

Undergraduate Dissertation  
Trabajo Fin de Grado

“From the Material to the Spiritual:  
A Reading of D.H. Lawrence’s ‘The Horse-Dealer’s  
Daughter’ in the Light  
of Virginia Woolf’s ‘Modern Fiction’”

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2020

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The late and early twentieth centuries were marked by a movement under the name of modernism, which “resulted from the challenge of representing new content, the historical experiences of the modern world, in the context of changing social norms about the status of art and literature themselves” (Lewis 2). In other words, a break with tradition that will also renounce the status quo (religious, political and social views). Although modernism has been analysed in diverse ways, “according to Peter Faulkner, modernism means all the different trends of art that appeared in the twentieth century” (qtd. in Hasan 2). Moreover, Peter Childs remarks that it is “impossible and undesirable to speak of a single ‘modernism’”(13). This is to say that we cannot talk about a unique modernism since the concept affected every aspect in society. Therefore, according to Andersen, Childs gives different definitions of this movement postulating:

modernism as either a time- and geography-bound movement, which started by the end of the 19th century and was over by 1930, mainly situated in the Anglo-Saxon world; or a genre-bound movement, defined by a set of stylistic devices used as a general response to the radical developments in science, philosophy and psychology in the late 19th and early 20th century. (11)

Another aspect to take into consideration is that modernism was a reaction against Realism, a movement whose “aim was to offer a truthful, accurate and objective representation of the real world, both the external world and the human self” (Habib). Hence, this movement was opposed to imaginative worlds and stressed the use to represent reality as it was.

Thus, modernism was a clear attempt to make a breakthrough from traditional values and change the society as a whole including “literature, music, painting, film and

architecture” (Childs 3) in which writers, poets and philosophers, etcetera were a major key for the development. As Levenson shows, names such as Stein, Woolf, Pound, and DuBois in coordination with painters like Picasso and Braque or Ford and Conrad, and together with intellectual movements such as Dadaism and Surrealism were major factors of modernism (5). And also they became known with the term modernists. In addition to this point, these modernists tried to question the conventions already set in the society by introducing “new styles and techniques as well as subject matter that had not been treated seriously by artists and writers in previous generations” (Lewis 3). This is to say that they made known these different proposals in their works as a reaction to Realism and as Lewis states “modernism insisted that each artist or writer must create a new appropriate convention for representing reality as he or she experienced it” (5).

Focusing on modernist literature, the term modernism emerged in the years following World War I as a literary movement with the works of poet and novelist, Charles Baudelaire and Gustave Flaubert, respectively (Childs 14). Nevertheless, as pointed by Hasan, it is also believed that “modernism reached its peak and matured in 1922 when Eliot wrote *The Waste Land* and Joyce *Ulysses*” (44) alongside with “Katherine Mansfield’s *The Garden Party*, and Virginia Woolf’s *Jacob’s Room*”(Childs 14).

As I have said above, their aim was to introduce new means of representation in their writing, therefore, “modernist writers, in particular, emphasized the attempt to capture immediate experience ‘to record the atoms as they fall upon the mind’ independent of all philosophical categories or ideas, experience as it is actually lived” (Lewis 7). As opposed to literary realism which “gives an illusion of exact correspondence with reality in its limited aspects” (Slaterry 55). Namely, realism was a literary technique that was dedicated to the “faithful representation of reality”

(Campbell 1997-2013). Above all, modernist writers were interested in being original and in exploring and capturing the state of our inner minds, that is to say, meaning comes from the individual's perspectives, which makes the work more authentic and at the same time confusing for its readers. Consequently, it is the readers' duty to infer the meaning and interpret the text. The emphasis on originality was introduced by Baudelaire who, according to Lewis, asserted that "modernity is the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent; it is one half of art, the other being the eternal and immutable... nearly all our originality comes from the stamp that time impresses upon our sensibility" (5-6).

