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NATURE AS SYMBOLISM IN D.H.LAWRENCE'S *SONS AND LOVERS*

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ABSTRACT

Literature deals with human life, it tries to explore all those mystic, invisible, hidden emotions, passions and ideas of human life. So, the objective of the study of literature is human life which is very mysterious in nature. Human relations are highly complex and complicated. It is not an easy task to understand human mind in D.H Lawrence works, so he deliberately makes the use of nature in his work to explore the inner reality of human life. This Research paper examines the uses of nature in the major novels of D. H. Lawrence from *Sons and Lovers* to *The Man Who Died*. In his best work, Lawrence uses nature both as a character in itself and as an essential element in the creation of his "other" main characters. As well as acting in the Wordsworthian fashion as mentor and nurse, nature is capable of functioning as both mirror (reflector) and lamp.

In a character's unconscious relationship with nature, his true unconscious self is laid bare; that is, in comparison with nature's vitality and completeness, the character shows him to be equally or potentially as vital and complete, or else he is revealed as unsubstantial--perverting or denying the life-force within him.

**Keywords:** Nature, reflector, contributor, potentially,

Introduction

Nature is one of the most powerful and mysterious forces of the universe that influences man greatly. Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of nature and soul. It controls all the living, non-living, human, non-human, organic, inorganic and visible, invisible things. It rules over the universe like a monarch and man can't escape from the influence of nature; he is influenced by both nature and culture. To man nature is the pure and original source of happiness. He forgets all his inevitable and depressing and

sorrowful conditions in the delightful company of nature. It also developed man's sense of beauty. It fills man's heart with heavenly pleasure with he can't get anywhere under the sun. In the presence of nature a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows. Every bit of alternation in the atmosphere in nature gives man happiness. At the same time, nature as a teacher teaches man to accept all the changes in life. It also motivates man. In the world of literature nature plays a very role to set the mood of the text. The creative artist uses nature to reveal both comic and tragic aspects of

human life. Nature itself acts as one the most dominating characters in text which exercises its powerful impression upon the character. It helps to expose their inner and abstract feelings which can't be understood by the common reader. It can repair all disgrace and calamity in the life of man. In the presence of nature all mean egotism of man vanishes or it can be said that nature humanize man. Each and every object in nature gives man an internal delight.

The comprehension of nature is beyond man's capacity. But the origin and meaning of the term nature can be traced with the help of available sources. Insofar as the origin of the word nature is concerned, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* gives the details of the nature origins, it is derived from the Latin word *natura*, which means "the source of things or natural character which was the translation of the Greek work *Physis* which originally related to the innate way in which plants and animals live at their own accord" [Encyclopedia Britannica 1973: 1510]. According to the latest edition of *The Oxford English Dictionary* which defines the term nature as:

The whole universe and every created thing or the phenomena of physical world As a whole and all the plants, animals and Things that exists in the universe that are Not made by people. [Hornby 2000: 848].

In this way, the term nature covers every things and man is a product and a part of it. The power of nature is infinite; man can't challenge its power. It has got the most vital place in human life as man can't live without it. Therefore, it is impossible to imagine human existence without the presence of nature because it is the source of life, energy, motivation, satisfaction and happiness. It has got a healing power which gives relief to the soul of man. It is extremely beautiful and it is the beauty of nature that beautifies human life by developing the aesthetic sense of man. In the contact of nature man loves to make his life more beautiful. That's way Keats says in his famous poem *Endymion*: "A thing of Beauty is joy forever" [Keats 1817: 430].

**Nature as Symbolic Element:** Natural phenomenon is easy to understand; actually man is acquainted with Natural objects, Changes in seasons and so on

So, Nature is abundantly used in literature and natural objects such as tree, leaves, waterfall, flowers, the moon, the sun, rivers and sea. All these natural objects have got some symbolic meanings.

Main reason for use of Nature in literature is that the language, the author uses in describing human life, fails to communicate the inner reality of the characters in the novel. Language is also very mysterious as it is connected with the mind of the author. When language is used as the medium to express and explore the inner reality of human life, it may fail to reveal it in the work of art then the author goes for some symbols, images and other objects through which he communicates the reality.

