able to be free of those values after her husband dies; she is free
from the enslavement of marriage: “and because she was his prisoner, his passion for
her always remained keen as death. He had always loved her, loved her with the
intensity. Within the cage, she was denied nothing, she was given all license” (242).
Further to this, “she never opposed her husband in word or deed ... She submitted to
him, let him take what he wanted and do as he wanted with her. She was like a hawk
that sullenly submits to everything. The relation between her and her husband was
wordless and unknown, but it was deep, awful, a relation of utter interdestruction....”
(244). In Lacanian terms, Mrs.Crich is in the Symbolic Order, accepting all the
limitations and regulations of patriarchal society, she yields to her husband’s orders
and wishes, she submits to him, and obeys the rules of the Law of the Father
embodying the primary signifier, the phallus. As a member of the Symbolic Order,
Mr.Crich has quite traditional notions of women and his wife: He thinks of her pure
and chaste, he is also afraid of her because of her wild temper. He has contradictory
attitudes towards his wife. He both loves and fears her. “...there remains the covert
fear and horror of his wife, as she sits mindless and strange in her room” (246). As a
member of masculine order, Mr. Crich describes his wife Mrs. Crich as “almost mad. But still she is not of wild and overweening temper” (242). Madness seems to be a means by which Mrs. Crich can protect herself from the limits of patriarchy and to recover from imprisonment.

Although some relationships may escape notice, the relationship between Gerald and his father, which would be complementary to Lawrence’s own view, offers a lot for feminist critical analysis. It does not promise hope: Gerald and his father are alike in that both the father and the son seem to be afraid of life itself. The father assumes the role of a holy man; both Gerald and the mother despise his philanthropy:

There had always been opposition between the two of them.
Gerald had feared and despised his father ... he had avoided him all through boyhood and manhood. And the father had felt very often a real dislike of his eldest son ... he had ignored Gerald as much as possible, leaving him alone .... he was partly subject to that which his father stood for ... a certain pity and grief and tenderness for his father overcame him, in spite of the deeper, more sullen hostility.(244)

However, although Gerald does not get on well with his father, the father plays an important role in Gerald’s life as the unifying power:

Gerald’s father after all had stood for the living world to him.
Whilst his father lived, Gerald was not responsible for the world. But now his father was passing away, Gerald found himself left exposed and unready before the storm of living ...
he did not inherit an established order and a living idea. The whole unifying idea of mankind seemed to be dying with his father, the centralizing force that held the whole together seemed to collapse with his father, the parts were ready to go asunder in terrible disintegration ... during his childhood and boyhood he had wanted a sort of savagedom. (248)

As for Gerald’s sister Winifred, who seems to be pathological, is unable to have sincere relationships with such a father and mother: she cannot love people, she mistrusts them, and she lives in her own little world. Winifred is “an odd, sensitive, inflammable child who is quite single and by herself, deriving from nobody” (247). Lawrence’s disapproval of childbirth is overt as he does not see any use in giving birth to hopeless and unhappy children. Gerald is a hopeless son who dies in the end, likewise Diana dies as well. Winifred does not seem to be peaceful. In this respect, through these pathological children, Lawrence may be said to be against Irigaray and Cixous who describe motherhood as sacred and holy.

The bond between Ursula and her father, similar to that of Gerald and his father, is not built on affection and love, but on domination. He is the authority, and Ursula wants to be away from that authority. Surprisingly enough he withdraws himself from the authority of Ursula too:

It was a bitter thing for a man to be near her, and her father cursed his fatherhood. But he must learn not to see her, not to know ... she was perfectly stable in resistance ... mistrusted by everybody, disliked on every hand ... only Gudrun was in accord with her ... they felt a strong bond of
understanding between them ... and during all these days of blind bright abstraction and intimacy of his two daughters, the father seemed to breathe an air of death, as if he were destroyed in his very being. He was irritable to madness, he could not rest, his daughters seemed to be destroying him. But he was inarticulate and helpless against them. He was forced to breathe the air of his own death. He cursed them in his soul, and only wanted that they should be removed from him. (296)

Ursula sees her men (her father and Birkin) as sons, pities their yearning and admires their courage, and wonders over them as a mother wonders over her child, with a certain delight in their novelty. However, to Gudrun, they are the opposite camp. She fears and despises them, and respects their activities even overmuch (296).

Ursula’s father’s attitude to Birkin when he comes to visit Ursula to propose marriage reflects his conventional ideas. The father says:

His daughter has had everything that’s right for a girl to have—as far as we could give it to her ... there was something naturally irritant to him in Birkin’s mere presence ... her father was not a coherent human being, he was a roomful of old echoes ... He adds, I’d rather see my daughters dead tomorrow than that should be at the beck and call of the first man that likes to come and whistle for them ... and I would rather bury them than see them getting into a lot of loose ways such as you see everywhere nowadays ... she’ll please herself—she always has done. I’ve done my best for them, but that doesn’t matter ...
but she’s a right to consider her mother, and me as well ... I
don’t know what you’ve come here for, and I don’t know what
you are asking for. But my daughters are my daughters- and
it’s my business to look after them while I can ... I’ve nothing
against your marrying to Ursula ... it’s got nothing to do with
me, she’ll do as she likes, me or no me...(289-92)

Although Ursula accepts the marriage proposal, she does not like being
bullied by them, feeling that she is being forced to do something that she is not ready
to do. Her father’s reaction is not kind to Ursula: her father cries: “a self opinionated
fool, that’s what she is” (295). Her father feels himself powerless because of Ursula
and, therefore, he hates her:

Her father sat below, powerless in humiliation and chagrin. It
was as if he were possessed with all the devils, after one of
these unaccountable conflicts with Ursula. He hated her as if
his only reality were in hating her to the last degree. He had all
hell in his heart. But he went away; to escape himself ... she
completed herself against them all. Recoiling upon herself, she
became hard and self completed, like a jewel. She was bright
and invulnerable, quite free and happy, perfectly liberated in
her self-possession. Her father had to learn not to see her blithe
obliviousness, or it would have sent him mad. She was so
radiant with all things in her possession of perfect hostility.

(295)

In such an atmosphere, Ursula and Gudrun struggle against all the traditional
values in the Symbolic Order represented by their father. They want to have their autonomies, and to be free from the constraints of home: they don’t want to submit to patriarchy. They struggle much more eagerly than Ann and Helen. Gudrun decides to go away from that ghostly, dark, hostile world. This is the voice of an individual who in fact accepts patriarchal values that can never be avoided: “…all the time her heart is crying, as if in the midst of some ordeal: “I want to go back, I want to go away, I want not to know it, not to know that this exists. Yet she must go forward” (13).

Within that frame, both Ursula and Gudrun have the tendency towards remaining single, feeling empty, fearful and lost in a male dominated world. They even get pleasure from that thought. The answer to all those questions of the girls is that the core of woman is her relation to man and the opposite. It is not quite clear if these potential marriage resisters will be able to break the norms of marriage and childbearing or not, by remaining in their Semiotic mode in Kristevan terms. Each female character has her own conscious singleness and in other words, difference. Lawrence’s writing for women as the embodiment of resistance and submission to the masculine has opened spaces in the body of his writing about women for revisioning feminist responses.

The girls’ tendency not to get married is first detected through their desire to be free from the male dominated world, especially from their father. In the novel, home is one of the traditional concepts that is in the Symbolic Order, thus, the girls reject to be in. Symbolizing the Law of the Father, it reveals patriarchal authority, and encompasses one’s cultural and national origin in which the individual strives to be himself/herself. Gudrun considers herself outside her father’s house; she feels she does not belong to that family place and the home which are in fact the most
important positions, which could be challenged to enable the girls to form their subjectivities and autonomies. Gudrun finds herself “completely out of it” (11). The sisters find themselves “confronted by a void, a terrifying chasm, as if they look over the edge” (11). Home suggests patriarchal authority. Therefore, they detest it in the same way that they detest everything in the Symbolic Order, which limits their freedom in Lacanian terms. Ursula “loathes it, the sordid, too familiar place! She is afraid of the depth of her feeling against the home, the milieu, the whole atmosphere, and condition of this obsolete life. Her feeling frightens her” (11). Ursula feels that she has lost her connection with outer world and she may be said to wish to go back to her joyful fusion with her mother’s body in the Lacanian Imaginary Order or Kristevan Semiotic Order which is the primary locus of fantasies and dreams. She says, “if only she can break through the last integuments! She seems to try to put her hands out, like an infant in the womb, and she cannot, not yet. Still she has a strange prescience, an intimation of something yet to come” (9-10). Gudrun questions her life, finding the place where they live man-made, dirty, and industrial. Criticizing all the values related to the Symbolic Order, like Ursula, Gudrun does not want to submit to the Law of the Father in that order. “It is strange that she has come back and tested the full effect of this shapeless, barren ugliness upon herself. Why has she wanted to submit herself to it, does she still want to submit herself to it, the insufferable torture of these ugly, meaningless people, this defaced countryside” (11). Gudrun feels threatened, but this feeling turns into something marvellous and ghostly attractive in her fantasy. She is living in her sensational world; everything is good and interesting when they enter in her fantasies. In Kristevan terms, she is in her Semiotic mode, which is associated with the desires, feelings and fantasies, and thus
associated with the body. Gudrun says:

It is like a country in an underworld ... The people are all ghouls, and everything is ghostly. Everything is a ghoulish replica of the real world, a replica, a ghoul, all soiled, everything sordid. It is like being mad; If this were human life, if these were human beings, living in a complete world, then what was her own world, outside? And she feels as if she were treading in the air, quite unstable, her heart tracts, as if at any minute she might be precipitated to the ground. (12)

As could be understood from the above quotations, though being a male-authored text, Lawrence assumes an androgynous approach in which he seems to be aware of realizing women and their feelings. In this respect, Anais Nin points out that “in fact very often he wrote as a woman would write, he was quite sensitive to descriptions of women, every single detail, cooking, setting the table, managing the house and the servants, quite exclusive to women” (1964: 57). Lydia Blanchard also praises Lawrence’s ability to write sensitively from the point of women: “Lawrence was extraordinarily sensitive to the problems of women. In his works, in fact, he is at least in part an attempt to describe the crippling results of male domination of female, and his descriptions of the economic and social handicaps under which women labour ... are quite simply brilliant” (Roplowski, 1993:127). Most of his letters reveal that like Wells and Bennett, Lawrence also both likes, and desires, yet dislikes and fears women, which shows that men’s feelings are also complex. Most of his female characters are trying to resist their traditional roles. Lawrence’s antagonism is not towards women; however, towards femininity which “for the
feminists means self creation for independence and power and therefore it is marginal” (Humm, 1989:74)

In this respect, one of the critics of the period, David Cavitch who wrote about Lawrence’s confusion of sexual roles, and his self-questioning attitude on that issue is important to mention:

For Lawrence, the confusion of sexual roles remained critical in his development as an artist. His creative self was so closely bound to his image of woman that he needed constantly to defend the genius of himself against the conscious shame of effeminacy. As an artist, he usually remained true to that delicate sensitiveness which he noted in women, but he felt undermined as a man in society and threatened as a sexual being by his sense of femininity ... the unsatisfied need for masculine identification enters all of Lawrence’s works, in which he pursues an ideal of maleness that he could never recognize in the circumstantial world and that his own divided nature could never wholly accept. He felt like a woman. This was a source of shame and need for male supremacy, he in fact feared himself; he was not against women, preoccupied with male relationships. Because of repressed relationships in his childhood, he has conflicts between masculinity and femininity that are seen in the novel through the conflicts in the relationships between two men. (Roplowski,1993: 128-129)

On the other hand, the concept of otherness is important for Lawrence, if the
character finds “the Other” to form a relationship, then he/she is going to be liberated. Birkin and Ursula find this other and therefore, they are liberated in the end. Nevertheless, Gudrun is not able to find “the Other,” although she finds “the Other,” their relationship brings their destruction rather than liberation.

Lawrence’s inconsistency and his lack of confidence in women’s freedom is stated in one of his letters to Sallie Hopkin on 23rd December 1912: “I shall do my work for women, better than the suffrage” (1993: 529). In similar fashion to Wells and Bennett, Lawrence feels antagonism towards women to a greater or less extent. For example, Lawrence desires male authority in one of his letters:

I do think a woman must yield some sort of precedence to a man, and he must take this precedence. I do think men must go ahead absolutely in front of their women, without turning around to ask for permission or approval from their women. Consequently, the women must follow as it were unquestioning.