One of the main concepts used to achieve this is called stream of consciousness which is considered to be an emblem of modernist literature. According to David Lodge, it was developed by William James "to characterize the continuous flow of thought and sensation in the human mind" (42). Baldick defines this philosophical concept as a "continuous flow of sense, perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and memories in the human mind; or a literary method of representing such a blending of mental processes in fictional characters usually in an unpunctuated or disjointed form of interior monologue" (244). This concept has to do with psychology, about thoughts and feelings, also known as "flow of thought" produced in the minds of the characters generated by the way the writers write (Greenblatt 22). Consequently, modernist writers captured this stream of consciousness in their works by using the free indirect speech and the interior monologue. The latter technique is a different way of thinking loud which according to Baldick is "the written representation of a character's inner thoughts, impressions, and memories as if directly "overheard" without the apparent intervention of a summarizing and selecting narrator" (126). This way of writing enables readers to access the mind of the characters as well, as stated by Greenblatt "the

reader overhears the characters speaking, so to say, from within their particular consciousness” (22).

Another method mentioned above was the “free indirect style” which can be described as a different way “modernists felt free also to enter their characters’ minds, to speak as though on their behalf ” (Greenblatt 7). What distinguishes this technical device from the interior monologue is that free indirect style blends the use of some features of third person and first person speech while the interior monologue allows the reader to know what a specific character is thinking or feels from what the character says to himself.

With these two techniques, the writers’ aim was to reflect subjective life in their works and according to Lewis “modernist writers, in particular, emphasized the attempt to capture immediate experience” (7). He continues arguing that “the task of the artist was not to discover a pre-existent meaning, but to create a new meaning out of the chaos and anarchy of actual modern life” (8). Furthermore, in modernist fiction, according to Randall Stevenson, we can mention James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence and their works as the greatest pioneers of fiction (1-2). Moreover, Childs emphasizes that “the transition from realism to a Modernist style in fiction is accomplished not by one author, or even by writers in one country, but by a range of figures which would include Gustave Flaubert, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Émile Zola and Henry James” (74-75).

Additionally, Childs argues that fiction writers rebelled against some features of realism, for instance “a dependable narrator; the depiction of a fixed stable self; history as a progressive linear process; bourgeois politics, which advocated reform not radical change; the tying up of all narrative strands, or ‘closure’” (22).

One of the modernist authors who famously wrote against the realist writers and whom, according to Childs, referred to these writers as “materialists’ and ‘Bond-street tailors” (79), and criticised them deeply in her essays was Virginia Woolf (Stevenson 3). Hence, in her essays “Modern Fiction” and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown”, Woolf “explicitly assaulted the - “materialism”- of the realistic Edwardian heirs of Victorian naturalist confidence, Arnold Bennett, H.G. Wells, and John Galsworthy” (Greenblatt 21). These novelists were, as Stevenson states, remarkable and very respected at the time (3). But Woolf referred to their works as being “restricted by outmoded fictional conventions” (Stevenson 3). This is to say that, according to Woolf, the materialists wrote about “unimportant things” (278) and also their works lack an important aspect, which is life (278). In view of this, Woolf urged to take as a model works of writers like James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence, Dorothy Richardson, May Sinclair which contributed to the radically change of fiction after many years (Stevenson 3). If we take into special account the works of one writer to illustrate what Woolf considered to be a modernist writer it will be D.H. Lawrence, who contributed with his essays to the rebellion against fiction in 1920 (Childs 82).

Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to explore “The Horse-Dealer’s Daughter”, a short story by Lawrence, in order to show how he breaks the traditional conventions in fiction and looks within the characters as it is eulogized in Virginia Woolf’s “Modern Fiction”. To do that, I am going to analyse each work by both artists individually, starting with how Woolf drew the difference between two types of writers of her time whom she named “materialist” and “spiritualist”, and thereupon how Lawrence’s short story meets the requirements of a modern writer which is to access the inner world and “dark places of psychology” (Woolf 280) of his characters’.

