

## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION : D.H. LAWRENCE : THE THOUGHT ADVENTURER

That D.H. Lawrence emphasized the freedom of the individual is not an idea altogether new. What is distinct and innovative is his conception of it. Freedom, says Lawrence, is a state of life 'when the sense and spirit and mind are consummated into pure unison' (Lawrence : *Phoenix*, 680). It is a perfect condition of dynamic balance between the apparently contradictory aspects of life, namely, personal and social, sensual and mental, intuitive and intellectual and so on. The understanding of life as an organic whole where the unity of the opposites sustains a pure equilibrium in conflict is the first and foremost condition for freedom. And this reconciliation of the opposites envisions a third force, the reconciler, the 'Holy Ghost'. It is a process of integration that Lawrence struggled to present in an age of split and spiritual impoverishment. D.H.Lawrence emerged as an apostle of naturalism, a vitalist, who thought in terms of bringing back the conception of 'the whole man', alive; the conception of 'the spontaneous organic being'.

D.H.Lawrence was conscious, though vaguely of this third force, as early as the first novel, *The White Peacock*. Here he introduces Annable 'a third force between nature and culture' (Kermode; 1973, 13). He 'has to be there... he makes a sort of balance' (E.T.; 1965, 117). In *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence presented Paul, the protagonist of the novel, as a third force, the reconciler between father and mother, between animalism and idealism. But till then, D.H.Lawrence formulated no conscious metaphysical outlook in his art. From his mother's death, the crucial

stage of his life began. He gave up Louis Burrow with whom he had been engaged in the last weeks of his mother's death in December, 1910. He saw his Croydon friend, Helen Corke, for the last time; bade farewell to Jessie Chambers in the spring of 1912; met Frieda Weekley and left England with her on 3 May in that year. Those critical experiences caused Lawrence's break with the past. The nature of his engagement with fiction was also rapidly changing. In January, 1913, he had written a preface to *Sons and Lovers* which happened to acquire a metaphysical tinge. It is his first metaphysical announcement, an obscure sermon with quasi-biblical tone. But it matters much in the later development of his metaphysics.

Father, says Lawrence, is the flesh and son, the Word and the Spirit is begotten by the Holy Spirit. Father is forever 'unquestioned and unutterable', the lawgiver. Adam, the first Christ, was the flesh made Word. We are of the Word. Within the Word, the flesh is held. The son has usurped the Father and the Father withdraws from us leaving the Word in ruins. The reason is that we have exchanged the physical for mental consciousness. The woman is the Flesh; she produces man and the Father which is the Flesh. She is the door for ingoing and outcoming. Through her we go back to the Father. She stands for 'God', the Father, the Almighty, the unknowable creator. In the woman, lies the eternal continuance and from the man comes the exclamation of joy and astonishment and a new self-revelation of that which is woman to man. Every woman demands her man after his exhaustive day's work to be reborn of her. If this is violated, if her man denies her, then she turns to her son who can "never be received into her for his confirmation

and renewal and so wastes himself away in flesh" ('Original Foreward to *Sons and Lovers*' in Salgado Gamini, (ed.) 1969,p.37). The old son lover was Oedipus and the new one is legion. This is Lawrence's philosophy of Trinity that resembles the Occult Philosophy of Male, Female and the Holy Spirit :

There is in God, a Divine Masculinity by which He creates, a Divine Femininity, by which He conceives; and a Divine proceeding of the masculinity into Femininity, by which he ultimatizes. This is the truth which is concealed within the formulae of father, son and Holy Spirit. The eternal Masculinity is The Divine love. The eternal Femininity is the Divine Truth. The eternal proceeding of the Two-in-One is the Divine Ability. (Whitehead, 184).

This kind of apocalyptic theology, the scheme of the Female (mother) as law and Flesh, the male (son) as logos and the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit) as the reconciler came to obsess him and greatly affected his later fictions. Henceforth Lawrence was different not only as an artist but also as a thought adventurer. The coming of Frieda in his life and her love for him changed him much affecting both his views on life and art. Woman, the source of Flesh, now preoccupied him. He said that 'a woman that I love sort of keeps me in direct communication with the unknown in which otherwise I am a bit lost'. (Lawrence : *Letters* (ed.) H.T. Moore, 179. Hereafter by page number). Her love provides a remedy for contemporary human malady. A few days before sending the 'Preface to *Sons and Lovers*' to Garnett, Lawrence wrote to Ernest Collins about his philosophy of 'blood knowledge' that indicates a new direction in his writing after *Sons and Lovers*'. This letter contains another attack to the Word, intellect and mind, with further elucidation of the preface and affirmation

of the Flesh:

My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true. ...All I want is to answer to my blood, direct without fribbling intervention of mind, or moral or what not. I conceive a man's body as a kind of flame, like a candle flame, forever upright and yet flowing : and the intellect is just the light that is shed on to the things around .... we ought to look at ourselves and say 'My God', I am myself'(180)

Lawrence was now altogether serious. The problem he faced lies in the establishment of a new relation or the readjustment of the old one, between man and woman. He declared that 'the source of all life and knowledge is in man and woman and the source of all living is in the interchange and the meeting and mingling of these two : man life and woman life, man knowledge and woman knowledge, man being and woman being'(280). He thought of 'the regeneration of England through a readjustment between men and women and by making free and healthy of this sex'(204). This meant for him also the liberation of sex from the cultural and mental aspirations of the good woman or from all those taboos that make man slave of the Word, of morality. His desiderated readjustment between nature and culture would start with a genuine response to and cognition of the 'blood knowledge'. In a letter to Edward Garnett, while discussing 'The Wedding Ring', he again declared the supremacy of the Law, of the Flesh and attacked the Word, the old stable ego, saying that 'but somehow - that which is physic-nonhuman, in humanity is more interesting to me than the old fashioned human element' (281). He forbade Garnett to look for the old stable ego in his novel and declared that 'there is another ego according to

whose action the individual is unrecognisable' (282). He said, 'Diamond, what ! This is carbon. And my diamond might be coal or soot and my theme is carbon'(282). In *The Rainbow*, he had envisaged a similar idea and had gone deeper into the unfathomable core of life. Here he evolved a process of 'dehumanizing' the human character, of presenting the nature and behaviour pattern of the very stuff of which human being is constituted, showing them in complex relationships with the human and non-human universe at a living moment. Catherine Carswell also refers to this new attitude when she says that Lawrence repudiated 'character' entirely and retained only the merest crust of outward form sufficient for telling a story. (Catherine Carswell, 1932, 71).

