

The Interaction/Intra-action of People and Things in Different Spaces in Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

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Abstract: D. H. Lawrence has always been a controversial writer in literary area when it comes to the modernity, for he was active in the transitional era between realism and modernism. But it is almost accepted that he is more of a modernist writer. When talking about the way he demonstrates his sharp resistance against industrial civilization, the resolution he offers to recover the loss of humanity in his novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, we cannot bypass the perspectives of symbolism, imagery and metaphors which have been widely discussed by the academic field. Different from other contemporary writers, Lawrence emphasizes the depiction of interactions between human beings and non-human materials, and gives an exquisite description on various spaces in this novel. As a result, this paper intends to analyze the characterization and Lawrence's vision of modernity from the perspective of New Materialism, focusing on the writing of non-human things, especially the interaction/intra-action between people and things in different spaces, in order to prove how the space changes and how the characters' interactions with things actively influence or even determine the hero and heroine's choices, and further result in their alienation and emancipation respectively. By employing the theory of Spatial narrative and thing theory, this paper is going to make it be more plausible that D. H. Lawrence is a great modernist and holds a critical view on industrial civilization, and call for more attention and studies on how non-human things influence and mould human beings and how the plot and theme of novel are driven by the interactions between people and things.

Keywords: D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, New Materialism, Non-human Things, Spatial Narrative

1. Introduction

D. H. Lawrence, English poet and novelist, is famous but controversial for his bare depiction of sex in his works. Studies on D. H. Lawrence are countless around the world, and the relevant perspectives are assorted in analyzing his lifetime, his view of philosophy and society, his view of love and sex, his writing techniques and so forth. When it comes to the most common topic on Lawrence's studies—whether he's a modernist or not, it is accepted that he is more of a modernist though he is at the transitional area between critical realism and modernism, for in most of his works, Lawrence tends to use symbolism, imagery, and different kinds of metaphors to depict characters' complicated mental world and their unconscious mental activities. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, his last novel, should undeniably be in the line of the above characteristics. It happens to a couple of whom the husband Clifford Chatterley is amputated during the WWI. His wife

Connie has no choice but to take care of him. They move into the big house—the Wragby Hall located in Tevershall, a typical industrial village in the middle of England. It is there Connie and the Mellors have sex that is all natural, raw, and sensual; it is there Clifford transfers his interest from literature to the industrial manufacture, until totally submits to the industrial civilization. Since it is a story which is about the alienation of people and their relationships caused by the terrible industrial society, and a story about mental emancipation of the heroine and the alienation of the hero, critics intend to pay much attention to study this novel from the perspective of sex writing, feminism, ecocriticism and other traditional critical theories, and try to find out Lawrence's negative and critical attitude to industrial civilization and the way he provides for balancing humanity and industrial civilization. Besides the above perspectives, this paper turns to focus on the non-human things in different spaces, especially the interactions/intra-actions between people

and things in this novel and in order to figure out how non-human things influence and mould human beings and how the plot and theme of novel are driven by the interactions between people and things. Most importantly, this paper intends to offer a new perspective of New Materialism to interpret Lawrence's view of modernism.

With the "Material Turn" theories coming into literary criticism since 1990s, Western theorists began to turn their critical focuses from the long-term anthropocentric domain to non-human materials. Literary critics followed this tendency to pay attention to the writing of different spaces and varieties of things in literary works so as to explore the functions and meanings which non-human things would bring to a literary work. D. H. Lawrence is certainly one of the most remarkable writers when it comes to attention to non-human materials.

Since the Western industrial revolution, material civilization has developed so fast and widely, and it has surpassed so far from the domain of natural things, not to mention the invention of AI products nowadays. Therefore, it's worthy of studying the non-human material writing in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, not only because the material culture is prevailing everywhere in human society, but also because it's a good way to get closer to Lawrence's foresight of the industrial development and his insight into the drawback it would bring to human society. As a result, we will have a better understanding on Lawrence's modernist perspective. Based on the background of the novel and theories mentioned above, this paper will firstly give a brief relevant literary review, and then discuss the protagonist's interactions/intra-actions with various non-human things in the inside and outside spaces in the novel.

