

The Psychological Bases of Lawrence's Sons and Lovers: Some Educational Implications

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Abstract

Lawrence is said to be a writer who, while writing, goes deeper into the human mind and soul. For those who charge him of obscenity and those who think that he calls for the practice of sex as such, a word of caution is necessary. Lawrence's concept of love and sex is based on the rationalisation of both and directing them towards supreme and legal purposes of pre-creation. He, in fact, identifies the deeper psychological needs of human beings to combine the mental and bodily, spiritual, and physical properties for the sake of achieving a real humanitarian sense of love and sex. Though most of the books on Lawrence have tackled this issue, this study has approached it from both a psychological and educational perspective.

1. Psychology and Literary Criticism

A universally acknowledged truth is that every writer is a product of the age in which he/she is born and bred, and in which he/she works and creates. In various ways, his/her writings express his/her age and his/her works cannot be understood without an understanding of the times in which he/she lives. Thus, no writer can escape the influences of his environment: social, cultural, political, and intellectual. It is also true that a critic could decide whether a work is good or bad through the psychological investigation of individual authors.

Psychology, then, comes closer to literary criticism through the psychological study of particular authors to show the relation between their attitudes and states of mind and the special qualities of their works.

There are two traditional approaches to Lawrence's Sons and Lovers. While the first approach risks reducing the novel to a case history, the second is the autobiographical approach, exploring the

many passages where Lawrence seems to be retelling his own experience fictionally. However, there might be no evidence to prove that Lawrence wrote Sons and Lovers with the intention of writing his own biography. The chief concern of the present study is to shed light on this other approach, which treats the novel as a psychological study, emphasizing particularly Paul's Oedipus complex. Though the first approach could be psychological in essence because Lawrence might unconsciously write the novel to be his own autobiography, it is not the concern of this study.

Initially titled 'Paul Morel', Sons and Lovers, published in 1913, is Lawrence's third novel. To the best knowledge of the researcher, it is one of the first British novels, which explicitly deal with sexual matters. It is one of the first 'Freudian novels' that deal with the so-called Oedipus complex, or the sexual childhood attraction of a young boy for his mother.

When Sons and Lovers first appeared, many readers and critics welcomed its erotic frankness and saw it as a revolutionary

fictional partner of the pioneering work of Sigmund Freud, the father of psychiatry. It opened out, for English fiction, a completely new territory of psychic relationships that required a radical modification of the conventional ideas of character, plot, and moral significance; a territory that most impressively charted by Lawrence himself in his later fiction.

The novel is the first to be observed from within as it begins like a nineteenth century realistic novel but ends as a twentieth century exploratory one. Indeed, it gives a true and full picture of the industrial life and deals with serious problems such as frustration, conflict and alcoholism in the mining community. It, for instance, treats many issues such as the effect of the industrial revolution on the family affairs and future life and the tragic effect of an alcoholic father on his family.

1.1 The Psychological Paradigm⁽¹⁾

By the last decade of the 19th century, there was a complete breakdown of the agrarian way of life and economy. This decade could represent the end of rural England, and the increasing urbanization and industrialisation of the century, but they brought in their wake their own problems. The century ushered in an era of moral perplexity and uncertainty. The rise of the scientific spirit and rationalism led to the questioning of socially accepted beliefs, conventions and traditions.

Under this impact, the 20th century has witnessed a gradual weakening of religious

⁽¹⁾ Sampson (1980) should be credited for his term 'paradigm', which means, in one sense, the general intellectual or scientific climate. The term suits the purpose of this study which tries to approach the topic scientifically via Psychology.

faith, hence, religious controversies no longer exercised any significant influence on public issues. Besides, moral and ethical values were no longer regarded as absolute. Then, there has been a loosening in sex taboos and an increase in sexual promiscuity as the public opinion no more operates as a check in crowded cities. The breakdown of accepted values has resulted in increased inwardness and increased withdrawal of the individual within his own shell (Tilak, 1975: 5-9)

This, consequently, gives the ways to some alternative theories and ideologies to appear. Freud developed a theory of personality and a system of psychotherapy known as psychoanalysis. Freudian theories, for instance, have a great deal of influence on western thinking. Freud's focus on sex, as the driving force of human behavior, and repression of sexual desires, as a cause of neurosis, made a considerable impact on medical and social scientists. He emphasizes the power of the unconscious to affect conduct and the century's intellectual convictions. Individuals are encouraged to express freely innate sexual and aggressive desires that further contribute to changing the sexual attitudes and lack of inhibition in the society at large. With Freud pointing out that individual's conduct is not guided and controlled by the conscious and that it is rather at the mercy of the forces lying buried deep within the subconscious and the unconscious, the impact of new psychology specially appeared since that time (Ibid: 7; Encarta Encyclopedia, 2002: online)

The new psychology has had a profound influence on 20th century moral attitudes, especially in matters of sex. The study of the subconscious and unconscious becomes a major theme of modern literature. Intellect, then, is no longer regarded as the means of true and real

understanding and emphasis is placed on feeling and intuitions. The theory of the Oedipus complex has actually caused a sensation and been freely exploited by the 20th century writers, such as Lawrence. Hence, rationalism, along with humanism, becomes at a discount as the role of the irrational in determining human conduct has been emphasized more and more (Ibid.)