But Lawrence's metaphysics needed further and systematic development. He planned a little book on Hardy. Then the war began and he was shocked. So the Hardy Study was taken up 'out of sheer rage'. The rage was quite evident, as he said that "...it will be about anything but Thomas Hardy. I am afraid - queer stuff - but not bad' (Lawrence, *Letters*, 290). He wrote it as an answer to the great need, in the military and cultural crisis of 1914, to protect the human race from the ghastliness and hideous stupidity of war. For Lawrence, the final aim of every living thing, creature or being is 'the full achievement of itself' (Lawrence, *Phoenix* 403, Hereafter by page number). Life demands a possible plenitude for its fulfilment which is distinct for distinct beings. But instead, we go in for the wrong kind of cabbage-like self-preservation, rotten and rotting inside. The fulfilment of life, like the flowering of the poppies, depends on the degree of self-liberation from the

bondage of old self-preservative custom. The movement for women suffrage, for making more laws to protect women - are only further steps for self-preservation which implies self-degradation. Man needs the courage to let go the securities and to risk himself in a forward venture of life, as Lawrence himself learnt from Frieda to let go his own old preservative bonds. The war has shown man his strength to throw away his life, a terrible wastage of life. The only positive value of the war is that it has shown man the necessity for another war 'for the freedom of the bonds of our cowardice and sluggish greed of security and well-being; it is a fight to regain ourselves out of the grip of our own caution' (407). Repetitive work brings on mechanical boredom, from which we should be free as much as from the money-urge. Only the creative work which is performed with pleasure and satisfaction can provide us with the taste for the freedom of self.

The knowledge about life and individuality must come, from man's own self : 'If he have that which is not his own, it is a burden, he is not himself' (433). This knowledge of distinct individuality, Lawrence observes, comes at the age of twenty or thirty, when the anguish of desire to meet the female is fulfilled. And the process is the process of love, that is sexual. In sexual communion, both man and woman become fulfilled; it is a process of unification in difference. The woman is the reservoir, symbolizing stasis, and the man is the stream symbolizing motion. The man-woman relationship is a stationary state of stasis in motion. In Lawrence's opinion, the woman is the axle and the man is the hub; their relation is a frictionless whole, 'a duality that is sheerly one'. Man is not pure male but dominantly so, and

so also is the woman. Man should be re-vitalized by sexual communion with woman, and his instability should be stabilized by her. Sex is neither frictional nor a matter of relief equivalent to eating or drinking. It is a process of leaping up into the unknown : 'Life consists of the dual form of the will-to-motion and the will-to-Inertia, and everything we see and know and are, is the resultant of these two Wills'.(447) The reconciliation of these two Wills of man and woman creates a third thing that stands between Law and Love, as the 'Holy Ghost'. In the Jews, the female, that is, 'the Will-to-Inertia' was dominant; so they rushed towards degeneracy. In Europe, since the Renaissance, the northern race has sought the consummation through love and has denied the Father. Now it is time to unite Law and Love, Father and Son with the help of the 'Holy Ghost'. The Christian love is spiritual and so is one-sided and denies the Father, the flesh. But true love is dual; it is both sexual and spiritual and can fulfil both flesh and spirit. Lawrence says that since, by the Law, we are all one flesh, so love is only a closer vision of the Law. A more comprehensive interpretation : "Think not I come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets : I come not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled"(466). The phallic marriage serves the dual purpose. It exhausts and enriches both man and woman : 'The female at the same time exhausts and invigorates the male and the male at the same time exhausts and invigorates the female'(500). Law and Love, although contradictory, are complementary to each other. The perfect balance between Law and Love, between male and female, is

achieved in the 'Holy Ghost', 'which is beyond us but with us'. And this is the moment of perfect freedom of both man being and woman being, the moment of the flowering of life like the flowering of the poppies.

The inter-war years were the arid years for Lawrence. London seemed to him 'a hoary ponderous inferno' (Letters, 339). People were like prisoners 'with a strange abstractness, submissiveness and an isolation' (357). It was an age of 'decline and fall'(384). In 1915, Lawrence was obsessed by the idea of freedom - individual, social and political. He planned to 'gather together about twenty souls and sail away from this world of war and squalor and found a little colony'(307), his Rananim where they would be free to live by the best they know. On March 1, he wrote to Lady Ottoline Morell about his idea of integrated life and free-living :

To live, we must all unite, and bring all the knowledge into a coherent whole, we must all set to for the joining together of the multifarious parts, we must knit all words together into a great new utterance, we must cast all personalities into the melting pot, and give a new Humanity its birth .... It is not honour nor personal satisfaction, it is the incorporation in the great impulse whereby a great people shall come into being, a free race as well as a race of free individuals.(325)

D.H.Lawrence wished fulfilment of all desires in the flesh not in heaven but on earth. He gave a call to start a solid basis of freedom of actual living and a revolution to set free our bodies because 'there never was a free soul in a chained body'(317) and now that 'the shell, the form of life, is a prison to the life'(320), we either 'have to break the shell, the form, the whole frame, or we have got to turn to this inward activity of setting house in order and drawing up a list before we



die'(320). Similar ideas were developed more systematically and elaborately in 'The Crown'. Lawrence began it in March, 1915, gave it up temporarily, but resumed it in April and finished it in May, that year. It was rewritten between June and September. Three of its six chapters were published in Middleton Murry's short-lived review, *The Signature*. The whole thing was eventually included in the '*Reflection on the Death of a Porcupine*'.