2. Literary Review

The non-human writing in Lawrence's works has long attracted academic attention. Early in the 1947, English modern poet W. H. Auden in a book report stated that "there are four things which Lawrence does supremely well", and one of the four is his "writing about non-human nature" [1]. Auden believed that Lawrence holds a kind of esteem on natural things when he wrote "whenever he writes about animals or plants, the anger and frustration which too often intrude in his descriptions of human beings vanish, *agape* takes their place" [1]. And different from Wordsworth who treats non-human things as "symbols of great mysterious powers" and other naturalists who regard non-human things only as "aesthetic objects", Lawrence admits the power of themselves and treats the thing power seriously. As for Lawrence's proficiency in writing non-human things, it has the official judgement put forward by Keith Sagar on the establishment of the Lawrence Institute of Nottingham University in 1992. Sagar raised the turn of the academic studies on Lawrence from the study of erotic love to his pantheism and his concern for ecology.¹ The ecological turn

demonstrates the academic studies of Lawrence have gradually broadened from perspectives of traditional criticism to the non-human areas, which exist extensively in his works but have been long-term neglected. And also, it can better illustrate Lawrence's version of modernism by emphasizing the power of nature to call for the return of human nature. Terry Gifford concerns on Connie's engagement with nature in his paper, he pays his heed on Lawrence's evolution of view on nature from the "Other" to the "other" [7]. The "other" here means that "Lawrence achieves a sense of Connie and Mellors being so at home in nature in their gendered modes that nature is not an alien 'Other' and they assume an instinctive at-one-ness with it" [7]. It is Connie's "engagement with wild daffodils on a slope at the back of Mellors' cottage that defines her relationship with nature", which, makes her learn "from the forces of nature an empowered sense of her own nature, producing an inner stillness that 'disentangles' her from her previous life" [7]. Gifford makes progress in taking notice of the power of things in the nature by personating flowers. But he fails to figure out why and how the character can gain the power from the nature. Besides the attention to the nature, industrial products also permeate everywhere in this novel. Simultaneously, the attention to industrial products and other man-made products shows another evidence of Lawrence's introspection of industrial civilization. David Trotter criticizes the modernism of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in the view of its techno-primitivism. Introduced the Marx's "meaningful commodity", Trotter dates back the origin of rubber and the way it is commercialized, according to which he analyzes Connie's primitive inclination when she wears her rubber shoes. While taking plastic as an example, Trotter states that a material's presence "can matter a great deal and yet not symbolize", and he argues that man-made materials "are compounds of the organic and the inorganic" [18].

Tightly connected with the non-human writing, studies on the spatial writing in Lawrence's work is also one of new perspectives since 1990s. Plants, animals, dwelling space, and living stuff in Lawrence's works are all within the scope of the study of critics. Raymond Williams in his book *The Country and the City* firstly mentions the spatial meaning of the mining area in Lawrence's works. He indicates that "Lawrence lived on a border which was more than that between farms and mines...he was on a cultural border" [19]. Julia Moynahan in her paper introduces two opposite orientations towards life by concerning the corresponding spatial elements. She regards two dwellings—Wragby Hall and the gamekeeper's hut—as synecdoche and spatial metaphor, which respectively represents industrial world and natural world.² Zhang Qiong in her PHD dissertation studies the space of mining countryside in Lawrence's novel. In her dissertation, Zhang takes Phillip E. Wegner's assertion of spatial turn in multidisciplinary to emphasize the interaction

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² Moynahan, Julian. "Lady Chatterley's Lover: The Deed of Life." *ELH* 26.1 (Mar 1959): 66-90.

¹ Quoted from a review of D. H. Lawrence's work in China written by scholar

between people and space. Taking the mining space as an example, she explores Lawrence's view on gender, human's alienation caused by material development and the expansion of industrial city. Chinese scholar An' Dongyang discusses in his paper the influences of spatial writing on the protagonists' psychological development and the plot development, in which he especially employs the idea of Joseph Frank and Henri Lefebvre.³ An, inspired by them, divides spaces appearing in the novel into physical space, emotional space, and meaningful space. Besides introducing several typical physical spaces such as Wragby Hall and the wood, he creatively puts forward different kinds of emotional spaces among Connie, Mellors, and Clifford, which discloses how characters construct their subjectivities through their interactions between each other in these spaces.

The previous studies on the non-human materials in this novel are restricted in the rhetoric area such as symbolism and metaphor and in ecological dimension. Even though some critics like Gifford and Trotter who have already noticed the power of non-human things, they seldom pay attention to the issue about how things affect people, and the interactions between them. Researches on space writing in Lawrence's novels is still in its infancy, and it has not connected space with non-human things, nor paid attention to how non-human things in different spaces affect human beings.

To supply the previous researches, this thesis will take account of both organic things and inorganic things, emphasize the "thingness" of things, analyze its initiative in characterization, plot arrangement, and theme of a novel. Drawing on thing theories, this paper will mainly focus on the interactions/intra-actions of people and things in different spatial forms so as to reflect on the western industrial civilization and the western dualist tradition, by which offers a new vision for examining Lawrence's modernist perspective.

