

Whose *Bildungsroman* is this?: A Comparison of Paul Morel and Miriam Leivers

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1. Paul and Miriam's *bildung* story within the frame of their relations to community

D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (hereafter *SL*) has long been regarded as "an outstanding example of the kind of novel to which the German term *bildungsroman* is sometimes applied, being centrally concerned with the formative tears and growth into full awareness of a single character" (Salgado 106). For a long time, many of the critics mainly have narrowed their anticipations down onto Paul's *bildungsroman*, therefore, Miriam has remained merely as an assistant foil helping Paul's maturity. Carefully read, however, this novel as a whole revealed itself as a novel in which Miriam achieves a noticeable success at the end, while showing us the undeniable fact that Paul ends up a "pathetic Oedipal tragic failure" (Kwan 64). The primary reason caused Paul's failure and Miriam's success of their *bildung* process can be mainly supported by the frame of their relation to the communities they belong to in the text.

Despite the diversity of the critics' notions about the novel, one of the most significantly shared notions by them is its "reconciliation" between individuals and their communities in the text; characters and communities they belong to are closely interconnected with each other in *SL* and these reciprocal interactions, consciously and unconsciously, contribute to influence protagonists' *bildung* process which is moral and social development and maturity. There exist a series of critics who appreciate *SL* on these communal and social grounds: Raymond Williams, in his book *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence*, demonstrates that this novel is "the most gifted English novel of his

time and for many reasons his problems were central to a main current of growth and difficulties in his own society and own culture" (202), while Terry Eagleton also focusing on these relations between people and community, estimating *SL* as "one of the greatest masterpieces in nineteenth century, which depicts the life of working-class so realistically and naturally with the vision and view point from the very insight of working people" (192). Moreover, Salgado points out in his article that "It [*SL*] is the first great novel of English working class life and the first to be observed from within, ... giv[ing] a true and full picture of industrial life" (106). Holderness also seems to embrace this notion, stating that readers can find "an irreducible synthesis of the imaginary of nature, Industry and humanity consistently preserved in the realist framework" (133).

Under keeping this presumption in mind, from now on, we are going to centrally concentrate on Paul and Miriam's *bildung* process within the framework of their relation to their communities shown in *SL*.

2. Paul

Paul is a sympathetic derelict, cutting from the rest of his communities, not belonging to any of the categories with a firm grasp. He is also a marginal character placed on the dilemma of "belonging and not belonging" (Williams 171), between two communities which are the colliery society at Bottoms and the middle-class society at Bestwood. Therefore, as a hero of a *bildungsroman*, Paul, I believe, seems to have the fatal deficiencies and limitations to become an estimable hero of a typical *bildungsroman*. And I think the primary reason for this is Paul's "individuality" or "isolation" from the society. Most of the *bildungsroman* must include several essential courses or stages, among which the most important one for protagonist's *bildung* is the conflation between the protagonists and society or social values: i.e. 1) "the spirits and values of the society he/she belongs to have to become manifest in him/her, who then accommodates into society" 2) in addition, "the novel should end with an satisfactory assessment by the protagonist of himself and his new place in the society" ("Wikipedia"). Choi, in her dissertation, supports this idea, asserting

that "The *bildungsroman* is a typical modern genre that seeks for reconciliation between social reality and the individual whose identity itself is problematized by the unprecedented social mobility of the modern period (161). Paul does not meet these requirements for such a hero.

The life at Bottoms has prescribed his original identity and conventional life as a member of working-class community since he was born, while the life at Bestwood representing spirits and values of the middle-class community he has always wanted to internalize into. This tendency of transcendence into the higher level of hierarchy seems to stem from Mrs. Morel's fervent aspiration which, in fact, ironically impedes him not only from settling down on the conventional life at Bottoms but also even from experiencing and developing autonomous relationship based on total "individuality." After all, he always had nothing but to recur home, where Mrs. Morel, "the pivot and pole of his life" (*SL* 254), exists at the end. Consequently, he is obliged to only hover around the margins of these two different categories, with the feeling of "the bitter peace of resignation" (*SL* 261). The narrator also describes Paul's frustration and instability in the text, by saying that "[t]he feeling that things were going in a circle made him mad" (*SL* 395).