D.H.Lawrence allegorically begins the article with a fight between the lion and the Unicorn. They are fighting for the Crown, the greatest prize, but the fight is never-ending, without any cessation or victory. The lion represents the dark intuitive nature and the Unicorn, the enlightened conscious one. Man is born in the womb of darkness, but then the mind is created within the flesh. A perfect union in opposition between the dark and the light, the unconscious and the conscious aspects forges the integrity of life. Triumph of either demolishes both : 'But who triumphs perishes' (Lawrence, *Phoenix II*, 371, hereafter by page number). The pure interrelation in opposition between flesh and spirit, their consummation through one another creates a third thing, the blossoming of life or the state of integrated free living. By way of that consummation of the spirit through the flesh, man comes to the very dark source of his life, and the way is necessarily the way of the blood, the physical. So the fulfilment comes through sexual communion between man and woman. Woman is 'the gate to the dark eternity of power, the creator's power'(377). In the sexual consummation, for the time being, man's subjective consciousness melts out into the eternal darkness of primal creative power, his sense of not-being dominates him,

and finally he is re-created, re-born into another new being, free and fresh : 'I am not, and at last I am'(378). And 'the crown is upon the consummation itself, not upon the triumph of one over another, neither in love nor in power'(381). For love is not a goal of life, but a progression towards the goal. It is relative, not absolute, for absolute love is a bondage. It is 'the hastening gravitation of spirit towards spirit and body towards body in the joy of creation'(24). But the goal of life is a state 'balanced in perfection in the midst of time and space'(26), yet 'transcendental, absolved from time and space'(26).

In 'The Crown', one theme is more positively stressed than before. It is the flux of corruption. At that period, Lawrence was disgusted with the living process that gave way to corruption and dissolution. Destruction outruns the process of creation, the two have fallen apart : 'Our every activity is the activity of disintegration, of corruption, of dissolution whether it be our scientific research, our social activity... our art... Everything alike contributes to the flux of death, to corruption, and liberates the static data of consciousness'(392). All absolutes are for Lawrence, prison walls. The "Laws" which science has invented, 'like conservation of energy, indestructibility of matter, gravitation, the will-to-live, survival of the fittest... the earth goes round the sun'(397), and so on are prison walls. In them, says Lawrence, lies the germ of our suicide or degeneracy for the lack of their proper relation to life. The beginning and the end, the death and the life, the day and the night are now fallen asunder. Our consciousness and civilization are held together only by a sort of evil rind, the forward movement to a new epoch

seems blocked. Lawrence here tries to search a way out of that situation, beginning with corruption itself : 'In corruption there is divinity.... In the soft and shiny voluptuousness of decay, in the marshy chill heat of reptiles, there is the sign of Godhead' (402) and 'corruption will at last break down for us the deadened forms, and release us into the infinity' (403). If we have our fill of destruction, then we shall again turn to creation. In life both creation and corruption go together; one fulfils the other. The blossoming of the poppies depends on the sucking of its nutrient from the heart of dark marsh. In life, we are balanced between flux of creation and flux of corruption. Our bodies are always being composed and decomposed and the nature of our fulfilment is dual. Through the fulfilment of corruption in creation, of death in life, we are 'at last born into open sky, we shall have a whole new universe to grow up into .... dawning aeons.... unfathomable' (404).

From 1916 to the end of the war, Lawrence remained frustrated and harassed by the political turmoil. He felt as if he were more helplessly enslaved than ever before by the foul social and political world. He became desperate and his struggle to be free was more violent and his verdict, more drastic : 'This world of ours has got to collapse now in violence and injustice and destruction' (Lawrence : *Letters*, 424. Hereafter by page number). It was to him like a 'sinking ship'. He vowed to reject this foul world : 'I will stand outside this time, I will live my life, and, if possible, be happy, though the whole world slides in horror down into the bottomless pit.... I will save myself, ... living in the greatest truth, not submitting to

the falsehood of these personal times'(424). Lawrence became more aggressive towards society and people : 'All my work is a shot at their very innermost strength'(428), 'with noiseless bullets that explode in their souls'(428). He began to hate democracy, that he previously had praised, and opposed it now for higher reality. But where is that world in which he could get that higher reality and be free?

His reply is : 'At present my real world is the world of my inner soul, which reflects on to the novel'(453). And it is the *Women in Love*, 'so end-of-the-world.'<sup>o</sup> But it is, it must be, the beginning of a new world too, (482), 'a new heaven and a new earth'(477). Lawrence placed individual liberty above national interest : 'I do esteem individual liberty above everything. What is a nation for, but to secure the maximum of liberty to every individual?'(462). He felt that England as a nation had failed to sustain this personal freedom and he himself was a victim of that failure and had suffered much by the military harassments in the war period. He appealed to the people to break with the old reforms : 'socialists, Fabians - they are all our disease, not our hope. We want a clean sweep, and a new start' (491). And this new start would begin 'by establishing of pure relationship which makes heaven, wherein we are immortal, like the angels, and mortal like men, both' (467). This pure relationship would be, besides that of man-woman love relationship, the eternal 'friendship between man and man ... sworn, pledged, as eternal as the marriage bond' (565), and each would be complementary to the other. Lawrence's next two articles : 'The Reality of Peace' (1917) and 'The Education of the People' (1918) reflect the same desperate attitude but systematically in different ways. The former

continues the argument initiated in 'The Crown' but more artistically.

In 'The Reality of Peace', Lawrence emphasizes the proper understanding of both creative and corrupt sides of life. In his opinion, 'we, ourselves, are the living stream of seething corruption ... as well as the bright river of life' (Lawrence : *Phoenix*, 676, Hereafter by page number). Both the issues of creation and corruption come from the body : 'within our bowels flows the slow stream of corruption'(677) and 'within our veins flows the stream of life, towards the issue of pure creation'(677). In this sense man is the source of both and he need not be ashamed of the corrupt side of life. Lawrence suggests us to 'go down into ourselves, enter the hell of corruption and putrescence, and rise again, not fouled, but fulfilled and free' (677). The condition of man's inner freedom depends on his understanding that he is not only angel or devil but more than that, a full, undiminished being complete beyond both angel and devil. Creation and corruption, both are aspects of life; they, with their dynamic balance, constitute the 'systole-diastole of the physical universe'(678). Through this understanding, man can transcend the two desires, 'the desire of life and the desire of death'(680), and can comprehend fully, 'flesh and blood and bone and mind and soul and spirit (as) one rose of unison'(680), that is, his own self, whole and integrated, All things that emerges pure in man from the matrix of chaos is the rose of pure understanding. With the help of this understanding, man has to learn that death and life, and darkness and light are adjusted into a perfect equilibrium in life. It is an understanding, sensual and non-

mental : 'Understanding is not necessarily mental. It is of the senses and the spirit'(682)..