Generally speaking, the modern writer is intensely conscious of his age and does not fail to reflect it in his works. To what extent is the age reflected in the novel of the period, especially in the field of psychology, shall be examined in the following pages.

1.2 Freud's Psychoanalytical Theory

As the founder of psychoanalysis, Freud compared the human mind to an iceberg. The tip above the water represents consciousness and the vast region below the surface symbolizes the unconscious mind. He believed that much of an individual's personality develops before the age of six. He also proposed that children pass through a series of psychosexual stages, during which they express sexual energy in different ways. According to him, boys become sexually attracted to their mothers and feel hostility and jealous toward their fathers. Similarly, girls develop sexual feelings toward their fathers and feel rage toward their mothers. In Freud's view, such innate sexual and aggressive drives cause feelings and thoughts that the person regards as unacceptable. In response, the individual represses these feelings and drive them into the unconscious mind (ibid.)

In the process, three basic personality structures are formed: the id, ego, and superego. Out of them, the id is totally unconscious. Id forces are unconscious and often emerge without an individual's

awareness, causing fear, anxiety, depression, or any other distressing feelings. These three function as an inseparable whole (ibid.). The id represents unchecked instinctual drives; the superego is the voice of social conscience whereas the ego is the rational thinking that mediates between the id and the superego and deals with reality. Thus, the bewildering number of interrelated observations uncovered by psychoanalytic exploration led to the development of a model for the three-structure functional psychic system. This system gives a clear understanding of psychosexual development and unconscious motivation of behavior. Freud describes the unconscious innerself as id and conscious self as ego. Ego is regarded as active portion of personality adapting to the forces of id, external reality, and superego (Wikipedia: online)

At the time Lawrence was developing as a writer, Freud was revolutionizing the way the world looked at sexuality. He believed that children naturally have sexual derives or urges and that the first focus of these feelings is the parent of the opposite sex (Salami, 1999: 452). The child urges remain active from childhood and are expressed in activities such as sucking and swallowing. They explain the children's love for their parents where children develop sexual attitudes toward parents of the opposite sex and a simultaneous rivalry toward the other. Freud calls this as the 'Oedipus complex', which is foundation of his psychoanalytic theory, and thinks that it resolves as a child grows (Wikipedia: online)

1.3 Oedipus Complex

A basic assumption of the Freudian theory is that the unconscious conflicts involve instinctual impulses, or drives, originated in childhood. As these conflicts are recognized by the adult, his or her adult

mind can find solutions that were unattainable to the **immature** mind of the child. The depiction of the role of instinctual drives in human life is a unique feature of the theory (Encarta Encyclopedia, 2002)

In psychoanalysis, Oedipus complex is a son's largely unconscious attraction toward his mother accompanied by jealousy toward his father or daughter's largely unconscious attraction toward her father accompanied by jealousy toward her mother. Freud thinks that Oedipus complex was the most important event of boy's childhood as it had a great effect upon his subsequent adult life. Freud believes that as a result of this unconscious experience a boy with an Oedipus complex feels guilt and experiences strong emotional conflicts. He states that the oedipal period, occurs at about four to six years of age. At this specific stage of development, the child for the first time becomes capable of an emotional attachment to the parent of the opposite sex. This is similar to the adult's relationship to a mate; the child simultaneously reacts as a rival to the parent of the same sex. Physical immaturity dooms the child's desires to frustration and to his/her failure in the first step toward adulthood (ibid)

1.3.1 Origin and Definitions

The name Oedipus has been borrowed from the classical story of the Greek myth of Oedipus, the mythical and tragic king of Thebes. He was the son of Laius and Jocasta. He unknowingly killed his father and married his mother (Wikipedia: online; Webster's dictionary, 1992: 696; Hornby, 2005: 1051). When the infant Oedipus was abandoned, he was found by a shepherd who gave him to King Polybus and Queen Merope (or Periboea) of Corinth, who raised him to adulthood. Later, traveling

through his original hometown, Oedipus killed Laius in a roadside argument, not knowing who he was, and went on to marry Jocasta, also not knowing who she was. When Oedipus found out that she committed a suicide, he forced her brooch pins into his eyes (Wikipedia: online).