Paul's awareness of being isolated from the rest of the communities has already been present since he was in the womb of his mother. Salgado demonstrates in his article that Paul has been presented to us from even before his birth as being linked to his mother's frustration and desires in peculiar intimate ways and the bond between Paul and Mrs. Morel appears to go below Mrs. Morel's conscious will (Salgado 101-2).

She felt as if the navel string that had connected its frail little body with hers had not been broken. A wave of hot love went over her to the infant. She held it close to her face and breast. With all her force, with all her soul she would make up to it for having brought it into the world unloved. She would love it all the more now it was here, carry it in her love. Its clear, knowing eyes gave her pain and fear. Did it know all about her? When it lay under her heart, had it been listening then? Was there a reproach in the look? She felt the marrow melt in her bones, with fear, and pain. (*SL* 51)

As shown above, Paul's oscillating and unstable position as "belonging yet not entirely belonging" is derived from his mother's passionate craving for his son to enter into the middle-class community; Holderness in his book, *D. H. Lawrence: History, Ideology and Fiction*, blames her for Paul's marginalization from his own communities: "the mother tries to push her sons into the middle class and in fact, however, she pushes them into isolation, separateness, individuality, which destroys William and leads Paul into a position of isolated singleness" (147). Even so, ascribing all the blames and responsibility for Paul's isolation entirely to Mrs. Morel's own fault is inappropriate and unfair, because Mrs. Morel and Paul's situations are somewhat very different. Mrs. Morel's separateness from the collective life of colliery community and her exceptional and unusual position out of place in the community have their own reasons: originally, Mrs. Morel herself is from "a good old burgher family" (SL 15), well off middle-class people. Her temperance, "proud and unyielding" (SL 15), is actually from the Coppards, who had once been the famous independents and still remains stout Congregationalists. Moreover, her expectation towards Paul, read carefully, is found out as a prolonged part of her own unfulfilled self-establishment which has been continuously frustrated by her husband. She is confessionarily quoted in the text as saying that "[s]he seemed so far away from her girlhood, she wondered if it were the same person walking heavily up the back garden at the Bottoms, as had run so lightly on the breakwater at Sheerness, ten years before" (SL 14). Therefore, the discord between her frustrated self-fulfillment as a member of middle-class community and her harsh reality of colliery at Bottoms, as a matter of course, produces anger and despair as well as extraordinary expectation towards her sons, which seems quite apprehensible and even natural.

However, her very attempts to set her sons beyond their own communities seem to be apparently accusable for Paul's own sake. Mrs. Morel's strong impact on him drew him to the "individuality," cutting the son from his rest of the communities and categories, only to become his mother's own boy separately. Paul's such an allegiance to Mrs. Morel affects on his alienation strongly in two categories: gender and class.

First of all, he is marginalized from the center of his own gender. It is not that

he doesn't belong to the "male" category itself but that Paul's original gender colors stays at the margin of the boundary from the very center of the "male" category, slightly lying aslant on the colliery society at Bottoms. From the very first time, he seemed to feel much inclined to take the "feminine" values by his mother: "He is eager to do domestic jobs associated with his mother, such as baking bread, and evidently quite competent at them" (Salgado 102). Besides, his restrained manners and "gentility in speech, sedentary rather than manual works, temperance and domesticity" (Salgado 101) much resembles female's nature rather than male's. In addition, his feminine nature and emotional crippling has been deliberately established in the early stage of the novel, which often stands out through the text quite opposite to William who "grew bigger and stronger and more active" and "run like a wind" (*SL* 64, 70).