Lawrence criticizes social men for violating their deep urge, as he thought, to retain integrity in life. They are, in Lawrence's opinion, debased; they do not try to understand death in life, to encompass deadness in living activities and finally, fail to retain their singleness like stars. Lawrence's cry was to 'release me from the debased social body ... (to) let me be myself'(687). Lawrence's suggestion to achieve peace in life lies in the understanding that man is not the only creature of disintegration and of creation, but above both, he is the 'rose of perfect being'(690), 'beyond all dark and light'(690). Day and night, dark and light, creation and corruption - all are aspects of life, that stands in opposition to each other. But each of them can be understood with the help of its opposite. Their unification in dynamic balance, when achieved in life through the understanding, makes life perfect and free. The process lies in the love-hate relationship between man and woman. These two opposite poles, male in man and female in woman when united give rise to a new heaven on earth, 'a new heaven and a new earth, the heaven and earth of the perfect rose' (693).

Although the argument of 'The Reality of Peace' is somewhat similar to his argument in 'The Crown', here Lawrence laid more stress on the process of understanding, the Lawrentian understanding. In the 'Education of the People', Lawrence distinctly presented this process of understanding about life, its development through education along with his own scheme of Education. The

prevalent system of education, in Lawrence's opinion, is a failure because it cannot ensure the youths a prospect of choosing a free living of their liking according to their nature. For man, 'nature is his destiny'(602), and fulfilment of life is deeply related to his or her nature'. The goal of life lies not in the equality of man but in his singularity : 'one is one and all alone and ever more shall be so'(603). Education or for that matter growing up, Lawrence says, is a process of learning to escape the automatism of ideas and to live direct from the spontaneous, vital centre of oneself :

We've got to try to educate them to that point where at last there will be a perfect correspondence between the spontaneous, yearning, impulsive-desirous soul and the automatic *mind* which runs on little wheels of ideas' (605)

But the process of their understanding should be 'living understanding-not intellectual understanding' (607). Lawrence here differentiates these two types of understandings. Intellectual understanding is mechanical, it belongs to the technical activities. It is a process of scientific understanding of matter, dead or inert, a process towards generalization, life-denying. But the living understanding is vital and belongs to the masters of life. It is a process of understanding the creative mystery of life and of acquiring the implicit knowledge that 'life is unfathomable and unsearchable in its motives .... having no ascribable goal save the bringing forth of an ever-changing, ever-unfolding creation' (608). Here Lawrence plainly rejects the thought and understanding that is logical in its form. He follows the Bergsonian idea, whom he read early in 1913, that 'the categories of thought-unity, multiplicity, mechanical causality, intelligent finality etc. .... are too narrow and above all too

rigid to apply to life' (Bergson, 1964, P-X). Like Bergson, Lawrence could realize that the most living thought becomes frigid in the formula that expresses it, that the words turn against the idea and the idea kills the spirit. Our most ardent enthusiasm as soon as it is externalized into words is so naturally congealed into the cold calculation of interest and vanity, both individual and social, that we doubt our sincerity or deny goodness and love. That is why Lawrence's understanding is 'unfathomable and unsearchable', a paradox in itself, a process of knowing the unknowable.

The goal of education would be to create a pure individual with his 'integral separateness as the stars at night' (Lawrence, *Phoenix*, 634; Hereafter by page number). Birth is a process of breaking off all the navel connections of the mother's womb, a process of isolation from the great womb of darkness into another single being - new. For Lawrence, breaking off from the old dogmas about love, wealth, mechanical knowledge and coming out as a free individual, both in action and in being, is a second birth occasioning the purity of singleness as much as the solitary integrity :

'We shall realize at last that the highest reality for every living creature is in its purity of singleness and its perfect solitary integrity, and that everything else should be but a means to the end. All communion, all love, and all communication, which is all consciousness, are but a means to the perfected singleness of the individual being'(637)



The last word of education is that :

'marriage and deathless friendship, both should be inviolable and sacred : two great creative passions, separate, apart, but complementary : the one pivotal, the other adventurous : the one marriage, the centre of human life; and the other, the leap ahead'(665).

D.H.Lawrence's next two prominent works of nonfiction are *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (1921) and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922). They are in a sense a further development of his "Preface to *Sons and Lovers*". Here Lawrence observes that the significance of sexual or physical relationship is not only reduced but also misunderstood by the modern civilization which in its own turn, 'is achieved only at the expense of distorting our sexuality' (Kermode, 1973, 87; Hereafter by page number). It is a view that Lawrence shares with Reich and Freud. But while Reich's solution to the problem is 'orgastic and antipatriarchal and anti-authoritarian'(87), and Freud's solution is founded on heuristic method of science, Lawrence tries to solve it in a process which is anti-scientific, patriarchal and is based on occult terms. He operates a soft primitivism, whereas Freud operated for a hard one. Lawrence argues that the horrors of Freudian unconscious are propagated by mental intervention of sex, which is a perverse 'half lie' (Lawrence, Letters, 475). Although Lawrence brings in that essay, the complex 'navel-centered psychology of the baby, "negatively polarised" by "the great ganglion of the spinal system" which works for "sundering separation"'(Kermode, 88), he never goes far from his basic idea that emphasizes 'the need for self realization, the need to break away from the ruinous tyranny of idealism'(Kermode,88).