3. The "Material-turn" Literary Criticism

Western culture has been under anthropocentric thoughts for a very long history. The dichotomy of subject-object has occupied people's thoughts for a long time. However, early at the beginning of the new millennium, western literary criticism represented by many critics such as Bill Brown, Elaine Freedgood took in abundant theoretical nourishment, and pushed non-human things to the core of literary interpretation [14].⁴

The material turn can be dated back to the philosopher Martin Heidegger, who raises the idea of "thingness of

things"⁵. He distinguishes the thing from the object, and emphasizes that we cannot learn about the essence of the "thing" if we regard it as an "object"—"the thingly character of the thing does not consist in its being a represented object, nor can it be defined in any way in terms of the objectness, the over-againstness, of the object" [8]. Heidegger agrees with the intersubjectivity between human and thing. Bruno Latour puts forward the Actant Network Theory in which he insists that both human and non-human things are "actants". He believes "agency of things and has discussed how humans and non-humans execute their agencies in their interactions through various processes of mediation and the formation of collectives" [12]. The term "actant" raised by Latour refers to a source of actions that can be either human or nonhuman. Latour defines this term to prove that non-human things also have force to "make a difference, produce effects, and alter the course of events" [5]. Similarly, Jane Bennett demonstrates her attitude to non-human materials by discussing the "vibrant matter". Unlike Hegel and Marx's historical way to study matters, Bennett pursues vital materialism through exploring "thing power" and the "agentic contributions of nonhuman forces" [5]. From Heidegger to Bennett, affected and inspired by "Object-Oriented philosophy", they "refuse the dichotomy between spirit and matter or mind and body and instead elevate things as equally important forms of existence as humans" [12]. Also, they actively explore the "thingness" or "vitality" of non-human things in material writing from different types of literary works.

As an active leader of the "Material turn", Bill Brown promotes the development and the maturity of New Materialism—a new trend in humanities and social sciences. Bill Brown redefines the relation of human and things, and things and traditional objects by stating that "only by turning away from the problem of matter, and away from the object/thing dialectic" [3] have people been able to turn their attention to things. From his famous works *Thing Theory*, *A Sense of Things*, to *Other Things*; From the early "material unconscious" discourse, to the elucidations of "thing theory" and the critical practice of the "thingness", till the maturity of "Brownian" New Materialism, Bill Brown perfected his thing theory constantly.⁶ Bill Brown absorbs ideas of the "material turn", and establishes the New Materialism discourse system in literary criticism.

As for the connection between New Materialism critical discourse and D. H. Lawrence's modernist's perspective, it's appropriate to describe in Brown's words—"Modernism's resistance to modernity is its effort to deny the distinction between subjects and objects, people and things" [3]. Therefore, to understand clearly about the modernity in this

3 "Social space in its broad meaning includes the perceived, conceived, and lived space, while in its narrow sense it is opposed to the critically understood mental and physical-material space." (Stanek 129). Stanek, Łukasz. *Henri Lefebvre On Space, Architecture, Urban Research, and the Production of Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

4 Mitchell, W. J. T. "Romanticism and the Life of Things: Fossils, Totems, and Images." *A Material Culture Reader*. Ed. Meng Yue and Luo Gang. Beijing: Peking UP, 2008. 530-46.

5 In Heidegger's famous book *Poetry, Language, Thoughts*, there is one chapter about the thing, in which he puts forward the idea of "thingness of things" by discussing the thingness of a jut.

6 Interpreted by Chinese Scholar Han Qiqun's conclusion on Bill Brown. Han, Qiqun. "A Study of Bill Brown's New Materialism in Literary Criticism". *Foreign Literature*, (06) 2019: 104-114.

novel, we should get closer to those non-human things, especially observe and experience their interactions with human beings, and find out their vitality which has already affected or changed we human being.

Employing the main ideas of these contemporary Western revisions on things to analyze the hero Clifford and the heroine Connie's interaction with things in both inner and outer spaces, this paper will also figure out how D. H. Lawrence breaks the traditional western binary opposition, as well as creates divergent attitudes of two protagonists toward industrial civilization, so as to examine the indispensable function of things in characterization and identifying the theme, which consist of the expression of modernity, the rebellion against the alienation of human beings by industrial society, and the subversion of the binary opposition between people and things in a transitional era.

4. The "Powerful" Wragby House

Wragby Hall itself as a material entity also provides space for a variety of other things. In this material space, the male and female protagonists perceive different types of thing power and thus gain completely opposite life experiences, due to which they choose the opposite life road. Therefore, it's not enough to regard the Wragby Hall as a symbol which only represents something unvital and primitive, not just for it has built since last centuries and added a lot, but for it is a space large enough to make it possible be separated into different small vital pieces, in which Clifford and Connie live their own life respectively, and from which they receive different kinds of power—the power of ruling and the power of extrication. Clifford embraces one side of its power—being separated and undisturbed, while Connie is deeply affected by the other side of it—being prisoned and forgotten.

