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A SCHOPENHAUERIAN NOVEL: D. H. LAWRENCE'S *THE WHITE PEACOCK*

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ABSTRACT: *This work shows a laudable understanding of the importance of Arthur Schopenhauer to D. H. Lawrence, especially in the early years of his writing career. If the impression received was strong enough, an individual might expect to find evidence in the nature of Lawrence's writing. And such is indeed the case. Lawrence's career as a professional novelist began after publishing his first novel, The White Peacock. He started the novel in 1906, right after reading Schopenhauer's essay. Accordingly, as complex and thoroughly enigmatic as the novel may appear at first reading, my purpose is to show how it shares commonalities with three Schopenhauerian concepts: the will to live, love and physical qualities between the sexes.*

KEYWORDS: Schopenhauer, Love, physical attraction, Lawrence's *White Peacock*

INTRODUCTION

Lawrence first read Schopenhauer in 1905 or 1906 from Mrs Rudolf Dircks's translation of *Essays of Schopenhauer* (1897), while studying at the Ilkeston pupil-teachers centre. Her work was a compilation of Schopenhauer's essays on thirteen different topics. Jessie Chambers makes it clear that Schopenhauer's essay, "The Metaphysics of Love," had a great impact on Lawrence, as documented in his twenty or twenty one. She explains that "it was during his second year in College that Lawrence began to read philosophy," he also advised one of Jessie's brothers to give her Schopenhauer's essay for her birthday, and Lawrence read "The Metaphysics of Love" aloud to them. As Jessie states, "This essay made a deep impression upon him … He followed the reasoning closely, as always applying it to himself, and his own case … He thought he found there an explanation of his own divided attitude and he remained under the influence of this line of reasoning for some time" (111-12). If the impression received was strong enough, one might expect to find evidence in the nature work of this young intellectual. And such is indeed the case. D. H. Lawrence's career as a professional novelist began after publishing his first novel, *The White Peacock*. He started the novel in 1906, right after reading Schopenhauer's essay. Accordingly, as complex and thoroughly enigmatic as the novel may appear at first reading, my purpose is to show how it shares commonalities with three Schopenhauerian concepts: the will to live, love and physical qualities between the sexes.

Love, Marriage and Species

In *The White Peacock*, Lawrence systematically elaborates on Schopenhauer's "The Metaphysics of Love." Each character in the novel is bound with the failure of his or her desires for love,

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marriage and species. These words – love, marriage, species – regularly arise throughout the novel and suggest that a state of ecstasy and supreme contentment is brought about through deeds of passionate devotion by the lover. But Lawrence reveals that such contentment and fulfilment cannot be had solely from a love relationship. For Schopenhauer, there remains a psychological concern behind the aspect of love and that is the perfection of the individual, a need to create a new procreation. In his philosophy, the sexual impulse is the concentration of human and animal nature. They both pursue the purpose of that impulse, fertilisation or impregnation. In this process, "the will does not need to be guided throughout by knowledge" (*WWR 2*: 512). Accordingly, Schopenhauer concludes that "the true being in-itself of every living thing lies primarily in its species" (*WWR 2*: 512). Lawrence's novel develops the characters' consciousness through the acknowledgment of this concept. It must have been invigorating for Lawrence to find in a distinguished writer such as Schopenhauer, the bold and provocative notion that the true underlining force which propels all human activity is sexual desire. Accordingly, I concentrate more specifically on the concept of the will to live to disclose the idea of love in the novel.