*Fantasia* more speculatively develops this argument. Lawrence, in this book, tries to recapture a science older than the dead mechanistic modern variety to rediscover the lost myth and symbol and 'to smatter out the first terms of a forgotten knowledge' (Kermode, 1973, 88). But his main interest is again on the individual and his wholeness which is identified with the 'Holy Ghost', the reconciler of the mother and the father in him. The mother, for Lawrence, enforces the sympathetic relation with the universal and the father, separateness. The father will 'spank', for 'the vibration of the spanking acts directly upon the spinal nervous system... the spanker transfers his wrath to the great will-centres in the child and these will-centres react intensely, are vivified and educated' (Lawrence, *Fantasia*, 88). It is a process of breaking up the sympathetic plexus, the source of which is the mother. The mother or woman no longer 'act(s) from an idea' (*Fantasia*, 121; Hereafter by page number). Eve did it and so we lost our paradise and got our sex into our head. As a consequence 'the whole man-woman game has become just a hell'(122), and now we have either 'to pass on and leave room for another race or to get rid of that disease called 'mental consciousness' or 'self-conscious idealism' or 'love'(122). The polarity of the sexes should be strictly maintained, and the way is intuitive, not mental. In Chapter XIII of the *Fantasia*, Lawrence argues that the universe is organic and every object in it maintains its own natural course with strict discipline. So we have to maintain strictly the day and night consciousness, the man-woman relationship, and have to understand that woman's business is at night and by day she is to sit half in fear. Although, there is a great deal of rubbish in the *Fantasia*, its

value lies neither in its recommendations about education nor in the subjection of woman but in 'tormenting insistence on every man's responsibility to his own uniqueness, on the possibility to his regeneration, on finding his own vital relation to the world' (Kermode, 1973, 90-91).

During the war, mostly in Cornwall, Lawrence had been reading the American novelists and Whitman. Between August 1917 and February 1919, he wrote a dozen of essays on these themes eight of which were published in the *English Review*. He revised them drastically in Sicily (1920) and again in New Mexico in 1922-23, to produce the version published in 1923 as *Studies in Classic American Literature*. These essays are the result of five years of persistent work : 'They contain a whole *weltanschauung* -- new, if old -- even a new science of psychology -- pure science' (Lawrence; *Letters*, p.596).

The book begins with a question : 'What was the American artist and what was he seeking in his departure from Europe ? And it is the freedom of the self from the institutions of European society, from Church and state, and from the identity which these imposed upon the individual. The Americans, Lawrence felt, were right in emphasizing the importance of freedom, but were wrong in their understanding of it. They failed to see how much of the old European self they carried with them to the new world. Lawrence here searched for a true natural America infested with beasts and flowers and with men of primitive physical vitality like the Red Indians under the overdeveloped palefaced America. He lays more stress on the importance of human nature and contradicts the Hegelian view that the nature of man is an

historical issue and that there is nothing in man which might not be changed by a change in his social and economic relations. Lawrence argues that there is a human nature which can provide the basis for judging the kind of self that any society must strive to create. He could not accept that man or society, by an act of choice, can determine the future of man and flatly rejected the existentialist view of Sartre that there is no such thing as human nature and that each man invents his own in his freely chosen projects. When Lawrence declared in a letter that his theme is 'carbon', he at once accepted that human nature for its most part lies in the dark unknown territory, and fulfilment of life comes according to one's own nature.

Lawrence criticized Benjamin Franklin for his incapacity to understand the self as a whole. Franklin assumed that he could provide a complete definition of man and postulated a fixed nature in man which determines his fulfilment. But his idea of the totality of human nature, Lawrence thought, is only a part, the known part of the whole man. It ignores the unknown self that 'cannot be expressed because it cannot be known in the first place' (Aidan Burns : 1980, 9, Hereafter by page number). Lawrence said that, 'I must act from my whole self but my known self is only a part of this totality'(11). Any attempt to acquire knowledge about this 'unknown self', is, in Lawrence's opinion, to enlarge the boundary of the meaning of the word 'knowledge' that was used univocally in 'the sense of the scientist and mathematician'(11), over logocentrism towards sensualism. Lawrence's idea of 'blood consciousness', the sensual understanding, antithetic to that scientific understanding is a process that goes beyond the known self. This knowledge comes

through sex or sexual love, for, 'it is an encounter whose *raison d'être* is the expansion of human consciousness through the living expression of the unknown self'(12). But Franklin undermined the place of sex in human nature in a repulsive way advising to 'rarely use the ventry but for health and offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation'(Franklin : *The Autobiography* 1818, quoted from A.Burns, 11-12). This kind of attitude of Franklin illuminates his own incapacity to understand the dark side of human nature. But Crevecoeur, Lawrence observes, is rich in sensual understanding. He places man with his divinely given nature against the natural background. Nature and man in his works, together provide the ingredients for an ideal partnership. The darker side of human nature appears frequently in his writing that produces a tension between his idealism and art. Fenimore Cooper's *The Deer Slayer* provides Lawrence with a new understanding about human relationship. In this novel, the relationship between Natty Bumppo and Chingachgook, the white man and the red man, who by nature stand in stubborn opposition, opens up a new dimension of human relationship to Lawrence :

'A stark, stripped human relationship of two men, deeper than the deeps of sex. Deeper than property, deeper than fatherhood, deeper than marriage, deeper than love' (Lawrence : *Studies*, 61).

All our traditional concept of relationships like love, marriage, sex, and so on fall short in that case. Lawrence suggests that there are dimensions of the self that underlie language. Language, as an idealized version of social communication, fails to provide with a true image of the self, but the idealized image that society imposes

on him. The acceptance of the old categories of human relationship implies the acceptance of the old dead form of life. This insight helps Lawrence 'to break free from the false set of concepts.... (to) open a path to the dark forest in the soul and put him once again in contact with the deeper resources of life' (Burns, A. : 1980, 16. Hereafter by page number). In his study of Hawthorne, Lawrence recognizes that physical consciousness is as much essential to life as the spiritual consciousness, to retain integrity in life. The spiritual consciousness becomes fake if it dominates over the physical side, and the integrity of life is violated. Man's spiritualism comes to a test in his real sexual contact with a woman and 'a spiritual relation between them based on their known selves will always be threatened'(20). In sexual communion, woman appeals her man beyond the cosy concept of himself as a spiritual being to the dark forest in his soul. In that encounter, his belief as a spiritual being is undermined. So in carrying on the old spiritual European Self with them, the Americans, Lawrence observes, insinuate towards a new dimension of life that 'good and evil are both necessary and therefore in a higher sense *good* for the growth of a new self more sensitively adjusted to those unknown dimensions of human nature'(20).