The thing-power of the Wragby house is reflected by both its exterior and interior. The exterior is the house itself as a material entity, while the interior concludes its vertical space split, different types of rooms, and a lot of household items that have been displayed in the house even for a century. Therefore, the house itself and other things in it together give full play to its "thingness", which puts a kind of hybrid, inappropriate quality into Clifford and Connie's inner world, so that living in it they have different psychological feelings, behavior, way of treating people. Clifford's and Connie's different life choice are implied when they see the Wragby house for the first sight. Connie is scared by its warren-like appearance in its dismal style. She was fascinated "with a sort of horror and felt she was living underground" [11]. Clifford, on the contrary, "professed to like Wragby better than London" [11].

The exterior of the Wragby Hall shows its power of extrication at the first day the couple arrives at the Wragby. Connie is more affected by this power of escape than Clifford, which is reflected in her philosophical activities when she sees the house and moves in it. When seeing the Wragby house from outside, it is depicted as "a long low old house in brown stone, begun about the middle of the eighteenth

century, and added on to, till it was a warren of a place without much distinction". And around it is "a rather line old park of oak trees, one could see in the near distance the chimney of Tevershall pit" [11]. Such a dirty, inanimate, and lonely building doesn't even match Connie a little, for she has experienced the freedom and passion of life in Europe. But when coming into the house, Connie's eyes are full of "endless rooms that nobody used, all the Midlands routine, the mechanical cleanliness and the mechanical order", which for her is a "methodical anarchy" with "no warmth of feeling united it organically", and "seemed as dreary as a disused street" [11]. The exterior of the house shows its decayed, fusty, and hopeless atmosphere. Worse in the interior, plenty of empty rooms narrate their power of abandonment, which is just like Connie's life there. She feels that she has been abandoned by her husband, her previous passionate life with her families and friends, and she has to follow the ethics of nobilities and her husband's requirements just as those rooms in order. It will be a comfort for Connie if She is able to live it alone. However, unlucky as she is, she has "to superintend the house", to live in it and has communication with it every day. As Jane Bennett in the *Vibrant Matter* explains this kind of thing power—"which can aid or destroy, enrich or disable, ennoble or degrade us, in any call for our attentiveness, or ever 'respect'" [5]. For Connie, the power of Wragby seems to push her out of it with its so unacceptable inanimate quality. As a house standing for more than a century, and still with its traditional architectural style, Wragby should have had its particular character, which would have influenced and shaped people living there as a more natural one. But it fails to generate this positive power but presents a hybrid, malformed, and unhealthy state, affected deeply by industrial development. It thus can explain the reason why Connie chooses to run away from it, while Clifford, instead, enjoys it. Having lived in Wragby for two years, Connie becomes a frequent visitor to the woods, and in her mind, "Wragby was there, the servants...but spectral, non-existence" [11]. On the contrary, Clifford so matches the power of loneliness and its unheeded feature that he only occupies a room in the house, treats his friends there, and never cares about the rest spaces including the one where Connie lives.

So far, by analyzing the exterior and interior of the Wragby house itself, we can already feel the thing power of it. Employing Jane Bennett's words, it "aids" Clifford and almost "destroys" Connie by its opposite styles and atmospheres showing vertically by different spaces. In the next part, the interaction between people and things inside the house will discussed emphatically, and through the interactions, the thingness of things can be more obvious and be better understood.

5. The Indoor Space — Interactions Between People and Things

By interacting with different things in different rooms, Connie and Clifford obtains different kinds of thing power

and have quite opposite psychological experiences, as a result of which the indoor space of the Wragby house plays two converse roles—as a shield for Clifford, while as a prison for Connie. They are separated from each other in space, which leads to their eventual separation in the spiritual world. Connie liberates herself both physically and spiritually into a natural and organic material world. Clifford, instead, buries himself into industrial material world without humanity any more. In order to interpret the way that non-human things show their vital force to shape people, this part will begin with Gaston Bachelard's explanation about the house.