This legend inspired Freud to come up with the Oedipus complex. Freud developed the Oedipus complex as an explanation of the formation of the id, ego, and superego. He described the concept and explained it as the maturation of the infant boy through identification with the father and desire for the mother

Oedipus is a name that signifies or is derived from "a swollen foot", "swell", "a foot". The Oedipus conflict or complex is a concept developed by Freud to explain the infant boy maturation through identification with the father and desire for the mother. It is described as a state of psycho-sexual development and awareness first occurring around the age of 4-6 years, i.e. during the phallic stage, in Freudian terms (Wikipedia: online)

Freud considered this complex the cornerstone of the superego and the nucleus of all human relationships. Nonetheless, while acknowledging the significance of the oedipal relationships to personality development in culture, many psychiatrists ascribe love and attraction toward one parent and hatred and antagonism toward the other not necessarily to sexual rivalry but to resentment of parental authoritarian power (The Columbia Encyclopedia, 2001-05)

2. The Oedipus Complex in Sons and Lovers

2.1 The Psychological Atmosphere

There is a shift in the theme of the modern novelist. The individual is more important for him than society. The psychological probing into the sub-conscious reveal that every individual has a separate

personality peculiar to him, and that one particular personality can never merge or become one with another. Each individual is a lonely soul (Tilak, 1975: 15). As a twentieth-century novelist, Lawrence (1885-1930) brought the subjects of sex, psychology, and religion to the fore-front of literature. He considers the great society as the enemy of the individual and wants it to be reformed. He points out that individuals must first fully realise themselves as individuals before they can come into any true contact with the otherness of other individuals. True love consists in realising this otherness of the object of love and respecting it. Love should not be possessive and dominant; it rather should be considerate and sympathetic in the psychological sense of the word. Marriage is, thus, not a consummation true love, but rather than an uncertain beginning of it True love may result only later when an adjustment of individual sensibilities has taken place (ibid.,: 16)

Sons and Lovers, one of the most widely read novels, is the first psycho-analytical novel in the English language. It produces the novelist's re-creation of his own personal experiences through the protagonist, Paul Morel. Lawrence's use of Freud's Oedipus complex with his mother is of critical importance. Agreeing with Freud, Lawrence concluded that if a boy did not eventually suppress this attraction and begin to identify with his father, he would never be able to transfer his early love for his mother to a suitable partner.

Salami (1999: 452) thinks that some readers find an abnormally passionate attachment between Mrs. Morel and her sons. Lawrence was familiar with Freud's theories 'and they probably influenced his writings of sons and lovers. Since the novel's publication in 1913, many critics and

psychologists have considered it a penetrating study of the sexual dynamics of son-mother love and the way this love might destroy the man who cannot transfer such feelings to a mate

Sons and Lovers, thus, was the first modern portrayal of this phenomenon. Never was a son more indentured to his mother's love and full of hatred for his father than Paul Morel, Lawrence's young prota-gonist; never, that is, except perhaps Lawrence himself. It is a story of the unnatural devotion of Paul Morel to his possessive mother, Gertrude. He seems very much like a man suffering from an Oedipus complex. At times, Paul's relationship with Gertrude is disturbingly passionate. He hates his father and dreams of living exclusively with his mother. He, consequently, has grave problems finding a satisfying relationship with any woman other than his mother (ibid.)

Lodge (2002: online) brings to minds that Lawrence's depiction of the Oedipus complex in Sons and Lovers was a self-conscious attempt to incorporate Freudian theory; he makes us realize that psychiatry influenced literature as much as literature influenced psychiatry.

2.2 Themes:

Lawrence was one of the first novelists to introduce themes of psychology into his works. There can be no argument that Lawrence's Sons and Lovers was a study of human relationships through psychology. It is a closely autobiographical novel set in the Nottingham- shire coal-mining village of Bestwood. Walter Morel has married a sensitive and high-minded woman better educated than him. She began to shrink from his drunkenness and lack of fine feeling; embittered, she turned their marriage into a battle. Baffled and

thwarted, Morel was sometimes violent, while Mrs. Morel rejected him and turned all her love towards her four children.

It is the Oedipus complex with which Lawrence weaves this novel by the character of Mrs. Morel. She is the main character of the novel whether in her actual words or her effect on her sons when she is not in the scene (Al-Ghadeer, 1999: 17-8)

Mother-fixation is the central theme of Sons and Lovers, but there is no denying the fact that Oedipus complex is the central theme of the novel, and that it shows the harmful effect of too much devotion to the mother on the children.