Virginia Woolf was a prominent British novelist of the twentieth century who was also known as a remarkable reviewer, essayist and a feminist. She was born in 1882 in London into a successful family. Her mother was Julia Duckworth who was a member of the Duckworth publishing family, and her father was Leslie Stephen, the Victorian critic, philosopher, biographer, and scholar. The painter Vanessa Bell was her sister, with whom among other two brothers moved to Bloomsbury after their father's death and joined an enlightened group called The Bloomsbury Group with high profile people such as novelists, economists and artists. Nevertheless, her life was marked by some events that marked her deeply, which led her to a serious depression during her lifetime. Woolf died in March 1941 at the age of fifty-nine when she took her life by drowning herself in a river (Greenblatt 270-271).

Woolf is unquestionably a prolific writer who innovated the style of writing of the twentieth century. As I have said before, Woolf "rebelled against what she called the "materialism" of novelists such as her contemporaries Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy, who depicted suffering and social injustice through gritty realism, and she sought to render more intricately those aspects of consciousness in which she felt the truth of human experience lay" (Greenblatt 270). According to Childs, her writing has been perceived as "an attempt to blend style and gender, to subvert social norms through the less oppositional strategy of reinventing form rather than content, which is symptomatic of the general Modernist strategy to change society through the reconstruction of self not system, individual rather than social reality" (168). Some of her most significant works are *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando* (1928), *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *The Waves* (1931).



D.(David) H.(Herbert) Lawrence was also an important British writer of the twentieth century, although at the beginning the public did not like the way he addressed women and men considering his work as pornographic (“D.H. Lawrence”). He wrote mainly short stories but also novels, poems, sketches and articles. He was born in September 1885 in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire into a working class family. He did not grow in a harmonious home due to the several tensions between his parents and the problem with alcohol which his father suffered from. Notwithstanding this, his life was marked by a lot of travelling seeking refuge in many countries due to the war, with his wife Frieda von Richthofen, and also he suffered from various illness. Unfortunately, he died in the south of France, Vence of tuberculosis at the age of forty-four (Greenblatt 611-612).

Above all, there is no doubt that he was a controversial writer who contributed to the development of fiction as Woolf did. Hence, “he had new things to say and a new way of saying them” (Greenblatt 611). Lawrence also pursued to represent in his fiction and poetry “the deep-rooted, the elemental, the instinctual in people and nature. He is at constant war with the mechanical and artificial, with the constraints and hypocrisies that civilization imposes” (Greenblatt 611).

Some of his major works are *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The Rainbow* (1915), *Women in Love* (1920).

## 2. ANALYSIS

Now, I am going to analyse Lawrence in the light of Woolf's work in order to prove my point. "Modern Fiction" by Virginia Woolf was written in 1919 and revised in 1925 (Greenblatt 21). This essay was written with the purpose of decrying "the 'materialism' of the realistic Edwardian heirs of Victorian naturalistic confidence, Arnold Bennett, H.G. Wells, and John Galsworthy" (Greenblatt 22) and to inspire writers of the late nineteenth century. Moreover, she argues that writers should write with freedom, without following any conventions and to express what they feel without boundaries. Woolf believed that writers needed to evolve in their writings in order to represent the many changes that occurred in society at that time (Greenblatt 21). Woolf then, introduces a new style of writing in which she urged writers to capture what is important which she describes as an "unknown and uncircumscribed spirit" (Woolf 279).