(1993: 302)

The expressions Lawrence uses make him sexist; he is also ambivalent: according to de Beauvoir, “woman has been made to represent all of man’s ambivalent feelings about his own inability to control his own physical existence, his own birth and death” (Gilbert and Gubar, 1984:34). Lawrence likes to have domestic women but at times intellectual women supporting their rights in social economic and social life. In other words, he shares the same assumptions with both Wells and Bennett, who both desire and fear women due to their inconsistency towards them. However, his feminine sensibility cannot be disregarded and it is overtly explained through his protagonists, who are not passive but assertive, trying to struggle against
the social limits. Gudrun and Ursula are liberated women, who try hard to be free from patriarchal repression, and through this liberation, characters dialogize, subvert, and reorientate both of the socially-defined genders toward a release of their naturally wild, creative and female energies. At the end of the novel, the death of Gerald shows that the main characters are generally women who have major roles to play in the novel and in life; they are wholesome, while men are dead.

It should be noted that whatever the topic is, both Ursula and Gudrun “are mostly silent, talking as if their thoughts stray through their minds” (7). The girls are silent, because they reject speaking as they do not want to be fixed in the words that belong to the Law of the Father in the Symbolic Order in Kristevan terms. On the other hand, in Women in Love, female characters have their own discourses, through which they move to the men’s world in which they assert their similarities and differences from the other people and women around them in judgements and perceptions. As a result of Lawrence’s understanding of women in dual terms, they have multiple identities; they are not only mothers but also women and above all individuals, trying to achieve their autonomies in Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray’s terms. In the three novels analyzed in the dissertation, the female characters try to assert their identities, autonomies, and subjectivities no matter where they are and what kind of life they are leading.

The girls’ riding on a boat and deciding to throw off their clothes and swim naked in the water shows that they are in their Semiotic mode having their private discourses in Kristevan terms. They are free while they are swimming. However, it is confined to small circles and silence: they are afraid of being seen, they have a fear of time too. Ursula says: “we’ll bathe just for amusement … They look round.
Nobody can notice them, or can come up in time to see them. In less than a minute Ursula has thrown off her clothes. They have swum silently...for a few minutes…” (184). The girls do not want to be visible to the public gaze, and they have only temporary private desires. Binary oppositions-of unity/disunity, fear/desire, and public pressure/private desire are clearly detected in the experience of the girls. Being rejected and excluded from man’s world, both Gudrun and Ursula find their utterances shared with each other, without any interruption by men. Dance, clothes and singing refer to discourse on distinctively feminine body and sexuality. They dance to represent the possession of both the language of body and power: Ursula says:

How lovely it is to be free ... They danced too, when they were together, doing the things they enjoyed, the two sisters were quite complete in a perfect world of their own. And this was one of the perfect moments of freedom and delight, such as children alone know, when all seems a perfect and blissful adventure. (184)

Although Ursula feels herself peaceful and sufficient and in the centre of the universe, Gudrun believes that she is outside that circle and demands the Other to form her subjectivity. Nothing can heal her. Therefore, it seems that she will not be able to experience the Jouissance in the Real Order in Lacanian sense, she will deprive her partner Gerald of that feeling as well, causing his death at the end:

Ursula seemed so peaceful and sufficient herself... unquestioned at the centre of her universe. And Gudrun felt
herself outside. Always this desolating, agonized feeling, that 
she was outside of life, an onlooker, whilst Ursula was a 
partaker, caused Gudrun to suffer from a sense of her own 
negation, and made her, that she must always demand the other 
to be aware of her, to be in connexion with her. (185)

Ursula’s dance “with a voluptuous ecstasy towards the male cattle….with fear 
and pleasure, saying that we’ve all gone mad” shows that through madness, the girls 
reject stereotyped identities for women (184). They subvert the masculine authority. 
Moreover, they protect themselves from the limitations of patriarchal Symbolic 
Order in Kristevan terms. Ursula’s dancing is a kind of battle for supremacy and a 
body language of her femaleness against maleness. Because the cattle are male, she 
tries to torment and humiliate natural maleness as well. Ursula’s “singing to herself 
with her beautiful strong voice” creates a difference (184).

The girls are free to dance and sing which is the freedom of speech. Ursula’s 
dance towards the male cattle represents her sexual power, through her body which is 
also her language. Power to use language gives security to women: men sometimes 
cannot partake in the sisters’ joy of dancing, swimming, singing and speaking. Thus, 
the girls, in Kristevan sense, are in the Semiotic Order, free from any kind authority 
and rule. Much modern feminist literary criticism starts with Cixous’ concept that 
women flow like water or liquid as a metaphor for femaleness in a world dominated 
by men. According to feminist critics, women are described as waters, rivers, and 
floods that can never be controlled by men. Feminine language is related to the 
special sense of connection that women have to their bodies, a sense that arises from 
the memories of infantile Imaginary Order, fusion with the body of the mother which
women are aware of it. There is no alienation between their bodies and social life. They enjoy sexuality, and this discourse provides the possibility for the subversion of patriarchal positions. The female imagination is fluid; male thought is rigid, static, and fixed. From the female viewpoint, men’s ideas created the structures that limit female expression. Then what is female in literature whether seen as an individual woman’s creative product or a force disruptive of masculine discourse, is whatever escapes exterior definition and control, and what flows free.

Although “Ursula was always frightened of words, because she knew that mere word force could always make her believe what she did not believe” all the parts of women’s body and sexuality are put in the text to go beyond patriarchal taboos and values (492). The female characters’ discourses unite and differentiate them from the other ordinary groups of women in a wider community of discourses. It brings out the discussion of the struggle of woman to enter a new mode of presentation:

A more conscious orientation and pleasure in new modes of resistance beyond pure rustling animation to include a gendered language in violence; a re-focusing and re-appraisal of social relations to the body-body-swimmer, body-clothes, body-talk and so on and not least, a reordering and emphasis of an old recognition of the site of oppression and field of action, away from the interiorised and unconscious class-gendered power relations of the household to a wider and yet more concentrated focus on the exploitative relations between men and women. (Kelsey, 1991:153)
The power relations are seen in the discourse of men as well. Gerald is aware of his possession of bodily power and he reflects it through his bodily movements, such as swimming:

Through water, Gerald feels himself immune and perfect ... he swam steadily. From his separate element, he saw them and he exulted to himself because of his own advantage, his possession of a world to himself. He was immune and perfect. He loved his own vigorous, thrusting motion, and the violent impulse of the very cold water against his limbs, buoying him up ... Gerald suddenly turned, and was swimming away swiftly, with a side stroke. He was alone now, alone and immune in the middle of the waters, which he had all to himself. He exulted in his isolation in the new element, unquestioned and unconditioned. He was happy; thrusting with his legs and all his body, without bond or connexion anywhere, just himself in the watery world...they watched him. He waved again, with a strange movement of recognition across the difference. (51-2)

It is suitable here to refer to Hermione Roddice, with whom Birkin is involved in an affair as she is another image of a woman, who has an inner terror of losing control and confronting the void in her nature. Like Mrs. Crich, Hermione personifies a devouring mother image. She displays all negative qualities in a life of mental excess, she feels a void, painful insufficiency and emptiness. Birkin is compensation for her feelings of insufficiency. Knowledge is her great power in order to fill her void. She tries to exert her influence over everyone and everything
because of her own lack of physical and psychological qualities. Like Mrs. Crich and Gudrun, Hermione is the product of patriarchal Symbolic Order in Kristevan terms.

She describes herself in her own discourse, which reflects socio-sexual differences. Although masculine language is dominant in the novel, women use their own languages rather through their bodies such as swimming and dancing. Since Hermione has a very obsessive and destructive personality, there is no life and vitality in her, except for sensuality: she is like beauty in darkness and destructive sexuality, her destructive energies are a part of her own discourses, through her struggle for asserting her autonomy. In Kristevan terms, she is in the Semiotic mode and in the Imaginary Order in Lacanian terms, for she is aware of her femininity and desires. She also reverses the binary opposition of Nature/Culture, in which women represent the first part, which excludes women from the sphere of culture and history. However, she feels that she represents the culture in Cixous’ terms (Lodge, 1985:287). She attacks patriarchal binary opposition:

She was rich. She was a man’s woman; it was the manly world that held her. She had various intimacies of mind and soul with various men of capacity ... she knew herself to be the social equal, if not far the superior, of anyone she was likely to meet ... she knew she was accepted in the world of culture.(16-17)

However, she suffers from internal emptiness: “she always felt vulnerable, vulnerable, there was always a secret chink in her armour she did not know herself what it was. It was a lack of robust self, she had no natural sufficiency, there was a terrible void a lack, a deficiency being within her” (18). The love relationship between Birkin and Hermione is a sadistic type of relationship in which Hermione
tries to possess not only Birkin’s body but also his soul, and she tries to use her power over him. She wants to have command over him, and Birkin wants to free himself from Hermione who is obsessed with Birkin:

She craved for Birkin. When he was there, she felt complete, she was sufficient, whole. For the rest of time she was established on the sand, built over a chasm, and, in spite of all her vanity and securities, any common maid-servant of positive, robust temper could fling her down the bottomless pit of insufficiency, by the slightest movement of jeering and contempt. (18)

Birkin “fought her off, he always fought her off. The more she strove to bring him to her, the more he battled her back. And they had been lovers for years” (18). Birkin tries to break away from Hermione and her possessiveness. He describes himself as an obstinate child having a holy connection. Yet, it does not lead to the development of individuality. He wants to separate himself from Hermione, the abject image:

She knew he was trying to leave her. She knew he was trying to break away from her finally, to be free. But still she believed in the strength to keep him, she believed in her own higher knowledge ... she only needed his conjunction with her And this, this conjunction with her, which was his highest fulfilment also, with the perverseness of a wilful child he wanted to deny. With the wilfulness of an obstinate child, he wanted to break the holy connexion that was between them. (18-19)
In Lacanian terms, Hermione deprives both herself and her partner Birkin of Jouissance and finds satisfaction in sacrifice and she fails her partner too. She denies being the cause of “the Other”s Jouissance. She is a victim of patriarchal power, which operates by attaching to women certain paradigms of feminine identity. She wants to look beautiful to attract Birkin:

She made herself beautiful; she strove so hard to come to that degree of beauty and advantage, when she should be convinced. But always there was a deficiency ... He would see how beautiful her dress was, surely he would see how she had made herself beautiful for him. He would understand, he would be able to see how she was made for him. (18-19)

Hermione is also described as a fallen angel and a demoniacal being: “she had a rapt, triumphant look, like the fallen angels restored, yet still subtly demoniacal” (24). Therefore, as an abject figure, who arouses both fascination and disgust, Hermione proves that she has an ambiguous quality in Kristeva, Cixous and Irigaray’s words. She is a subversive subject treated with hostility. She stands up against the society’s norms. As she destroys the order, she must be excluded from the society.

Hermione loves to watch herself in her mirrors: Hermione is unfaithful to Birkin in taking the mirror as substitute male, but her whole mode of sexual organization and desire is visual and in Herself Beheld: The Literature of the Looking Glass, Jenijoy La belle writes: most authors who criticize the glass do so because it is a sign of a woman’s submission to masculine values. Lawrence presents just the reverse: “the mirror does not make the woman a slave to the male world, but
stimulates a woman’s self-consciousness that inhibits her merging into the male” (Williams, 1993: 72).

Hermione always tries to tease Birkin she holds her power over Birkin: “Hermione appeared, with amazing persistence, to wish to ridicule him and make him look ignominious in the eyes of everybody. And it was surprising how she seemed to succeed, how helpless he seemed against her. He looked completely insignificant...” (93). Even the seed producing flowers do not suggest any meaning to Hermione, she is sexless, nothing moves her apart from knowledge and power: “she must know. It was a dreadful tyranny, an obsession in her” (99). She is against everything: authority, limitations, burdens, rules, regulations in the Symbolic Order in Kristevan terms. She wishes to enter the Semiotic Order in Kristevan terms. She maintains power over Birkin in his fantasies of her. In addition, through Hermione, Birkin is able to analyze his own personality. Talking about the major difference in the world, he says:

There is the whole difference in the world, between the actual sensual being and the vicious mental deliberate profligacy our lot goes in for ... you’ve got to lapse out before you can know what sensual reality is, lapse into unknowingness, and give up your volition. You’ve got to do it. You’ve got to learn not-to-be, before you can come into being, but we have got such a conceit of ourselves- that’s where it is. We are so conceited, and so unproud. We’ve got no pride; we’re all conceit, so conceited in our own papier-mache realized selves. We’d rather die than give up our little self-righteous self-opinionated
self-will. (48)

It is important to mention Hermione and Birkin’s talk about the equality of human beings. It also points out Birkin’s ideas about woman sex: Hermione says, “If we can only realize that in the spirit we are all one, all equal in the spirit, all brothers there...there will be no more of this carping and envy and this struggle for power, which destroys only destroys” (115). Nevertheless, Birkin, as usual, does not agree with Hermione, saying:

It is just the opposite just the contrary, Hermione. We are all different and unequal in spirit- it is only the social differences that are based on accidental material conditions. We are all abstractly or mathematically equal, if you like. Every man has hunger and thirst, two eyes, one nose and two legs. We’re all the same in point of number. But spiritually there is pure difference and neither equality nor inequality counts ... But no equality. But I, myself, who am myself, what have I to do with equality with any other man or woman? In the spirit, I am as separate as one star is from another, as different in quality and quantity. Establish a state on that. One man isn’t any better than another, not because they are equal, but because they are intrinsically other, that there is no term of comparison. (115-6)

Another destructive power relationship is portrayed in the scene in which Hermione attacks Birkin with lapis lazuli. She brings a lapis lazuli paperweight down on Birkin’s head, in a state of ecstasy. Hermione is not satisfied with attacking Birkin verbally and then without verbal utterance strikes Birkin on the head. It is the
language of women’s power and oppression:

In smashing her language on her lover’s head forms connections with Gudrun’s struggle to touch and repel. Use of violence of Gudrun and Hermione is a substitute for or absence of a fair discourse exchange. By force of violence, they speak what they want to say. Women are alone in the novel and autonomy of action and speech is expressed in a new language.