In Melville, Lawrence found a similarity of his own view about primitivism. Melville was attracted by the idea of the noble savage but found in the end wholly inadequate. Lawrence also tried to see over our horizon towards the primitive life to enlarge our concept of life. But 'there can be no going back' (Lawrence; *Studies*,

129) for Lawrence because the regression to the life of the savage is an antithesis to the definition of the purpose of human life as the extension of consciousness. Lawrence's preference to the primitive life and rejection of mental life, his fascination with the Etruscans, with the Indians, and in England, with gypsies and gamekeepers and above all his own wandering in rural Italy, Sicily and Mexico, suggest his ceaseless search for an alternative to the *cul-de-sac* into which our modern culture has condemned us.

To be precise, the ambiguities of American fiction arose out of the conflict between two different concepts of man, spiritual and physical. This gave birth to two moralities, one of the author and another of the tale. The author's morality is old European morality, according to which the soul is superior to the body. But against the author's conscious intention, the morality of the tale rebels and is bent on the destruction of the old spiritual morality. Lawrence discovered in Whitman, an end of this conflict between body and soul. Whitman<sup>t</sup> located the soul into the body, and the soul once more becomes the *anima* of the body, the first principle of life in living things : 'Whitman divests the soul of its thin spirituality and plants it firmly in the flesh, in the limbs, in the lips and in the belly' (Lawrence : *Studies*, 162-63). Lawrence admires him for his taking the body seriously. A similar view is expressed by Nietzsche when he says that we must start with the body and 'inaugurate culture in the right place - not in the soul .... the right place is the body, demeanour, diet, physiology : the rest follows' (Nietzsche : 1889, 101). Like Nietzsche, Lawrence was dismayed at the ways in which the individual becomes a

slave of ideas and society is stultified in its growth by a fixed conception of the self or of right. For Lawrence, as for Nietzsche, the future of the self is open. Lawrence's realization is that it is neither the spirit nor the body to which he can subject himself. He can subject himself only to the 'Holy Ghost', the reconciler. Precisely, Lawrence maintains in the *Studies* that man must never lead his life by reference to a blueprint such as the one provided by Franklin in his system of maxims. Any attempt to situate the self within a system of concepts can subvert its freedom. Lawrence suspects all philosophical abstractions of man, because such abstractions can present only a truncated view of man. Lawrence trusts only the novel, 'the bright book of life'. Only in the novel, he says, can we perceive the whole man alive with darker side of his nature that always eludes our effort to capture it in words.

The *Studies* is Lawrence's major nonfictional work of the second period. During that period, Lawrence being obsessed by the leadership idea, wrote most of *Kangaroo* and the first draft of *The Plumed Serpent*, then called *Quetzalcoatl* in 1923 and after drastic revision in the next year, he completed its final version now entitled *The Plumed Serpent*. In February, 1925, he suffered from fatal illness and left Mexico for good in the following autumn. He stayed in England for a short time and then also left it in October that year. Apart from a few weeks in the late summer of 1926, he never returned to his country and continued to wander, living in Majorca, Tuscany and Provence and then settled for almost two years in the Villa Mirinda near Florence. During these last five years of his life, Lawrence, though in the worst of his health, remained artistically prolific. At that period, apart from fiction, he



wrote the travel book *Etruscan Places*, and essays like, 'Apropos to Lady Chatterley's Lover', 'Pornography and Obscenity' and the unfinished *Apocalypse*. This period shows a sharp change of Lawrence's attitude to life and art. He rejected the leadership idea that had obsessed him in the after-war period and turned again back to his familiar theme of love and sex. He now began to reinvigorate the old pre-Christian religion based on physical communion and phallic knowledge. For him now, 'the phallus is a great sacred image' which 'represents a deep, deep life which has been denied in us'. (Lawrence, *Letters*, 967). In a letter to Witter Bynner on 13 March, he confessed that :

The hero is obsolete and the leader of man is a back number. After all at the back of the hero is the militant ideal : .... leader-cum-follower relationship is a bore. And the new relationship will be some sort of tenderness, sensitive, between man and man, and man and woman, and not the one up one down, lead on I follow, *ich dien* sort of business.... I feel one still has to fight for the phallic reality, as against the non-phallic cerebration unrealities. I suppose the phallic consciousness is part of the whole consciousness... To me it's a vital part' (Lawrence, *Letters*, 1045-46).

In *Etruscan Places*, Lawrence recreates imaginatively the lost civilization of Tuscany, dominated by the emblem of phallus and womb. It had been, in his opinion, a culture deeper and more beautiful than the Romans who conquered it. What Lawrence has discovered in the Red Indians, a blood-centered civilization, is also present in Italy, where people are 'always kept in touch physically with the mysteries' (Lawrence, *Etruscan Places*, III).

During the war years, Lawrence read works on Occult symbolism and

Theosophy. He asked Lady Ottoline Morell in January 1916, to send him the Homeric Hymns and Orphic religions (*Letters*, 416). Later on, he did some quite extensive reading in Apocalyptic scholarship. He met Frederick Carter, a wellknown Occultist who was writing a book entitled *The Dragon of the Apocalypse*. Lawrence read the first draft in Mexico, and afterwards wrote the preface for Carter's book, a much longer introduction which was published posthumously as the unfinished *Apocalypse*. Here Lawrence interpreted the astrological scheme of Revelation, too fundamental for rational explanation or scientific description. Lawrence said that St. John's book was a 'revelation of Initiation experience, a manual of esoteric lore derived from the ancient pagans, corrupted by later Jewish and Christian editors' (Lawrence, *Apocalypse*, C.U.P., 4). Lawrence believed in the existence of true and ancient knowledge which Christianity has repressed with the doctrine of spiritual salvation. He observed that 'the religious system of the pagan world did what Christianity has never tried to do. They gave a true correspondence between the material cosmos and the human soul .... In them science and religion were in accord' (Lawrence, *Phoenix-II*, 227). He wished a fresh start away from intellect with the polarity downwards and wanted 'sceptre, not the logos' (*Letters*, 745), the end of the domination of the logos, the Word, and to restore a balance between the spiritual and the sensual planes for existence that Christianity with its emphasis on the spirit and the mind has destroyed. In his opinion 'what man passionately wants is his living wholeness and his living unison' (Lawrence, *Apocalypse*; 149). Only

through recognition of the duality inherent in the cosmos and in man's being and by transcending it, can that living wholeness be achieved. And this is for man the state of freedom achieved with the help of the 'Holy Ghost'.

