



A Study of Man and Woman Relationships in D. H. Lawrence's Novel 'Sons And Lovers'

* Neha

* D – 118, University Campus, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra -136119 (INDIA)

ABSTRACT

- Sons and Lovers published in 1913 is the Lawrence's first most important novel which receive praise. It is a great work of art and is based on his direct experience of life. The novel depicts the story of the Morel family, and in particular, of Paul Morel. The story focuses on the problems of human relationship, chiefly relations between man and woman, woman and woman, children and parents. It has been found that in the novel, Lawrence has attempted to examine the possibility of happiness in the life of man. Men and women whose lives are not in tune with their souls (inner self) but are entirely controlled by their minds cannot live happily. One can listen the voice of one's Soul only when the mind is silent and the psyche remains still. The man who dives deep and gets into contact with his soul achieves real freedom.

Keywords : Human, Love, Relationship, Soul.

The quality of man's relationship determines the quality of his life. Among the human relationships man and woman relationship is the most important for humanity. The man-woman relationship was the dominant theme of Lawrence's major novels particularly the 'Sons and lovers'. The present paper attempts to study and analyze the human relationships among the man and women characters of this novel. The story revolves mainly around Mrs. Morel and her sons.

The world of his novel Sons and Lovers is shaped to a large extent by a 'spiritual' woman, Gertrude Morel, belonged from middle class background made marriage with an illiterate miner, Walter Morel, a handsome man of twenty seven. His virility and liveliness, his warm non-intellectual humour, and his use of the dialect fascinated her. They were perfectly happy with each other for some time. But this happiness was very short lived. Her disillusionment began when she discovered that her husband had lied to her about owning the house and about the unpaid furniture bills. She cannot forgive the poor miner who has told some innocent lies to hide his poverty from the lady whom he loves and has just married. Her fanatical behaviour almost tortures him and he comes home often drunk which puts burden on their budget. Mrs. Morel completely ignores the fact that he has to work terribly hard inside the pits for the whole day and would like to have a few light hearted moments with his pals. Mrs. Morel likes discussing religion and philosophy. Walter listens to her obediently, but he cannot participate in any such discussion. He is sensuous, earthy, non-intellectual and un-inhibited by rigid Puritanism, which frustrated her. They quarrel often and even sometimes he beats her, every quarrel diminished Walter Morel's self-assurance. This makes their relationship with each other like a strangers and Walter had lost all his respect and authority in his own house. The children become hostile towards their father, and this hostility is flamed by Mrs. Morel. He was treated by his wife & children as "an outsider". A close reading of the novel leaves no doubt that Mrs. Morel is more responsible for the destruction of their marriage than Walter Morel because of her rigid Puritanism and philosophical thinking.

Mrs. Morel turns to her children for her emotional satisfaction. Her eldest son, William is a talented boy and the mother looks to him as a young man who will make "the world glow again for her". Mrs. Morel wants him to rise in life and move toward the middle class. William gets a job in a London firm.

William's success is quite in tune with her plans. She hopes that the dreams that had remained unfulfilled in her marriage with Morel will now be fulfilled through William. William, too, is not only deeply attached to his mother, but is also under the powerful influence of her mind and thought. In London, William falls in love with a 'modern' girl 'Gyp' and wants to marry her. But, Mrs. Morel is jealous of her and does not want that William should marry her. William was deeply attached to his mother, therefore, he torn with conflict between his love for his mother and his passion for his beloved. This inner conflict becomes unbearable for him. He falls ill and dies in arms of his mother.

Mrs. Morel is terribly distraught over William's death and nurses her physically weak second son, Paul, with great love and care that also maintains her own mental balance. She wants the fulfillment of her self through him. Paul too feels that his life and achievements have meaning only in relation to her. She has a strong spiritual hold on him. When he grows up, this spiritual bondage makes him unfit to establish healthy adult relationship with any woman. Paul comes close to Miriam, the love between them is idyll. But his mother not allowed a mature love between them because she regards Miriam to be one of those women "who will want to suck a man's soul out". She fears that this relationship will leave "no room" for herself in the mind and soul of Paul. Paul deeply loves his mother so not wants to go against wishes of his mother. Thus the strong mother-pull stands his way of giving himself completely in love to Miriam. On the other hand, Miriam's attitude towards love and sex is typically Christian that may be regarded as 'Spiritual', but it is certainly neurotic, as her mother told to her that marriage is always dreadful. This awareness of physical passion makes them feel uneasy that becomes the reason of the failure of their relationship. Miriam thinks that if Paul's 'lower' desires (physical passion) are burnt away through Clara, she might then have him altogether for herself. Miriam brings Paul and Clara together and Paul goes all out for passion with Clara, a sensuous woman. Mrs. Morel is not hostile to her and rather glad to know it as she thinks that Clara will take his body and leave his soul to her. Their passion soon gives way to dis-satisfaction and uncertainty. Now Clara feels that in the matter of sex her husband Baxter was preferable to Paul. Both of them realize that they will not stay together permanently. Clara realizes that Paul will never surrender his will to her. In the meantime, Mrs. Morel has cancer

and her suffering makes Paul suffer terribly, which becomes unbearable for Paul and he gives her mother an overdose of morphine to relief off cancer. After her death, the world appears to be unreal for him. Clara cannot provide any comfort to him and now she wants to go back to her husband and it is Paul who re-unites them. Paul thinks of Miriam once again but she offers herself to him as a sacrifice as she had done before. But he does not want her sacrifice and again thinks of his mother.

In conclusion, *Sons and Lovers* is the saga of false relationships between husband and wife, man and woman as lovers and parents and child. The mother-fixation is structured into

a wider family situation. Mrs. Morel dissatisfied with her husband and turns for love and life to her children. She nurtures the children with the passion of lovers and this passion in turn perverts the life cycle of her sons. Lawrence presents conflicts between the two kinds of love, physical and spiritual. Paul Morel is dominated too much by his mother's over possessive love and is unable to achieve any satisfaction in love. Lawrence believed that physical love must collapse if it is unsupported by the soul because there is no body distinct from soul. Both should be brought in balance. Man and woman can be happier by respecting the individuality and otherness of each-other. Domination from either side spoils human relationships.

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