Schopenhauer believes that the notion of the will to live and species are central to the conception of human individuality. He argues that the desire of escaping from death is what forces human to give birth to a new individual built up out of his own self and his own belief. He expresses these ideas in "The Metaphysics of Love." Lawrence, having read that essay in 1906, was fascinated with Schopenhauer's notion of the will to live, and the influence of this theory can also be traced in *The White Peacock*. What emerges when studying the novel as a work on genetic love, or rather modified genetic love, is a matrix of two attitudes towards procreation.[1] First, a sign of life is reflected in the occasionally harsh passages about death. The idea of life and death occurs "when death is just touching a plant," forcing nature into a "passion of flowering" (*WP* 28). Lettie tells George about this tragic mechanism of life, about the atmosphere in her home when she was born: "You don't know. There's always a sense of death in this home. I believe my mother hated my father before I was born. That was the death in her veins for me before I was born" (*WP* 28). The second attitude is a portrait of creating a complete child which will not lack any deficiency. For Lawrence's heroine, Lettie, most of "the things in life seem[s] worthless and insipid" and so she determines "to put up with it, to ignore her own self, to empty her own potentialities into the vessel of another or others, and to live her life at second-hand … to abandon the charge of herself to serve her children" (*WP* 284). Lettie constantly thinks about bearing a child and transferring all her "potential" into that offspring. She gives her spirit through the process of creating a new being, as a mother can look down upon her child and in this new life see her own likeness, characteristics, positive or negative traits. Lettie wills to live through another's body and to escape death by creating a new being, and consequently becoming the servant of her new generation. It appears that as the author focuses on Lettie, he undertakes a Schopenhauerian premise that women "exist solely for the propagation of the race" (*WWR 1*: 312).

Schopenhauer remarks that all loving, "however ethereally," is rooted in the individual's sexual instinct, which takes its strength from the will to regeneration (*WWR 2*: 533). This abhorrence of love is articulated in Lawrence's novel. References to Schopenhauer and this idea appear in Lettie's character. She knows Schopenhauer very well and her dialogue alludes to him. When she walks with George across the grass in the field, she sarcastically says to him, "You, for instance –

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fancy *your* sacrificing yourself – for the next generation – that reminds you of Schopenhauer, doesn't it? – for the next generation, or love, or anything!" (*WP* 210). Lettie is being sarcastic as she asks George how he feels about being used. There is irony in her voice when she explains to George that all love is basically an illusion. Taking Schopenhauer's view into account that individuals sacrifice themselves for the next generation, Lettie reminds George about the truth of love. Nature is mischievous in the method it uses to secure the next generation, and we think foolishly that it is love we are feeling. Indeed, she is quick to generalise the idea that the love one looks for is more than sexual desire or union: it is also a desire for the propagation of a new race. Soon after union, one confronts the awareness that one's incentive was merely based on perpetuation of the species. Lawrence thus appears to take seriously Schopenhauer's observation that the purpose of lovers in love is the will to produce or the will to live. Furthermore, Lawrence's character sees clearly that such sense in the act of love leads the individual towards his abolishment. In *The White Peacock*, the lovers imagine that their beloved will provide limitless satisfaction and contentment, while after marriage they realise the ugly truth that the act of union has destroyed their identity and distinctiveness, and they become pawns or servants of the female. It is the same feeling that makes George to think that there is nothing "left for [him] to believe in" and in their "marital duel Meg is winning" (*WP* 301). He imagines that Meg wants him as a supportive and provider while Lettie, in hope to encourage him in staying in his conjugal life, reminds him that "you are necessary as a father and a husband, if not as a provider" but George still believes that he is a "servant" in his relationship (*WP* 301). Throughout the novel, Lettie and George find themselves trapped in the same scenario. She herself is truly a servant of the species. Her most significant task is that of bearing children, and she is wholly a loving and attentive mother

Eventually, it is understood that Lettie has adapted to her changing life. "Living life at second hand," she serves her son, who is "her work" and tolerates her husband:

> Like a nun, she puts over her living face a veil, a sign that the woman no longer exists for herself: she is the servant of God, of some man, of her children, or may be of some cause. As a servant, she is no longer responsible for her self, which would make her terrified and lonely. Service is light and easy. To be responsible for the good progress of one's life is terrifying. It is the most insufferable form of loneliness, and the heaviest of responsibilities. (*WP* 284)

The idea of wearing a "veil" as a "sign that the woman no longer exists for herself," gives rise to the question: do all the female characters in Lawrence's works lack individuality after they marry? Do they agree with Schopenhauer's view which calls women a "subjection to [men]" (Sch., *Women*: 1), "a patient" companion? Lawrence's third novel, *Sons and Lovers*, clearly explains that a woman does not need to compromise and tolerate her difficult situation in marriage. Mrs. Morel, after finding that her marriage with Walter Morel has led her to a low class status, drifts away from him but she never can make a clear break of him. This is in contrast to Lettie who learns to tolerate her husband and tries to be patient.[2] Nevertheless, both Schopenhauer and Lawrence agree that a woman's life after marriage should flow more quietly and gently in the service of species. Lawrence writes in the summary of his third novel to Edward Garnett in November 1912 that Mrs.