Paul would be built like his mother, slightly, and rather small. His fair hair went reddish, and then dark brown: his eyes were grey. He was a pale, quite child, with eyes that seemed to listen, and with a full, drooping underlip. As a rule, he seemed old for his years. He was so conscious of what other people felt, particularly his mother. When she fretted, he understood, and could have no place. His soul seemed always attentive to her. (*SL* 82)

Paul is also shown to have hostility to his father who is the very patriarch of the Morels family. Paul's hostility to his father inevitably involves at some degree the acceptance of these "feminine values" of his mother, because Mr. Morel is the one who directly represents the "muscularity, shaped by the needs, desires, and authority of the men" (Salgado 101). Paul, whose family has been actually maintained by his father's income earned from the arduous and painstaking labor from mine, seems to have no right to accuse his father. Yet, he still hates to resemble any of Mr. Morel's masculine and brutal nature such as his magnanimity, savage aspect, or even viscous friendship with his co-workers, all of which closely links to the working-class community at Bottoms and the very source of consciousness of miners' group.

So, Paul's inclination to feminine nature smoothly moves into the notion of "class." In *SL*, he is described as an unstable character who adopts neither of the reality in the working-class community, nor of the values and identities of the

middle-class community. He often bursts out the anger and the hatred towards "commonness" of his own people at Bottoms, striving himself to deny the originally prescribed identity by colliery society, but sometimes seems to highly approve of their lives as a real one. From here, his dichotomized notion about "class" and "people" occurs. Let us closely look at the scene where young Paul has just come back from the colliery office after fetching his father's money.

Suddenly he turned on her in a fury, his eyes flashing.

"I'm not going to the Office any more," he said.

"Why, what's the matter?" his mother asked in surprise. His sudden rages rather amused her.

"I'm not going any more," he declared.

"Oh very well, tell your father so."

He chewed his bun as if he hated it.

"I'm not-I'm not going to fetch the money."

... "They are hateful, and common, and hateful, they are, and I'm not going any more. Mr. Braithwaite drops his 'h's, an' Mr Winterbottom says 'you was'."

"And is that why you won't go any more?" smiled Mrs. Morel.

The boy was silent for some time. His face was pale, his eyes dark and furious. His mother moved at her work, taking no notice of him. (SL 97)

His binary and controversial feeling towards his own people at Bottoms is also presented at the proceeding paragraph as well.

"You know," he said to his mother, "I don't want to belong to well-to-do middle class. I like my common people best. I belong to the common people."

"But if anyone else said so, my son, wouldn't you be in a tear. You know you consider yourself equal to any gentleman."

"In myself." He answered, "nor in my class or my education or my manners. But in myself, I am."

"Very well then-then why talk about the common people."

"Because-the difference between people isn't in their class, but in themselves.-Only from the middle classes, one gets ideas, and from the common people-life itself, warmth. You feel their hates and love-"

"It's all very well, my boy-but then why don't you go and talk to your father's pals?"

"But they're rather different."

"Not at all. They're the common people. After all, whom do you mix with now, among the common people? Those that exchange ideas, like the middle classes. The rest don't interest you."

"But- there's the life-" (*SL* 298)

As shown above, Paul is shown to have the arbitrary and obscure notions about "class" and "common people," while remaining himself merely as a spectator from the outside of class boundaries, yet also struggling himself against his unstable "belonging and not belonging" status.

However, he goes on to fight for entering into the industrial middle-class community for getting a white colored job. After getting a clerical job at the Jordan appliance's company at Bestwoods and achieving the goal to enter into the threshold of middle-class, Paul's progress in fulfilling his mother's ideals ostensibly seems to go forward unimpeded. But, his dichotomized separation starts right here. This separation between his conventional life based on the lower working-class community and his working life at Bestwoods inevitably produces a tragedy. This separation cannot be fully ratified in that the conflicts themselves must be fought out within a shared area of living and "in the condition of his own people, without moving from home" (Eagleton 199). Consequently, the result brings in a "deadlock": "Paul neither escape from his environment into a new dimension nor re-enter its life on the old term" (Eagleton 197). Once the working-class is left behind, there is precisely nothing "there." In that void, Paul only feels the "restless fretting" (*SL* 299) as well as dissatisfaction towards his own life. In another words, he is unhappy.

"My boy," said his mother to him, "all your cleverness, your breaking away from old things and taking life in your own hands, doesn't seem to bring you much happiness."

