

In my dissertation, I examine encounters with otherness in E. M. Forster's *A Room With a View* and D. H. Lawrence's *The Lost Girl*. Primarily, I focus on the development of the main protagonists, which is influenced by such a sudden encounter. I also discuss the particular views of the two writers concerning this issue. In both books, Forster and Lawrence dramatize their belief in the great potential of southern emotionality and suggest a sort of solution to the dehumanized and stiff life of the English middle classes, which the writers severely criticised.

In both novels, Forster as well as Lawrence choose Italy as the representation of the great potential of the Southern nations and they place it against the criticised stiffness and sterility of the English middle classes. The portrayal of this southern element, however, differs in several aspects in the respective books. What is more, the conception of otherness appears in various forms in both works, reflecting their author's approaches.

The depiction of the development of Forster's and Lawrence's heroines actually demonstrates their author's beliefs in a possible way for a young middle class woman oppressed by social conventions and values towards her inmost feelings and passions on the grounds of an encounter with otherness. Moreover, there is another interesting point which results from the fact that Forster as well as Lawrence relate their works to slightly different periods of time. Consequently, the two novels also provide a contrast between the position of women in society during the first and the second decades of the twentieth century.

Despite all the above mentioned differences in the authors' views, in the end Forster as well as Lawrence come to more or less similar conclusion. They both seem to realize that neither uncontrolled passion nor too strict rules and conventions can bring utter happiness and so they offer a certain compromise in combining these two counterparts.