According to Stevenson (4), at the very beginning of "Modern Fiction" Woolf asserts that "the modern practice of the art is somehow an improvement upon the old" (Woolf 277). As Penda argues, "this improvement is related to modernists' freedom to choose their interest and write about it freely" (69). However, Woolf admits that earlier writers performed well with what they had: "With their simple tools and primitive materials, it might be said, Fielding did well and Jane Austen even better" (Woolf 277). She further explicates that we have not "learnt anything about making literature" (Woolf 277) and expresses her hope to write better "we do not come to write better; all that we can be said to do is to keep moving, now a little in this direction, now in that, but with a circular tendency" (Woolf 277). Consequently, she calls out Mr. Wells, Mr. Bennett, and Mr Galsworthy "for having shown us what they might have done but have not done; what we certainly could not do, but certainly, perhaps, do not wish to do"

(Woolf 277). This is to say that these novelists wrote about nonessential things and with this in mind Woolf labels them as “materialists” (277): “if we tried to formulate our meaning in one word we should say that these writers are materialists” (277) and explains that this is because “they are concerned not with the spirit but with the body that they have disappointed us” (277). Woolf continues to say that the best option for English Fiction is to abandon this way of writing and move forward to seek a better path (Woolf 277). Woolf points out that among these three writers, Bennet “is the worst culprit” (Woolf 277) but overall he is still a materialist because “he takes too much delight in the solidity of his fabric” (Woolf 278). Correspondingly, Woolf refers to the works of these writers as materialists:

if we fasten, then, one label on all these books, on which is one word, materialists, we mean by it that they write of unimportant things; that they spend immense skill and immense industry making the trivial and the transitory appear the true and the enduring. (Woolf 278)

In other words, these writers focus on things that will not be on our minds as the time passes because we might forget them. They are mainly concerned with the material things but not with the character’s inner mind. That is why she says that in their writings “life escapes; and perhaps without life nothing else is worthwhile” (Woolf 278).

Woolf goes on to say that writers are repressed by the society and publishers who expect them to write according to the norms already established:

The writer seems constrained not by his own free will but by some powerful and unscrupulous tyrant who has him in thrall, to provide a plot, to provide comedy, tragedy, love interest, and an air of probability embalming the whole so

impeccable that if all his figures were to come to life they would find themselves dressed down to the last button of their coats in the fashion of the hour. The tyrant is obeyed; the novel is done to a turn. (279)

She then advises writers to delve into the purpose and meaning of life because there is more than what we see (279). She wanted writers to be original and focus on life as a whole in their works and pay attention as “the mind receives a myriad impressions-trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel” (279). Additionally, she points out that if writers were free to write whatever came into their minds there would not be a fixed pattern to follow (Woolf 279). Clearly, Woolf opposes any form of writing that follows a model as she says “life is not a series of gig-lamps” (Woolf 279), but instead “life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end” (Woolf 279). Therefore, it is as she claims in interrogative mode “the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible” (Woolf 279). This is to say that modern writers need to embrace what she depicts as spiritual, which cannot be explained because each writer has a unique form of perceiving it. And as Childs says “Woolf wanted novelists to explore character and thought, desire and memory” (80).

Extending her criticism, on the one hand, Woolf praises young writers who try to make their own interpretations of the world because “they attempt to come closer to life, and to preserve more sincerely and exactly what interests and moves them, even if to do so they must discard most of the conventions which are commonly observed by the novelist” (Woolf 279). Among these writers, she points out James Joyce as an example and names him as “spiritual” (Woolf 280) because

He is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its messages through the brain, and in order to preserve it he disregards with complete courage whatever seems to him adventitious, whether it be probability, or coherence, or any other of these signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader when called upon to imagine what he can neither touch or see. (Woolf 280)

Woolf praises also the works of other writers like Joseph Conrad's *Youth*, Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and William Makepeace Thackeray *Pendennis* (Woolf 280).

At the same time Woolf expresses admiration for writers who wrote differently. This did not mean that she was suggesting a new method of writing but instead she states that there is no perfect way to write (Woolf 282) and that "it is a mistake to stand outside examining 'methods'" (Woolf 280). The reality that she wants writers to convey is that of showing life in their writings and not portraying it as "a series of gig-lamps" (279). Therefore, writers should embrace any method that they felt it was okay because "any method is right, every method is right, that expresses what we wish to express, if we are writers; that brings us closer to the novelist's intention if we are readers" (Woolf 280). Thus, she advocated originality in their works. She continues to urge writers to have the bravery in order to move away from the traditional conventions and have a voice of their own to choose what they want to write (Woolf 280). Therefore, as Childs states "Woolf says that the interest for modern(ist) authors 'lies very likely in the dark places of psychology'" (80).