"What is happiness!" he cried. "It's nothing to me! How am I to be happy?" The plump question disturbed her.

"That's for you to judge, my lad. But if you could meet some good woman who would makes you happy—and you began to think of settling your life—when you have the means—so that you could work without all this fretting—it would be much better for you."

... "You mean easy, mother," he cried. "That's a woman's whole doctrine for life—ease of soul and physical comfort. And I do despise it."

"Oh do you!" replied his mother. "And do you call yours a divine

discontent?"

"Yes—I don't care about its divinity. But damn your happiness! So long as life's full, it does not matter whether it's happy or not. I'm afraid your happiness would bore me." (SL 299)

However, to be very sorry to him, his fair seeming "divine discontent" theory (SL 299) is now destroying himself; to make matters worse, after Mrs. Morel died, Paul is literally left alone as a sympathetic derelict, drifting towards death. His vacillations and refusals not belonging to any of the communities have worn him away till he has reached something like "nonentity" at the end.

For all that, there still remains one last hope for Paul's revival: critics who appreciate *Sons and Lovers* as the twentieth century *bildungsroman* are actually trying to rescue him. They suggest that the well-known last scene signifies Paul's embarking on a meaningful initiative and "capability of regenerating spark," all of which denotes the possibility of modern autonomous and individual hero of this new genre, the twentieth century *bildungsroman*:

But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked towards the city's gold phosphorescence. His fist were shut, his mouth set fast. He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly. (SL 464)

According to Pinkney, it is also said that the twentieth century *bildungsroman* sustains the ambition of totality, but raises it one level, containing it entirely in the aesthetic rather than the phenomenal realm, so that totality in this sense never reaches the community at all, which is felt as threat rather than the field of possibility to the protagonist (32). Salgado further indicates that *SL* becomes more and more to be concerned not with morality in the ordinary sense but with the psychic ebb and flow within and between characters, from which the greatness of the twentieth-century exploratory novel form generates (106). Choi also seems to agree with this notion, demonstrating that the reconciliation based on the "socialization" model is not tenable any more and Lawrence breaks a new path towards a creative overcoming of this limitation of historical genre "*bildungsroman*" (163).

Nevertheless, availability of this notion remains much doubtful to me. Of

course, I do not mean to deny the very possibility of this new path towards the twentieth century *bildungsroman*, but the main reason why I cannot fully endorse these regards is its lack of evidences which actually show this possibility and the new path from the very inside of the text. As long as the evidences are insufficient, the notion raises the doubt about whether Paul can really show us this optimistic possibility towards an estimable hero of this new genre. Hence, I believe coming to arrive at a conclusion with so much of conviction of Paul's inner development and maturity in this way seems too hasty. Nobody can ensure what would result in his life in the coming years, because, at the end of the novel, Paul is obviously drifting towards death, ending up a pathetic "Oedipal tragic failure suffering from mother's death" (Kwan 64). In addition, the tiny little clue of this "faintly humming glowing" beckoning town (SL 464) must not be enough to guarantee Paul's new initiative and optimistic possibility. More significantly, this last scene which is often told to lead us to the very possibility is diverted from the mainstream of the novel too abruptly and too unexpectedly. Therefore, even though taking all of these notions into serious account, it seems undeniable that there still remains one suspicious yet unsolved question: "Where would he go, and what would be the end of him?" (SL 463).

3. Miriam

Besides Paul, there exists a female character as important as he. Her role cannot belittled, so long as we regard this novel as a *bildungsroman*, concentrating on "spiritual, moral, psychological or social development of the protagonist from childhood to maturity" ("Wikipedia"). Yes, it is Miriam. Paul in this novel is quoted as saying that he was "just opening out from childhood into manhood" (177). However, though often neglected, readers become to acknowledge that Miriam is also opening out from girlhood to womanhood, "cover[ing] almost a decade of her life, during which she leaves behind the typical 'romanticism' of adolescence, and matured into a strong, intelligent woman" (Gavin 38) without difficulty and the readers could have hardly closed their books, before they realize the fact that Miriam achieves a noticeable

success as a woman in those days, at the end. Under this presumption, she can be also re-illuminated as a "new woman" like Sue Bridehead in Hardy's *Jude of Obscure*. *SL* is a *bildungsroman* dealing with Miriam's successive *bildung* process on the basis of her tight relations to her own community and people.

