

FAIMLY LIFE AFFECTION OF D.H. LAWRENCE LIFE: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

D.H. Lawrence stands out as one who lived with a fierce intensity and whose stormy, passionate nature could tolerate no external control. His first novel, The White Peacock, shows his awareness of the social influences that operate to thwart the natural play of instinct and affinity. He explores what are relatively unknown modes of being, character at the unconscious level, at the depths, and in the darkness.

Lawrence is interested in the quality of feeling in human life. Believing "the old, stable ego" to be an illusion, he rejects the literary tradition, which assigns to each person a fixed and definite character. That is the reason why his characters are not always consistent. In the novel Sons and Lovers, the characters are less complete in their detail; there is a blur in many of them so that we are not sure of the focus; but they are life-size. Lawrence in his characters is not much the social man, though he is interested in him, as the seven-eighths of the iceberg of personality submerged and never seen.

Keywords

D.H. Lawrence; Family Life; Sons and Lovers; Human Relationships; Mother-Son Relationship; Gender Relations; Psychological Analysis; Modern English Literature.

INTRODUCTION

In 1914, Lawrence married Frieda, wife of Professor Ernest Weekly, of Nottingham University. She was six years older than Lawrence was and was already the mother of three children when she met Lawrence. She was the daughter of Baron Von Richthofen, a German Aristocrat and soldier. She had married the Professor who was fifteen years older than herself. She was leading a life of superficial comfort and contentment and found real fulfilment in her contact with Lawrence. She eloped with Lawrence in 1912, For two years, the lovers were wandering from place to place on the continent and they were able to marry only in July 1914 after Frieda had been granted divorce from her first husband. This marriage brought some sense of permanence and stability in the life of Lawrence.

Affection of Lawrence:

Profoundly Lawrence was highly affected with First World War for much of the time; the authorities in England, suspected of subversion, immorality, espionage and anarchism, hounded him. Lawrence is, in many ways, the most English of authors, as his description of the English landscape and language, his wide acquaintance with the English social system, and his roots in its industrial life testify, but his bitterness at the way he and his wife were treated during the war, coupled with his horror at what the war represented, meant that he felt betrayed by the country of his birth.

The war-years proved the most creative period of his life. Acutely, the script of the novel was begun before the war but was completed after the war. When the war was over, Lawrence was reluctant to start a new novel. But this disenchantment with fiction did not last, though it was in the wandering last decade of his life, 1920- 30, that he wrote most of his non-fiction: Major essays like Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (1920) Studies in Classic American Literature (1923), the travel books Sea and Sardinia (1921), Mornings in Mexico (1927) and Estrucan Places (published in 1934), verse collections such as Tortoises (1921), Birds, Beasts and Flowers (1923), Pansies (1929) and The Book of Revelation, Apocalypse (1931).

Influence of Family Background on Lawrence Life:

Every artist is moulded by the spirit of his age. In the same way, Lawrence was also influenced by his age. But as Lawrence is a man of strong individuality and egoism, he reacts sharply against the established conventions of the age. Therefore, in his case, the primary facts that influence his works are his personal experiences and convictions, which at times corresponded with the tendencies of his age but often ran counter to them. Lawrence's family background has much influence over his works. Lawrence's father was a miner but his mother was an educated woman. Feeling dissatisfied with her husband, she turned towards her sons and centred all her hopes and aspirations over them. Lawrence was her dearest child. She swayed his early youth so powerfully that he became incapable of establishing a normal and healthy sexual relationship with the women who attracted him. In the continuous battle between his parents, Lawrence was always on the side of his mother.

Thus, there was an abnormal love for his mother in his heart. Though, later on, Lawrence was tired of it and wanted to free himself from this strong tie, yet he could do so only after the death of his mother. His mother was responsible for his separation from Jessie Chambers, his beloved. It was only after his mother's death that he could marry Frieda. Actually, Lawrence could never free himself from the influence that his mother had left over him. Thus, Lawrence has actually derived the material of his writing directly from life rather than from books. His novels and his poems are born of his palpitate, sensitive self. They have behind them the "immediacy of an intensely felt experience which sways the reader with the force of something elemental".

