

D.H. Lawrence is the Harbinger of New Psycho Dynamics in the Modern Literature

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Abstract

The psychodynamic model is founded on the ideas of Sigmund Freud. Freud's writings have a greater influence on the development of psychology. Central to his approach is the assumption that biological drives and inborn instincts towards self-preservation direct behavior. Thus we are dominated by sexual and aggressive urges, catching the infant or young child in a crosscurrent. Though we are the mercy of our inherited urges and early parental training experiences, we survive by imposing rational control over these basic conflicts. Behavior that does not appear to make sense, or to be based on logic, is analyzed as a symptom of unconscious motives. According to psycho dynamic model, human nature is fully determined by heredity and early life experiences.

In accordance of Freud's belief, Lawrence as an author pours in his own unconscious into the characters and situations depicted in his works more specifically in his novels. Freudian interpretation of literature applied to Lawrence's works becomes convincing and ingenious in explaining the "*return of the repressed*". His novels besides portraying the psychology of characters are also taken as the conscious or 'Overt' interpretation of the 'covert' or the unconscious of the author himself. The critical analysis of the psycho dynamics revealing itself through abstract impulses, feelings, and instincts, mythical or materialistic symbols has been attempted in the present study.

Keywords: Psycho dynamics, conscious and unconscious, suppression or repression of the natural instincts, impulses and instincts.

D.H. Lawrence has been acclaimed as the first psychoanalytical writer of the twentieth century who investigates the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in his works. Dominant streaks of psychoanalyst, artist, moralist mingled in his complex genius adding a new dimension to his literary output. A just assessment of such a genius would become difficult if the readers and critics do not cut across the narrow grooves of tradition and cultural obsolescence. Lawrence developed his original thoughts and philosophy through the influences of his environment- domestic, social, cultural, political, intellectual, and physical. It is a known fact that environmental influences are always expressed consciously or unconsciously in a writer's work, more particularly if he is as sensitive as Lawrence was. Therefore, Lawrence projects these personal impressions and influences in his works. The early domestic environment of parental discord, the over-possessing nature of his mother, the materialistic greed of the womenfolk of the minery, all colored his works. All these experiences contributed in lending originality and newness— reflected in thematic reverberation of his creations. But this needed some exercise on the part of readers and to overcome their initial difficulty in tuning their comprehensive and appreciative intelligence to his greatness and originality.

John Middleton Murry sums up the modern attitude towards Lawrence in these words:

“D.H. Lawrence has been the most controversial figure in English literature in the twentieth century, but, since the end of the Second World War, there has emerged a growing consensus of opinion that he is the most significant writer of his time. Controversy continues about him. His significance itself is no longer in debate. Yet as a poet and novelist he has no imitators; as a prophet no successors. And that also is significant”¹.

He intended to project through his work the “Science which proceeds in terms of life and is established on the data of living experience”². Lawrence found that excessive nineteenth century repression of impulses and twentieth century intellectuality were leading to destruction of man's instinctive nature and intuitive faculty. He observed the modern man floating on the currents of doubts and disbeliefs, uncertainty and depression. He witnessed an age where a frightening change from the world of apparent order and contentment, balance and complacency to the hollow world of chaos and sickness, conflict and tensions, inhabited by schizoids surfaced up. The disintegration of traditional, moral and social values generated a crisis in every sphere of life leading to despoliation and mutilation of social consciousness.

All these circumstances of his age and his personal experiences directed his flow of thoughts into a kind of psychological philosophy of his own. It is in this self-created psychodynamic theory which Lawrence applies in almost all of his creative works, themes, characters and situations. The greatest example of this application is found, in his novel *Sons and Lovers* which could be rightly termed as *his psychobiography*.

Like a real psychoanalyst Lawrence chose to speak freely and frankly about this concept of human impulses and instincts, feelings and emotions, attitudes and prejudices, conflicts and tensions, conscious and unconscious, drives and motivations. And all these concepts lie within the periphery of psychodynamics.

Although his views were frowned upon by the conservatives and traditionalists but Lawrence remained unperturbed by these frowns and continued to open his mind and heart in his works. All the while he was completely aware of the inner forces of unconscious as the pivot of all human actions. He knew that the 'overt' behavior is the result of 'covert' unconscious, and the latter is conditioned by one's personal experiences.

Along with these personal experiences, lies the powerful influence of Austrian Psychologist Sigmund Freud. But Lawrence formulated his psychodynamic theory quite early in life, prior to the influence of Freud. Studies on Freud helped Lawrence to know more of human psychology. And sources reveal that his *Sons and Lovers* was written before Lawrence has read Freud. Freud's reading helped Lawrence to know more particularly about sexual psychology, which is one of the most prominent parts of Lawrentian psychodynamics.