(Kelsey, 1991: 152)

Hermione is torn between the might of male power where she gains hollow victories, and the powerlessness of the female stereotype that conforms to male images of women. Hermione is a kind of Medusa-like figure who represses her feelings and therefore poisons her inside and consciousness. She has a corrupted sexuality:

Hermione’s whole mind was a chaos, darkness seemed to break over her. The terrible tension grew stronger and stronger; it was most fearful agony, like being walled up. And then she realized that his presence was the wall, his presence was destroying her. Unless she could break out, she must die most fearfully, walled up in horror. And he was the wall. She must break down the wall- It must be done, or she must perish most horribly. Terrible shocks ran over her body, In utmost terror and agony, she knew it was upon her now, in extremity of bliss. Her hand closed on a blue, beautiful ball of lapis lazuli that stood on her desk for paperweight. She rolled it round in her
hand as she rose silently ... she moved towards him and stood behind him for a moment in ecstasy. He, closed within the spell, remained motionless, and unconscious ... she brought down the ball of jewel stone with all her force, crash on his head. (116-8)

Another major love relationship in the novel is the relationship between Gudrun and Gerald, which is mainly based on destructive power relations that Cixous’ power-over concept can easily be applied to. Gudrun’s slap on Gerald’s face is the first signifier of that destruction; her being described as “Eve, reaching to the apples on the tree of knowledge” gives a very apparent clue about her destructive nature which recalls Hermione’s smashing lapis lazuli on Birkin’s head (374). She is not able to make her partner happy, other than causing her partner’s downfall, even his death. After Gerald’s father dies the bond that he is already unable to form with his mother breaks with his father too. He needs consolation from Gudrun, who is not going to give. Through the death of his father, it is also proved that there is no place for the male authority in the novel. The sign of the Symbolic Order dies, the paternity and patriarchal authority, which is a means of continuity, is deconstructed, suggesting discontinuity. He cannot control his space; his home is not his castle. If his only real power is the power to leave then his position as a seat of authority is undermined.

Gudrun and Gerald’s relationship does not offer any promise, not only because of the desire to dominate the Other but also because Gerald seeks motherly love from Gudrun after his father’s death. Gerald is eased to sleep by the close bodily contact, but Gudrun is uncomfortable with Gerald and remains awake. She is uneasy in this relationship, in which the man is no longer a man and the woman is no longer
a woman, only a mother. Gerald and Gudrun do not wish to touch each other. Their relationship is based on need rather than love and giving. Gerald seeks a kind of escape with Gudrun. Gerald regards his love for Gudrun as a way for salvation. As his father dies and he realizes his dependence on his father, and he clings more and more to Gudrun. However, Gudrun finds this dependence oppressive and turns malicious. Because Gerald cannot dominate Gudrun, he feels insecure and humiliated, and his love turns to hate. Gerald is not free from his devouring mother, and also he is not able to form a heterosexual relationship, but he tries to form mother and son relationship with Gudrun. He is not able to separate himself from that mother image, both the real and the projected image in Gudrun:

He felt his limbs growing fuller and flexible with life; his body gained an unknown strength. He was a man again, strong and rounded. And he was a child, so soothed and restored and full of gratitude ... she was the great bath of life, he worshipped her. Mother and substance of all life she was. And he, child and man, received of her and was made whole. His pure body was almost killed. But the miraculous, soft effluence of her breast suffused over him, over his seared, damaged brain, like a healing lymph, like a soft, soothing flow of life itself, perfect as if he were bathed in the womb again. (389)

Although Gerald feels himself complete whilst he is burying his head between her breasts, Gudrun gets bored and Gerald becomes her victim. Gerald feels himself in a collapsing mood, Gudrun feels he is using her in order to be free, away from his problems:
He buried his small, hard head between her breasts and pressed her breasts against him with his hands...the lovely creative warmth flooded through him like a sleep of fecundity within the womb. Ah, if only she would grant him the flow of this living effluence, he would be restored, he would be complete again. He was afraid she would deny him before it was finished. Like a child at the breast, he cleaved intensely to her, and she could not put him away. He was infinitely grateful, as to God, or as an infant is at its mother’s breast. He was glad ... he felt his own wholeness come over him again, as he felt the full, unutterable sleep coming over him.....but Gudrun lay wide awake ... she lay motionless, with wide eyes staring motionless into the darkness, whilst he was sunk away in sleep, his arms round her ... she was exhausted, wearied ... she disengaged herself firmly.(389-92)

Gerald is not strong enough to assert his masculinity, a number of things damage his masculine identity, which is supposed to be strong and positive. In the scene, where he is not able to save his sister Diana from being drowned, his masculinity is diminished again. Thus, he is reduced to a weak female. With the obsession of his murder of his brother, he feels sorry again. He is the prisoner of his own image, he cannot differentiate between I and the other: ‘I’m afraid not. There is no knowing where they are...and there’s a current and as cold as hell ... I’m sorry, I’m afraid it’s my fault” (205). Diana’s having her arms tight round the neck of the young man, choking him, results in the death of the two people. Having a destructive
power like Hermione and Gudrun, Diana kills the man. To Birkin, Diana has achieved her Real Order in Lacanian sense. He says: “better Diana were dead-she’ll be much more real. She’ll be positive in death. In life she was a fretting, negated thing” (208).

Gerald’s fixing his terrified mare before the passing train is one of the signs of his attempts to dominate the female, even a mare, is described like sexual rape:

Gerald holds the mare inflicting his will upon her; he takes pleasure in her fear and in his power to hold her quivering body between her knees while he presses himself to her with a great amusement. He held on her unrelaxed, with an almost mechanical relentlessness, keen as a sword pressing into her. Both man and horse were sweating with violence. Yet he seemed calm as a ray of cold sunshine. (124)

The different reactions of the two girls to this event give hints about their lives in the future. Ursula finds Gerald’s oppressive and cruel treatment disgusting, whereas Gudrun, who has a tendency to dominate people, even animals, sometimes using physical force, is quite excited and fascinated. Ursula cries with her powerful voice: “she’s bleeding, Gudrun sees the whole scene spectacularly, isolated and momentary, like a vision isolated in eternity” (124). Gerald’s language gives idea about his cruel and narcissistic personality as well as his male point of view:

I have to use her ... I consider that mare is there for my use.

Not because I bought her, but because that is the natural order.

It is more natural for a man to take a horse and use it as he likes, than for him to go down on his knees to it, begging it to do as it
wishes, and to fulfil its own marvellous nature. (154)

Another incident in which Gerald “tossed the rabbit down” proves once more that he is cruel and narcissistic (272). Gerald’s becoming a machine himself; problems with his father and mother, his father’s death and his problematic relationship with Gudrun all lead to his collapse in life. Gerald suggests that they need to re-think their whole attitude towards sexual relationships if they are to survive as human beings. Birkin believes that he should challenge all the traditional values and relationships. This is also seen through his relationship with Ursula.

In one of the scenes, another love relationship, based on domination and submission, between Gerald and Minette is observed. Minette is another female character who tries to establish a relationship based on her ability to wield power: “her intention, ultimately, was to capture Halliday, to have complete power over him ... she had got her Halliday whom she wanted. She wanted him completely in her power. Then she would marry him. She wanted to marry him. She had set her will on marrying Halliday” (89-90). To Gerald, “her inchoate look of a violated slave, whose fulfilment lies in her further and further violation, made her nerves quiver with acutely desirable sensation. After all, his was the only will; she was the passive substance of his will” which reflects Gerald’s dominating male point of view (88).

Sexuality, which is one of the appeals of feminist critical analysis, is bound up with different feelings such as shame and rage for Lawrence. It is a source of terror, dread, and repulsiveness. It also represents the locus for narcissistic repair, for idealization and salvation. For example, Ursula and Birkin aim at reaching salvation through their sexuality, while Gudrun and Gerald are doomed to fail in this relationship.
In Minette’s case, it is a source of terror and disgust: Minette’s pregnancy out of marriage, Halliday’s giving some money to escape from her, her efforts to make him marry her, describing him as a coward, not finding him manly, her desire to make love to Gerald although she is pregnant, being a slave like woman, and her ability to keep her dominion over Halliday due to her pregnancy make her a mysterious and enigmatic person to be analyzed. Through her characterization, disgusting relationships between men and women who undermine the quality and value of sexuality are demonstrated.

Gerald begins to feel something powerful towards one of Halliday’s women, Minette, “who spoke her r’s like w’s, lisping with a slightly babyish pronunciation which was at once affected and true to her character. Her voice was dull and toneless” (69). Gerald’s feelings towards her are in the form of tendency to have power over her:

He felt full of strength, able to give off a sort of electric power.
And he was aware of her blue, exposed-looking eyes upon him.
She had beautiful eyes, flower-like, fully opened, naked in their looking at him ... she appealed to Gerald strongly. He felt an awful, enjoyable power over her, an instinctive cherishing very near to cruelty. For she was a victim. He felt that she was in his power, and he was generous. The electricity was turgid and voluptuously rich, in his limbs. He would be able to destroy her utterly in the strength of his discharge. But she was waiting in her separation, given. (71)

Besides, Gerald is sure that the girl is going to yield to him and his male
being:

She looked at him steadily with her naive eyes, that rested on him and roused him so deeply, that it left his upper self quite calm ... he felt, she was compelled to him, she was fated to come into contact with him, must have the seeing him knowing him. And this roused a curious exultance. Also he felt, she must relinquish herself into his hands, and be subject to him. She was so profane, slave-like, watching him, absorbed by him. It was not that she was interested in what she said; she was absorbed by his self-revelation, by him, she wanted the secret of him, the experience of his male being. (73-74)

Gudrun’s striking of the blow on Gerald’s face is also the symbol of a declaration of war rather than love. Gudrun articulates her discourse while striking Gerald on the face. It is a destructive kind of power and it reveals Gudrun’s obsession with power and violence towards a male. Although being of the physically weaker sex, Gudrun has a more subtle and developed power than a man’s, and she has the real control in her relationship with Gerald. This is the most destructive form of traditional love, in which the female gains dominance through submission and being dependent on the other. Gerald is obsessively dependent on the other.

Gerald’s destruction is complete when Gudrun tells him that she does not love him, so as to show that his passion for her is not elevating but degrading, and to make him to pour out his love for her. However, it leads to his destruction gradually. It only proves that she used him according to her wishes and desires, he feels himself degraded and humiliated: that powerful man becomes like a weak woman, he is
completely tortured when Gudrun prefers the little dwarfish homosexual Loerke. They also begin to compete with each other in order to satisfy their narcissistic desire to have the power in the Symbolic Order, thus, they are doomed to fail. A vital conflict had set in, which frightened them both. Gudrun coldly says, “...you were in a fearful state when you came to me...when you first came to me. I had to take pity on you. But it was never love” (497). Gerald wants to kill Gudrun, “the Other,” who is ugly, bad, threatening, humiliating, and negative, in order to free and to form his subjectivity. He wants to expel “the Other.” However, he himself is expelled, and he is beaten forever by a woman: “he was silent in cold, frightened rage and despair whispering repeatedly. If only I could kill her, I should be free ... he stood as if he had been beaten ... it seemed to him he was degraded at the very quick, made of no account” (498-9). Her humiliation brings his disaster and finally his death:

Gerald took the throat of Gudrun between his hands that were hard and powerful. And her throat was beautifully soft...what bliss! What satisfaction ... how ugly she was ... a revulsion of contempt and disgust came over Gerald’s soul? The disgust went to the very bottom of him ... what was he doing, to what depths was he letting himself go! As if he cared about her enough to kill her, to have her life on his hands! a weakness ran over his body.... without knowing, he had let go his grip, and Gudrun had fallen to her knees a fearful weakness possessed him ... I didn’t want it really, was the last confession of disgust in his soul ... I’ve had enough- I want to go sleep ... he was weak, but he did not want to rest, he wanted to go on and on, to
the end ... he went always higher, always higher ... and he went
to sleep ... he slept eternally. (531-3)

Gerald, who suffers most from his inner void, family history, insufficiency, is
in fact the product of his abnormal mother’s. His inner world is fragmented. Gudrun
deprives both herself and her partner of jouissance, finding satisfaction in sacrifice.
As she fails her partner, she denies being the cause of the other’s jouissance.
(Hermione does the same thing to Birkin, but Birkin is saved through Ursula). The
self fails to discover a real “Other.” Having achieved and accomplished love, the
man passes into the unknown. He has become himself and his tale is told.