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Morel's passionate love for her husband moves to her children after they are born, and as "her sons grow up she selects them as lovers" (*Letters* 477).[3] Mrs Morel has a disturbed view of love and care for the next generation, as she takes the life of servitude to her family further than it should go by later selecting her sons as lovers. She realises the matter and begins to die when her sons find their own loves and eventually leave her all alone. I believe, in this case, relinquishing herself to the care of children for the sake of species has doomed and destroyed not only her, but the sons as well. Accordingly, it is observable that the emphasis on the idea of devotion to the species remains a significant point in Lawrence's early works. The narrator in *The White Peacock* also states directly that Lettie is responsible for "the good progress of one's life," which is "the heaviest of responsibilities," though this responsibility is terrifying and insufferable for Lettie and also results in the death of Mrs. Morel as well.

In *The White Peacock*, both George and Cyril learn that most of a woman's energy is spent in the caring and nurturing of children, and it would appear they have less time and interest for their men. "'Meg never found any pleasure in me as she does in the kids,' said George bitterly, for himself" (*WP* 278). And where Emily had been enthralled with Cyril, "her eyes searching mine, her spirit clinging timidly about me," discussing Strauss and Debussy, the "inarticulate delight" she finds in caring for Meg's baby leaves him "alone, neglected, forgotten, outside the glow which surrounded the woman and the baby" (*WP* 278). Through all this, the reader receives an important Schopenhauerian idea, namely the notion that "the first love of a mother, as that of animals and men, is purely *instinctive*" (*Women* 50). Lawrence also shows that a woman takes children on her side to overcome man's strength. This concern is fully articulated in Lawrence's text: "a woman who has her child in her arms is a tower of strength, a beautiful, unassailable tower of strength that may in its turns stand quietly dealing death" (*WP* 292). A greater presentation of this idea is given in the relationship between George and Meg. After the birth of George's daughter, Gertie, the gap between he and Meg grows, and he finds himself isolated, unable to communicate with her any longer. George acknowledges the fact that in marriage the man is the loser, for the woman "has the children on her side" (*WP* 301). Lawrence illustrates how the woman and child unite, at times, against the man; in a scene, Meg becomes increasinglyconcerned about George's use of alcohol, and as it becomes an addiction, her concern turns to disdain. She enlists their little daughter on her side in an effort to intimidate him into satisfactory conduct.

In *The White Peacock*, the male is killed by the female as soon as the purpose of fertilisation is achieved: "Lawrence's natural analogue is the black widow spider or the praying mantis rather than the flying ant" (Montgomery 55). The female spider gives all her love to the child while ignoring the male who is "put away, quite alone, neglected, forgotten, outside the glow which surrounded the woman and her baby" (*WP* 277). Cyril ponders this when thinking about Meg and one of her children: "the mother's dark eyes, and the baby's large, hazel eyes looked at me serenely. The two were very calm, very complete and triumphant together. In their completeness was a security which made me feel alone and ineffectual" (*WP* 292). Although Cyril is not involved in a marital commitment, by seeing the relationship between Meg and her child, he can imagine how the companionship between mother and child can cause the man to drift away and lead to his isolation. These passages establish the impression that, in writing *The White Peacock*, Lawrence's thought mirrors Schopenhauer's idea that the males sacrifice themselves in love, and they will become

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disillusioned soon after the goal of propagation of the new generation is achieved. The primary reason behind man's illusion, according to Schopenhauer, is that he is driven from the beginning by instinct rather than by rational reflection. In the first chapters of the novel, most of the male characters are entangled with an illusory love, only to later realise that after marriage and especially after the creation of a child, the reality behind their acts is something else. It is through their senses and the experience of union with a woman that these male characters become more aware of their surrounding environment and achieve consciousness after finding that all their potential is sacrificed to woman and species. A significant example of this reality comes through Lettie's announcement, when she tells George that he is going to sacrifice himself for the "next generation" (*WP* 210) and not for love.