Among countless rooms in the huge Wragby Hall, Clifford as a disabled man, has to stay at the ground floor; while Connie chooses the top of the house. They both own only a piece of this huge castle rather than the whole of it. Gaston Bachelard⁷ in his famous work *The Poetics of Space* emphasizes the importance of the house, whose rooms and its spatial verticality “appeals to our consciousness of centrality” [4]. Bachelard believes that this kind of “Verticality is ensured by the polarity of cellar and attic”, which can be associated with the top and ground floor of the Wragby Hall. The ground floor presents the dark entity of the house. People living in the cellar are easy to be fear and unconscious about their true desire. Therefore, the ground floor of Wragby Hall as an “actant” marks the same indifference between itself and Clifford—a cold, silent, and powerful shield for him. Right in it he can move here and there freely and he didn't need to receive other healthy people's eyesight. Living under a shell, Clifford can't be aware of the ugliness of the outsides. Instead, he can barely expose his sense of fear and insecurity, which is directly reflected on Clifford's self-centered and selfish behavior and thoughts. For example, when he is looked after by Connie, he, “as was inevitable in the course of time, took all the service for granted. It was natural he should” [11]. Besides it, living in such a secluded space, Clifford is numb with his wife's depressed mood, and is lost in his own life pursuit. In order to consider his preference, Connie “had to help him in all the intimate things, for he had no man, and refused a woman-servant” [11]. When Clifford gives his daily public speeches among his guests, Connie stays sewing in silence; when Clifford needs to move from his electric wheelchair to another indoor chair, Connie is there helping him for his disabled lower limbs. Clifford's demands cause Connie “hardly ever went away from Wragby, and never for more than a day or two” [11]. Despite Connie's considerate care and guests' flattering, neither of them makes Clifford realize that he is going to backslide, nor that his craze about profit-oriented literature creation is totally violation against natural truth. Furthermore, Clifford's alienation not only consists in his manipulation over Connie as a tool, but also lies in his relation with Mrs. Bolton. The subtle close relation with Mrs. Bolton in this space makes Clifford change his attention from inside to

outside, and broaden his “bitch-goddess” of success into a wider range, which is the industrial production. Mrs. Bolton's active descriptions about those pits, coal and machines as the other “actant”, invigorate “a new sense of power” into Clifford's heart, which makes a connection between himself and the machine. As it is written: “after all, he was the real boss in Tevershall, he was really the pits” [11]. Mrs. Bolton's depiction of the industrial life is a seed buried in Clifford's heart and sprouts soon. In order to figure out this sense of power, Clifford starts his studies on coal-mining research, and goes to the pits all by himself. When Clifford really goes into the mine, goes under the pits, touches and inhales the coal air, “he seemed verily to be re-born. Now life came into him” [11]. If the ground room of Wragby hall is an “actant” by which Clifford obtains the power of control, then the coal pits and its output are “actants” changing Clifford's attention from inside to outside, and by communicating with which Clifford becomes a part of them. As mentioned above, it makes sense to grant that space and non-human things play quite significant roles on the process of Clifford's alienation. People being affected and changed by the power of things always have no idea about the process. Therefore, thing power does exist and is able to take part in characters' physical and spiritual development.

Affected by the “vibrant matters” displayed upstairs, Connie who lives in the top floor has a clearer cognition about her real inner thought, which is that she belongs to nature, not here, and she must find a way to escape the manipulation of the Wragby House. Therefore, Connie gets emancipation both physically and mentally affected by the other power of the Wragby House—the power of extrication. Different from Clifford, Connie's living space is in the top floor of Wragby House which has a verticality difference from that of Clifford where she not only protects herself from being alienated by Clifford's craze for those inane and meaningless literary gatherings and creation, but also tries to achieve her physical and mental recovery. Seeing from the description of Connie's living space— “Her room was the only gay, modern one in the house, the only spot in Wragby Hall where her personality was at all revealed” [11], we can know that Connie's room is decorated so exquisitely. From Michaelis' point of view, Connie's living space is secret, and filled with exotic atmosphere. On his way to Connie's parlour, Michaelis meets many paintings like “German reproduction of Renoir and Cézanne” [11]. Though Lawrence gives no extra explanation on these two artists, it has presupposed that both of them emphasize the reflection of the real, connotation and inner emotion. Renoir's early works are full of bright colors, and he always creates adorable kids, flowers and landscapes, especially beautiful women. Cézanne adopts distorted lines in his paintings which rather reflects nature more animate. Paintings in such a style shows that Connie is keen on nature, which paves the way for her to search in the wood and meet Mellors there. Also, as non-human things, these paintings release their vibrant power to Connie living in this space and others like Michaelis who passes by here. They are not only the symbols of Connie's

7 Gaston Bachelard, French philosopher, discusses the issue of house and universe in his famous work *The Poetics of Space*.