Lawrence points out that nobody is a complete man or woman. Every man
has a feminine, and every woman a masculine feature, and the ones who can be in
harmony with their feminine and masculine sides will be happy. However, it is
essential that men and women are never complementary to each other as they are
never broken fragments of one whole. In Women in Love, some female and male
characters embody both qualities. Thus, they are considered androgynous beings who
are free from the confines of the traditional gender roles which corresponds with
Kristevan concept of androgyny which contains the two, namely andro: male; gyne: a
female in both sexes. To Lawrence “Male” and “Maleness” are not the same as
“‘man”, and “female” is not synonymous with woman. He accepted that any person-
whether man or woman- has “Male” and “Female” elements in their personality: For
every man comprises male and female in his being, the male always struggling for
predominance. A woman likewise consists of male and female, with the female
predominant (Lawrence, 1956: 191). Thus, Hermione corresponds to “the Male, the
Love, the Spirit, the Mind, the Consciousness” while Ursula is depicted as closer to
“the Female, the Law, the Soul, the Senses, and the Feelings.” Lawrence believes that each individual is made up of male and female, we all have masculine and feminine sides to our personality, so individuals in the novels are amalgams of the two principles (Marsh, 2000:104). The female characters seek to liberate themselves from dependence and passivity and achieve a mode of behaviour which is androgynous. Hermione, like Gudrun, is both a female and a male combined into one perfect androgynous being having male qualities such as destruction, power, and anger, combined with aggressive femininity, which makes them the symbol of the abject in Kristevan terms. Gerald, on the other hand, has weaknesses and several females destroy his masculinity, namely Gudrun, his mother, his sister, and Minette.

Birkin, one of the major male characters, acts as the mouthpiece of Lawrence to describe women, and one of their images, and his love concept, his notion of star equilibrium, and his love relationship with Ursula are reflected through Mino:

The Mino walked steadily up to her ... he looked casually down on her ... walked after her, then suddenly, for pure excess, he gave her a light cuff with his paw on the side of her face. She ran off a few steps, like a blown leaf along the ground, then crouched unobtrusively, in submissive, wild patience. The Mino pretended to take no notice of her ... she began to quicken her pace ... when the ... lord sprang before her, and gave her a light handsome cuff. She subsided at once submissively. (165)

Birkin declares the need for male desire to direct the female to the required union with her mate. The chapter begins with the act of independence and courage by a female. Ursula is tense over the issue of the female cat’s subordination and Birkin’s
approval of his male cat’s aggressive behaviour towards a female stray. Birkin’s cat was following the female cat, this is what Birkin has pointed out in terms of balance of male and female. Ursula describes it as “male superiority” (167). Birkin says, “...with the Mino, it is desire to bring this female cat into a pure stable equilibrium, a transcendent and abiding rapport with the single male, whereas without him, she is a mere stray, a fluffy sporadic bit of chaos” (167).

To Birkin, his star equilibrium concept will bring hope and salvation. However, this equilibrium will occur only if he is dominant and she is submissive in the relationship. Dominance over women, as in the case of Mino, the cat, is an ultimate form of relationship. Birkin tries to find and create an ideal woman combining all his wishes, desires, and fantasies by focusing on Ursula. However, the love offered by Ursula is a bondage like Hermione’s. He feels that:

Woman is always so horrible and clutching, she has such a lust for possession, a greed of self-importance in love. She wants to have, to own, to control, to be dominant. Everything must be referred back to her, to Woman, the Great Mother of everything, out of whom proceed everything and to whom everything must finally be rendered up. It fills him with almost insane fury, this calm assumption of the Magna Mater, that all is hers, because she had borne it. Man is hers because she had borne him. (224)

Birkin does not want the commitment of an ordinary love relationship. He cannot talk about his obscure sexuality. He thinks that Ursula’s strong sexual urge is rather frightening. Birkin goes on with his concept of love that is impersonal, harder,
and rarer. It is beyond love and Birkin needs to love:

If we are going to know each other, we must pledge ourselves forever. If we are going to make a relationship, even of friendship, there must be something final and irrevocable about it. I can’t say it is love I have to offer- and it isn’t love I want. It is something much more impersonal and harder-and rarer, he adds, 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.(161)

He furthers his ideas:

I don’t want to see you. I’ve seen plenty of women, I’m sick and weary of seeing them. I want a woman I don’t see ... I want to find you, where you don’t know your own existence. ... what I want is a strange conjunction with you- he said quietly; not meeting and mingling; you are quite right:- but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings:- as the stars balance each other.(161-4)

However, Birkin was almost “afraid of the mocking restlessness of her splendid face ... he mistrusted her, he was afraid of a woman capable of such abandon, such dangerous thoroughness of destructivity...”(171). There is the need for equality in sex and love, which means that both partners sustain themselves and they fight each other to remain themselves. It does not mean they are the same, but they are equal in the sense that neither one submits to the other. This is what Birkin desires to have.
Birkin’s directing Ursula’s attention to the smell of the marsh, pointing out the female mythological character that has a seductive beauty, is interesting enough to be noted:

It seethes ... a river of darkness ... it is your reality he said, that dark river of dissolution. You see it rolls in us just as the other rolls- the black river of corruption. And our flowers are of this- our sea-born Aphrodite, all our white phosphorescent flowers of sensuous perfection, all our reality nowadays ... Aphrodite is born in the first spasm of universal dissolution- then the snakes and swans and lotus-marsh flowers- and Gudrun and Gerald-born in the process of destructive creation. (193)

The description of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of seductive female beauty, corresponds with Birkin’s phrase “sensuous perfection.” The myth of her birth is somewhat disturbing: Cronus and his mother plotted together, and Cronus castrated his father Uranus. He threw the severed genitals into the sea, where they produced foam, which became Aphrodite (Marsh, 2000: 165). In this way, she was, as Birkin says “water born” which refers to the idea of Semiotic Order in Kristevan sense, and the association of women with water in Cixous’ terms.

Ursula’s rejection of the rings that Birkin offers is the symbol for her rejection of sexuality and her gender under any kind of patriarchal organization. It also suggests that Ursula does not want to be bought. In other words, she refuses to be bound by any codes imposed by the society despite the codes of courtship, marriage and love. However, both Birkin and Ursula should overcome their gender suspicions: Ursula must be herself not a mere reaction against Hermione. Birkin must
be himself too. Birkin is split in his relationships with women. To be with men is his secret wish but he represses his homosexual desires. This results in the futility of all his attempts at relationships with women. A sudden attack of jealousy for Hermione makes Ursula attack Birkin furiously. She throws the rings. Hermione was in a kind of state of self-destruction from which he is not wholly free, but Ursula’s emotional intimacy is just as dangerous to his marriage ideals, a kind of tyranny, which nauseates him.

Ursula seems to move from the Imaginary Order to the Real Order in Lacanian terms, as she appears to realise her true nature. She talks to herself. She feels that her existence is deadly; her self seems to be dying. Lawrence describes Ursula as struggling against the emergence of her true femininity:

Then let it end, I shall quickly die. Ursula’s passion seemed to bleed to death, and there was nothing. She sat suspended in a state of complete nullity, harder to bear than death ... I am at the end of my line ... she knew she was near to death. She had travelled all her life along the line of fulfilment, and it was nearly concluded ... and one must fulfil one’s development to the end, must carry the adventure to its conclusion ... death is a great consummation, a consummating experience. It is a development from life. (214-5)

She asks herself “...it is better to die than live mechanically a life that is a repetition of repetition. To die is to move on with the invisible. To die is also a joy; a joy of submitting to that which is greater than the known ... life, indeed may be ignominious, shameful to the soul. But death is never a shame....” (215-6).
In the novel, Birkin complains about most of the female characters who are equipped with dangerous powers, firstly, Hermione, later Gudrun, and Mrs. Crich. Feminism is the struggle of women to define themselves and their situations in the world. However, Birkin hates the dominating Hermione, who is obsessed with knowledge to be powerful. She is the “Lady of Shallot,” he attacks her verbally, and this foreshadows his hostile act of stoning the pond. Her passions and instincts are intellectualized and spiritual, and her will is a mirror. Through this mirror image both subjectivity and objectivity is blurred. Birkin tells her that sex in the head is a form of pornography, like watching her naked animal actions in mirrors. His male discourse demands the silent participation of women. Both Ursula and Hermione listen to him:

It’s all that ‘Lady of Shallot business,’ he said, in his strong abstract voice. He seemed to be charging her before the unseeing air. You’ve got that mirror, your own fixed will, your immortal understanding, your own tight conscious world, and there is nothing beyond it. There, in the mirror, you must have everything. But now you have come to all your conclusions, you want to go back and be like a savage, without knowledge. You want a life of pure sensation and passion. But your passion is a lie, he went on violently. It isn’t passion at all, it is your will. It is your bullying will. You want to clutch things and have them in your power. You want to have things in your power. And why? Because you haven’t got any real body, any dark sensual body of life. You have no sensuality. You have
only your will and conceit of consciousness, and your lust for power, to know ... you want to have everything in your own volition. As it is, what you want is pornography- looking at yourself in mirrors, watching your naked animal actions in mirrors. (46)

When Ursula says “woman is the same as horse: two wills act in opposition inside her. With one will, she wants to subject herself utterly. With the other she wants to bolt, and pitch her rider to perdition” (157). Birkin points out that women should not be domesticated: he says, “it is a dangerous thing to domesticate even horses, let alone women” (157).

The concept of love, which is one of the premises of the feminist literary criticism, is also elaborated through Birkin and Gerald’s discussion on love. Birkin’s sexual desire has been transformed into discourse: he never stops talking about sex, and love, and the perfection of love relationships. Birkin wishes to be able to love a woman with his complete being. Birkin’s relationship with Hermione is a failure, not only because of her inadequacies, but also because of his passion for homoerotic desires. Yet Birkin’s learning to accept his sexuality as a man to be saved from homosexuality (through Ursula’s help) brings him closer to the Symbolic Order as heterosexual relationship is approved while homosexuality is against the rules of the Symbolic Order. Birkin says: “one needs some one really pure single activity- I should call love a single pure activity. But I don’t really love anybody- not now” (63). But Birkin wants to love and wishes for the finality of love with one woman, adding, “the old ideals are dead as nails- nothing there. It seems to me there remains only this perfect union with a woman- a sort of ultimate marriage- and there isn’t anything
else” (64). With a negative attitude towards both women and the concept of love, Gerald says, “I don’t believe a woman, and nothing but a woman, will ever make my life” (64).

To Lawrence, apart from love, sex, and marriage relationships, there are deeper dimensions of the self. For language is a public activity and will carry the very disease he is fighting, namely, repression, oppression, domestication, tradition, marriage, Birkin is not able to say he loves Ursula, he does not want his future imprisoned within the confines of that word in Women in Love. Therefore, the individual will be in conflict within himself/herself to be able to find his/her true self (which is always split from cradle to tomb according to Lacan), being free of the old system, which has enabled him/her to form his/her self. She/he begins to search for a new order not to be imprisoned within false sets of concepts, when the man acts independently of the traditional concepts, for example, marriage.

Lacan’s Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal concept is clarified through Gerald’s accusation of Birkin’s having no fixed standards of behaviour. He says to Birkin that, an individual must form his/her own real identity smashing the old ideals: Birkin replies: “standards- I hate standards. But they’re necessary for the common...” (35-36). Gerald is not free from standards, so he does not have his real subjectivity; instead he has fake identity, which is in fact a self identity under the control of the Symbolic Order, which is formed in the traditional value judgments. Birkin points out:

I think the people who say they want a new religion are the last to accept anything new. They want novelty right enough. But to stare straight at this life that we’ve brought upon ourselves,
rejected, absolutely smash up the old idols of ourselves, that we
sh’ll never do. You’ve got very badly to want to get rid of the old
before anything new will appear even in the self ... when we
really want to go for something better, we shall smash the old...