Lawrence's Schopenhauerian view that the purpose of love is regeneration is more significantly expressed by the gamekeeper Annable. He is the one who serves Lawrence's moral purpose. Annable's dictum is "Be a good animal, true to your animal instinct" (*WP* 147). His children can be "like birds, or weasels, or vipers, or squirrels, so long as they ain't human rot" (*WP* 132). They are innumerable, and he refers to them as "a lovely litter … natural as weasels … bred up like a bunch o' young foxes" (*WP* 131).The stray figure of Annable suggests Schopenhauer's idea of sexual opposition. He has an admirable physique but this has only offered his wife the production of numerous neglected children. To his wife, he is only an "animal" and her "*boeuf*" (*WP* 151). In the narrator's view, "he did not know what he was doing any more than the rest of [them]" (*WP* 185). Annable has one idea, "that all civilisation was the painted fungus of rottenness" (*WP* 146). He has an aversion to all symbols of culture and his primary concern is with the deterioration of mankind. It seems that Lawrence is endeavouring to alter Schopenhauer's principle in a manner to indicate that the tragedy does not lie in Lettie's, George's and Annable's future offspring, but only in their own inability to give birth to themselves. The tragedy of the misfortune of their vanished chance to achieve their own "perfection" is confined to their inability to separate from the limits of their individual ego and to reach the fullness of life by distinguishing each other's opposing qualities.

Love as a Physical Attraction

The White Peacock displays a physical attraction and tenderness between the male and female characters, and throughout the novel, body shape and physical experiences are detailed by the narrator. Every character in the novel has a list of attributes he or she desires in a partner. These attributes are more focused on physical characteristics than intangible virtues. Schopenhauer's notion of reproduction can be used to explain that these sensual encounters in the novel show that the sexes in love look for qualities that secure the well-being of the offspring. By using Schopenhauer's theory of physical qualities in love, it will become clear to the reader, of how physical qualities in *The White Peacock* function to fuel the flame of physical attraction while simultaneously cloaking any weaknesses between the sexes.

Lettie's qualities of beauty and intelligence make her attractive for her suitors. As the narrator says, "she was tall, nearly six feet in height, but slenderly formed. Her hair was yellow, tending towards a dun brown. She had beautiful eyes and brows, but not a nice nose. Her hands were very beautiful" (*WP* 15). It seems that Lawrence, in representing beauty,felt sympathy with Schopenhauer's ideas,

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and considered that some of them – like the qualities that the woman looks for in the man and the male looks for in the female, and the destructive role of beauty – afforded possibilities to develop his novel.[4] For Schopenhauer, a woman's beauty is a deceptive tool used by nature and has a powerful attraction over man, but it loses its fascination as soon as the will to live achieves its goal. Just as the female ant "bites off her own wings after the business of impregnation is over; they will be only a hindrance to her in the actual business of tending under the earth the new family she is to start," consequently the woman, for Schopenhauer, usually loses her beauty after one or two childbirths (*WWR 2*: 345). Thus, beauty is an illusion as "only the man whose intellect is clouded by his sexual instinct that could give the stunted, narrow-shouldered, broad-hipped and short-legged race the name of the fair sex; for the entire beauty of the sex is based on this instinct" (*Women* 46). By the sheer force of this instinct, women's beauty incapacitates the reasoning faculty of man; the tragedy is the loss of his loftier goals which are nullified through the act of wedlock.