early unmarried life, but also show a kind of thing power, to some extent, becomes one of reasons why there is spark of passion occurring between Connie and Michaelis which causes their intercourse later, and it also says something to Connie's inner desire to nature and mentally freedom. According to Bachelard's statement that "Up near the roof all our thoughts are clear" [4] and the house somewhat "appeals to our consciousness of centrality" [4]. Besides those paintings with thing power, it's remarkable to notice the space where Connie and Michaelis have their secret love. Connie invites Michaelis to her sitting-room in which they firstly have intimate body contact. However, Connie never lets Michaelis enter in her bedroom. Their intercourses all occur in Michaelis' room. After their quarrel, Michaelis says "You're coming round to my room tonight, aren't you? I don't darned know where your room is" [11]. This detail denotes that Connie still remains her most private space, and she fails to regain her vitality from Michaelis, which consequently means that she isn't able to find out a way of mental recovery in this oppressive space. Bachelard also mentions the relation between bedroom and people owning it. He describes bedroom and living room as spaces associated with corners and nooks, "in which the leading characters held sway" [11]. It is because Connie lives in her secret bedroom that she can keep a clear mind on her relation to Michaelis, and stay in a dominant position in their relationship. That is to say, Connie receives thing power from those paintings to get close to nature, and she holds her independent thinking and deep introspection on the issue of gender and sexual love in her exclusive space. The interaction between two persons—Connie and Michaelis, and the intra-action between people and things—Connie and the paintings finally offer Connie the answer to her future choice.

What worth of noticing is that Lawrence also mentions three times when Connie stays alone in her bedroom. Connie's bedroom is a place to reflect on herself, an independent and intimate place for her to reconsider her inner mind. After the first time Mellors invites her into his hut, Connie comes back into her bedroom and takes off all her clothes and watches herself naked in the mirror. And this behavior is described as "what she had not done for a long time" [11]. It marks the beginning of Connie's reawakening. The second time the author mentions Connie's bedroom is when Mrs. Bolton is employed and responsible for taking care of Clifford. This time, Connie "had more time to herself she could softly play the piano, up in her room, and sing" [11], which reminds us that Connie was an artsy girl before her marriage. And it's really a rare opportunity for her to burst the restraint of life and to regain her former interest. Finally, with Clifford's indifference on their daily life and his craze about the industrial goods, Connie has a sense of out-of-breath which leads her to choose her last two "sanctuaries" — This time "she fled up to her room, or out of doors to the wood." [11]. The process of Connie's returning to her bedroom witnesses Connie's self-awakening and self-revolution. And reiterates what has mentioned above, that is, Connie follows her heart and chooses the lifestyle of

returning to nature.

6. The Outdoor Space — The Wood and the Hut

In contrast to Connie and Clifford's "home" Wragby Hall, the outdoor space—the wood and the hut exist as Connie's "sanctuary" which is mentioned twice in this novel. Connie escapes from Wragby and encounters such natural, modest, outdoor spaces. She enjoys the beauty and vital force of nature and interacts with things in nature. In Latour's actor-network theory, He regards both humans and non-human entities as "actants" [12]. He emphasizes that things can execute their agencies in their interactions with human beings. If saying that Wragby House is an actant which restrains and control Connie, but reminds her of escape, then the wood is quite an opposite actant that makes it clearer that Connie desires for freedom and has a strong repugnance for industrial civilization. Wandering there Connie strikes a chord with the sunshine, the wind, the robust trees and flowers; Staying there Connie receives the powerful vitality burst out of flowers in forms of their bright colors and fragrance. Meditating there, Connie feels the connection between the natural things and herself by showering under the same beam of sunshine. Different from Clifford, Connie is closer to the wood. Clifford is described to "love wood", while his "love" is to manipulate it—"He felt they were his own through generations. He wanted to protect them. He wanted this place inviolate, shut off from the world" [11]. Connie, instead, never views herself as a master of the wood but as a companion, visitor, or even a child of it. This attitude can be seen when they once met the bare trunks in the wood. Clifford is just mad at the war for cutting down the trees, while Connie realizes another more important reason—the industrial development. As she thinks secretly, "it was a breach in the pure seclusion of the wood. It let in the world" [11]. But she doesn't tell Clifford. Leading by this realization, Connie gets more interactions with natural things in the wood. Firstly, she encounters the old trees which are though "remnant" but seem to have "a very power of silence, and yet a vital presence" [11]. From the old trees, Connie sees the same sense of waiting for an ending or a new beginning as her. Secondly, having felt the vitality of old trees unconsciously, Connie becomes more active when she interacts with other plants. And in the process of their interaction, Connie becomes more sensitive to the power of those natural things which causes a synaesthesia between she and the flowers. "She walked ploddingly, picking a few primroses and the first violets, that smelled sweet and cold, sweet and cold. And she drifted on without knowing where she was" [11]. Connie feels the power of coldness of flowers from smelling its sweetness. The power of coldness immerses in Connie's mind, invokes her sense of loneliness, and promotes her to think more about her own situation. Through this inner communication, she reexamines herself from those flowers—she is thirsty for a natural, happy, and