There are two themes that work together, the second being the result of the first, the 'crippling' and 'split'. The novel shows the crippling effects of a mother's love on the emotional development of her son and the 'split' between kinds of love, physical, and spiritual that the son develops. Represented by Paul, Lawrence loves his mother and hates her simultaneously; he also loves his father and hates him as well. He hates his mother for compelling his love and hates his father due to the true Freudian jealousy. Yet, he loves him for what he is in himself and hence he more deeply sympathises with him because his wholeness has been destroyed by the mother's domination (Tilak, 1999: 113)

The novel provides with two kinds of love: human spiritual and non-human sensual. None of them could satisfy the young man loving his mother. Here, the hero is looking for a woman able, for a while, to give him his sexual manhood and his separate selfhood. In the concluding scene, this rootless and despairing hero makes a final rejection of his childhood sweetheart, home and his past just to be isolated, purposeless, and unfulfilled. Lawrence grappled with the discordant

loves that haunted all his life: the love for Miriam, his spiritual childhood sweetheart, and for his mother, introduced as Mrs. Morel.

By Lawrence's own account, the novel is a book aimed at depicting Mrs. Morel's grasp. As her sons grow up, she selects them as lovers, first the eldest then the second. These sons are urged, on and on, into life by their reciprocal love of her. Nevertheless, when they come to manhood, they cannot love because she is the strongest power in their lives.

2.3 The Development of Oedipus Complex

Sons and Lovers has a rigorously controlled structure by the idea of an organic disturbance in the relationships of men and women. It is the disturbance of sexual polarities that is first seen in the disaffection of mother and father, then in the mother's attempt to substitute her sons for her husband. In the sons' unsuccessful struggle to establish natural manhood, Lawrence's has ultimately developed this idea with certain major implications. It, first, implies that his characters have transgressed against the natural life-directed conditions of the human animal, i.e., against the elementary biological rhythms man shares with the rest of biological nature. It, furthermore, implies that this *offence* against life has been brought about by a failure to respect the complete and terminal individuality of persons.

So, the mother, who tries to possess her husband and sons, and Miriam, who tries to possess Paul, represent a kind of twisted desires to possess other persons disrespecting their individuality. This offence is a disease of modern life in all its manifestations beginning with the sexual up

to the broad social and political relationships (Coles, 1981: 61)

Lawrence is adept at planting small scenes within larger narrative sweeps to highlight general behavior and perplexing emotions. For instance, the scene, in which Morel interrupts his wife and Heaton, explains, without abstract commentary, Morel's jealousy over Heaton's relationship with his wife and even his child. It also explains his bitterness over his job in comparison with the clergyman's and his growing irritation with his wife (see Lawrence, 1968: 46-47)

Though her psychological snare is immense, Mrs. Morel takes neither William, who dies early, nor Paul, whom she further intensifies her grip on, as a literal lover. Complicating this oedipal relationship, Mr. Morel acts in an infantile dependent manner and becomes, in effect, an ignored middle child. Despite this temporarily enhances his relationship with his wife, whatever love they had is gone and he no longer has the power of being an imposing father figure.

With William, there is a reverse Oedipus complex at play. He desires the approval of Mrs. Morel who seems to be in love with him, but he is not nearly as dependent on her as she is on him. Her jealousy over the girls who visit him and have sent him love-letters is thinly veiled. Moreover, he is drifting further from the family. He is more devoted to his own career uses his money for his personal life. As a result, it seems that Paul starts working not only to compensate for the loss of the family's income, but also to take over William's position as the responsible son. Paul even gleefully announces that he is the 'man in the house' when his father is in the hospital.

Mrs. Morel has a tendency to transfer dissatisfied feelings from one area of her life

(such as her marriage) to another area (her children). It may be assumed that she projects her longing for William onto Paul. Just as she previously transferred her dissatisfaction with her life to her love for William, she reacts with overflowing love for her second son. This continues the hinted oedipal theme and bolsters the idea of oppositions playing off each other.