However, there have been so much controversy over Miriam's character. These critics can be optionally divided into three groups, based on how they appreciate her character: the first group have a tendency to simplify Miriam's character merely as "spirituality" or "mentality," indicting her for interrupting Paul from "incorporating into his real life some sense of wholeness, of completeness, totality of life and experience" (Holderness 156). For instances, Spilka in his book, *The Love Ethic of D. H. Lawrence*, severely derogated her as a "spiritual Vampire" and a "nun," throwing all the blame of Paul's split-self and instability on Miriam (68). He further declaims that "her body is tense and lifeless, her abnormal spiritual intensity is compounded by a genuine fear of things physical" (64). In addition, Murfin who contributed to schematize almost every relationships of characters in *SL* by means of their diagrammatized split-consciousness, goes further to say that Miriam is overwhelmingly overbalanced by her "virginity," which does cause severe conflicts in relation with Paul. The second group of the critics tries to emancipate her character from the predominantly typed conception, "spirituality," vindicating Miriam's dynamic potentials hidden by "the over-painted commentary of Paul-narrator" (Martz 54). Lawrence has once told that "Never trust the teller, trust the tale" (Gavin 18). By keeping this notion in mind and following the story, we can reach out the conclusion that Paul-narrator has unjustly distorted Miriam's multi-dimensional characters all the way through the novel, especially as entering into the second part of *SL*. Gavin also strongly insists that "Miriam herself is fragmented by Paul-narrator throughout the text, and as she grows into womanhood she learns more about herself, sees herself more fully, and these fragments become a whole" (28). Moreover, Louis Martz points out that Miriam's portrait is being enriched dynamically and progressively before our eyes, over a long period of years, from her early adolescence, through an awakening and potential fulfillment, to the utter extinction of her inner life and hope (58). Last but not least, the third group of critics is apt to defend her in

terms of Feminism critique, ultimately setting their goal at assaulting Paul's and therefore Lawrence's male chauvinistic and ruthless manner towards his female lovers. For example, Faith Pullin harshly criticizes Lawrence himself as a "ruthless user of women" (49) and an "extremely egoistical writer" (50), confirming that Miriam and other female characters in *SL* have been victimized as author's scapegoats (49, 50).

What I felt towards Miriam, on finishing reading the novel, cannot be exactly defined as "sympathy," since Miriam having been victimized and distorted by Paul-narrator, or "antipathy," just in that she interrupted Paul from experiencing of "totality of life" and "completeness" of community (Holderness 156). Rather, it would be all the more appropriate to name those feeling towards Miriam "admiration."

I believe that it is not Paul but Miriam who lives a complete and wholesome life, even experiencing the totality of life; since Miriam having been constantly faithful and earnest to her own life at Willey Farm, we cannot help becoming to know more and more that her life is at least grounded on her complete and wholesome life experiences towards her community and people; she neither digresses from her own rural and agricultural society nor shirks from any of the responsibilities prescribed to her such as arduous household drudge or waiting on her brutal brothers, without displaying any of unpleasant behaviors towards them.

Even so, she is not merely satisfied with her status and does not give in herself to the living of serene rural life at Willey Farm. She persistently struggles to work hard and study hard with so much of passion and aspiration. But this is because she herself is very well aware that her potentials and intellects made for more than being the household drudge, not because she "desire[s] to be a man" (Spilka 68) or hopes for "escape[ing] from the constriction of a woman's life on the farm" (Salgado 105). In addition, though she sometimes bursts out the anger and anxiety towards her meager status as a "swine girl" (*SL* 174) and "only a common girl" (*SL* 157), she does not seem to be entirely unstable or restless as often shown by Paul. This is because Miriam's "independence" which she achieves at the end of *SL*, is quite different from Paul's isolated "individuality" cutting from the rest of his communities. Miriam's

painstaking struggle has unwittingly yet straightforwardly formed the very firm basis for her to stand on her own and launch into the independent life later.