free life. Despite of coldness, she should pursuit her own sweetness of life. Times flies, Connie feels more at home when she is in the wood and finally the power of things mingles with her spirit by sharing the same sunshine together. She “sat down with her back to a young pine-tree, that swayed against her with curious life, elastic, and powerful, rising up. The erect, alive thing, with its top in the sun! and she watched the daffodils go sunny, in a burst of sun that was warm on her hands and lap” [11]. It is the power of the trees and flowers that makes Connie regain the hope for a free life, and that promotes her to go into Mellors’ world to pursue the true primitive and passionate emotional life.

Another “actant” that helps Connie to look for her emancipation is Mellors’ hut in the wood. To other people even to Mellors himself, this hut is just a space for living daily life, but it is Connie’s mental sanctuary and the charge station of her body and thoughts. It is depicted as— “The hut was quite cosy, panelled with unvarnished deal. It was a jumble, but also it was a sort of little sanctuary” [11]. Different from the huge and elegant Wragby House, furniture in the hut is quite rough—the unvarnished deal, a rustic table, and stool; the bench, a big box, tools, new boards, nails and so on, most of which can’t be regarded as “furniture”, but just some necessities for a handyman. As a body sanctuary, In the hut Connie enjoys peaceful atmosphere and simple sexual intercourse with Mellors. It is quite impressive when Connie argues for a key to the hut, for she can visit there conveniently at any time. While Mellors is hesitated about this, he doesn’t like to be bothered, even she is a lady. But maybe just because the same desire for a secluded lifestyle of both of them makes Mellors finally allow Connie to visit his living space frequently. As a mental sanctuary, Connie has experienced a psychological process that changes her from a guest position to a host position. At the beginning, Connie feels constraint in the hut. She is used to sitting outside the hut even though Mellors has given her the key. The first time she comes inside the hut is invited by Mellors, for she bursts into tears. In the hut, Connie has the secret sexual intercourse with Mellors for the first time. The soft blanket makes Connie leave the unsafe sense away and just enjoys the joy of close relation with Mellors. The color of the blanket is brown green with masculine soldier’s style, but at the same time it is as soft and tender as a woman’s heart. When Connie is covered by it, she regains the comfort and sense of close relation. Also, it’s worth to notice that Mellors adds another blanket afterwards, by which the power of blanket is doubled and enhances the sense of home of the hut, and the close relation between Connie and Mellors as well. Later, with the fluency Connie visits the hut, she gets increasingly familiar with the stuff in it and becomes more like a hostess. For example, she visits the “pent-house scullery”, the “pantry” [11], in which she does the dishes and prepares milk all by herself. Although there is no regular living room, kitchen, or bedrooms like the Wragby Hall, Connie staying in the hut can live independently without servants’ help. Connie not only serves for herself in this hut, but also feeds and takes care of little chickens like a

“mother”. As it is described “Connie found corn in the corn-bin in the hut” and “brought water in a little tin, and was delighted when one of the hens drank” [11], which manifests that she is familiar with the position of things in this space. In spite of Mellors’ absence, Connie can also handle everything in this small space. The deep interactions with non-human things in the hut give Connie a new life. A life of being a hostess of home, but not a master of a big hollow and indifferent house. Everything in the hut is necessity and must be used in anytime, which differs from the useless boxes with antiques in the spare rooms in Wragby House. To sum up, the hut together with non-human things in it as “vibrant matters” makes Connie introspect her former life and opens her prospect toward the future life. From being a visitor to being a hostess, Connie reexamines the relation between things and herself and gives up her identity of a master, but as a participant of them, which motivates her to reconsider her marriage life and finally makes the choice of leaving away from Clifford. All in all, the shift of space and the effects of non-human things take an indispensable role on Connie’s physical and mental emancipation.

