

**"Dogmatic Approach to Nature in the Novels of
D.H. Lawrence."**

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Among the primary forces and dogmas which mar the energy, the vitality of nature, Christianity is one of them. Lawrence discovers that the cathedrals which symbolize the dead and the dogmatic Christianity do not include nature:

He listened to the thrushes in the gardens and heard a note which the cathedrals did not include: something free and careless and joyous. Crossed a field that was all yellow with dandelions, on his way to work and the bath of yellow glowing was something at once so sumptuous and so fresh, that he was glad he was away from his shadowy cathedral.¹

There is life outside the church and that is life of 'the winds, the sky and the hearths. As a matter of fact, Lawrence finds that the Church has outlived its utility and powers of moving and stirring. It has ceased to be the source of energy and vitality that it used to be. Of course, as a symbol, it may live on. Outside the Cathedral were many flying spirits that could never be sifted through the jeweled gloom. He had lost his absolute.²

In fact, 'the organised and dogmatic religion which Christianity has come to be, has ceased to be alive and pulsing, cut off as it has been from the very springs of life. The Church is somehow tainted; it is not in touch with the vivid life of the cosmos.'³ What Lawrence seeks and insists upon is 'pure relationship' with the cosmos. He believed that if modern man was ever to re-establish a connection with the universe, he would have to reject the dead Christian ritualism and dogma. We must get back into relation, vivid and nourishing relation to the cosmos and the universe. Lawrence talks up the contrast between the commanding of Christianity and singing of nature:

And before Buddha or Jesus spoke the nightingale sang, and long after words of Jesus and Buddha are gone into oblivion the nightingale will sing. Because it is neither preaching nor teaching nor commanding nor urging. It is just singing and in the beginning was not a word, but a Chirp.⁴

It is crystal clear that there is a basic difference between the working of an organised and dogmatic religion like Christianity and that of nature. The one upon the free, instinctive and institutional modes of living. Nature, on the other hand, only confirms and re-inforces such modes. In the essential Lawrence, nature nowhere interferes with or intrudes upon the spontaneous and natural feeling of man. As a matter of fact, nature keeps on singing, as it were, breathing out vitality which imperceptibility and

effortlessly passes into the being of the observer who looks upon nature as an integral part of its being. As an inexhaustible treasure of vitality, nature keeps on supporting and feeding the vital aspects of man. In Lawrence, nature does not become an external teacher or educator. He, for one, does not believe in the dualism of subject and object. His views of nature is basically mystical in which only communion between man and nature can be imagined and no communication. Nature communes whereas Christianity communicates. Whereas Christianity is circumscribed by time and place, nature is eternal. The singing of the nightingale is timeless. Vitality belongs to the timeless, to nature. Man instinctively seeks to eternal and the important in his immediate actions:

Not only in Lawrence's works but also in the history of literature, we find traces of original thoughts which are condemned, by pointing out that the work presents a close reading of senses rather than that of ethos. This chapter aims at comparing Lawrence creative output with Indian view of life and highlighting affinities between them. Let us deal with the issue first in 'Eastern' context in general and Indian in particular. It is remarkable to note that, India, which is known as the world for its philosophical and spiritual deliberations and prescriptions does not leave any aspect of the corporeal world untouched, because the human enchanted world is the object of the metaphysical queries and inquisitive. One should not think that Indians or the Hindus have given importance only to metaphysics and that they are interested in the next world only. They have not neglected the worldly life, the society and the pleasures of senses. The four important aspects of Indian philosophy '*Dharma*' (social behaviour), '*Artha*' (economic prosperity), '*kama*' (sexual gratification) and '*Moksha*' (spiritual realization) make the subject comprehensively relevant. The place given to '*Dharma*' and the importance of '*Artha*' has been acquired by '*Kama*' also. There is no dearth of illustrations of sex in the *Vedas* in the *Brahmana*, in the *Upanishads*, in the *Puranas*. There sex is neither neglected nor discarded in the name of public or social morality which is very difficult to define. There are instances and clues which establish a relationship between man's social, religious and sexual behaviour. Hindu Festivals like 'Holi' and 'Durga Puja' are strongly coloured with sexual language in many part parts of India. The festival of the goddess Kali is marked with obscene songs,¹⁶ at the time of Bharani festival in Kerala and in the region of Kashmir, the goddess kasmira, is said to menstruate on the 5th of the bright half of the month of the Phalguna', after which regular ploughing is to start.¹⁷ Later, on the dark 14th of the month of Chaitra (which is called Pisaca-Chaturdasi, the fourteenth of the ghosts) people are said to go round about the streets, dancing and singing gaily along with prostitutes.⁴ In the Asvayeya festival, coming about the month of October, the ancient Kashmir is said to go gay uttering sexy expressions.¹⁹ The swing festival in the eastern part of India is also marked with similar activities which indicated the fructification of the earth. Along with these living traditions of festivals that have the strong tinge of sex, we have multiple examples which mentions the Vedic concept of ritual sex.