**Nature as Symbolic Element in *Sons and Lovers*:** *Sons and Lovers* is an autobiographical novel; its setting is the mining district, the Lawrence country, which the novelist knew as well as he had been bred and brought up in it. It is the story of a Midland miner's son, Paul morel, who is Lawrence himself. Walter Morel and Mrs. Morel and the reactions of the children are all transcripts from life. Miriam is Jessie Chambers whom he met early in life, whom he loved, but with whom he failed, like Paul, to establish satisfactory relations, owing largely the influence of Mrs. Morel, the mother of Paul, and his brother Earnest Lawrence, too, died early in life, like William in the story, However we must remember that a novel is primarily a work of art, and even when it is based on the personal experiences. The facts of life-reality-undergo a process of imaginative selection and ordering, and the whole experience has to be re-organized and shaped for the purposes of art. And that is what Lawrence has done in this most autobiographical of his novels. It was for this reason that Jessie Chambers was shocked when *Sons and Lovers* was published in its final form. She complained that Justice had not been done to her that the whole Paul-Miriam affair presented her in an unfavorable light, and that the laurels of victory had been given to Mrs. Morel. She gave her own version of the whole affair She might be factually true, but she was certainly mistaken in taking on novel to be autobiography. Lawrence had created a work of art and he was well within his rights to organize and interpret the facts in accordance with the requirements of art. Besides this, he has

departed from reality in another important respect also. While, Lawrence married Frieda Weekley, the other woman, after the death of his mother and lived comfortably with her, Paul fails to reach a satisfactory adjustment even with Clara, the other woman in the novel, and does not marry her. Moreover, after the death of his mother, he goes out towards the city, a derelict, probably to die.

**Middleton Murry** in his clever study of his friend has emphasized that, owing to what is called "mother-fixation", [Murry 1931:142] Lawrence was never able to make a happy emotional adjustment with other women. Lawrence was a tortured soul throughout the full forty-five years of his life, and what he suffered, and what he thought and observed under the stimulus of suffering can very well be guessed from a study of the *Sons and Lovers*. This is so because the novel is primarily a story of mother-fixation. As Graham Hough puts it, *Sons and Lovers* is doubtlessly the first Freudian novel in English" [Graham. 1956:91] Paul's love for Miriam is a desperate attempt to free himself from the excessive attachment to his mother. He cannot give to Miriam what he has already given to this mother and thus it results the terrible and torturing conflict within him, and the disharmony between him and the woman who wants all his love, and to whom he can give but half. It is the dark shadow of the mother-image that comes between Paul's relations with Miriam and spoils that relationship. Paul is conscious of the damaging influence of his mother on him and tells her bitterly, "I shall never meet the right woman as long as you are living" (Lawrence 1913: 392).

Paul and Miriam, the chief characters of the book, are great lovers of Nature. Paul Morel has great fascination for natural beauty. The pursuit of art and things of the intellect, like French or Algebra or poetry, brings inner satisfaction and so does the world of Nature. Natural beauty has a strange fascination for him, and it is for this reason also and not for Miriam alone that he goes to Willey Farm time and again. He cannot keep away from it. The beauty of nature, her changing colours and forms, stimulate him. The wonderful lyrical chapter entitled, *Lad-and-Girl-Love* is punctuated throughout with his intense enjoyment of the world

of leaves and flowers. The flowing water, stars, the moon and the sun, all have an overpowering effect on him. Flowers are his special love, and whenever he sees a beautiful flower he wants to make it a part of himself. He would breathe a flower, as if he and the flower loved each other. It is not a mere coincidence that the girl, whom he really loves and who fascinates him, is herself a great lover of nature:

So her friend, her companion, her lover was Nature. She saw the sun declining wanly. In the dusky, cold hedgerows were some red leaves. She lingered to gather them, tenderly, passionately. The love in her fingertips caressed the leaves; the passion in her heart came to a glow upon the leaves. [Lawrence 1913: 205]

This indicates that D.H. Lawrence was extremely impressed by the world of nature. He considered nature above God or compared it to God. He called nature a friend a companion and a lover and gave nature all those virtues which are generally possessed by great human beings or Prophets. According to him nature is the lover of human beings which provides remedies to all human internal and external problems. Nature is a caretaker of humanity.