7. The Outdoor Space — The Mining Space and Other Industrialized Things

Unlike Connie’s way to escape from industrial world, Clifford chooses to take part in the mine industry. Aspiring to the industrialized things such as electric wheelchair makes Clifford become more and more apathetic toward his daily life as well as his spiritual world, which thus causes his final alienation. In fact, Clifford is actually surrounded by things all the time. He has to stay in his electric wheelchair, which is the medium brought him from the old Wragby Hall to the mining countryside. When Clifford faces the possibility of alienation. Two forces have been formed between his wife Connie and Mrs Bolton. Connie tries to instruct him to return to nature, while Mrs Bolton makes Clifford choose the mining countryside by her constant descriptions of the miners’ daily life. For Clifford, the electric wheelchair is a separate space out of any other spaces. It is in the wheelchair that Clifford lives his daily life; it is the wheelchair that takes Clifford out of the Wragby Hall to the outside space. Clifford trusts in his wheelchair very much. When the engine of the wheelchair once broke down, Clifford refuses to let Connie to push it, and he rejects Mellors’ help as well. “‘If I gave her a push, she’ll do it,’ said the keeper”. “kept off! She’ll do it by herself” [11]. This episode shows Clifford’s stubborn pride especially toward a game keeper. Furthermore, it also implies Clifford’s craze about the industrial civilization.

Brown mentions in his *Thing theory*: “A thing, in contrast, can hardly function as a window. We begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us” [3]. At the moment of its breakdown, the wheelchair no longer serves for Clifford, thus its thingness appears. The reason for its thingness appearance is not because the physical properties of the wheelchair have changed. What has

changed is a kind of relation set up between subject-object identity. At the moment of the wheelchair's breakdown, a "hinderance of desire" is constructed. And what makes the whole process most satirical is that Clifford is even unable to stand up without a wheelchair. That is to say, he has no choice but to be a slave of the industrial goods. Undoubtedly Clifford's submission is tragic, for Connie still has an opportunity to escape from the alienation, while Clifford has to survive in the confines of industrial civilization forever.

Beyond that, Clifford's curiosity and enthusiasm towards the mining space show his choice between the way of Connie's life and the advice given by Mrs Bolton above. It is in this outdoor space that Clifford totally submits to industrial world. "But let that be. Let man slide down to general idiocy in the emotional and 'human' mind, Clifford did not care" [11]. Clearly Clifford has made his decision between art and industry. But he proceeds without hesitation, for he regards saving the mining industry as saving his own life. Scholar Long diyong raises a concept "sacred space" in his paper which states that "an establishment of a sacred space makes a basis point become possible, which thus makes our requirement for a direction in a homogeneous chaos become possible. And finally, makes the construction of this world as well as living in this world truly and meaningfully become possible" [24]. For example, the reason why churches are sacred spaces for people who have faiths is that churches are the whole meaning and basis point for them. So does Clifford. He regards inanimate Tevershall as his disabled legs, which has no future to expect. Therefore, Clifford's obsession on saving the mining space is fighting for himself at the same time. In this inanimate, dirty, and meaningless space, he can find out his life meaning as an educated noble man. "Clifford was tempted to enter this other fight, to capture the bitch-goddess by brute means of industrial production" [11]. "He went down to the pit day after day, he studied, he put the general manager, and the overhead manager, and the underground manager, and the engineers through a mill they had never dreamed of..." [11]. Acquiring the thing power from those industrial machines and tools, Clifford is awoken by the desire for doing a great business. The mining space brings Clifford a sense of belonging and achievement, and furthermore brings him a very strong sense of security. Consequently, Clifford fulfills himself by the help of man-made things for he is disabled physically, but he loses his spiritual fulfillment by interacting with industrial products. On the contrary, Connie seems to return to a primitive state but she actually upgrades herself on the level of mentality. And that's the radical cause of different pursuit between Connie and Clifford.

8. Conclusion

Considering both the hero and heroine's interactions with things in different spaces given by D. H. Lawrence, we can realize that how non-human things play an important and indispensable role on affecting characters' physical behavior and mental development. In this novel, Lawrence depicts two

different self-development ways for both hero and heroine. One is on the way of dissimulation, while the other searches for true freedom. They are inspired by natural things or influenced by industrialized things. Lawrence's skillful usages of thing writing and space writing make it possible for this paper to pay attention to their functions in a literary work. What's more, by breaking through traditional subject-object binary opposition, Lawrence removes things from their passive "object" position and makes things release their "thingness". On the way of alienation and de-alienation of Clifford and Connie, their actions in different spaces and their communications with things in different spaces, together with the "thingness" of things giving full play to their physical properties, make the changes of the characters' psychological and spiritual world come true. In this process, the importance of space writing has been highlighted and plays a pivotal role. As a transitional writer at the beginning of a new century, Lawrence not only pays his heed to human beings' alienation in a society full of materials, but also notices the importance of the interwovenness between the non-human materials and human beings. Most importantly, the active depictions on both natural things and industrial things reflect Lawrence's modernist prospective. By employing the new perspective of "Material Turn", this paper offers a new way to analyze characters and the theme of the novel, and provides a new view on studying Lawrence's modernist prospective.

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