Various Aspects of Human Life:

Lawrence also has presented human life in its various aspects. He deals with the complexity of human nature. He presents human relationship especially man-woman relationship in his novels. He feels that only if men and women accept each other and establish a correspondence among them, there can be a re-sourcing and revivifying of art. The freedom that we all value greatly cannot be enjoyed in solitude. Only when we string the chords of harmony, we can truly relish our individuality. According to Lawrence, men and women have their individuality and their being in relationship to each other. Lawrence talks of a union and not a fusion of man and woman. Once a living contact between man and woman is established, they will be on their way to form a part of the animating perpetuity of the universe.

Lawrence Feels Lack of Virility in Modern Man and Women:

Lawrence believes in an essential maleness and an essential femaleness, both necessary to universal fruition. But Lawrence feels that there is a lack of virility in the modern man, and or real femininity in the modern women. The modern civilization has destroyed the common natural relationship between man and man and between man and woman. Consciousness, relation and intellectualisation destroy the harmonious relationship between man and woman. Instead of leading a balanced life of emotion and intellect, men and women in the modern age live directed at one extreme by the body and the other by the mind. He feels that the modern man does not act with his whole self. He thinks that when we cease to be guided by our whole selves, we start laying more importance on one aspect of life at the expense of the other. Excessive emphasis on any particular emotion is bound to disturb the balance in regard to one's relationships with one's fellow-beings. Lawrence's faith in natural human relationship greatly influenced his judgement of literature. He consequently rejected Shelley, Plato, Raphael and Wordsworth for making one emotion supreme. When one idealises one emotion, the personal inspiration gets distorted, pure maleness and pure femaleness are lost. Man and woman cannot meet each other on their own grounds, and this entails a constant conflict between the two.

Conflict Between Man and Woman is Mainly Based Upon the Idea:

Lawrence feels that the conflict between man and woman is a conflict mainly based upon the idea that 'civilized woman' has become essentially the antagonist of man, sapping his manhood and ultimately bringing him under her control. In his letter to Miss Cooper on 23 Nov 1926, he wrote about the strange, weird patterns of young women he usually met. He

mentioned in particular a young woman of about twenty-five. She had herself so exactly like a boy with her Eton crop black jacket and narrow skirt that she could easily pass for a young lad. Lawrence just could not understand why a young pretty girl should ever want to appear just, like a lad from a public school. He wanted women to be just women. Any deviation in other directions was simply repulsive to him.

Effect of Woman Dominance on the Life of A Man:

Lawrence feels that whenever a woman tries to dominate the life of a man, she destroys not only her life but also the life of her husband. Mrs. Morel, Mrs Beardsell and Lottie are the examples of over-possessive women who destroy the lives of their husbands because they always try to dominate them and they themselves never remain happy. In his novels, Lawrence has also presented the search of modern woman for self-fulfilment. In his novels, he shows her entering a new 'Man's World', trying to share the male activity. He attempts to show that modern woman is not only dissatisfied with the domestic world but also does not want that she should achieve it at the cost of the femininity. Ursula in *Women In Love* clearly presents his view about the ideal modern woman.

Lawrence has presented the image of women with great skill because he has drawn most of his lady characters from his life. Therefore, there is a realistic touch in the presentation of women characters. They are the ladies who came in contact with him before his marriage and after his marriage. The novels of early phase present the image of his mother. Lawrence had been very much close to his mother. Her image comes before us in the form of Mrs. Beardsell in *The White Peacock* and Mrs Morel in *Sons and Lovers*.

Conclusion:

Lawrence firmly believes that men and women are not separate and complete entities. Whatever struggle there has been between them in the past on economic, political and social level, Lawrence is sure, it has never been a sex struggle. Sex, in its warm vibrations, makes people happy together in togetherness.

Lawrence thinks that for the fulfilment of the personality, man and woman must also recognise the essential otherness of each other. Lawrence gives much importance to 'self. Therefore, in each relationship such as in love relationship no party should try to dominate the other. There should be no over possessiveness. Birkin and Ursula in *Women In Love* achieve sexual harmony only because none of them tries to dominate the other. Thus, while on one side, Lawrence thinks physical union with the other sex to be essential, on the other side; he gives importance to the 'separateness of man and woman. Lawrence feels that whenever a woman tries to dominate the life of a man, she destroys not only her life but also the life of her husband.

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