*Apocalypse* is a searching examination of our civilization and a radical criticism of Christianity and scientific technology. But it is also a revelation of Lawrence's belief in man's power to create 'a new heaven and a new earth'. In this book, Lawrence condemns nearly all our contemporary ways of life and searches for the causes of our malaise in the failure of Christian and democratic ideals. *Apocalypse* recognizes the need to give homage to the natural power and greatness of a man 'who transmits the life of the universe' (Lawrence, *Letters*, 994). The same belief was expressed by Blake when in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, he said that 'the worship of God is : Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best; those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God' (Blake : *Complete Writings* (ed) Geoffrey Keynes, 158). Lawrence's view of man as an incarnation of God is strikingly similar to the view of Tolstoy, the great Russian novelist, who in his revolutionary book *War and Peace*, made Pierre, one of the protagonists, to think that :

'.... life is everything. Life is God. Everything changes place and moves, and this movement is god. And while there is life, there is the joyful awareness of the divinity. To love life is to love God' (Victor Shklovsky : *Lev Tolstoy*, p.330)

Lawrence believes that man needs to regain the imaginative and spiritual

values which alone can restore the sense of living connection and wholeness, lost in our scientific and materialistic age. The *Apocalypse* embodies Lawrence's final vision of man and the cosmos and is his last testament of belief 'in the symbolic value of art as the way to creative integration' (*Apocalypse*, 24).

Lawrence tries to give shape to this speculation in his last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, a phallic novel, but not pornographic. It is his drastic attempt 'to make the sex relation valid and precious, instead of shameful' (*Letters* 972), a shock therapy, 'a bit of a revolution in itself - a bit of a bomb' (*Letters*, 104). But in order to heal man from the disease of 'the cerebral sex-consciousness' and to provide 'the phallic consciousness', Lawrence has to defend his stand with further elucidation of this speculation in his two essays: 'Pornography and Obscenity' (1929) and 'A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover' (1930). In the 'Pornography and Obscenity', Lawrence contradicts the prevalent view that 'sex appeal in art is pornography' (Lawrence : *Phoenix* 174, Hereafter by page number), and says that sex is 'a very powerful, beneficial and necessary stimulus in life ... (a) warm natural flow .... like a form of sunshine' (174). 'Pornography', he says 'is the attempt to insult sex, to do dirt on it'(175). The sex functions and the excrementory functions in the body work very close together. But they are quite different. Sex is a creative flow but excrementory function is de-creative and disintegrative. Modern man has lost his power of proper identification and differentiation. The two streams have become identical for him due to his psychic deterioration, and sex has become a dirt to him. We should be free in our understanding about sex for, the suppression of sex as 'a

dirty little secret' will kill the dynamic sex altogether. The urge of life that is within man always surpasses his conscious individuality. We have to understand that 'each individual has sex, and is pivoted on sex'(187).

Lawrence's next article 'A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover', an expansion of 'My Skirmish With Jolly Roger' (1929) is a kind of desperate attempt to justify his unconventional phallic novel. But, simultaneously it conveys much of Lawrence's mature thought and ideas about sex and marriage. He desired 'men and women to be able to think sex, fully, completely, honestly and cleanly' (Lawrence : *A Propos of Lady Chatterby's Lover and Other Essays*, Pen, 1961, 89, Hereafter by page number). It is not that Lawrence wanted more sexual activities; he wanted a 'full conscious realization of sex' (89), and 'a proper reverence for sex' (90). He advocated proper sexual education not only for those who are ignorant of sex but also for those who are advanced and 'play with the toys of life, sex being one of the chief toys'(91). We now live, in his opinion, in a world of fake sexual emotion and love is a counterfeit feeling today that 'at last maddens, or else kills, sex, the deepest sex in the individual'(97). But sex, argues Lawrence, remains always pure. What is obscene is the 'antisequential defiance' or the counterfeit sex. Marriage brings one wholeness and integrity. It has religious sanctions in all ages and is a sacred ritual. But marriage should be basically and permanently phallic. He says :

The phallus is a column of blood that fills the valley of blood of a woman. The great river of male blood touches to its depths the great river of female blood - yet neither breaks its bounds. It is the deepest of all communions, as all the religions, in practice, know.

And it is one of the greatest mysteries, in fact, the greatest, as almost every initiation shows, showing the supreme achievement of the mystic marriage'(112).

D.H.Lawrence has also much to say about art and art-form, especially the novel and his views are deeply held views, reinforcing those of life and living. As early as 1912, he defended the construction of *Sons and Lovers*, protesting against the conventional idea of art-form and remonstrated saying that 'they want me to have *their* pernicious ossiferous skin-and-grief form, and I won't' (Lawrence : *Letters*, 172. Hereafter by page number). This kind of critical attitude to traditional art-form implies not only his greater understanding about art-form but also its deeper significance to the form of life, he presented in his art. He forbade us to look for the development of his novel following the lines of certain characters. But the characters, he says, fall 'into the form of some other rhythmic form, as when one draws a fiddle-bow across a fine tray delicately sanded, the sand takes lines unknown'(282). This is an idea of the form of the novel, quite life-like, unknown and unprecedented. That is why, Lawrence contradicted Arnold Bennett when he complained against him, for the lack of form in his novel, and said :

'Tell Arnold Bennett that all rules of construction hold good only for novels which are copies of other novels. A book which is not a copy of other books has its own construction, and what he calls faults, he being an old imitator, I call characteristics. I shall repeat till I am grey-'(399).

