

Relationships among Humans and the Nature in D. H. Lawrence Novels.

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Abstract – D. H. Lawrence wrote several novels with main themes on relationships between man to woman, woman to woman, man to man and man with the soul/God (nature). Humans because of self/ mind and the society sometimes, establishes false relationships among them and with the nature. For man, the woman, he loves and marries, is the contiguous representative of Nature. For woman, her man is the most intimate representative of the universe. Thus, Lawrence novels enlighten on the pure relationships between man and the surrounding nature including the heavenly bodies like the sun, the moon and other planets that helps man to achieve fulfillment in life. The discussion of such relationships among the novels of D. H. Lawrence is the main focus of the present article.

Keywords - Human, Love, Relationship, Soul.

Lawrence believed that the central reality in man, as in any living being, is the Soul. The Soul, that comes from ‘the unknown’, ‘the beyond’ or God (if one may like to call it so), is our direct link with ‘the unknown’, ‘the beyond’ or God. But the Soul is not the living man. The living man is the trinity of Soul, Nature and body. Soul is the unchanging and unchangeable non-material reality. Nature and body (including mind) belong to the realm of Matter, which is always changing. Just as in cricket the beauty of batting lies in the perfect, though changing, relationship between the batsman, the bat and the ball, the beauty of the life of man lies in the perfect, though changing, relationship between his soul, his body and the Universe (representing Nature) around him.

Lawrence's first novel *The White Peacock* portrays the beauty and joy of Nature. But man is not having right relationship with Nature. Men and Women are not having right relationships with each other. For man, the woman, he loves and marries, is the closest representative of Nature. For woman, her man is the most intimate representative of the Universe. Annable retreats to Nature; but there is somewhere some falsehood in his relationship with Nature. Nature is here and now. Annable broods over the past. He hates womanhood. Nature, like woman, has many moods. How can one hate woman and yet really love Nature? It is one thing to break-off with a particular woman, but to hate womanhood is quite another thing. Annable lives an unhappy life. He dies an unhappy death. George is cut-off from the soil. His relationship with Lettie also breaks. At the end of the novel we see him completely alienated from life. Cyril's approach to Nature is egoistic. He and his beloved, Emily, are equally, are equally timid and self-conscious in their mutual relationship. We find Cyril as unhappy as George at the end of the novel. Why is man unhappy? Why do men and women fail to have healthy relations? The quest for truth continues in the subsequent novels.

Sons and Lovers is the saga of false relationships. However, Paul, the protagonist is the story, ultimately realizes that in order to live, one has to realize one's God i.e. one's self. He comes "more or less to the bedrock of belief that one should feel inside oneself for right and wrong, and should have the patience to gradually realize one's God". As he is awakened to the reality of the 'quick' of his own self, he moves away from his false relationships and moves towards "the glowing town, quickly"², with the determination to have a fresh start in life (in his writings, Lawrence has many times used the word "quick" to connote the Soul or the deep inner self within man)³. After great struggle and suffering Paul realizes that his own soul is his only and ultimate guide. The story of Ursula Brangwen in *The Rainbow* is the story of her voyage of discovery of the self. Only after realizing her self is she able to see everything with clarity and all her gloom and doubt vanishes. Her joy returns. She is hopeful about the future of mankind. She believes that one day everyone will be able to see without being mentally self-conscious and egoistic. Then the bridge between the heaven and the earth will be built. The un-self-conscious innocence of Adam and Eve will be restored. The joy of life will return to man and woman. That is the meaning of the rainbow that Ursula sees towards the end of the novel.

Industrialism has reduced man to a mechanical unit of the society. Gerald, the Industrial magnate in *Women in Love*, views man as an instrument like a machine-tool. He thinks that the success of his own life depends on the effectiveness of his role as the director of industry. He achieves great success as an Industrialist. But he is not happy in his life. He is a Will-driven creature who works his iron will on others. His death in 'cold' show is the culmination of his deep-seated death-wish. Birkin, on the other hand, fights against his own mechanical mental consciousness and the self-conscious love between himself and Ursula. He ultimately achieves consummation in love in which he and his beloved experience, at least temporarily, the state of "Oneness"⁴, whereby they have a glimpse of the reality of the self.