> But the will of the species is so much more powerful than that of the individual, that the lover shuts his eyes to all the qualities repugnant to him, overlooks everything, misjudges everything, and binds himself for ever to the object of his passion. He is so completely infatuated by that delusion, which vanishes as soon as the will of the species is satisfied, and leaves behind a detested partner for life. Only from this is it possible to explain why we often see very rational, and even eminent, men tied to termagants and matrimonial fiends, and cannot conceive how they could have made such a choice. (*WWR 2*: 555)

Lawrence highlighted the above passage from "The Metaphysics of Love" in his copy of Schopenhauer's *Essays* and "doubly underlined the description of marriage as most often 'a howling discord.' [He] was obsessed by the idea of the sacrifice of the individual in the marriage trap" (Montgomery 54). Moreover, in his novel, Lawrence announces the destructive role of beauty, with Leslie telling Lettie:

> "Then just be comfortable. Let me look at myself in your eyes."
>
> "Narcissus, Narcissus!--Do you see yourself well? Does the image flatter you?--Or is it a troubled stream, distorting your fair lineaments."
>
> "I can't see anything--only feel you looking-you are laughing at me--What have you behind there – what joke?"
>
> "I—I'm thinking you're just like Narcissus--a sweet, beautiful youth."
>
> "Be serious--do."
>
> "It would be dangerous. You'd die of it, and I-- I should--" (*WP* 86-87)

Of upmost importance in this dialogue is the connection that Lettie implies between beauty and death. Although her perspective is veiled with comic language, her focus upon the "dangerous" reality of beauty, especially after Leslie asks her to be "serious," remains significant. In her final

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comment, Lettie acknowledges that Leslie may indeed become a victim of her beauty and it may cost him his life or freedom while he is not aware of it, a Schopenhauerian notion that man can easily be deluded by woman's beauty. When Lettie emphasises "I-I should," it shows that she is consciously aware not only of the deception of her beauty but of her own motivation, or desire, in choosing Leslie. She decides to select Leslie as her husband rather than George because she feels he is more compatible in wealth. This equates to him being the superior choice and more "agreeable" with her desires (*WP* 20-28). However, this aspect only remains until Leslie's severe accident. His physical deformation repulses Lettie. Before the accident scene, Lawrence expresses the cruelty of the landscape, leaving the reader with an image of a black cat whose paws are snared in a trap as another female cat "shrugged her sleek shoulders, and walked away with high steps" (*WP* 12), a reaction similar to Lettie's response to Leslie's car accident.

The way that Lawrence's characters approach one another echoes another Schopenhauerian theory, namely that the two in a relationship must neutralise each other like "acid and alkali" (*Metaphysics* 124). Considering the interaction between "acid and alkali" and consistently applying this metaphor to humans, the male is the acidic and the female is the base, and as they join together, they neutralise one another to form the perfect balance and to overcome their deficiency. This is the basic principle of "Metaphysics of Love": in an effort to produce dominant offspring "the two persons must neutralise each other, like acid and alkali to a neutral salt" to assimilate "the harmony concerning the individual and its perfection" (124). For Schopenhauer, an equilibrium exists to stabilise and separate the sexes; there is a precise extent, or degree, to which the male qualities need to be completely met, or matched, by the female qualities, in order to naturalise the sexes. In other words, the most virile of men will wish for the most sensual of women, and conversely, so that each person is sexually in accord with the other. Lawrence's narrator concurs with Schopenhauer's image of balance between the sexes when referring to the physical aspects of George and Lettie. He describes how Lettie becomes silent by seeing the movement of George's body. When they walk across the standing corn, George takes off his hat, "his black hair was moist and twisted into confused halfcurls. … he swung with a beautiful rhythm from the waist … his shirt … was torn just above the belt, and showed the muscles of his back playing like lights upon the white sand of a brook. There was something exceedingly attractive in the rhythmic body" (*WP* 47). The narrator also refers to how men compliment Lettie on her physical qualities, "some look at [her] hair, some watch the rise and fall of [her] breathing, some look at [her] neck" but as she says, "a few, - not you [George] among them, - look me in the eyes for my thoughts. To you, I'm a fine specimen, strong! Pretty strong! You primitive man!" (*WP* 27). The irony in Lettie's voice reveals a negative view that she holds of George. She makes him aware that she is fully aware that he only notices her body, her physical qualities. He is behaving with his primal brain and when she says "you primitive man," it is the insult given from her, as a proper lady, to show her disapproval of his behaviour.