Lawrence's idea of art-form is dynamic, 'a revelation of two principles of Law and Love in a state of conflict, yet reconciled' (Lawrence : *Phoenix*, 477). Just

as these two must always meet under fresh conditions, so form must also be always different. He argues that 'each work of art has its own form which has no relation to any other form' (*Phoenix*, 477), and that the criterion of a good or a bad novel lies as much in its degree to represent life in its livingness and integrity as in its 'struggling for freedom from dead categories and restrictive judgements' (James, H. : *Art of Fiction*, 16).

Lawrence wished to be a pirate or a highwayman to shoot those social men with noiseless bullets that would explode in their souls. 'All my work is a shot at their innermost strength' (Lawrence : *Letters* 428), he says and perhaps this was one of the reasons for the disapproviation of some of his novels. Lawrence, by the declaration that 'one must be an outlaw these days, not a teacher or a preacher' (*Letters*, 433), was at once detached as a novelist from the previous generation. He simply rejected the idea that 'a novel is a novel, as a pudding is a pudding and that our only business with it could be to swallow it' (James : *Art of Fiction*, 35). A book, to Lawrence, should be either a bandit or a rebel that would either shock the readers out of their false self-consciousness or shoot them :

'...after all the world is not a stage ... nor a theatre ! nor a showhouse of any sort. And art especially novels, are not little theatres where the reader sits aloft and watches - like a god with a twenty-lira ticket and sighs, commiserates, condons and smiles... And that's what my books are not and never will be. ... But whoever reads me will be in the thick of the scrimmage, and if he does not like it - if he wants a safe seat in the audience - let him read somebody else' (Lawrence : *Letters*, 827).

It is a belief, antithetical to Arnold Bennett's view that multitudes read fiction just to pass away time ; but similar to the opinion of Butler, the literary 'bad boy', who said that 'social education is a humbug and moral and religious ideas have no foundation' (Long M.J.,: 1977, 590). Lawrence was dissatisfied with the prevalent trends of novel. In the 'Surgery for the Novel or a Bomb', he said that both serious and popular novels need 'some sort of surgical operation' (*Phoenix*, 518); for the former is centered on 'self-consciousness' with an 'application of the author's discoveries of their (readers') reactions', almost a post-mortem behaviour; and the latter produces 'a funny sort of self', 'purely emotional and self-analytical'. Philosophy and fiction parted company and as a consequence the novel suffered to be sloppy and philosophy abstract and dry. 'The two should come together again - in the novel'(52) claims Lawrence. Every novel must have at its depth some theory of being, some metaphysic. But the metaphysic must always subserve the artistic purpose beyond the artist's consciousness. It is an idea not far from Henry James, who said as follows :

The story and the novel, the idea and the form are the needle and the thread and I never heard of a guild of tailors who recommended the use of the thread without the needle or the needle without the thread' (James: *Art of Fiction*,49).

Lawrence observes that art has become optical, an 'objective reality', complete in itself and man has become what he sees; 'he makes himself in his own image''due to the development of his conscious ego' (Lawrence : *Phoenix*, 523. Hereafter by page number) - a truncated view about life, not vitally related to the



flux of time and space, thus dead. Lawrence says that nothing is true or good or right except in its own living relatedness to its own 'circumambient universe', and the form of art is a process of recognizing that relationship in the creative flux. The purpose of art, Lawrence argues, is to 'reveal the relation between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment'(527). In this sense, Lawrence is truly a philosopher artist who attributes to art the great function of creating harmony, interrelatedness. Indeed, the novel for him is the highest example of interrelatedness that man has ever discovered. It is the one 'bright book of life' (535). As a tremulation, it can make 'the whole man alive and tremble'(535), more than 'poetry, philosophy, science or any other book-tremulation can do'(535). They all deal with different bits of man, not with the man in his organic wholeness. That is why he declared :

'I am a novelist. And being a novelist I consider myself superior to the saint, the scientist, the philosopher, and the poet, who are all great masters of different bits of man alive, but never get the whole hog'(535).

Only in the novel are all things given a full play giving us the impression that life itself and not its inert safety, is the reason for living. Keith Sagar acknowledges this attitude of Lawrence to both life and art when he says that at bottom Lawrence is 'not concerned with art' but 'concerned with life and makes art servant of life' (K.Sagar, 1966,p.2). Lawrence's view that the novel is like life, a living thing an organic whole, is a further confirmation of Henry James' definition of the novel that 'a novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism and in

portion as it lives will it be found that in each part there is something of other parts.' (James : *Art of Fiction*, 44). This idea of the novel resembles Coleridge's notion of the 'intuitive growth of the work of art from seed' (*Art of Fiction*, 16). Clearly Lawrence forbade us to care for the didactic statement in a novel for it may be simply wrong. He called upon us to listen 'to the low, calling cries of the characters, as they wander in the dark woods of their destiny' (Lawrence : *Phoenix*, 760). The right message might be there. It echoes what he has said in the *Studies in Classic American Literature* : 'trust the tale not the teller', evincing a process of dissociation of art from the artist, of art becoming an objective entity with which the readers may have to struggle or 'scrimmage'.

In what follows, I propose to interpret the major novels of D.H.Lawrence. I would carry with me his message as a philosopher, but would at the same time try to discover the artist that he supremely is. His novels constitute the other proper site for the study of his odyssey for human freedom. Here meanings are produced and reproduced through the fictionality of the texts which are more free than have hitherto been thought of. They deliver insights not always identical with the author's conscious preaching. We would however try to establish as far as possible a correspondence between them. Of the Chapters that follow six will be devoted to his six major novels : *The White Peacock*, *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, *The Lost Girl* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The seventh chapter will explore Lawrence's treatment of his women characters and what the feminist critics think of him, while the penultimate one will explore post-modern views and ideas about

Lawrence and his supremacy as an artist. Lastly, necessary attempt has been made to demonstrate that Lawrence as an artist has succeeded in delivering his message of freedom and delivered it most powerfully.

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