Even when Lawrence wrote his so-called leadership trilogy *Aaron's Rod*, *Kangaroo* and *The Plumed Serpent*- his thought was centred upon the question of man's relation to his God and humanity.

In *Kangaroo*, the narrator/author observes:

"The purest lesson our era has taught is that man, at his highest, is an individual, single, isolate, alone, in direct soul-communication with the unknown God, which prompts within him.

But just as a tree is only perfect in blossom because it has groping roots, so is man only perfected in his individual being by his groping, pulsing unison with mankind. The unknown God is within, at the quick. But this quick must send down roots into the great flesh of mankind"⁵.

Man can achieve fulfillment in life only through genuine relationship with mankind and the whole universe. But only that relationship is genuine which is prompted and directed by the soul within. The trilogy brings home this 'purest lesson' effectively.

It must be understood that *Lady Characterley's Lover* is not a complete break from the theme of Lawrence's earlier novel, *The Plumed Serpent*. The question of social organization is there in *The Plumed Serpent*. The subject of leadership has also been magnificently explored in the novel. But essentially the novel is about Kate's quest of 'phallic consciousnesses in Mexico

as opposed to European mechanical mental consciousness. Lawrence called *The Lady Chatterley's Lover* the novel of phallic consciousness. Phallic consciousness is not sex-consciousness. Phallic consciousness is the consciousness of the joy of creation – the consciousness that unites man with God and His Universe⁶. Connie and Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* are resurrected into phallic consciousness. In *The Plumed Serpent*, Ramon and Teresa are born with it, and Kate struggles to attain it.

Clifford Chatterley is one of those men whom Lawrence regarded as having no soul. However, a thorough reading of Lawrence's works makes it clear that he never meant that there are some people who possess the soul and there are others who do not have it. When he said that most of the people do not have the soul, what he meant was that most of the people are out of contact with the soul. These people are deaf to the voice of their own soul. Clifford, like his cronies, is the slave of mechanical mental consciousness. For him, the industry comes before the individual. He violates Nature by intensive industrialization of his estate; and he violates womanhood by denying divorce to Connie while encouraging her in sexual infidelity. To love a woman is to accept a great responsibility, as Mellors realizes in his life. Mellors accepts this responsibility, while Michaelis, who is 'soulless' like Clifford, shirks it.

Annals of *The White Peacock* (Lawrence's first novel) regarded womanhood as "falsehood and defilement". His incarnation, Mellors, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (Lawrence's last novel), realizes that some women may be false as many men are false, but a woman may be tender also. There must be reciprocity of tenderness in the relationship between man and woman, between man and man (At one time Lawrence wanted to call his last novel *Tenderness*)⁷. But tenderness is impossible between self-conscious and egocentric individuals. In order to be aware of another individual at the deepest level, one must be able to get rid of one's mental self-consciousness. The awareness of the other individual at the deepest level leads to the realization of one's own deepest self within. And only by self Realization can man be truly happy.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. D.H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*, Heinemann: London, 1966, p.255.
2. *Ibid.*, p.420.
3. See (i) "Democracy", *Phoenix, the Posthumous Papers of D.H. Lawrence*, ed. Edward D.Mc. Donald, Heinemann, 1966, p.710; (ii) D.H. Lawrence, *Kangaroo*, Penguin Books, Narmondsworth, 1972, pp.332,344. (iii) D.H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, Penguin Books, 1983, p.289.
4. D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, Central Book Depot, Allahabad, 1944, p.389.
5. *Kangaroo*. (Penguin Books, 1972) p.332.
6. See Chapter II, pp.119-120.
7. *The Collected Letters of D.H.Lawrence, Vol.II*, ed. Harry T. Moore, Heinemann, 1962, p.1030.