With this new status, there comes a more confused sexual identity. When Paul and his mother go to Nottingham together, Lawrence describes them as "feeling the excitement of lovers having an adventure together". Paul's Oedipus complex is sketched out in his ambition to share a cottage with his mother after his father dies. Although this does not include the oedipal desire of murdering the father, the psychological implications are clear (see Lawrence, 1968: ch. V)

Mrs. Morel loathes Paul's Miriam from the start, understanding that the girl's deep love of her son will oust her: "She's not like an ordinary woman, who can leave me my share in him. She wants to absorb him" (ibid.: 237). Meanwhile, Paul plays his part with equal fervor, incapable of committing himself in either direction: "Why did his mother sit at home and suffer? Why did he hate Miriam, and feel so cruel towards her, at the thought of his mother? If Miriam caused his mother suffering, then he hated her, and he easily can". Soon thereafter, he even confesses to his mother: "I really don't love her. I talk to her, but I want to come home to you" (ibid.: 261)

The result of all this is that Paul throws Miriam over for a married suffragette, Clara Dawes, who fulfills the sexual component of his ascent to manhood but leaves him, as ever, without a complete relationship to challenge his love for his mother (BookRags, 2005: online)

Paul strengthens the connections between the two women when he fuses his mother and Miriam through his painting: his mother provides the artistic inspiration while Miriam helps him shape the final product. However, this blending confuses Paul's evident sexual desires when the image of his mother, and not Miriam, presides in his head at night. Perhaps Miriam is simply a way for Paul to get to a younger version of his mother before she was ruined by her husband and William's death

Some themes that are presented in *Sons and Lovers* give rise to questions concerning the relationships Lawrence had with his mother and his girlfriends. For example, Lawrence's bondage is apparent in Paul's digressive attitude about marriage because of his consciousness that Mrs. Morel, his mother, is disapproving of any girl that comes between her and Paul. The id model is illustrated in Paul's bondage because the conscious is overpowering the unconscious in his mental thoughts. Paul is not capable of making decisions that contradict the desires of other individuals, specifically his mother.

Paul's over consciousness of Mrs. Morel is not simply done by being attentive, but by rejecting others whom she dislikes, especially Mr. Morel. Therefore, Paul eventually becomes so intimate with Mrs. Morel that their relationship seems sexual. Paul's fixation on his mother and his hatred of his father contributes to a confusion of his sexual identity and to his inability to love girls of his own age in a normal healthy way. The source of this abnormal desire for sexual pleasure is the *id*.

However, Paul's superego teaches him that he cannot consciously commit incest with his mother because society views this practice as an indecent act. The conflict between the *id* and the superego causes a

psychological split that causes Paul to seek out girls who perform the psychological role of mother-surrogates. These girls are: Miriam who is a representation of the spiritual love and Clara Dawes the buxom who, from a Freudian viewpoint, represents the 'degraded sex-object', the fallen woman, and equally the projection of the son's prohibited erotic desires for his mother (Worthen, 1997: online)

Thus, the ego helps determine a way of obtaining Paul's physical satisfaction while staying socially accepted. Miriam desires intense spiritual attention but Clara wants Paul's greater sexual experience, which frees her from her husband. Paul finds no satisfaction from either Miriam or Clara because both girls use him for personal gain. Therefore, Paul becomes filled with a violent hatred for his mother and his girlfriends, which is an aggressive instinct that also derives from the *id*.

Consequently, Paul spends every last moment watching his sick mother anguish in pain, a suffering that becomes more than he can bear. He dimly realizes that he has never lived outside his mother and therefore has never really lived. The feelings that he cannot live without her and cannot live an independent life as long as she is alive run side by side. Paul's actions neither release him from his mother's bondage nor help him develop a life of his own. Therefore, he forms a seemingly suicidal mentality, while maintaining hope through the remembrance of his mother (*ibid.*) (*see also* Lawrence, 1968, ch. XIV)

3. The Concept of Sex

3.1 Lawrence and Freudianism

For Freud, Man is a biological phenomenon, a creature of instincts and impulses. He believes that children naturally have sexual drives and the first focus of

these feelings is the parent of the opposite sex (Salami, 1999: 452). For Freud, everything can be interpreted according to subcon-sciousness. He believes in the dominance of sexual and ego drives are libidinal. Sex is basic in the analysis of the human behaviour (Ahmed, 2006: online). While Freud attributes all human activity to sexual motives.

Lawrence seems to disagree with him. The former emphasizes a unilateral aspect of man, i.e., man as a biological phenomenon and a creature of instincts and impulses, but the latter emphasizes duality in man, i.e., man is a combination of spirit and body. As Freud tends to show an actual reaction of industrialism, Lawrence goes further to prove in practice that Freudianism is a matter of dehumanization and that the spiritual aspect of man is essential. Man is a spirit in nature; bodily pleasures are temporary and forgettable.