Furthermore, Lawrence's *The White Peacock* notes the qualities that women look for in men. According to Schopenhauer, "it is chiefly the strength of a man and the courage that goes with it that attract them,"

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> for both of these promise the generation of robust children and at the same time a brave protector for them. Every physical defect in a man, any deviation from the type, a woman may, with regard to the child, eradicate if she is faultless in these parts herself or excels in a contrary direction. (*Metaphysics* 122)

In addition to the basic and generalized qualities of attraction, there exists a secondary level. This second consideration that Lawrence takes from Schopenhauer's concept of love is the dependence of women on men's physical traits. As men are not only evaluated by their strength and courage only, women further grade the physical qualities they find necessary for attraction. Through this theory, we reach the idea that there is a standard male physique that is considered universally attractive by the majority of women:

> These include the masculine build of the skeleton, breadth of shoulder, small hips, straight legs, strength of muscle, courage, beard, and so on. And so it happens that a woman frequently loves an ugly man, albeit she never loves an unmanly man, because she cannot neutralise his defects. (*Metaphysics* 123)

As Lawrence develops the mannerisms and sometimes silent exchanges of the sexes, he visualises the sexual attractions between Lettie and George. In their first meeting, they follow the "critical way" (*Metaphysics* 126) that Schopenhauer considers proper at the first meeting between the sexes.[5] While dallying on the piano, Lettie almost censures George for showing his lack of culture. Then, as she lifts her eyes, she is mesmerised by his bare chest and arms.[6] He stares "at her with glowing brown eyes, as if in hesitating challenge," and she returns "his challenge with a blue blaze of her eyes" (*WP* 15).

This detailed portrait of physical appearance discloses a Schopenhauerian thought immersed in the novel, that light-skinned individuals "are a deviation from the type and almost constitute an abnormality" (Sch., *Metaphysics*: 125). Individuals are thus captivated by mates with dark skin. George possesses this characteristic, as he has "a naturally fair skin burned dark and freckled in patches" (*WP* 1). Lettie is drawn by the colour of his skin and George, as well, has a weakness for her milky white skin. Their opposing eyes colour presents another element of their attraction to one another, as Lettie cannot help but to gaze upon George's brown eyes with her eyes of blue. Lawrence "vehemently" agreed with "Schopenhauer's opinion that a white skin is not natural to man [and] fair hair and blue eyes are a deviation from type" (Chambers 111). For Lawrence, "a brown skin is the only beautiful one" (Chambers 111). This idea is fully represented in *The White Peacock*. The subtle interaction between colours, the curiosity and appeal that exists between differing physical traits, and their role in love affairs among the characters points to a deep understanding of Schopenhauer's theory of the physical attraction between the sexes.

Neither Schopenhauer nor Lawrence apply boundaries to the physical qualities that women look for in men. Schopenhauer believes that the other aspects that a woman pays careful attention to when choosing a mate, aside from the manly appearance, are wealth, reputation and social dignity. This material aspect is ranked highly in a woman's mind, and Lawrence fully represents this idea

