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Man and the Universe Relationship in the Novels of D. H. Lawrence

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ABSTRACT

Relationship between man & the universe is also one of the important themes of Lawrence novels. Pure relationship between man and the universe around him helps man to achieve fulfillment in life. Man due to the habits of his mind, sometimes, establishes false relationships with the forces of nature and the universe, results in sufferings and disaster. 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. The present study focuses on vital correspondences between man and its surroundings including the heavenly bodies like the sun, the moon and other planets.

KEYWORDS: Cosmos, Human relationship, Nature, Soul

D. H. Lawrence is one of the greatest novelists and philosopher. Lawrence's work is largely dominated by the problems of human relationships. Chiefly relations between man and woman, man and man, woman and woman, children and parents and man's relationship with the universe. The present study of his novels covers the man's relationship with the cosmos to achieve fulfillment in life.

In the Lawrence's first novel, The White Peacock, Annable prefers nature to human society but there is some falsehood in his relationship with Nature. He cannot forget his past of bitter experiences with women and hates womanhood. In Nature, there is no before and after i.e. past and future. There is only now. It may be 'furious', sometimes or may be fierce or gentle. But it never nurses a 'feeling of resentment'. Annable lives an unhappy life and dies an unhappy death. George's tragedy begins with the cut-off of him from his fields and he feels that he is slowly "crumbling away" from his foundations. He likens his condition to that of a sycamore tree, the leading shoot of which has been broken off. His relationship with Lettie also breaks. George's final alienation is as much the result of the breaking off of human relationships as of his losing touch with the soil.

Much of the suffering in the world today is due to the lack of harmony between man and Nature. The image of Australia that emerges from the reading of Kangaroo is that of a dual world-the world of Nature and the separate world of man. The world of man is full of conflicts and trouble while the world of Nature is full of beauty and joy. Lawrence believed that every living thing has a soul of its own. We can establish a relationship with a tree, a flower or a bird. This relationship can give us satisfaction. But real joy is only possible when we respect the individuality of the flower, or the tree or the bird. The romantic lovers of Nature are often incapable of healthy human relationships. Helena in The Trespasser and Miriam in Sons and Lovers are such romantic lovers of Nature. Helena's 'romanticism' drives Sigmund to suicide. The love of Miriam and Paul starts with "their common feeling for something in Nature". But, Miriam's love of Nature, like her love of her little brother of four, is possessive and egoistic. Thus, by discarding his self-consciousness and egoism, man can share this joy and beauty with Nature.

The man (Tom) and Women (Lydia) of the first generation of Brangwens, in The Rainbow, are wedded to the soil they cultivate. They live an integrated life with the surroundings in which they live. Tom and Lydia live a satisfied life. They attain a great measure of fulfillment in their lives. The life of Will and Anna, of the second generation, is not a miserable failure; but their fulfillment in life is only partial. There are streaks of falsehood in their mutual relationship and their relations with their surroundings. However, both of them gradually learn to view their relationships in true perspective. The rainbow in the sky that Ursula Brangwen, of the third generation, sees towards the end of the novel symbolizes not only the hope in her own life but also the promise that man will ultimately emerge out of his self-conscious dishonesty.

Lawrence wrote in Apocalypse: "We and the cosmos are one. - - - it is a vital power, rippling exquisitely through us all the time". There is vital correspondence between man and the heavenly bodies like the sun, the moon and other planets. The planets and the stars guide the destiny of man. But, too much of self consciousness vitiates man's relationship with these great cosmic bodies. These heavenly bodies exert malefic influence over men and women who are egoistic and self-centered. As in Sons and Lovers, Mrs. Morel's communion with the moon, after being shut out of the house by her drunken husband, The "great white light that fell cold" on Mrs. Morel gave" a shock to her inflamed soul" here the moon stands for mental consciousness and 'whiteness' suggests coldness, avoidance of life and even death-wish. The pelting of the image of the moon in water with stones by Birkin in Women in Love has been given fantastic interpretations by Western Critics. The scene, however, simply suggests that he is emphatically rejecting the self-conscious and egocentric love between men and women. The 'ritual' of Gerald's death in Women in Love is 'prescribed over' by the bright moon, symbolizing his cold mind.

The modern man has lost touch with the mystery of life. Kate in The Plumed Serpent goes to Mexico in search of the mystery of life. She thinks that in Europe life is "all politics or jazzing or slushy mysticism or sordid spiritualism". She wants to escape from the mechanical life of Europe and "let the unwise world steal across to her and add its motion to her, the motion of the stress of life, with the big sun and the stars like a tree holding out its leaves". She cries: "Give me the mystery and let the world live again for me!

The modern industrial civilization has reduced man to a mechanical unit of the society. He has lost his individuality and personal freedom in work and has become like a nut or a bolt of the great industrial machine. For General, the industrial magnate (in Women in Love), a worker is just like an instrument or a machine-tool. What industrialism has done to man and his environment has been described poignantly in The Rainbow: Indiscriminate industrialization is defacing the earth and creating ugliness everywhere. Man has been left no privacy. The atmosphere has been polluted. There is air pollution, water pollution and noise pollution. The rhythm of the day and the night has been disturbed. Industrial noises and sharp electric lights turn the peaceful night into uneasy day

Mellors, in Lady Chatterley's Lover identifies Mammon with "the mass-will of people". Man is connected with the cosmos through his soul. Modern man has lost touch with his soul and is dominated by his will. The will directed and will dominated man has become greedy. Too much money is poisoning him and the lack of money is starving him.

In conclusion, Lawrence believed that God is immersed in creation, and it is futile to separate or distinguish him from his creation. His concept of God can, thus help us to understand his view of man's position in the Universe. Much of the suffering in the world today is due to lack of harmony between man and nature.

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