The majorly stressed psycho dynamical concepts in the novels (*Sons and Lovers*, *Women in Love*) discussed in this study are directly related to psychology and few terms are very common in psychological study as a science. The terms and phrases are—*Mother Fixation*, *Oedipus complex*, *Infantile sexuality*, *Sexual instincts*, *Split personality*, *Man-woman relationship*, *Parent-child relationship*, *Man to man relationship*, *Relationship between family members* etc. All these psychological concepts are widely, wonderfully and realistically discussed in these two novels. Here Lawrence also reveals the psychological trauma of the twentieth century man. He showed that natural instincts and passions that clamoured for satiation dithered and clashed with inhibitions and restrictions imposed upon the modern man. The aberrated mind and the split personality of an individual denied him deeper and vaster dimensions of emotional experiences.

In 1921, Lawrence published *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, and in 1922 he published *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, both books offer a critique of Freud's psychoanalytic theory, together with Lawrence's own, somewhat different theory about the relationship between conscious and unconscious life. Freud as discussed earlier influenced Lawrence's psychology of man-woman relationship, more accurately his psychology of sexual relations.

Though Lawrence has been censured for sensual overtones in man-woman relationship but Lawrence said that sexual instinct is natural and one should not feel ashamed in talking freely about sexual matters. Moreover, he believed in the true vein of a psychologist that suppression or repression of these natural instincts leads to deterioration of personality. This split personality, as a result of repression is a serious disorder, and one could overcome this by giving natural vent to his feelings of sex. But his sexual psychology does not at all advocate wrong or inhuman pursuits of sex. His psychology of sex could be understood more clearly by the following excerpts? From his poem, "*Sex isn't sin—*".

Sex isn't sin, but dirty sex is worse, so there you are!

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Let's be honest at last about sex, or show at least that we've tried.

*Sex isn't sin; it's a delicate flow between women and men,
And the sin is to damage the flow, force it or dirty it or suppress it again.*

*Sex isn't something you've got to play with; sex is you. It's the flow of your life,
it's your moving self, and you are due*

*To be true to the nature of it, its reserve, its sensitive pride that it always has
to begin with, and by which you ought to abide.*

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*You must know sex in order to save it, your deepest self, from the rape of the
itching mind and the mental self, with its pruriencey always agape.³*

Lawrence wanted mankind to be "*honest at last about sex*" in order to direct this "*delicate flow*" to life enhancing grove. He reacted sharply against suppression of sex.

After discussing sexual psychology we should know that Lawrence also talked of healthy psychological growth in terms of material progress. At the same time, he fully realized that the material processes of satisfying human needs are not separated from personal relationships and that a common life has to be made on the basis of a correspondence between personal relationships and work relationships, individual consciousness and social consciousness.

Thus, psychological treatment of Lawrence's novels explores and unfolds the possibilities which an individual through "*the changing rainbow of our living relationships*,"⁴ could live by to affirm life-enhancing and conflict-eliminating values. The first essential to the proposition lies in attaining a normal, psychologically balanced and harmoniously developing self.

Lawrence notes that the way to this ultimate peace and tranquility lies through fulfillment of our desires.

We must have the courage to cast of the old symbols, the old traditions: at least, put them aside, like a plant in growing surpasses its growing leaves with higher leaves and buds...The great Christian tenet must be surpassed, there must be something new: neither the war, nor the turning the other cheek.

What we want is fulfillment of our desires, down to the deepest and most spiritual desire. The body is immediate, the spirit beyond: first the leaves and then the flower: but the plant is an integral whole: therefore every desire, to the very deepest...I shall find my deepest desire to be a wish for pure, unadulterated relationship with the universe, for truth in being. My pure relationship with one woman is marriage, physical and spiritual: with another is another form of happiness, according to our nature...

It is this establishing of pure relationships which makes heaven, wherein we are immortal, like angels, and mortal, like men, both and the way to immortality is in the fulfillment of desire...

Because, you see, what intimations of immortality have we, save our spontaneous wishes? God works in me (if I use the term God) as my desire...Suddenly, God moves afresh in me, a new motion. It is a new desire. So a plant unfolds leaf after leaf and then buds, till it blossoms. So do we, under the unknown impulse of desires, which arrive in us from the unknown.

It is the perception of the real self which should be the centre of each one of us for working out the temporal things in accordance with our nature. One should avoid suppression of one's instinctive urges and attempts to derive pleasure in a natural manner, but at the same time, one should not attempt to damage the socio-cultural fabric of society. It is the harmonization of the sensual life with the cultural mould that can help man out of the predicament.

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