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when Cyril wonders why his sister is going over to Leslie and what she sees in him in contrast to George. George Saxton, when it comes to physical attraction, is an ideal man for Lettie. He is a manly type, "stoutly built, brown eyed, with a naturally fair skin, burned dark" (*WP* 1), but she is not wholly interested in him. At this stage, one wonders why she seems unsatisfied with his manly characteristics, and thus, the question becomes what she is looking for in her future mate. Her method of choosing a mate parallels Schopenhauer's view, as she continues to rate both men simultaneously according to her specific list of attractive qualities. Lettie likes George, the son of a tenant farmer, and Leslie, who is a son of a mine-owner from a cultured and rich family. She flirts with both of them until she makes the decision to marry Leslie Tempest for material gains and security reasons. Not long after her marriage to Leslie, she does not feel really happy and satisfied. "A subtle observer might have noticed a little hardness about her mouth, and disillusion hanging slightly on her eyes" (*WP* 283). She is fiercely unhappy with her existence; writing to Cyril that "she had nothing at all in her life, it was a barren futility" (*WP* 290). But on the other hand, when she puts it into perspective she concludes that she is "quite content" (*WP* 291). In choosing to marry Leslie over George, Lettie has gained money, social standing, and the security she sought. Although George was more attractive, Leslie was attractive enough, and he offered her more of the qualities she desired outside of physical appearance. Lettie had succeeded by marrying into her own class, and she developed into a fine lady of society where "she stood with her white hand upon the peacock of her cloak" as she had "discovered the wonderful charm of her womanhood" (*WP* 254).[7] Although this manner of selection, admission of defeat, and learned toleration is not a new or unusual concept in marriage, this view was adopted by Schopenhauer and became an important part of his philosophy and consequently, Lawrence's novel.Indeed, Schopenhauer insisted on the awkward reality that the force within humans which drives the individual towards the opposite sex is not love but the will to live. Like Schopenhauer, Lawrence was concerned with what attracted the sexes towards each other, but he did not limit his concentration on defining the force as an inherent drive within human beings to stay alive and reproduce; rather, as I argued previously, he argues that it is the will to completeness that motivates people towards each other and bonds them together. It is the will to live that is always the initial driving force, motivating the sexes into relationships. However, the characters involved are usually not aware it is happening. They assume they are choosing mates based on love and intellect while this union is more like "a duel than a duet. One party wins and takes the other captive, slave, servant" (*WP* 301). Being used in marriage, George realises that he is only a "servant" in his relationship and the result of Lettie's marriage is very much the same as George's. She herself is actually a servant of the species.

> What happens in *The White Peacock* is a great internal struggle of the will, almost like a battle. At first, the characters obey their sexual desire; as the novel continues, the characters are held prisoner, bound together in a united misery by their failed pursuit of union. Once a child is created, the sexes seem unable to escape their union. Helplessly, they remain in their unhappy relationships in order to properly secure the next generation, while their thoughts and dreams peer always outward. It is in this moment that they reach a Schopenhauerian concept of the will to live as they realise it was the will that drove them together, and as they stay in miserable unions, it is yet again the work of the will to live, securing the future of the species.

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Note:

[1] What I call genetic love is based on Schopenhauer's consideration that love is just the propagation of a new generation.
[2] Such idea is also presented in the relationship between George and Meg. She is not happy with her husband when he begins to have dreadful drinking but she tolerates him. While his existence for her is like "having Satan in the house" or "a black tiger glowering at you," she is sure that "nobody knows what [she's] suffered with him (*WP* 292).
[3] As Lawrence says, "these sons are *urged* into life by their reciprocal love of their mother — urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them" (*Letters* 477). As soon as they come into contact with women, there is a split. The split kills the eldest son, William, and also make the younger one unable to stay in his relationships. Indeed, their soul stays with the mother and their body with the other women.
[4] This is observable from my earlier discussion of how beauty is an illusion and how it renders the male helpless "in love," and leads to marriage. Later, I disclosed how Lawrence knew that Schopenhauer was obsessed with the idea of marriage being a "howling discord" and how the man sacrifices his individuality. Moreover, I portrayed how Lawrence finds inspiration for further development of the storyline and the relationships between his characters from Schopenhauer's notion of the concept of love and the destructive illusion of beauty.
[5] In Schopenhauer's critical way, the search for a mate is based on how far the mate would be able to fulfil the other's deficiency. In other words, we subconsciously choose mates for their reproductive potential.
[6] As I showed earlier, this is not the only time that she is fascinated by George's manliness and body. Throughout their walking in the farm, she feels talk-less when seeing "the muscles of his back" (*WP* 47).
[7] Her development is somehow that of the Victorian woman, as Patricia Branca states in her study of Victorian times [*Silent Sisterhood: Middle-Class Woman in the Victorian Home* (Croom Helm London 1977)]. As a middle class housewife living in the early part of the 19th Century a woman played a vital role in the family unit. Along with cooking, baking, raising of the children, and charity work. She was responsible for everything within the home so as to provide a sanctuary for her husband (6). Lettie even helps Leslie in his work. She is truly helpful to him.

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Abbreviation:

WWR *The World as Will and Representation*
WP *The White Peacock*

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