(59-60)

In another scene, Birkin acts again as the mouthpiece of Lawrence by stating
that he does not want to accept the love, and marriage offered by Ursula, who
represents the old way of life he detests. He prefers a kind of love in which the man
and the woman can be single in himself/herself, balancing each other as two subjects:

But he would rather not live than accept the love she offered.
The old way of love seemed a dreadful bondage, a sort of
conscription. He wanted something clearer, more open ... these
married people, shut themselves into their own exclusive
alliance with each other, even in love, disgusted him.
meaningless entities of married couples. On the whole he hated
sex, it was such a limitation. It was sex that turned a man into a
broken half of a couple, the woman into the other broken half.
And he wanted to be single in himself, the woman single in
herself. He wanted sex to revert to the level of the other
appetites, to be regarded as a functional process, not as a
fulfilment. He believed in sex marriage. (223-225)

While Birkin desires for freedom and balance in love, he detests the lust in
women to possess. Therefore, Birkin as a subject in process criticises the women
who are obsessed with possession, calling them Magna Mater, Great Mother, A
Mother Dolorosa:

He wanted a further conjunction, where man had being and woman had being, two pure beings, each constituting the freedom of the other, balancing each other like the two poles one force, like two angels, or two demons. He wanted to be with Ursula as free as with himself, single, and clear and cool, yet balanced, polarized with her ... but it seemed to him, woman was always so horrible and clutching, she had such a lust for possession, a greed of self importance in love. Everything must be referred back to her, to Woman, the Great mother of everything ... It filled him with almost insane fury, this calm assumption of the Magna Mater, that all was hers, because she had borne him ... A mater Dolorosa, she had borne him ... Ursula held him her everlasting prisoner. In each, the individual is primal; sex is subordinate, but perfectly polarized. Each has a single, separate being, within its own laws. The man has his pure freedom, the woman hers. Each acknowledges the perfection of the polarized sex-circuit. Each admits the different nature in the other. (223-225)

The “Moony” chapter is one of the most important scenes, as it deals with the male fear of female power. Birkin tries to break the image of women in his mind to reach perfect love. Birkin is afraid of women and female possessiveness and egoism, symbolized through the moon: “he stands still, looking at the water, and throwing upon it the husks of the flowers.” He curses Cybele, goddess of matriarchal fertility:
“Cybele- curse her! The accursed Syria Dea! Does one begrudge it her! What else is there-?” (278). Ursula’s loud and hysterical laughter on hearing his isolated voice speaking out corresponds with Irigaray’s term that her hysteria is a rebellious outlet for her, this hysterical voice may be said to represent the woman’s masculine language reflecting feminine experience (Humm, 1989: 100).

The moon, to Birkin, represents the will of the woman, the stoning of the moon shows the change in Birkin’s desires, which now reflect hatred and rejection of women. The will is filled with anger at men: women must be liberated from it:

He stood staring at the water. Then he stooped and picked up a stone, which he threw sharply at the pond … Then again there was a burst of sound, and a burst of brilliant light, the moon had exploded on the water, and was flying asunder, in flakes of white and dangerous fire. The furthest waves of light, fleeing out, seemed to be clamouring against the shore for escape, the waves of darkness came in heavily, running under towards the centre. But at the centre, the heart of all was still a vivid, incandescent quivering of a white moon not quite destroyed, a white body of fire writhing and striving and not even now broken open, not yet violated. It seemed to be drawing itself together with strange, violent pangs, in blind effort. It was getting stronger, it was reasserting itself. The inviolate moon. And the rays were hastening in thin lines of light, to return to the strengthened moon, that shook upon the water in triumphant reassumption ... He got larger stones, and threw
them, one after the other, at the white-burning centre of the
moon, till there was nothing but a rocking of hollow noise, and
a pond surged up, no moon any more, only a few broken flakes
tangled and glittering broadcast in the darkness, without aim or
meaning, a darkened confusion, like a black and white
kaleidoscope tossed at random. (278-9)

Birkin wants to destroy Ursula’s female power and her ego by throwing
stones. They achieve equilibrium when his ego and Ursula’s power are destroyed. As
Birkin finds Ursula’s love destructive, he does not want to be involved in it.
Therefore, he tries to destroy the destructive will of Ursula through the image of
moon. Birkin’s actions spring from frustration in his relationships with women in
general and Ursula in particular, something that is suggested by his angry reference
to Cybele. Birkin associates the moon with the ancient religions in which the
prominent deity was female, and therefore with a love concept between the sexes in
which women are almost always dominant although it takes different forms, ranging
from the openly domineering attitude of Hermione, who sees herself as the Magna
Mater to the more subtle and unconscious assertion of primacy that Ursula makes,
through her willingness to serve and sacrifice herself. The imagery used to describe
the integrated reflection of the moon after Birkin’s first attack on it links the scene
with the earlier “Water Party” chapter in which female dominance, the destructive
power, women can exert over men, is a central theme. When Birkin throws the stone,
Ursula is “aware of the bright moon leaping. In the following episode, the serene
image of the moon reminds Birkin subliminally of the “overweening assumption of
female primacy” (278). He has met in the women he has been closely involved with,
and he is provoked to a kind of symbolic re-enactment of his efforts to challenge that assumption. The scene reflects the way in which he has been able to disturb Ursula’s attachment to the conventional notion of love, but it also suggests getting her to accept his new basis for a relationship.

Ursula wants to be involved in a love relationship that is based on her power over Birkin, who will render himself up to her:

She wanted to have him as her own ... to drink him down ... and subtly enough, she knew he would never abandon himself finally to her. He did not believe in final self abandonment ... it was his challenge. She was prepared to fight him for it. For she believed in an absolute surrender to love. She believed that love far surpassed the individual. He said the individual was more than love, or than any relationship. For him, the bright, single soul accepted love as one of its conditions, a condition of its own equilibrium. She believed that love was everything. Man must render himself up to her .. let him be her man utterly, and she in return would be his humble slave whether she wanted it or not.

(299)

The “Excurse” chapter, in the words of Adelman, “is a journey from the isolation of self to the universe of otherness” (Adelman, 1991: 100). It is essentially about Birkin’s liberation into being. However, Birkin hates the women who assume power over him. Acting as the mouthpiece of Lawrence, he states that he is against the idea of fusion, in other words, union of two people, two qualities, or principles, rejecting the fusion of Ursula’s emotional and Hermione’s spiritual intimacy. Birkin
yearns for individuality and freedom other than absorbing, melting, or merging:

Birkin felt tired and weak ... and was not Ursula’s way of emotional intimacy, emotional, was it as dangerous as Hermione’s abstract spiritual intimacy? Fusion, fusion, this horrible fusion of two beings, which every woman and most men insisted on, was it not nauseous and horrible anyhow, whether it was a fusion of the spirit or of the emotional body? Hermione saw herself as the perfect Idea, to which all men must come; and Ursula was the perfect Womb, the bath of birth, to which all men must come! In addition, both were horrible ...

Why could they not remain individuals, limited by their own limits? Why this dreadful all-comprehensiveness, this fateful tyranny? Why not leave the other being free, why try to absorb, or melt, or merge? One might abandon oneself utterly to the moments, but not to my other being. There was a darkness over his mind...his life was dissolved in darkness over his limbs and his body...he wanted her to come back. He breathed lightly and regularly like an infant, that breathes innocently, beyond the touch of responsibility. (348-9)

Thus, Birkin’s fulfilment in the relationship with Ursula is presented as the result of a struggle to achieve the separation of his self from the devouring mother image, the possessive mother figure who wants to absorb and subjugate Birkin. He does not want his autonomy to be threatened. However, with Ursula, who tries to possess him, he is not able to be an individual. Ursula constantly tries to protect
herself against male dominance and bullying. Ursula’s narcissistic need of a union with one of the sons of God (Birkin) is clear from the very beginning of the novel: “she was rich, full of dangerous power. She was like a strange unconscious bud of powerful womanhood. He was unconsciously drawn to her” (102). In the anal intercourse, Ursula yields to his masculinity, the experience of lovers is overwhelming heavenly, goes beyond even the sexual love: “and she was drawn to him strangely, as in a spell. Kneeling on the hearth-rug before him, she put her arms round his loins, and put her face against his thighs. Riches! Riches! She was overwhelmed with a sense of a heavenly riches” (352).

Keeping the importance of touch, which is beyond life, in mind, Ursula touches him as a son of God, not as an ordinary man. Birkin gives Ursula a physical release that is beyond sexual orgasm; through anal sex, they also become aware of maleness and femaleness. Even in the Semiotic Order, Lawrence’s male chauvinism and phallic pride is seen as he puts Birkin who has the control, putting the laws and rules for women to obey even in the sexual discourse in the Semiotic Order. Although Ursula seems to be the active one, in fact she worships Birkin like a god, a power, definitely superior to her who is not a goddess but a daughter of man. Birkin initiates and controls everything even in the Semiotic Order:

With her fingertips, she was tracing the back of his thighs, following some mysterious life flow there. She had discovered something, something more than wonderful than life itself ... it was a strange reality of his being ... this was release at last ... this was neither love nor passion. It was the daughters of man coming back to the sons of God, the strange inhuman sons of
God, who are in the beginning ... she was beautiful as a new marvellous flower opened at his knees ... beyond womanhood ... it was all achieved for her. She had found one of the sons of God from the Beginning, and he had found one of the first most luminous daughters of men. (353)

It is a kind of rebirth for them. They experience the Real Order in Lacanian terms, which is the most difficult one to reach among the other phases (Imaginary and Symbolic Orders). Both of them experience their beings and selfhood. The anal intercourse as the posture suggests, is the moment of jouissance. They feel the ecstasy of their sexuality. Ursula is satisfied by Birkin’s fountains that transcend any human fountains, sex and the phallic source. Ursula’s coming to sexuality is also a coming to selfhood. In the words of Cixous, the road to true being is by way of touch:

He stood there in his strange, whole body that had its marvellous fountains, like the bodies of the sons of God who were in the beginning. There were strange fountains of his body, more mysterious and potent than any she had imagined or known, more satisfying, ah, finally, mystically satisfying. She had thought there was no source deeper than the phallic source. And now, behold, from the smitten rock of the man’s body, from the strange marvellous flanks and thighs, deeper, further in mystery than the phallic source, came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches. (354-5)

In the kneeling scene, Lawrence’s male chauvinism is overt when Ursula is submissive and subordinate to Birkin. As Birkin is no longer a man, “strange and
inhuman” Ursula is no longer a woman “beyond womanhood” (Scherr: 1995: 71). Kate Millet accuses Lawrence endlessly of patriarchal male dominated sex: “…Lawrence is the most talented and fervid of sexual politicians. He is the most subtle as well, for it is through a feminine consciousness that his masculine message is conveyed” (Eagleton, 1991: 137). They achieve a real union in separateness through his star equilibrium:

They would give each other this star equilibrium which alone is freedom … they threw off their clothes, and he gathered her to him, and found her, found the pure lambent reality of her ever invisible flesh … the body of mysterious night, the night masculine and feminine … 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.

(360-1)

This chapter ends with their celebration of otherness. Ursula and Birkin enjoy sexual desires, and begin to realize their realities. In Lacanian terms, they approach the Real Order that includes the deepest feelings, such as death and sexuality. Thus, both Ursula and Gudrun experience the Imaginary Order, and Ursula passes from the Imaginary Order to the Real Order. Birkin also experiences the Real Order after they begin to experience their otherness and realities; Ursula and Birkin decide to be away from all the traditional values of the Symbolic Order, such as jobs, a regular place to live, furniture, and responsibilities. In Cixous’ words, “Ursula’s coming to sexuality is also coming to selfhood and coming away from the historically hegemonic Western nerve brain consciousness that would subordinate body to mind, blood to
brain, passion to reason” (Gilbert, 1986: xvii). Ursula and Birkin can quit everything, all responsibilities to find the equilibrium in their love and life. Ursula, for example, quits her job and leaves her father’s house. They want to be away from every kind of corruption, especially the materialistic ones; they decide that they need nothing, no furniture, and no house as they refuse what culture offers them. They are ready to become exiles, searching beyond the Symbolic Order in their perfect and complete relationship based on sensations. Birkin replies, “the truth is, we don’t want things at all…the thought of a house and furniture of my own is hateful to me” (401).

In the novel, not only heterosexual but also homosexual relationships are a medium for the application of Kristeva’s abject theory and Lacan’s Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal theory. Both theories refer to the appropriateness of the motives of the characters within the rules of the Symbolic Order. The homosexual relationship between Gerald and Birkin which is the symbol of monstrous and abhorrent, the abject, which is against the norms and rules of the Symbolic Order in which Gerald and Birkin crave for since they do not achieve fulfilment in their relationships with women. It should be expelled from the society. Birkin attacks conventional marriages because he has homosexual affinities like Lawrence. Therefore, he declares his love for Gerald. He is afraid of a relationship with Ursula although he wants to experience real love with her: this is a kind of reaction to the female world. As women react to the male dominated world through their lesbian relationships in order to be free in the oppressive facets of a patriarchal society in terms of their body and soul, they react in the same manner:

Their talk brought them into a deadly nearness of contact, a strange, perilous intimacy that was either hate or love, or both.
Yet the heart of each burned for the other. They burned with each other, inwardly. This they would never admit. They intended to keep their relationship a casual free-and-easy friendship, they were not going to be so unmanly and unnatural as to allow any heart burning relationship between man and men, and their disbelief prevented any development of their powerful but suppressed friendliness.(37)

Through the power of Ursula, who has strong instincts, Birkin is saved from having a homosexual relationship with Gerald although Birkin does not feel fully satisfied, yet both of them achieve real and complete fulfilment. Birkin and Ursula develop toward a state of maturity and balance, while Gudrun and Gerald develop toward a state of destruction. Birkin is able to slip through the net of identity: he is an orphan and can change his identity.