However, despite her close relations to her rural life at Willey Farm, many critics still have a tendency to regard her life merely as cutting from "daily" or "ordinary" life without any stable foundation. Holderness suggests in his article that "Miriam's experiences is isolated and incompatible with everyday life" and Paul strives to escape from her holy communion back into his real life to "incorporate into his life some sense of wholeness, of completeness, totality of life and experience" by rejecting the intensified relations to Miriam (155). Even Paul-narrator seems to precipitate these notions by saying that "she[Miriam] was cut off from ordinary life by her religious intensity which made the world for her either a nunnery garden or a paradise, where sin and knowledge were not, or else an ugly, cruel thing" (SL 185). However, to Miriam, the pastoral landscape she belongs to and a working farm in which continual business busily goes around and the Leivers family and other tenants depend on their whole living are "reality." These are her "daily" and "ordinary" life the rural, agricultural life, deep in the forest - which always calls for hard work. Therefore, indicting her for separation from the reality and ordinary life is nonsense and inappropriate, which only result in succumbing to Paul-narrator's incredulous assessment towards Miriam's life. It also seems an apparent exaggeration to simply believe her life as an entire seclusion from outside world, such as "a land far away and magical" or "a nunnery garden" (SL 185). These critics and the narrator ground their justification for accusing her isolation largely on her intensified "spirituality" which includes her intense religiosity and extraordinary desires for learning. However, these two ironically become the very sources and measures for her to incorporate into the whole worlds and experiences "wholeness" and "completeness" of life in her own ways: her intensified religiosity is a shield to protect and bolster her own life at Willey Farm, while her passion and craving for knowledge is the real "food for her life" (248) and the "fire fed on books" (360). In other words, these two "tools" are the very necessities inevitably made by her painstaking endeavor to settle down on her own life in rural and agricultural society with her own people.

Then, let us look at Miriam's religiosity which represents her "spirituality"

best. The very first impression of women in the Leivers family is described as “mystical,” while Miriam and her great companion, Mrs. Leivers, being described as “breath[ing] the treasure of religion on their nostrils and see the whole life in mist,” throughout the novel (*SL* 173). To Miriam, “Christ and God made one great figure, which she loved tremblingly and passionately” (*SL* 173). Even at the scene she burned the potatoes for dinner table and her brothers blamed her harshly, “Mrs. Leivers just sat in silence suffering like some saint with her the other cheek theory” (*SL* 178).

“They [Miriam’s brothers] don’t forget that potato-pie against our Miriam,” laughed the father. She was utterly humiliated. The mother sat in silence, suffering, like some saint out of place at the burnt board. It puzzled Paul. He wondered vaguely why all this intense feeling went running because of a few burnt potatoes. The mother exalted everything, even a bit of housework, to the plane of a religious trust. ... “They are so hateful!” cried Miriam. “And - and low.” “Yes dear. But how often have I asked you not to answer Edgar back. Can’t you let him say what he likes?” “But why should he say what he likes!” “Aren’t you strong enough to bear it, Miriam, if even for my sake. Are you so weak that you must wrangle with them.” Mrs. Leivers stuck unflinchingly to this doctrine of “the other cheek.” She could not in still it at all into the boys. ... Miriam was often sufficiently lofty to turn it. Then they spat on her and hated her. But she walked in her proud humility, living within herself. (*SL* 177-78)

Salgado in his article also concentrates on “indivisibility” between her religiosity and her very life at Willey Farm.

[M]iriam’s much talked of “spirituality” is clearly an inheritance from her mother’s deep religious feelings. But that feeling may itself be, what it so often is, in part a kind of unconscious (or perhaps conscious) compensation for a life of ceaseless drudgery in which men make the decisions while women cook, wash and keep house for them. One way to live with such a deadening routine is to sanctify it, to offer it up as one’s personal sacrifice to God, which is what Mrs. Leivers does. (Salgado 105)

From the examples quoted above, we can reach out the important fact that Mrs. Leivers’s “the other cheek” theory represents their frustration and anxiety

of women towards their lives. Moreover, we soon become to acknowledge that by aid of this theological doctrine, they strengthen themselves to be callous enough to endure their uneven status and overcome the harms from others. In other words, her intensified religiosity is the very significant part of her *bildung* process for her to grow into the fully empowered woman.