The above account shows that sex or kama is the emotional self of man. S. Radha Krishnan also expresses the same view by adding a practiced aspect to it. His first '*Ashrama*', not to stop the continuity of progeny.⁵ At the marriage ceremony the father of bride says, "I am giving my daughter; you have accepted her for progeny. "The bride groom replies thus," you are giving your daughter; I have accepted

her for progeny.”⁶ Upanisadic seers further instruct that as this act of intercourse is like a sacrifice, one should understand all the matters relating to it. It proclaims that one who does not know this, does not get any pleasure and he will not become an apple of woman’s eye. That was why, perhaps the people never hesitated to speak about sex and to discuss sex problems. They knew that the pleasure arising from sexual sport is incomparable with any other pleasure. Not only men expressed their love openly, women also requested for sex-sport to those whom they liked. They wooed and beguiled the persons for sexual pleasure.

Life-which is consist of multiple shades-love, hatred, jealousy, ambition, problems, human passions, men’s common joys and sorrows and destiny which were already old when literature came into existence and ever new as ever today-as life and death. These themes are taken up and handled not merely by different great writers but also by different people, at different times- under changing conditions and in response to shifting conception of literary art. In Lawrence’s view, Christian dogma is wonder less and productive of boredom, an endless boredom. On the other hand nature is permeated with a sense of wonder, which is fundamental to life. In ‘*Hymns is a Man’s Life*’, Lawrence reveals that in his childhood, he approached the Biblical hymns with a sense of wonder and mystery with the result that without bothering about ‘any Christian dogma or any salvation’. Lawrence is compelled to reject the mental consciousness of Christianity in favour of an instinctive and intuitional awareness and appreciation of nature which to Lawrence is the embodiment of all that is potent, life-living and essential in life. In the vein of Wordsworth, Lawrence adopting paganism and discharging Christianity that stands in the way of spontaneous and disinterested enjoyment of nature will like sing:

The world is too much with us; late and soon,

Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:

Little we see in nature that is ours;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon:

The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,⁸

To sum up, Christianity, by way of dogmatizing and conventionalizing the spontaneous and natural modes of living and inter-relatedness between man and man, by cultivating more and more of mental consciousness at the cost of the instinctive and intuitional framework of man’s being, by commanding man to live and abide by set and fixed patterns of life and by stiffening and hardening the free moral and religious sense of man into the inert, sterile and deadened dogma of an organized religion, has certainly taken away man from his earth contact and rendered the darker and vital aspects of nature meaningless and futile for him, The novels of Lawrence worked against the Christian didactic morality and exerted in favour of nature which in the words of Lawrence, changes the blood rather than the mind.

He, advocates ‘a morality of actual living, not of salvation’. Whereas Christianity harps upon the motive of salvation, nature nourishes and vitalizes actual living. Actual living is the heaving and living of the blood; salvation, the other hand, is didactic and mental reservation and complex.

REFERENCES

1. *The Rainbow*, p. 206.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
3. *Phoenix*, p. 202.
4. *The Complete, Short Novels*, p. 41
5. *Nilmata Purana*, V. p. 681.
6. *Taittiriya panisad*, pp. 1.11.
7. *Brahma Karma Samuccaya*, Vagdana Prayoge, p. 115.
8. *The World is Too Much with us, Late and Soon, The complete Poetical works of Wordswarth*, pp. 353