In *Sons and Lovers*, one could get a strong feeling that survival in modern industrial society depends upon strong heterosexual relationships, which is only possible when both man and woman are spiritually and physically vital. Paul's unfulfilled quest for this sort of relationship is a major theme of *Sons and Lovers*. Sex is a bone contention between Paul and his two loves Miriam and Clara. Both women want a personal relationship, whereas Paul views sex as rather impersonal. The woman is not an object but a catalyst for man's mystical communion with nature. Clara and Miriam feel that Paul does not make love to them as individuals but as symbols of womanhood (Tilak, 1975:176)

Lawrence feels that modern industrial life caused such sexual warfare between man and woman. Sex, which the author views as a healthy expression of man's link to God and nature, had been perverted by

the Victorian morality and the dehumansation of mechanised industrial life. His sense of sex as good was alien to the Victorian belief that it was evil and beastly. Sex was not supposed to be a topic of any conversation between a man and a good woman. The character of Miriam is a depiction of repressed sexuality common in the Victorian woman⁽²⁾.

Few years before Lawrence, the industrial revolution had finally brought its blessings and its curses to Eastwood. Most significantly, he felt that men had become mechanical creatures that had lost the warmth and dynamism, which was in the essential nature of human beings. He clearly distinguishes between the lower and the higher planes of being and consciousness, the sensual and the spiritual, and he lays his emphasis on the spiritual significance of sex. He is realistic enough to recognise that man is both body and soul, and therefore, the body too must not be denied. Rather, the two must work in harmony. Physical union with the opposite sex releases passional tides of ecstasy that open the window to the spiritual. Thus, the physical is sublimated into the spiritual as neither physical nor spiritual love alone is sufficient. There must be a union of the two for 'vital fulfillment' (Tilak, 1975: 44)

In effect, modern man is denying what is vital in himself, which is the spirit primarily, and this infuriated Lawrence. A man who has lost this vitality will have meaningless sex experience; he will seek woman for mere bodily pleasure. This phenomenon became the focal point for Lawrence's attack on the system mechanisation. Sex alone may not cure the

(²) Many other writers were encouraged by Lawrence's bold descriptions of the sexual act and continued his revolutionary work in their own novels.

world problems. Yet, meaningful sexual activity could not be experienced unless the participants had vitality and that was important for Lawrence. None of Lawrence's characters looks forward to living happily ever after; their vitality is something they most continually work for.

Lawrence's view of sex is that man and woman must have the realisation that their sexual union is for a purpose, which is procreation. They should fully enjoy the sexual act in a way that their feeling and mind are in a union in that act. Mind, then, is crucial to Lawrence in the sexual action as he finds that there is a misconception that when people have sex, they think they are doing it because it is expected of them to do it whereas the fact, as Lawrence puts it, is that the mind is interested and the body has to be provoked (Al-Ghadeer, 1999: 4). The balance and harmony between the sexual action and the realisation of this action means having reverence for sex. Here, Lawrence is rationalising the practice of sex as he wants human mind to apprehend the real notion of sex instead of understanding sex as a mere physical bodily practice, just like animals.

What Lawrence is talking about, then, is a lot more complicated than just sex; it is the spiritual regeneration of modern man and it would be difficult to find a more serious or more important subject. However, the careful reader will soon find that sex with Lawrence is never simple in any case. It had, for him, metaphysical implications. No one, he says, has a complete soul. It is only a partial fragment until the divine love-union, then, could be temporarily fulfilled. Harrison (2000: 32) reports that "the Biblical language of the forward to *Sons and Lovers* suggests a specifically Christian discourse. In fact, it expresses not a theological, but a profound

ontological truth". This means that Lawrence has tackled the topic of sex from more than one point of view. He is not only thinking about the subject from its psychological aspects; he, in more than one respect, thinks of it from a metaphysical and religious points of view.

3.2 Other Views

Lawrence is not the only one who rejects the concept of sex according to Freud. Popular culture often seeks to portray Freud as a pervert and proclaim his theory of the Oedipus complex utter nonsense. However, there were always a great deal of critiques of the Oedipus complex among psychoanalysts and philosophers who contended with Freud's belief in the dominance of the sex drive and whether ego drives were libidinal.