Another important necessity for her life is her fervent aspirations for education. Miriam is the character who has a real passion, although "her intelligence, her hopes, her warmth, her love, and her natural, if hesitant, lust are often obscured by the teller" (Gavin 29). Many critics vainly try to define her erratic aspirations for learning as "desperate struggle to escape from the constriction of a woman's life on the farm" or as a "fierce desire to be a man." However, her longings for intellect are not at all irrelevant to her very rural and agricultural society at Willey Farm. There exist strong evidences in the text showing that her passion for knowledge and intellect is closely related to her very life. First of all, "Miriam is drawn to the poems by Wordsworth" (Murfin 79). Wordsworth is a very well known for his meditative or landscape poems, favorably dealing with the themes of nature. Miriam's passionate interests for Wordsworth's poems start right here. Her love for surrounding nature and her pastoral life and the sublimate feelings she often experiences though the nature seem to be harmonized with Wordsworth's mood and style. Wordsworth is also very well known for his uses of daily language of the lower peasant class, where their true life and warmth melted inside. As a farmer's daughter at Willey Farm, she naturally draws into these Wordsworth's poems fervently. Moreover, the primary elements Wordsworth takes as important are the feelings such as sublime, rapture, and ecstasy brought by some kinds of soul communion which is quite familiar to Miriam.

Furthermore, her craving for intellect and knowledge is not to escape from the boundary of her own life at Willey Farm, but to simply bind all of her knowledge together more closely to her dream job, which is a school teacher. And, this profession as a "school teacher" is not at all irrelevant to her agricultural life, either. Because the school, at which she is going to teach, is actually "a farming college in Broughton" (SL 459), where her agricultural knowledge or notions can probably help her a lot. This life of Miriam, which is of her own planting, based

on the firm and rich bedrock of her own life and fertilized with so much of endeavors and struggles, is now about to bear a prosperous fruit, called "independence."

There are several more evidences showing her tight interactions with her rural and agricultural life at Willey Farm. She actually despises and even hates her sister's "commonness" and "worldly values" as well as other people's "triviality" (*SL 207*), all of which are the very nature of the outside industrial world.

The two sisters did not talk much to each other. Agatha, who was fair and small and determined, had rebelled against the home atmosphere, against the doctrine of "the other cheek." She was out in the world now, in a fair way to be independent. And she insisted on worldly values, on appearance on manners, on position, which Miriam would fain have ignored. (*SL 207*)

Moreover, she makes little account of money whose value is taken as important in the outside industrial world. Miriam said that "money would mean nothing to her" (*SL 285*). Had Miriam really wanted to escape from her boundary of rural and pastoral community at Willey Farm, she would probably have adopted more "common" and more "worldly" values like Agatha, who actually rebelled against "the other cheek" doctrine. Summing up all of these notions together, we can come up with one important conclusion that Miriam's self establishment and fulfillment are in fact taken place and carried on within the very framework of her own community, which is the rural and pastoral farm lives.

With a firm grasp of her own community and people, Miriam is now launching into the outside world, achieving considerable success and independence as a school teacher. Now she appears to be fully empowered and full-fledged independent woman, contrary to Paul who with small and extremely unstable looks, is drifting towards death. She seems rather "over-confident" and "haughty" at the end of the novel (Gavin 38).

"I [Paul] suppose you're glad," he said.
"Very glad"

"Yes - it will be something."

He was rather disappointed.

"I think it will be a great deal," she said, almost haughtily, resentfully.

He laughed shortly.