On the other hand, Woolf draws attention to the style of the Russian writers whom she considers that "they see further than we do and without our gross impediments of vision" (Woolf 281). She especially talks about "Gusev" by the Russian

writer Tchekov and praises the way that he “has chosen this, and the other, and placed them together to compose something new” (Woolf 281).

Furthermore, it is undeniable that Lawrence was one of the pioneers of what Woolf called spiritualist. He embraces in his works “new modes of expression” (Greenblatt 612) and “he had uncanny perceptions into the depths of physical things and an uncompromising honesty in his view of human beings and the world” (Greenblatt 612).

If we take his short story “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter” and analyse it taking into account the distinction of materialists and spiritualists made in Woolf’s “Modern Fiction”, then we can consider this story as a perfect example of what Woolf expected the writing of a modern writer should be. This short story was first written in 1917 “under the title ‘The Miracle’. Later, he revised it, gave it its current title, and published it in 1922 in the *English Review*, an influential journal that published his early short stories and poems” (Constantakis 2). “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter” deals with Mabel, who is left by his three brothers to manage on her own after their father’s death. Before his death, the family owned a horse business but due to debts left by him, they could not hold on the business again. So other than Mabel, the brothers seem to know what to do with their lives. With all this going on Mabel decides to commit suicide by drowning herself in a pond. But fortunately, she is saved by Jack Ferguson, the town’s doctor. Later on they both strangely fall in love and decide to marry.

In the story Lawrence breaks the traditional conventions of the genre which were set for writers to follow and chooses to write without constraints. Thus, we can see this at the very beginning when there is a question that opens the story: “Well, Mabel, and what are you going to do with yourself?” (Lawrence 626). In view of this, it can be said that, starting the story with a wide description of the setting would have been one of the

ways to follow the traditional conventions. Additionally, another key point is how Lawrence adjusts the point of view throughout the whole story (Constantakis 18-19), thus reinforcing this break with tradition. At the very beginning of “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter” as Constantakis states, “the author adopts a third-person omniscient point of view, allowing access to the thoughts and feelings of all characters” (18-19). Correspondingly, the readers follow the perspective of the narrator who seems to know everything about the characters. And by the use of the pronouns “he” and “she”, the reader is drawn to the point of view of one character and this gives a clue on what is going through the character’s mind (Constantakis 18-19). Firstly, to illustrate this, we can take the scene when Mabel visits her mother’s grave (Constantakis 18-19). In this scene, the point of view is totally focused on Mabel who mourns her mother’s death and feels closer to her at her tomb when she cleans and places a jar with chrysanthemums beside it. Thus, Kearny postulates that “the churchyard where her mother is buried provides a connection with lost love and security”.

It gave her sincere satisfaction to do this. She felt in immediate contact with the world of her mother. She took minute pains, went through the park in a state bordering on pure happiness, as if in performing this task she came into a subtle, intimate connection with her mother. For the life she followed here in the world was far less real than the world of death she inherited from her mother.  
(Lawrence 631)

Therefore, “Mabel worships death both literally and metaphorically” (Kearny). At the moment Jack Ferguson saw Mabel at the grave, the point of view focuses on him (Constantakis 18-19). As Constantakis states “now, suddenly, the reader sees events largely from his perspective” (18-19):

He lifted his cap and passed down the road. There remained distinct in his consciousness, like a vision, the memory of her face, lifted from the tombstone in the churchyard, and looking at him with slow, large, portentous eyes. It was portentous, her face. It seemed to mesmerise him. There was a heavy power in her eyes which laid hold of his whole being, as if he had drunk some powerful drug. (Lawrence 631-632)