Criticising Freud's over-emphasis on sex, Rafilo outlined that Freud gives a person three alternatives to choose as a desired behavior:

- to follow the instruction of his sexual urges,
- to become wicked and face the disgrace of society, or
- to repress his sexual desires to please society and expose himself to the danger of suffering from neurosis or renounce his instinctual desires and try to deviate himself by substitutes as art, religion and morality (Ahmed, 2006: online)

As an alternative to Freud's theory, Rafilo explains that the child loves his parents, feels an admiration for them, and ascribes perfection to them. The superego that develops as an interaction between parent and child demands an ever-increasing perfection. Thus, one can say that the individual is under powerful influence of a desire for the perfect and being admirable

throughout his life. In childhood, his desire finds an outlet in the persons of the parents and teachers. As his knowledge increases, he finds other and better objects and ideas worthy of love and devotion and he is naturally attracted to them, being compelled by the urge of his nature. It appears that the repression of the sexual urge is the cause of neurotic symptomatology; it can also be explained that the symptom may be due to obstruction of the urge of consciousness for perfection and conflict created by sexual urges. The fundamental cause of emotional trouble is the choice of the love of a wrong ideal. Thus, the cause of cure may not lie as much in the discovery of conflict as in the changing or the raising of the ideal.

Ahmed (ibid.) states that even Freud's own followers, Adler and Jung and other neo-Freudians, found it difficult to agree with Freud. Adler maintains that the unconscious urge is the impulse to power while Jung emphasized on collective unconscious. Other psychoanalysts such as Karen Horney and Erich Fromm also rejected Freud's ideas about sexuality as the basic force of life. Horney states that Freud's focus on sex as the driving force of human behavior was one-sided and led to other distortions. She emphasized on the influence of *family* on the development of personality and pointed out that Oedipus complex occurs only in distorted parent-child relationship.

All four theorist share several core orientations which characterize the neo-Freudian approach .First, they all a more positive and optimistic view of human nature than does classical psychoanalysis; they stress the striving for self-actualisation, for active adaptation to the environment and for social relatedness and harmony, in contrast to Freud's emphasis on antisocial impulses of sexuality and aggression. Where

Freud sees the individual as in inevitable conflict with the society which demands restriction of his impulse acts, the neo-Freudians propose a more harmonious relationship between the individual and society. They see social life as a fulfillment of basic human nature , not a repression of it. . In addition, these writers pay as much attention to the role of conscious conflicts and experiences in adolescence and adulthood as to unconscious conflicts in early childhood. Finally they stress the effects of the social milieu in determining personality (Harre and Lamb,1986: 168)

3.3 Some Educational Implications

A literary work is a piece of art which teaches, delights, motivates, and encourages students to make sense out of language; it provides the link between language and culture (Lado, 1964: 151). For Hill (1986: 7), the study of literature begins in delight and ends in wisdom. Literary texts are seen as authentic material.

Sons and Lovers has been taught as a textbook within the curriculum of teaching literature in the Departments of English in the Colleges of Arts and Education of the Iraqi Universities for many years. it is included within the literary courses of teaching English as a foreign language. Yet, for Hill (1986: 7), most works of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching language but language is the medium of literary work . As piece of art, the novel conveys a kind of moral massage and a true representation of life (Gray, 1984: 143).

Fries (1966: 228) thinks that the novelist is concerned with presenting a segment of human experience which shows attitudes towards human values; therefore, one may not only identify himself with the

characters and live the story but he may also regard the activity as a laboratory experiment in conduct. He may hold it up to view, question it and criticize it by discovering the characters' thoughts, feeling, customs, possessions, what they say, believe in, fear, enjoy, how they speak and behave behind closed doors.

Consequently, teachers of literature at universities should lead their students to discover how each of the essentials, i.e., setting, plot, character, and theme, is related functionally to the others and then to appreciate how a novelist weaves a multiplicity of meaning into an expressive unity that gives his novel an aesthetic form. Thus, it is the teacher's job to provide the bridge that links between the world of the novel and that of the students (Fowler, 1965: 237).

This means to relate literature to life by taking the students to the world of the novel to explore that world and, sometimes, unite with it. It is a demanding task of any instructor to decide on what the teaching of literature can offer, to show the students how much is demanded of a reader if he is to get full enjoyment out of a literary work, and to ensure that the students acquire the necessary knowledge (Hort, 1963: 65)

Marckward (1978: 67) believes that it is unfortunate that little has been said of the way of teaching literature. As for Sons and Lovers, unless one could understand the real thematic background and the real atmosphere of the novel he may go to far-fetched conclusions that may lead him away far from the real intensions of the author. Lawrence's fiction comes more and more to be concerned not only with morality in the ordinary sense but also with psychic ebb and flow within and between characters, i.e., 'the flow and recoil of feeling'. Such a tracing of the psychic rhythm is a highly moral inquiry since it is an exploration of the individual's deepest self. It opens out into the reader's world, illuminating and

enhancing it by the depth of its insight and the steady honesty of its vision. It does not simply provide a hero who has chosen his mother's side and rejected his father's but it also shows subtly the process by which this choice is gradually and finally confirmed. It is the first English novel depicts the harmful effects of mother-fixation. It is an extremely powerful novel of deep sincerity, which studies with penetrating insight the relationship between the son and the mother.