"Why do you think it won't?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't think it won't be a great deal. Only you'll find earning your own living isn't everything." (SL 460)

In this paragraph, "Paul does needle Miriam about her job, because he is rather disappointed that he is not her all in all" (Gavin 37). However, to be very sorry, "she has her own life without him" (Gavin 37). But, here, Paul actually does feel that "his last hold" and shelter for him has gone forever as Miriam head it off at the end of the novel. Contrary to Miriam's successive look, Paul is entirely left alone, naked, drifting towards "nothingness," while his instability being consummated. This is because "[t]here was nothing for Paul to get hold of" (SL 457). Since Miriam's "independency" is much different from Paul's isolated and saucy "individuality" cutting from the rest of his communities, Miriam's success seems quite stable and balanced.

What is more, other parts of Miriam's *bildung* process have also been consummated one and another. At age of twenty, her outward expression has also been changed from the mere "swinegirl" with "discolored, old blue frock, and her broken boots" (SL 176) into the beautiful "look of woman, and dignified with full breasted and luxuriously formed" (SL 256). Moreover, her beautifully matured body and rich soul precipitate the inquiry of more profound love and relationship with Paul not only in "soul - communion" but also in "physical love" Miriam willingly undergoes through Paul's "test" even "without regard for social concern" (Gavin 40), and after his "test" ending up a total failure, she finally found herself reborn into "a mature young woman" (SL 339).

Nevertheless, we have to avoid ensuring what would be the real end of Miriam and Paul in the coming years. But one thing that I can say with so much of conviction is that Miriam may well achieve at least her own happiness and satisfaction, seeking her dream within the frame of her community and people. I have no doubt about her future success either, on the firm basis of her closely interconnected life and experiences of "totality." Now, after finishing up the

eight years of bitter, yet such a beautiful friendship and love with Paul, she at last said that she must leave, and looked full into a mirror: "She stood before the mirror pinning on her hat" (*SL* 463). It is now that we see her "more than the sum of the fragments cited selectively against her, a still water who runs deep," (Gavin 41) and "whole and unfragmented" (Gavin 40), for the first, but the last time.

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ABSTRACT

Whose *Bildungsroman* is this?:
A Comparison of Paul Morel and Miriam Leivers

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D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* has long been regarded as a novel which '*bildungsroman*' German term, is applied, being centrally concerned with tears and growth into full awareness of a single character. For a long time, many of the critics mainly have narrowed their anticipations down onto Paul's *bildungsroman*, therefore, it seems that Miriam has merely remained as an assistant foil helping Paul's maturity. Carefully read, however, this novel as a whole revealed itself as a novel in which Miriam achieves a noticeable success at the end, while showing us the undeniable fact that Paul ends up a "pathetic Oedipal tragic failure." The primary reason caused Paul's failure and Miriam's success of their *bildung* process can be mainly supported by the frame of their relation to the communities they belong to in the text. One of the most significantly shared notions about *Sons and Lovers* by critics is its "reconciliation" between individuals and their communities in the text; characters and communities they belong to are closely interconnected with each other in *SL* and these reciprocal interactions, contribute to influence protagonists' *bildung* process which is moral and social development and maturity.

In this respect, Paul can be said as a sympathetic derelict, cutting from the rest of his communities, not belonging to any of the categories with a firm grasp. He is also a marginal character placed on the dilemma of "belonging and not belonging," between two communities which are the colliery society at Bottoms and the middle-class society at Bestwood. Therefore, Paul has the fatal deficiencies and limitations to become an estimable hero of a typical *bildungsroman*.

However, it is not Paul but Miriam who lives a complete and wholesome life, even experiencing the totality of life. Since Miriam having been constantly faithful and earnest to her own life at Willey Farm, we became to realize more and more that her life is at least grounded on her complete and wholesome life experiences towards her community and people. Besides, though often neglected, readers become to acknowledge that Miriam is also opening out from girlhood to womanhood and matured into a strong, intelligent woman and the readers could have hardly closed their books, before they realize the fact that Miriam achieves a noticeable success as a woman at the end. Miriam may well achieve at least her own happiness and satisfaction, seeking her dream within the frame of her community and people.

Key Words Bildungsroman , Paul, Miriam, individual, community, relation