Both Miriam and Paul are the exact counterparts of each other; each seeks in the other emotional fulfillment and each owes to the other his supreme movement of happiness. In her company, he gains insight and his vision goes deeper because it is Miriam who brings forth to him his imagination as she is also a lover of nature but her perspective to nature is different from Paul she thinks that nature is the window to God. The Beauty of Flowers, the glorious colours of sunset in the Western sky, and the splendor of the flaming day dawn all send her into religious ecstasy:

They went into the garden. The sky behind the town let and the church was orange – red; the flower garden was flooded with a strange warm light that lifted every leaf into significance. Paul passed along a fine row of sweet peas, gathering a blossom here and there, all cream and pale blue. Miriam followed, breathing the fragrance. To her, flowers appeared with such

strength she felt she must make them part of herself. When she bent and, breathed a flower, it was as if she and the flower loved each other. Paul hated her for it. There seemed a sort of exposure about the action something too intimate [Lawrence 1913: 214]

To emphasize their emotional need for each other, Lawrence is a great painter of human life and its relation with nature. He seems to have been gifted with the keen and deep penetrating power of observation therefore he has produced very fascinating, wonderful and mind-blowing nature descriptions. The study of his fiction is nothing but the human relationship as he was a great humanistic novelist who centered the human affairs in his creative writings. His skill of nature description reveals the fact that he had been extremely interested in the matrix of nature. Therefore, he has used natural symbolisms with greater symbolic significance to expose the most inner hidden and deepest feelings of human beings. This also throws light upon the influence of **Sigmund Freud** on his personality. Nature, for him, is a hospital that treats all depressed characters giving them relaxation when they come in the lap of nature they forget all their mental and physical pains. Therefore, his characters when disturbed try to seek peace of mind in nature so they go away from all hustle and bustle of mechanized human life. Their meetings, their walks through the woods, their visit to the church, and their discovery of pine trees and raised bushes, etc., in a language remarkable for its lyrical and emotional intensity:

One evening he and she went up the great sweeping shore of sand towards the dinglethorpe. The long breakers plunged and ran in a hit of foam along the coast. It was a warm evening. There was not a figure but themselves on the far reaches of sand, no noise but the sound of the sea. Paul loved to see it clanging at the land. He loved to feel himself between the noise of it and the silence of the sandy shore [Lawrence 1913: 220].

As pointed out earlier, Nature also nurses and nourishes young loves. We might say that typical Lawrence lovers make love in open sky far from the suffocated industrialized world. The love

affair of Paul and Miriam is set in the picturesque surroundings of the Willey Farm. There are a number of beautiful short scenes describing the boy and girl love in beautiful nature surroundings, in the open field. We find a graphic description of the beautiful Willey Farm the home of Mariamthe details of the place; have been painted by the novelist meticulously:

As soon as the skies brightened and plum - blossom was out, Paul drove off in the milkman's heavy float up to Willey Farm. Mr. Leviers shouted in kindly fashion at the boy, and then clicked to the horses as they climbed the hill slowly, in the freshness of the morning. White clouds went on their way, crowding to the back to the hills that were rousing. In the spring - time. The water of Nether mere Lay below very blue against the seared meadows and the thorn trees. It was four and a half miles drive. Tiny buds on the hedges, vivid as copper - green, were opening into rosettes; and thrushes called, and blackbirds shrieked and scolded [Lawrence 1913: 179]

#### CONCLUSION

The treatment of nature in literature is as old as literature itself. The relation of Nature with man is as old as the birth of man. Man is the product of his natural surroundings. It shapes man's mental and physical aspects of his personality. Literature discusses human life with all its colors; D.H.Lawrence also describing human life in his work, makes use of Nature. The basic reason behind this treatment of Nature in work of art is to make the reader understand the novel because every work of art is mysterious, difficult to comprehend. Therefore, the author deliberately makes use of Nature in his work to reveal the hidden and abstract ideas and ideologies of the work of art. Natural phenomenon is easy to understand i.e. the reader is acquainted with Natural objects, Changes in seasons and so on. So, Nature is abundantly used in literature and natural objects such as tree, leaves, waterfall, flowers, the moon, the sun, rivers and sea. All these natural objects have got some symbolic meanings. Therefore, in this research paper an attempt has been made to discuss how D.H.

Lawrence treats Nature in his novel *Sons and Lovers* to communicate human experiences such as psychological, mystic, spiritual and other feelings of the characters in the novel. He treats Nature highly symbolically to reveal to the reader abstract world of the novel.

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