Freudian theories have a great deal of influence on western thinking. Freud's focus on sex as the driving force of human behavior and repression of sexual desires as a cause of neurosis, made a considerable impact on society. Individuals are encouraged to express freely aggressive and sexual desires, which further contribute in changing the sexual attitudes and lack of inhibition in the society at large. Families are disintegrated; divorce rate and number of unwed mothers have increased sharply. Excessive sexual indulgence is predominant in adolescents and young adults. Apparent in the novel, in a home where parental figures are unloving, showing no respect toward each other, rejecting and punitive towards their children, conflict, loneliness, guilt, loss of self-esteem that results in manifestation of a variety of pathological disorders are mostly common events. Moreover, according to Freud, higher activities like art, science and religion have no intrinsic worth. These activities are attempts of man to compensate for his unsatisfied sexual desires (Ahmed, 2006: online).

Unfortunately, in today's Western society the religious, moral and ethical values have been declining. The families are falling apart, divorce rate is increasing sharply, substance abuse and excessive sexual indulgence are common in adolescents and young adults. These factors lead to conflicts, resentment, loss of self-respect, loneliness, depression, anxiety and a

host of psychological symptoms. Despite progress in the behavioral sciences, there remains the question of whether current technique of treatment and prevention of emotional disturbances are effective in making a significant impact on psychiatric problems (ibid.)

Islam proves to have a significant role in satisfying physical as well as spiritual needs. Islam teaches proper codes of behaviour and conservation of social values and gives a meaning for man existence. It helps in toleration and developing adaptive capacities for stressful events of life and gives a sense of self-respect and teaches about the virtues of family life and the cohesive society with a sense of brotherhood.

Family is an important socio-cultural institution, which makes a considerable impact on personality development and a potential factor in emotional disorders. Once one incorporates the image of God in innerself, there is no conflict with external reality and superego. Therefore, Qur'an emphasizes again and again, about healthy parent-child relationship and parents' responsibility toward upbringing. In a home where parents have a role of strong loving and protective figures, the child develops trust, self-confidence and interjects the love and authority of parents and God, with proper attention toward developing a sense of self-worth and dignity (ibid)

4. Conclusions

It was in the early years of the 20th that Freud shook the foundations of human thought by his revolutionary discoveries in the field of psychology as he stated that thoughts buried deep in the unconscious and the subconscious constantly keep coming to the surface and an amount of human personality cannot be complete and satisfactory unless these hidden elements are given their due weight.

The modern novel is pre-dominantly psychological. The role of the irrational in

determining human conduct is being emphasised more and more. Consequently, the study of the subconscious, even the unconscious, is a major theme of modern literature. Intellect is no longer regarded as the means of true and real understanding and emphasis is placed on feeling and intuition. Rationalism, and along with it Humanism, is at a discount.

As a record of Lawrence's emotional and spiritual struggle as a youth and the problems of most young people with the desire to love and to be loved, *Sons and Lovers* shows the effect of psychology upon writers of literature. Freud's theory of Oedipus complex, for example, has caused a sensation and is being freely exploited by 20th century writers such as Lawrence.

Though Lawrence's psychological insights into modern man are truly of peerless genius, he has been charged with obscenity. He has been often misunderstood and regarded as sensualist and some of his novels were banned as obscene since he broke free from the Victorian taboos on sex. He treated the subject in a free and frank manner without any inhibition. But in fact, he regards sex as a great spiritual and physical union between a man and a woman as a basic way for the realisation of God. Thus, he seeks to sublimate the sexual act and raised it to the level of a spiritual experience. Nonetheless, there are a number of causes which lead to a conflict between the sexes, the most important of which is the attempt at domination either on the part of the male or of the female; the relationship between the sexes must be one of reconciliation, and not of domination.

Accordingly, instructors teaching the novel should teach their students *Sons and Lovers* in terms of moral, spiritual, religious and metaphysical aspects of life rather than pure physical and sexual aspects. They, educationally, should have their own goals behind that and should aim, for instance, at encouraging students to study the text and think critically of their real world and compare it to that of the novel. They, then,

could examine different human experiences they are exposed to. They should realise that certain social and educational theories prove to have a significant role in satisfying physical as well as spiritual needs and provide solutions for most of the psychological and social problems related to the family as well as to the individual. Islam, for instance, teaches man a code of behavior and gives a meaning for his existence. Islamic principles, which are based on the Glorious Quran and Hadith, are the best form of prevention and treatment of emotional disturbances that Freud portrays miserably.

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