Birkin criticizes conventional marriage and love, referring to alternative relationships which will disrupt the Symbolic Order. As a member of patriarchal society, he says:

Marriage is one direction ... don’t do it ... marriage in the old sense seems to me repulsive said Birkin ... it’s a sort of tacit hunting in couples: the world all in couples, each couple in its own little house, watching its own little interests, stewing in its own little privacy- it’s the most repulsive thing on earth ... I do believe in a permanent union between man and woman ... in fact said Birkin, because the relation between man and woman is made the supreme and exclusive relationship ... you’ve got to
take down the love and marriage ideal from its pedestal. We want something broader. I believe in the additional perfect relationship between man and man- additional to marriage.

(397-8)

To Gerald, on the other hand, “marriage was like a doom to him. He was willing to condemn himself in marriage ... he was willing to accept this...but he would not make any pure relationship with any other soul. Marriage was not the committing of himself into a relationship with Gudrun” (398).

On the other hand, Ursula and Birkin associate themselves with radical concept of marriage, although she ends up sharing her husband with a man. Birkin accepts otherness and wants to be an individual. Birkin in his grief regrets that fellowship was not strong enough to save him; masculinity is suspended and divided by its own contradictory desires: what it wants and what it cannot control. Birkin realizes his falsity, he saves himself, but Gerald is not able to do that: family history, conventions, duties and obligations become a repression for him. Thus, the novel ends not in a utopian but in a dystopian manner, and ends with the alienation between the sexes and man and nature: Birkin tells Ursula his need for eternal union with a man: “you are enough for me, as far a woman is concerned. You are all women to me. But I wanted a man friend, as eternal as you and I are eternal ... but to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too: another kind of love” (541). Birkin’s final sentence proves that he believes that the ideal fulfilment is beyond the man and woman relationship. So, it should be complemented by a man-to-man, the homosexual relationship. Therefore, through this statement, he is closer to Cixous’ view of other bisexuality which is “multiple,
variable, and ever changing, consisting as it does of the non sex” (Moi, 1985:109). He is always the acting and the leading figure as a male. He is definitely a subject in process, who is in process, not fixed, but always developing in Kristevan terms.

In the final chapter, each person is able to discover a world of themselves: “Ursula went on in an unreal suspense, the last weeks before going away. She was not herself- she was not anything. She was something that is going to be soon- soon- very soon. But as yet, she was only imminent” (436). On the other hand, Gudrun reaches the top of the slope and she feels a triumphant joy. She describes the experience as ‘the complete moment of her life’ (473). Because of her intense feelings and joy, for a short time, she is in the Real Order in Lacanian terms.

In the novel, sexual identity is a burden that limits. Because of the fixed sex/gender identity, despite all his efforts to transcend this identity, Birkin can have no homosexual relationship with Gerald in the Symbolic Order. Marriage is finally sanctioned, but no children, no reproduction, new male relationship, deemed of, is unfulfilled (Williams, 1997: 110-111).

Women in Love mainly embodies tensions between constriction and release, the decay of social and personal power that constricts freedom, and the joyful release of feeling that nurtures personal growth. (Squires, 1990: 43). Characters like Ursula and Birkin are challenging and breaking constraints. They are indifferent to social values, being free to follow the impulses of their own natures. As is stated in the Introduction, feminist criticism mainly focuses on women’s sexual and social lives and value as mothers, their roles both in private and social lives, their feelings, tensions, alienation, loneliness, betrayal, dominance, and submission, and their rights in social and family lives. Wells, Bennett, and Lawrence put all these notions about
the female identity forward with great tenderness. To these authors, bearing children is also an invaluable experience; however, it degrades women as women are reduced to only this position. In most of Lawrence novels, there is no childbirth, sometimes miscarriage as in the case of *The Rainbow*, no children in the case of *Lady Chatterley*, and mystery in *Women in Love*. Child bearing is also a part of female sexuality, which is a long adventure into the unknown. If one of the main concerns of feminist criticism is to find the unknown and unsaid in the lives of both males and females in terms of not only their sexual and personal relationships but also social and political relationships, feminist criticism is an indispensable, and undeniable part of literary and social criticism. The sex/gender system and sexual relations take central stage in Lawrence’s novels. He values exchange with an Other as the most important relation, depending upon a binary sex/gender system. Lawrence is not feminist; however, sexist, and he clearly identifies the boundaries between the sexes.

In the novel, each individual seeks another to join with in order to achieve his/her own fulfilment; they seek positive sexual relationships, which complete them as individuals. However, it is not so easy for most individuals, who are imprisoned by the influences of family, childhood, social class, and work in the Symbolic Order. They should be free of any limitations and distractions of their backgrounds. Gerald, for example, is influenced by all these elements. Birkin is drawn without any relation. Moreover, Gudrun and Ursula are affected by their insensitive authoritarian father and a cold and unaffectionate mother, in addition to their ghastly environment. With Lawrence’s apocalyptic vision, each individual struggles into existence, and they struggle for unity with one another. In their love relationships, too, they have similar
conflicts with themselves and with their partners. Binary opposition works here through love-hatred, anger-desire, security-insecurity, and so on. Ursula and Birkin seem to achieve the complete union. Each wants to free himself/herself, to have their true identities; they break down each other’s defences and destroy each other’s old selves. Birkin leaves Hermione and is free from the destructive relationship. In other words, he gains his true identity through self-destruction. Ursula wants Birkin to be free by leaving Hermione, and Birkin then is able to gain his true individual identity as an active subject. They achieve an ideal relationship and are able to remain individuals with their free souls and bodies.

Lawrence asserts that identity is profoundly relational, that the self cannot be realized outside the context of the other- “we have our very individuality in relationships” ‘we need one another’; that effects are inextricably entwined with the body- “the body’s life is the life of sensations and emotions... all the emotions belong to the body” (“A Propos of Lady Chatterley’s Lover”; 1986: 492). Birkin and Ursula achieve this. Furthermore, all the women whether traditional, new or modern, have difficulties in their roles of sexuality. Gudrun, Hermione, and Ursula are potentially alien to their own realities and autonomies. They all look for places and times which are eliminated from the pressures of the society, to be free to do whatever they wish even for a short period of time. Ursula and Birkin achieve star equilibrium, which enables them to rescue themselves from the traditional notions of sex and marriage and achieve deeper realities of themselves in terms of body, emotion and phallic reality. Ursula, for example, rejects her husband’s love for Gerald. She wants to control sex too, therefore not only her mind but also her whole body challenge the discourse of the phallic, which has the ultimate power and control. She speaks from
her body. On the other hand, apart from achieving a union of marriage that is based on equilibrium, Ursula and Birkin differ quite radically from Ann and Helen in that they taste the joy in the Imaginary Order or the Semiotic Order, free from the rules of the Symbolic Order, and as a result can approach the most important and difficult phase, the Real Order momentarily. They are aware of their realities both emotionally and physically. Gudrun and Hermione are also able to remain in their Semiotic modes, rejecting any person or any authority, which can be hazardous to their liberation and comfort. They also for short periods of time live through ecstatic moods in their personal and sexual lives; therefore, they approach The Real Order momentarily though they enter the Symbolic Order after they are purged of all their destructive feelings.

Differently from Ann Veronica and Helen with the High Hand, in Women in Love, sexuality is studied in detail, real sexual intercourses are experienced, in which Ursula and Birkin, and Gudrun and Gerald are able to enter the Real Order momentarily. Even the novel itself subverts itself, and it breaks the Symbolic Order by killing Gerald and his father who represent the Symbolic Order. Gerald is not completely in the Semiotic Order, except for wrestling, sexual intercourse, rabbit and horse scenes. Diana’s fiancé dies too, and his death is due to a female who holds his throat tightly. Thus, while women are wholesome, men are dead. Most of Lawrence’s women in the novel are destructive, cold, and tyrants, shaped by the patriarchal social norms. The only traditional woman in the novel, Mrs Crich, who is shaped by the Symbolic Order, also achieves liberation from the authority of her husband through his death. Everything in the novel works through oppositions and the greatest binary opposition between man and woman in the Symbolic Order is
reversed. However, there is a kind of order in the novel that does not include domination and submission, but harmony and reconciliation, and if there is a kind of dominance, the woman is the one who dominates and who is definitely on the positive side. When Hermione, Gudrun, and Mrs. Crich dominate, they are destructive unless they are guided by a male like Birkin who is able to partake in the Semiotic Order in Kristeva's sense. Ursula is never dominant in the Semiotic Order. Ursula and Birkin are out of the patriarchal Symbolic Order. All the dead males die because of women. Thus, Lawrence is definitely sexist. Birkin is a subject in process who is always an active and a leading figure, who is always in process in that he is not fixed, but always developing. Since Ursula lives her Semiotic mode in which Birkin is the authority, she might be regarded as a subject in process: she too had a lesbian relationship in *The Rainbow*. Their marriage is out of patriarchal Symbolic Order as they lead their own lives free from what culture offers, namely, they give up their jobs, their responsibilities, all the materialistic values, such as house or furniture. Birkin is also closer to Cixous’ view of bisexuality when his last words are considered.
Conclusion

The English novel produced during the Edwardian era is not a domain independent from the social, cultural, and political events of its society. Novels during this era incorporated a multiplicity of such social concerns as the concept of woman question, and male and female relationships. Within this frame, in this dissertation, H. G. Wells’ *Ann Veronica*, Arnold Bennett’s *Helen With The High Hand* and D. H. Lawrence’s *Women in Love* have been studied chronologically, in terms of male and female relationships, relationships between parents and children, gender identities, power struggles between the sexes, sexuality and its expression, images and stereotypes of female gender, love concept, the “New Woman” and the “Woman Question.” Through the theories of Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, Helen Cixous, and Luce Irigaray, all these notions are depicted by treating the texts as codes representing the unsaid in everyday life and motives, hidden truths about individual feelings of the female characters during their constitutions as subjects, while taking into consideration that these female characters are created by male writes such as Wells, Bennett and Lawrence whose familiarity with the feminist thought is restricted to the period they lived in.

In these novels, male and female characters suffer from the dichotomy of being a male and a female. The notion of tasks fulfilled by the male, king of the household, responsible for guarding his queen from the perils and plights of outside world as a subject and the female, a servant of the household, and as an object has given rise to the concept of separate spheres, which explains the patriarchal view of the Victorian male who describes marriage as the ultimate end for women.

Through feminist literary theory, relationships between literature and
patriarchal prejudices in the society are exposed, putting a great deal of emphasis on literature’s potential role to play in overcoming such prejudices and discriminations. Feminist literary criticism aims to uncover the real identities of women who try to free themselves from the discriminative societal values to achieve their autonomies even if they somehow fail eventually. There are several philosophers, critics and authors who evaluate the issue of feminism, whose notions are still read and valued. Wollstonecraft, J. S. Mill, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, Betty Friedan, Mary Ellman, Elaine Showalter, and Gilbert and Gubar are only some of those people whose works have been quite essential in the development of gender studies and feminist literary criticism which attempt to improve society by keeping in mind that women have been unjustly marginalized and victimized by the patriarchal structures of the society. The only way to remedy this situation is through literary criticism, which provides consciousness raising among the readers by offering role models for them. Besides, it alters not only the treatment of societies towards women but also the attitude of a woman as an individual towards herself, while struggling to overcome stereotyped roles and positions for women. Feminist literary criticism fundamentally deals with how female characters are rendered in the works of male writers, through rejecting all labels, names, and isms, in particular, feminism and sexism.