Pursuing this further, after Mabel's suicide attempt in the pond, she is rescued by Jack who takes her to her house to change her wet clothes and make her recover her consciousness back. In view of this as stated by Constantakis "after Jack carries Mabel back to her house, the point of view encompasses both characters" (18-19):

She shuffled forward on her knees, and put her arms round him, round his legs, as he stood there, pressing her breast against his knees and thighs, clutching him with strange, convulsive certainty, pressing his thighs against her, drawing him to her face, her throat, as she looked up at him with flaring, humble eyes of transfiguration, triumphant in first possession . (Lawrence 634)

Hence, by using different kinds of point of view Lawrence is not only introducing a different way of writing but also a break with the conventions set by the genre. According to Constantakis "what may have motivated these shifts in point of view is the author's desire to re-create the psychology of both characters" (18-19). Overall, "in the early portion, the reader gains understand [sic] of Mabel and the events that have had an impact on her life. Later, the reader gains insight into Jack Ferguson. Then, after the two declare their love, the point of view can take in the perspective to both characters" (Constantakis 18-19). This need to "re-create the psychology of both characters" (Constantakis 18-19), which is to say to explore the innermost thoughts and feelings of characters is what Virginia Woolf praises about modernist young authors of whom she



states that “they attempt to come closer to life, and to preserve more sincerely and exactly what interests and moves them, even if to do so they must discard most of the conventions which are commonly observed by the novelist” (Woolf 279). Accordingly, she encourages modernist writers to depict life in their writings and to “examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions –trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel” (Woolf 279).

Furthermore, another style used by Lawrence which reinforces this break with convention is the use of imagery, described by Constantakis as “the use of language that evokes sensory responses – usually sight, but also hearing, smell, taste, texture, and the like (17-18). Thereby, if we pay attention to the language in certain moments throughout the short story we can identify this. For instance, in the scene when Jack saves Mabel from drowning, the language is written and used in a way that what the reader perceives are “images of dampness, heaviness, sinking, cold, rot, and deadness” (Constantakis, 17-18). Depression and loneliness drew Mabel to attempt on her life by drowning herself into a pond because “she seeks the world of death, where her dear mother abides” (Kearny). Doing that was the only way Mabel thought to end her suffering “There she stood on the bank for a moment. She never raised her head. Then she waded slowly into the water” (Lawrence 632). The pond is described as the “‘dead cold pond’, the ‘hideous cold element’, and the ‘foul earthy water’” (Constantakis 17-18), and according to Kearny, “MacCabe focused upon the metaphorical function of water in ‘The Horse Dealer’s Daughter’. Whereas the cold murky water of the pond represents the world of death Mabel embraces and against which Fergusson risks his life”. What is more, fortunately Jack manages to stop Mabel from drowning and saves her life. Suddenly, we move from dark phrases which suggest death to “imagery of heat and light, and the narration uses such words and phrases as *light of triumph, delicate*

*flame, a flame seemed to burn, his heart seemed to burn and melt, hot tears, and flared hot*” (Constantakis 17-18). Therefore, imagery contributes to showing this shift in the point of view of Jack and Mabel (Constantakis 17-18). Therein, as stated by Kearny, “Mabel’s love for the world of death, as exhibited by her sense of connection with her mother as she tends the grave, reverses direction toward the world of life once the young doctor delivers her from the pond”.

In addition, Clyde Ryals talked about three distinctions regarding this scene from a psychological view (qtd. in Kearny):

First, in the doctor-assistant’s entry into the pond, Ryals saw a parallel to Jung’s myth of the night journey beneath the sea where “slime” or some other objectionable elements in the water could represent unpleasant animal tendencies while simultaneously containing the germ of new life. Second, the suicide method Mabel chooses could be viewed as a “mythological enactment” of one’s desire to return to the moist security of the womb. Third, both Mabel and Jack undergo a kind of rebirth, where each delivers the other psychically from perception of the phenomenal world as meaningless. Both characters are transformed by their newly established organic connection with life.

Additionally, many critical studies have drawn special attention to the symbolism of the pond and the water itself regarding its psychological meanings. As quoted in Kearny, Kingsley Widmer says that:

Mabel’s attempt to drown herself becomes, by a coincidence like those in fairy tales, “a moment of regenerative baptism.” Having reemerged from the water, both Mabel and Jack leave death and a sense of hopelessness as they confront “the new agony of desire”.

From another perspective, Jack Stewart stated in 1985 that “Jack’s subsequent descent into the foul muddy water epitomized a hero’s need to know both the real and symbolic element of his and a heroine’s death before he can form a connection with her “unconscious life” and restore her desire to live” (qtd. in Kearny). What is more, “the water, Stewart suggested, is female and the symbol for both life and death, for “transformation and rebirth”. Both Mabel and Jack having been delivered” (Kearny). Furthermore, critic Daniel Faustino “approached the story from the perspective of Christian mythology” (Kearny), and associated Mabel’s drowning in the pond with “the Christian baptism”, which “redeems her of this sin; she is reborn by means of her recognition of her sexual nature, and she delivers Jack, as well, in the process. As Jack’s redeemer, Mabel can be seen as a Christ figure”. In other words, Mabel is represented as the son of God, Jesus the saviour who is capable to wash all your sins away to become a born-again (Kearny).

Another interesting psychological approach made by Janice Harris in 1984 is how she views the pond scene (Kearny).

Harris commended Lawrence’s ability to describe “the apocalyptic in the colloquial”. The double immersion of the foul, frigid water is a descent from disability to death. But in that descent lie the initial steps of “an ancient rite of ascent,” the cleansing bath of baptism. Both Mabel and Jack “rise from the waters of oblivion reborn. (Kearny)

Harris also distinguishes between three different stages at the rescue scene (Kearny). According to Kearny, “Harris saw the rescue scene functioning on three levels: the ritualistic, the literal, and the psychological. In reference to the latter, she saw Lawrence using the pond scene “to chart a psychological progress” in both Jack and Mabel”.

As I said before, there is no doubt that Lawrence's writing was controversial and thus he contributed to the flourishing of fiction as well as Virginia Woolf. Moreover, another way to emphasize this is how according to Thomas McCabe's study, Lawrence utilized rhythm as form in "The Horse Dealer's Daughter" (Kearny). That is to say, compared to the materialists who do not show life, rhythm is a characteristic that Lawrence introduces so as to show life in the short story. As attested by McCabe,

D.H. Lawrence saw the meaning of life in its rhythm – the endlessly changing to-and-fro relationship between man and woman; life's ever-recurring cycle of birth, growth, and fading into death. This belief in the importance of rhythm in life shapes most of his stories, and the meaning of these stories lies in their rhythm. (64)

This concept of "rhythm" was coined by E.M. Foster in a chapter in his book *Aspects of the Novel* in which he also differentiates between "easy rhythm" and "difficult rhythm" (McCabe 64). McCabe continues saying that "to examine Lawrence's work in terms of rhythm does seem legitimate, because Lawrence himself put so much value on rhythm in both life and art and because the relationship between his characters seems best described in rhythmic terms" (64). This concept of rhythm lies in most of Lawrence's stories (McCabe 65), and as McCabe puts it "his best and most characteristic stories are those which possess rhythmic elements of attraction-repulsion between the characters and rhythmic images that move toward a revelation of psychic experience" (65). As claimed by McCabe, "'The Horse Dealer's Daughter' is a perfect example of the kind of rhythmic form that is unique to Lawrence. The story moves from death to life, from paralysis to living, rhythmic relationship" (66).