In this dissertation, such theories as the psychoanalytical theoretician Jaques Lacan’s theory of the “Three Stages,” through which he evaluates human life and language process, namely, “The Symbolic Order” (acceptance of phallus as a signifier of the Law of the Father), “The Imaginary Order” (Freud’s pre-Oedipal period, the world of the infant before he learns language), “The Real Order” (deep
and intensive lives such as death and sexuality). Lacan’s concept of “The Ideal Ego” (how a person defines himself/herself), and “The Ego Ideal” (how a person is defined by the other). Julia Kristeva’s theory of “The Abject” which does not respect orders, positions, rules, and disturbs identity, system and order. Kristeva’s “Abject Mother” concept, her theory of “Intertextuality” which refers to the interaction between Semiotic and Symbolic drives, her “Androgyny” term which expresses her multiple identity concern, which in turn reflects that the identity is plural, and changing, and her term “Subject in Process” which suggests that the subject is not fixed, but always developing. Helen Cixous’ “Power Over” (bad and negative), “Power To” (good and positive), and her “Other Bisexuality” which is multiple, and everchanging, constituting as it does of the non sex. Luce Irigaray’s term “Hysteria,” to refer to the rebellious outlet for the submissive women and their feminine language in the masculine world, and the concept of “Good Mother” shared by both Cixous and Irigaray, have been applied to the female characters in Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love in relation with their constitution as subjects.

The contributions of such authors as Wells, Bennett and Lawrence, though they are not familiar with feminist thought and theory, are important in that through depicting relationships between women and men, they enable the reader to understand and analyze all the dilemmas and problems experienced by characters, who portray similar positions, through offering solutions, and thus making an analysis of his/her position in the society. It is also significant to note that the authors themselves have experienced similar dilemmas of split self, fake and real identity, Ego Ideal, Ideal Ego in their relationships with women as members of a patriarchal order which dominates, neglects and undermines women.
In this respect, a great deal of attention is paid in the novels, which are the reflections of real life to a certain extent, and to the images and representations of the female characters. In _Ann Veronica_, Wells’ Darwinism and pessimism about the future of humankind is unequivocal. To him, humankind is ultimately and already doomed that its prospect is not salvation but extinction. With his visionary and propagandist attitude, Wells rebels against all the authoritarian constructs that deny freedom of both sexes, and supports sexual equality, claiming that mere economic equality is not enough for women. Wells, in a similar way to Bennett and Lawrence, has a quite contradictory attitude towards women in that he both fears and desires them, expecting them to be strong at one moment and weak another moment. A woman is a kind of enigma for him. To Wells, the main purpose of the business of human life centres about reproduction, and he dismisses a childless life as essentially failure and perversion. He advocates free love in the novel, but it is, in fact, just for the sake of finding the right male for child breeding, which is the key to human salvation. He believes that women may be free only in theory as in the case of Ann Veronica. He also believes that all the individuals and societies are useless: even the new women like Ann are doomed to fail as they are not equipped with the abilities to govern their will power and they are not able to adapt to such societies.

In Wells’ sense Ann Veronica is enclosed in the domestic structure that she has escaped from the beginning of the novel, because not only her physical and emotional disadvantages as a woman, but also education, and economic system, and all the institutions are inadequate and poor. As a sexist, Wells places Ann Veronica in his “Lover-Shadow” concept, which is the embodiment of his ego’s dream. Although she challenges the stereotypical representations that confine her role to that
of a daughter and wife, she accepts the phallus as the signifier of sexual difference, which in turn signifies power, and control that Ann seems to be able to have. However, Wells ends the novel in a very traditional manner in which Ann seems to be stereotyped. Seemingly reversed binary opposition turns to its real position in which the woman represents the “Other” and negative. Wells, who fears power and intellect in women, states that freedom and domesticity can never be together. Thus, it seems that there is not much utopia for Ann and other women.

Although Ann is a new woman, who is bright, self assertive, intelligent and determined, opening possibilities for women, she seems to be unable to be away from the constraints of home and parental authority. However, in Wells’ case, she is in fact a failure because she is mentally unfit for the society, full of blind and irrational citizens, although she wishes for a better future that she is independent of any kind of authority in her life. Lacking scientific education, economic independence, and experience, she does not have any other choice but to accept the Law of the Father, Law of the Society. Although she seems to be an Open Conspirator, Intellectual Elite, a Female Samurai, and a Poietic, she is not able to preserve those values. Nevertheless, in terms of feminist criticism, she takes a lot of steps to awaken: defying her father and aunt, her wish to go to the ball, her struggles for equality and vote, her desire to study biology in Imperial College, her brave comments on man/woman relationships, leaving her home, her arrest, a month’s imprisonment, her sexual awakening and passions for Capes, her illicit honeymoon in the Alps and her jouissance all make her a multiple subject who has her private voice in the Semiotic Order and who is able to balance her semiotic modes through her marriage in the Symbolic Order.
In *Helen with the High Hand*, as opposed to Wells’ visionary and Darwinistic attitude, Arnold Bennett makes a social analysis and a realistic study of men and women. Poverty and failure constitute one of the themes in the novel. Bennett states that environment conditions the personalities of men and women. Furthermore, Bennett has contradictory notions about women because he both fears and desires them. As a sexist, he portrays Helen Rathbone, who is both domestic and kind; innocent and adventurous. Bennett is similar to Wells and Lawrence, he is sensitive to the relations between men and women and the problems of individual, economic and social forces on women’s lives. On the other hand, Bennett confesses that he considers women inferior to men, and they are incapable of the highest artistic or scientific achievements and they love to be dominated. He does not regard women as equals and individuals although he supports the causes of suffragist women’s rights for economic independence. For him, the real type of a woman is submissive and kind and marriage is the final chance for a woman. Thus, he overtly follows Ruskin’s separate spheres concept. Helen Rathbone, who begins as a modern woman having her autonomy and private voice, and who seems to be in Lacanian Imaginary Order, or Kristevan Semiotic Order, settles down choosing marriage with the man she wished for and a modest life being assimilated towards the traditional role of a woman accepting the phallus as the only authority in the Symbolic Order, accepting social castration. However, it should be pointed out that being manipulative, tricky and calculating; being familiar with business world and investment like a man, she is already in the Symbolic Order, living with her husband she loves passionately. She has not been in the Real Order in Lacanian terms, like Ursula and Gudrun though it is momentarily. Being in the Semiotic Order, obsessed with her desire to do whatever
she wants, Helen uses her power to influence her uncle, and manipulate him to do whatever she wishes and to triumph over him, and to overcome social and economic difficulties and prove her selfhood with her reasoning faculty. The novel questions hierarchical differences between the sexes in Western society, which valorise men over women, and logos over pathos. However, the power, tried to be held mainly by Helen and sometimes by James, is not a destructive and ruinous agent, unlike the power used in *Women in Love*, but rather a tempting and teasing element which takes the form of playing mutual tricks. Nevertheless, Cixous’ “power to” concept, applied to Helen, seems to be subverted at the end of the novel. Although she seems to reverse the hierarchy of Penis/Lack of Penis and subvert patriarchy, the power, which is the basic determinant, the force that shapes individuals and his/her environment, does not seem to belong to a female completely, but to her authority, her husband. The patriarchal figure becomes the authority, although even a matriarchal figure seems to hold the authority for a short time. Although Helen has to conform to the established orders in terms of familial, social, economic life, she seems to be happy in her personal life. She ends up in the Symbolic Order where she becomes a subject. Her sexual and aggressive instincts are put in normal level. Similar to Ann, she is able to balance her Semiotic and Symbolic modes as well. Her life is organized according to the traditional norms, people’s value judgments, ideals, and notions. Love changes Helen’s life, and marriage becomes her ultimate end in which she is happy with the man she desired so far. Helen does not repress her sexual desires like Wells and Lawrence’s heroines. She is not a mere sexual object for men. She is an androgynous sexual subject who is able to overcome paradigms of feminine identity. She proves that she is not one but multiple with no confines of gender. She
is not a type of Victorian womanhood, imbued with the 19th century female virtues of
duty, submission, and kindliness. She wishes to go beyond her horizons and limits to
control her destiny and challenge the patriarchal order.

In *Women in Love*, Lawrence, with the apocalyptic vision, assumes
contradictory perceptions towards female characters, as he celebrates the phallus at
one moment while he feels sympathy with women at another. Nevertheless, his
phallic pride and male chauvinism are quite clear not only in his literary career but
also in his personal life. His struggle to get out of the devouring destructive mother
figure has a profound effect not only on his social and private life but also on his
novels. Being obviously sexist, he creates seemingly domineering, assertive and
liberated yet submissive females. Sexual relationships both within and between the
sexes are expanded in the novel. There are several love affairs in the novel, among
them is the Ursula/Birkin relationship in which the couples find equilibrium. Acting
as a foil to that relationship, are the relationships of Gudrun/Gerald and
Hermione/Birkin, and Mr.Crich/Mrs Crich, all of which fail in the end. One
similarity with Ann Veronica and Helen is that there is female resistance to the male
definition of their world. Most of the female characters are awakening to a passionate
sense of autonomy, and in this novel, and they are the most successful. They all
reject stereotyped images of such women, created by the male characters as Magna
Mater, Medea, Cybele, Diana, Eve, Serpent, angel, queen, Lady of Shalott and so on.
By means of madness, loud and hysterical laughter, and exposing the bodies, dancing,
swimming, discourses and silences, they can protect themselves from the limits of
patriarchy and all the images, and prove their sexual power to resist the male world,
by not trying to lose their autonomies. They are able to find sexual pleasure like men.
As opposed to Helen and Ann, Ursula is able to enter the Real Order momentarily which is the realm in which the deepest and intensive feelings, such as death and sexuality are experienced. Unlike the other two novels, sexuality, including an anal intercourse is portrayed in detail. Gudrun and Ursula fight for their freedom at all costs, from the beginning until the end, and they are free from the repressive effects of social environments they find empty and unpromising, relying on their own instincts and personalities. In this way, Lawrence takes us right inside the characters, and in this attitude and style, he is different from Wells and Bennett. Most women assume “power over” men: Gudrun is responsible for Gerald’s humiliation, frustration and eventually his death, Diana is the cause of her fiance’s death, Hermione is about to kill Birkin, Gudrun slaps Gerald like an Amazon. In other words, women are generally destructive in the novel.

However, in the novel, most women turn out to be free individuals, responsible for taking their own initiatives, and oppressing the men when necessary, even with their own discourses. They are portrayed as strong women for whom it is of utmost importance to become an individual self, who are able to take their own initiative and a person who has their concerns of physical and emotional equality. Mrs Crich, the only traditional woman in the novel who is in the Symbolic Order, achieves liberation of the authority of her husband through his death. Therefore, in the novel, like the other two novels, marriage does not seem to be necessarily a place for domestic enslavement but a position in which the couples find emotional and sexual equilibrium in which they do not lose their autonomy, especially in the case of the Ursula/Birkin relationship. Because Ursula is free from her Ego Ideal much easier than Ann and Helen, her marriage does not resemble a plunge into another
sleep even a death. In the novel, the Real Order and Semiotic mode are experienced much more intensely than the other novels. The ones such as Hermione and Gerald who are not able balance their Semiotic and Symbolic modes are doomed to fail while Ursula is able to balance her semiotic and symbolic modes and she becomes a multiple subject. Birkin is a subject in process who is always an active and a leading figure, who is always in process in that he is not fixed, but always developing. Since Ursula lives her Semiotic mode in which Birkin is the authority, she might be regarded as a subject in process: she too had a lesbian relationship in The Rainbow. Birkin is also closer to Cixous’ view of bisexuality when his last words are considered. Ursula and Birkin’s marriage is out of patriarchal Symbolic Order as they lead their own lives free from what culture offers: they give up their jobs, their responsibilities, and buy no furniture.

In conclusion, the above-mentioned novels of H.G. Wells, A. Bennett, and D. H. Lawrence illustrate the female characters’ social, individual, and economic struggles to have their autonomies. The concept of women and men, identity, sexuality, instabilities in gender, power relations, emotional and physical relations, conflicts within characters themselves and with their partners, anxieties towards gaining spiritual and physical equalities, the meaning of being an individual, and relationships between mothers, fathers, and children have all been analyzed in the novels. The outcome is that although Bennett and Wells consider themselves to be revolutionary and modern in those issues, they find themselves in quite traditional spaces. Furthermore, having different perceptions for women, all three of these authors are not feminists, but sexists who are trying to identify the boundaries between the sexes clearly through binary oppositions of worship or fear, and love or
loathing. All of them feel antagonism towards women to a greater or less extent. They desire male authority and female submission. Feminist literary criticism mainly focuses on women’s sexual and social lives and value as mothers, their roles in both private and social lives, their feelings, tensions, alienation, loneliness, betrayal, dominance, and submission, their rights in social and family lives, sex/gender system, and sexual relations. Most of these notions that feminist literary criticism puts forward have been found in the novels by Wells, Bennett, and Lawrence although they are not familiar with the contemporary feminist criticism. It is also clear from the novels studied that women seem to be more courageous than men in the struggle for personal fulfilment and a harmonious life. Moreover, in the novels, each person, female or male, constitutes her/his semiotic system and, therefore, each can be free to speak, write, study, sing, go, fight, and do whatever necessary for the formation of their autonomies and subjectivities. Therefore, being a woman in the analysis of the above mentioned novels does not always mean being a negative “Other,” to have a split personality, to succumb to social pressure. Being a woman can also refer to gaining subjectivity, standing on one’s own feet, searching for values and identity, struggling for self expression, sexual and emotional pleasure and fulfilment, challenging existing role models and revolutionizing, finding sound relationships between man and women in the oldest continuous battle, and expressing their innermost feelings and notions in such a manner that will enable them the attainment of primary objective of self fulfilment, through accepting the differences, putting emphasis on the similarities, paving the way for the developments, through harmony, reconciliation and humanism.
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FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICAL APPROACH TO H.G.WELLS’ ANN VERONICA
ARNOLD BENNETT’S HELEN WITH THE HIGH HAND AND D. H. LAWRENCE’S
WOMEN IN LOVE

ABSTRACT

Contemporary feminist criticism comprises the struggle to challenge the societies, which regard the male figure as the only authority, not only at home but also in every part of the societies in which even the traditions and customs are generally regulated and applied according to the rules based on male-centred ideologies. The feminist literary critical approach puts emphasis on the relationships between the patriarchal prejudices in the society and literature and the potential role of literature to impede this. Several feminist writers assert that literature creates great changes not only in the treatment of societies towards women but also in the attitude of a woman as an individual towards herself.