Kearny states that in this study about rhythm in “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter”, Lawrence “used two major devices to develop that rhythmic form”. On the one hand, he continues saying that

The first device is the repetition of scenes, phrases, and characters. For example, “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter” incorporates three important scenes in which Mabel and Jack exchange glances: initially in the Pervin Kitchen, then in the churchyard where lay Mabel’s mother, and finally by the hearthside after Mabel’s rescue. Also, Lawrence repeated contrasting images of dampness and cold and of fire and warmth.

On the other hand,

the second device, more uniquely Lawrentian according to McCabe, heightens the revelation of the characters’ unconscious or psychic experience through characters’ rhythmically alternating attitudes of attraction-repulsion toward one another, and through the use of repetition to expand rhythmic imagery. In this way, the story has a double rhythmic movement. The overall rhythm of the plot is progressive, moving ahead to an ever closer relationship. But within this rhythm lies another: a “flux-and-flow” action that defines the battle between life and death, will and desire, man and woman. Thus, the major movement in this tale (the rhythm of which parallels nature itself) is lifeward, after its initial deathward impulse. Accordingly, Jack and Mabel abandon at least momentarily the world of wilfulness and find their deeper essential selves, both having deferred to desire. At the story’s conclusion, the balance between the soon-to-be husband and wife undergoes constant adjustment as they touch, then draw away.

Therefore, as McCabe claims, “Lawrence sees life itself as rhythm” (65), “and he always wrote about life, about becoming fully alive or about the failure to become fully alive” (65). Moreover, Lawrence did not like and showed his disapproval of writers who rejected this kind of writing and opted for a “mechanical form” (McCabe 65).

### 3. CONCLUSION

Virginia Woolf was undoubtedly one of the most important literary figures of the twentieth century, who contributed to the renovation of English Literature. She challenged the writing of whom she called “materialists” and rejected the kind of writing structure established by traditional conventions of her time. As a modernist writer, Woolf also urged young writers to write freely without any constraints and to portray life in their works. She advocated for “interior monologues and stream of consciousness narration” (Greenblatt 271) and rejected “linear narratives” (Greenblatt 271). And as Peter Childs claims, “Woolf’s writing has also been seen in terms of an attempt to blend style and gender, to subvert social norms through the less oppositional strategy of reinventing form rather than content” (168).

Therefore, in this dissertation I have analysed “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter” by D.H. Lawrence, another modernist writer who as Greenblatt remarks “looked at the world freshly, with his own eyes, avoiding formulas and clichés; and he forged for himself a kind of utterance that, at his best, was able to convey powerfully and vividly what his original vision showed him” (612). Thereby, Lawrence’s “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter” serves as an example of what Virginia Woolf praises in her essay “Modern Fiction” as the kind of writing a modern writer should write. Hence, the most pertinent point in this dissertation was to show how Lawrence through his work was able to access the inner thoughts of his character’s and give them life, thus, this making him a “spiritual” writer, as Woolf addressed in “Modern Fiction”—and as opposed to “materialist” whose writing lacked in life and was based on the convention which also restrained them from being free writers who can chose how and what to write about. To begin with this, I have explained Virginia Woolf’s “Modern Fiction” in which she makes a contrast between materialists and spiritualist writers. The next argument I made

is to take D.H. Lawrence's "The Horse Dealer's Daughter" and break down the various elements that makes it an unconventional work for his time. Following Ryals, McCabe concludes that "Lawrence used a framing device. While the beginning and end focus on the characters' behaviour in the everyday world, the heart of the work departs from this world, traveling to the interior world of their consciousness" (qtd. in Kearny). And as is shown throughout this analysis, as a modernist writer and "spiritual", Lawrence explored the inner thought of his characters by accessing their consciousness. Therefore, by shifting the point of view between the characters, the use of imagery and rhythm contributed to making the short story full of life. Thus, Woolf praised this emphasis on authenticity and originality which at the same time meant a break from the traditional conventions.



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