Feminist literary criticism basically deals with the depiction of female characters in the works of male writers in terms of male-female relationships, relationships between parents and children, gender identities, power struggles between the sexes, body and sexuality and images of women.

Although the most eminent and well known English male authors, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett and D. H. Lawrence were not familiar with contemporary feminist thought and theory, similar issues to those mentioned above can be found in their novels Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love.

In this dissertation, such theories as the psychoanalytical theoretician Jaques Lacan’s theory of the “Three Stages,” through which he evaluates human life and language process, namely, “The Symbolic Order” (acceptance of phallus as a signifier of the Law of the Father), “The Imaginary Order” (Freud’s pre-Oedipal
period, the world of the infant before he learns language), “The Real Order” (deep and intensive lives such as death and sexuality). Lacan’s concept of “The Ideal Ego” (how a person defines himself/herself), and “The Ego Ideal” (how a person is defined by the other). Julia Kristeva’s theory of “The Abject” which does not respect orders, positions, rules, and disturbs identity, system and order. Kristeva’s “Abject Mother” concept, her theory of “Intertextuality” which refers to the interaction between Semiotic and Symbolic drives, her “Androgyne” term which expresses her multiple identity concern, which in turn reflects that the identity is plural, and changing, and her term “Subject in Process” which suggests that the subject is not fixed, but always developing. Helen Cixous’ “Power Over” (bad and negative), “Power To” (good and positive), and her “Other Bisexuality” which is multiple, and everchanging, constituting as it does of the non sex. Luce Irigaray’s term “Hysteria,” to refer to the rebellious outlet for the submissive women and their feminine language in the masculine world, and the concept of “Good Mother” shared by both Cixous and Irigaray, have been applied to the female characters in Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love in relation with their constitution as subjects.

This dissertation not only aims to apply certain feminist theories to certain novels but also makes a comparative study among such novelists as Wells who has a visionary and Darwinistic attitude, Bennett who is preoccupied with social observation and analysis and Lawrence who has an apocalyptic vision, and who deals with the anxieties and tensions in the unconsciousness of the characters by taking the reader right inside the characters.

Disbelieving in the equality of men and women, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and D. H. Lawrence are similar to each other in that each has a quite contradictory
attitude towards the woman who is a kind of enigma whom they both fear and desire. On the other hand, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and D. H. Lawrence are all sexist authors although they have different approaches to portray their female characters. For example, Wells’ female characters are at the heart of feminist political activities while Bennett’s female characters are clear from politics, and Lawrence’s female characters are liberated enough to have sexual intercourses with their partners. Further to this, each author describes women with different attitudes and with different names, namely, H. G. Wells describes them as Lover Shadow, Open Conspirator, Poietic, Female Samurai, Intellectual Elite, and Bennett describes them as domestic, comfy, wayward, cocottes, angel, and satan, and as a male chauvinist D.H. Lawrence uses such concepts as Magna Mater, Medea, Cybele, Diana, Eve, Serpent, angel, queen, and Lady of Shalott.

In Ann Veronica, Wells’ Darwinism and pessimism about the future of the human beings is unequivocal. According to Wells, the main purpose of life centres about reproduction to create intellectual, creative, rational, and reasonable people. For this reason, in Wells’ case, even Ann Veronica who seems to be an intellectual and creative person is a failure as she is mentally unfit for the society itself which does not promise any success and development due to its poor and irrational instutues which produce failures like Ann Veronica. However, in terms of feminist criticism, she has taken a lot of steps to awaken, namely, defying her father and her aunt, her wish to go to the ball, her struggles for equlity, and vote, her desire to study biology, her brave comments on men and women relationships, leaving her house, her imprisonment, her sexual awakening for Capes, choosing her partner on her own, her illicit honeymoon all make her a multiple subject who has her private voice in the
Semiotic Order and who is able to balance her semiotic modes through her marriage in the Symbolic Order.

In *Helen with the High Hand*, Helen begins as a modern woman who has her autonomous self and private voice in Kristeva's Semiotic Order. However, she also becomes a subject in the Symbolic Order, by choosing to get married to the man for whom she feels passion and love. On the other hand, being manipulative, tricky, and calculating, being familiar with the business world, and investing like a man, from the very beginning, she is able to act as a multiple subject who is able to balance her semiotic and symbolic modes by accepting social castration and the Law of the Father.

Being an obviously sexist and a male chauvinist author, Lawrence clearly identifies the boundaries between the sexes in *Women in Love*. Even in the Semiotic Order, it is the man, Birkin, who controls the woman, Ursula as Lawrence endlessly supports patriarchal male dominated sex. However, Ursula and Birkin’s marriage is out of the patriarchal Symbolic Order as they lead their lives free from what culture offers, giving up their jobs, responsibilities, and all the materialistic values. Thus, their marriage is not a social contract, yet an individual compromise that they are able to find star equilibrium in their love and marriage in which they become subjects who are able to balance the semiotic and symbolic modes.

This dissertation has shown that in *Ann Veronica*, *Helen with the High Hand*, and *Women in Love*, written with different attitudes, and approaches, most of the female and male characters are able to construct themselves as multiple subjects in the Symbolic Order where they accept the Law of the Father, and they are also able to balance their semiotic and symbolic drives.
H. G. WELLS’İN ANN VERONICA, ARNOLD BENNETT’İN HELEN WITH THE HIGH HAND VE D. H. LAWRENCE’İN WOMEN IN LOVE ADLI ROMANLARININ FEMİNİST YAKLAŞIMLA İNCELENMESİ

TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Feminist eleştiri, erkek figürünevin evin reisi olarak kabul edildiği ve toplumun her kesiminde de bu otoritenin hissedildiği, aynı zamanda da gelenek ve göreneklerin bile genel olarak erkek egemenliğine dayalı olarak geliştirildiği ve uygulanıldığı toplumlara karşı meydan okuma mücadelesini içermektedir. Feminist edebiyat eleştiri kuramı, edebiyat ve toplumdaki ataerkil önyargılar arasındaki ilişkiler ve edebiyatın bu önyargıları önlemedeki potansiyel rolü üzerinde durmaktadır. Birçok feminist yazar, edebiyatın hem toplumun kadına karşı tavır ve yaklaşımdında, hem de kadının birey olarak kendine karşı tavır ve yaklaşımdında büyük ölçüde değişiklikler yaratığını savunmaktadır.


Bu tezde, Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand ve Women in Love adlı romanlardaki kadın karakterlere, kendilerini birer özne “subject” olarak oluşturma süreçlerinde, psikoanalitik kurmacı Jaques Lacan’in insan yaşamı ve zihnini tanımladığı “Sembolik Düzen” (fallusun Baba Kanunu’nun göstergesi olarak kabul

Bu tezin amacı, sadece belirli feminist kuramları belirli romanlara uygulamak değil, aynı zamanda da Darwinci yaklaşımu olan Wells, toplumsal gözlem ve analiz yapan Bennett ve apokaliptik düşüncə tarzını karakterlerin iç dünyalarındaki kaygı ve gerilimleri ile yansıtlan Lawrence üzerinde karışıtmalı bir inceleme yapmaktadır.

Lawrence’ın kadın karakterleri, partnerleri ile cinsel ilişkiye girebilecek kadar özgürdür. Buna ek olarak, H.G.Wells, Arnold Bennett ve D.H.Lawrence, kadını farklı tutımlarla ve farklı isimlerle tanımlamaktadır. H.G. Wells, Lover Shadow (Aşığın Gölgesi), Open Conspirator (Girişimci), Poietic (Yaratıcı), Female Samurai (Kadın Samuray), Intellectual Elite (Entellektüel Elit) tanımalarını kullanırken, Bennett, kadınları domestik, rahat, control dışi, kokona, melek ve şeytan olarak tanımlar. Erkek hayranı D.H.Lawrence ise Magna Mater, Medea, Cybele, Diana, Havva, Yılan, melek, kraliçe, ve Lady of Shalott gibi kavramları kullanır.


Helen with the High Hand adlı romanda Helen, Kristeva’nın Semiotik Düzeninde öznel sesi ve özerkliği olan çağdaş bir kadın olarak görülmektedir. O da arzuladığı ve aşk olduğu adama evlenerek Sembolik Düzende, kendini bir özne
olarak oluşturulmuştur. Hileci, hesapçı ve iş dünyasına aşina olan ve bir erkek gibi yatırım yapabilen Helen, semiotik ve sembolik modlarını dengelemeyi başarmış, toplumsal kısıtlamaları ve Baba’nın Kanunu’nun kabul etmiş ve çok yönlü bir özne olarak hareket etmeyi başarmıştır.


Bu tez, farklı yaklaşımlarla yazılan Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand ve Women in Love adlı romanlarda, kadın ve erkek karakterlerin çoğunun semiotik ve sembolik modlarını dengeleyerek, Sembolik Düzende çok yönlü bir özne olmayı başarabildiklerini ve Baba’nın Kanunu’nun kabul ettiklerini göstermektedir.
Feminist eleştiri, erkek figürünün evin reisi olarak kabul edildiği ve toplumun her kesiminde de bu otoritenin hissedildiği, aynı zamanda da gelenek ve göreneklerin bile genel olarak erkek egemenliğine dayalı olarak geliştirildiği ve uygulanıldığı toplumlara karşı meydan okuma mücadelesini içermektedir. Feminist edebiyat eleştiri kuramı, edebiyat ve toplumdaki ataerkil önyargılar arasındaki ilişkiler ve edebiyatın bu önyargıları önlemedeki potansiyel rolü üzerinde durmaktadır.

Feminist edebiyat eleştiri, temel olarak kadın karakterlerin erkek romançılardan, kadın-erkek, aile-çocuk arasındaki ilişkiler, cinsiyet, cinsler arası güç ilişkileri, vücut, cinsellik ve kadın imgeleri açıdan sunulmasını incelemektedir.

Bu tezin amacı, sadece belirli feminist kuramları belirli romanlara uygulamak değil, aynı zamanda da Darwinci yaklaşımı olan Wells, toplumsal gözlem ve analiz yapan Bennett ve apokaliptik düşünce tarzını karakterlerin iç dünyalarındaki kaygı ve gerilimleri ile yansitan Lawrence üzerine karşılaştırmalı bir inceleme yapmaktadır.

Bu tez, farklı tutumlarla yazılan Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand ve Women in Love adlı romanlarında, kadın ve erkek karakterlerin çoğunun semiotik ve sembolik modlarını dengeleyerek, Sembolik Düzende çok yönlü bir özne olmayı başarabildiklerini ve Baba’nın Kanunu’nu kabul ettiklerini göstermektedir.
Contemporary feminist criticism comprises the struggle to challenge the societies which regard the male figure as the only authority, not only at home but also in every part of the societies in which even the traditions and customs are generally regulated and applied according to the rules based on male-centred ideologies. The feminist literary critical approach puts emphasis on the relationships between the patriarchal prejudices in the society and literature and the potential role of literature to impede this.

Feminist literary criticism basically deals with the depiction of female characters in the works of male writers in terms of male-female relationships, relationships between parents and children, gender identities, power struggles between the sexes, body and sexuality and images of women.

This dissertation not only aims to apply certain feminist theories to certain novels but also makes a comparative study among such novelists as Wells who has a visionary and Darwinistic attitude, Bennett who is preoccupied with social observation and analysis and Lawrence who deals with the anxieties and tensions in the unconciousness of the characters by taking the reader right inside the characters with his apocalyptic vision.

This dissertation has shown that in Ann Veronica, Helen with the High Hand, and Women in Love written with different attitudes, and approaches, most of the female and male characters are able to construct themselves as multiple subjects in the Symbolic Order where they accept the Law of the Father, and they are also able to balance their semiotic and symbolic drives.