CHAPTER IV
NATURE SYMBOLISM

This is a kind of mind which employs symbolism either by reducing religion and poetry to sensuous images ritualistically arranged, or by using sign or images on behalf of the transcendental realities, moral or philosophical, which lies beyond them. Another kind of mind thinks of symbolism as something calculated, as a deliberate mental translation of concepts into illustrative, sensuous terms. In Cole ride’s opinion, which allegory is merely a translation of abstract notions into a picture-language, which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses, a symbol “is characterized by a translucence of the special (the species) in the individual, or of the general (genus) in the special… above all, by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal.” An image may be invoked once as a metaphor; but if it persistently recurs, it become a symbol.

Symbolism is an invaluable aspect of the modern art. The human mind functions symbolically “when some component of its experience elicit consciousness, beliefs, emotions and usages respecting other components of its experience.” The former set of components becomes symbol and the latter the meaning of it. He further adds that there must be
“some community between the nature of symbol and its meaning.” S.K. Langer and W.M. Urban also insist that there should be some sort of similarity between the symbol and the thing symbolized, otherwise, being unrelated, it would not be a symbol but “empty imagining.” A.N. Whitehead further points out that the objects of symbolism is the enhancement of the importance of wheat it symbolises. Virginia Woolf stresses these two points in her essay On Not Knowing Greek written in 1925 long before these philosophers. But a symbol, as W.M. Urban holds, “is suggestion or insight rather than direct or literal representation.”

True, symbols do not inform, but suggest and evoke. The modern psychologist have imparted a new meaning and dimension to symbols. In his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower, Jung points out that they are the corollary of a psychic process of development, and not rational thinking. To Feaud, they are “unconscious ideation.” Human mind functions symbolically, and so there is a community between the nature of a symbol and its meaning. Man has always been in love with imagination since times immemorial, and hence symbolic expression has been given a greater importance than an ordinary flow of language. Through symbol is not a once to one correspondence-like sign, yet it has its own values. It is rather the container of a sign. It enables man to interpret and organise his experiences, every one of which is a discovery
because it is a certain of reality. Through different in forms, all symbols functions in the same direction. Science builds them of facts, and art builds them of feelings. Symbolism is an outward device for presenting an inward state, and literature uses adequate words to create an image of time, space or dynamic pattern of feeling. The potency of the real thing is contained in the world that creates it.

In the novel symbols perform varied functions in varied ways. These may serve a character, the author, the reader of the critic. When a symbol serves a character, it carries some thing to him and shows his reaction to it. The character’s response enables us to understand his nature a little better. Obscurities, too deep for our reason to comprehend and explore, are best expressed through symbols. For the author and the reader, the symbol is punitive. It unites and organizes experiences in a kind of order, and reveals the complex relationships among seemingly divided things. Symbols can unite man to man to something greater than he – such as society, God etc. It can unite the unconscious to the conscious. Besides putting the reader and the author together, it unites the different parts of the novel and establishes a communication between them. Thus it unites the author, the reader and the fact, and is useful for the critic.
Symbol in the novel has a particular role to play, it is essentially a collective concept. But in a realistic novel, it is always casually related to its meaning. All human lives are somehow determined by indefinable principles which operate outside the domain of cause and effect, but which have a hidden meaning that manifest itself in external phenomenon. A novel may contain symbols and it can claim to be literature on account of these symbols. Yet it is by no means a necessary condition. The novel represents life, and many writers like Stenches, Balzac and Tolstoy have done very well without using symbols consciously. The 19th century novel is not the product of an imagination working in symbolic forms; it is a realistic representation of life. This particular form of novel is anti-symbolic, for it is opposed to the entire class of elements to which the symbol belongs. It seeks meaning in actual experience. The symbolic novel imposes a particular meaning or reality. The symbol in the realistic novel is casually related to its meaning. In the symbolic novel, it is a transcendent embodiments of the intended meaning. For example, a lamb symbolises innocence, or a bird with broken wings symbolises frustration. Since the realistic symbol is a direct reflection of the intended meaning, it has expressionistic potentialities. The symbolic novel is also expressionistic, but it achieves this quality by renouncing the casual connection between meaning and image. It gives
the image a transcendent meaning. The meaning is transcendent because the image embodies a meaning with which it has no direct connection.

The symbolic novel drawn its images from the realism of religion and myth. These two realms provide an authoritative interpretation of the symbol through the belief, or at least a memory of that belief, that genuinely links meaning and image. Ursula Brumn, in the article Symbolism and the Novel, feels that symbols without this mythological past are “private inventions”,9 such as used by Virginia Wolf and T.S. Eliot. Symbols in the novel are of two major types: the realistic and the transcendent. Both of them are the products of man’s imagination in its search for meaning.

Lawrence thinks that all art is symbolic, consciously or unconsciously, and that his novels mainly contain unconscious symbolism. In the letter written to D.V. Leader handler on September 12, 1929 he writes:

… all art is au fond symbolic, conscious or unconscious.

When I began Lady C., of course I did not know what I was doing – I did not deliberately work symbolically. But by the time the book was finished I realized what the unconscious symbolism was …. The wood is of course unconscious
symbolism was …. The wood is of course unconscious symbolism – perhaps even the mines – even Mrs. Bolton.\textsuperscript{10}

Again, Lawrence’s symbolism is an elaboration of the psychological implications of the term ‘symbol’, for the usually employs symbols to present the unconscious in man which is knowable only through the symbol. Naturally, his symbolism cannot be easily exemplified. Above all, his symbolism is predominately poetic, and he is perhaps the first English novelist to employ it effectively in this form. Lawrence defines symbols as ‘organic units of consciousness with a life of their own.’\textsuperscript{11} The value of symbols, according to him, “dynamic, emotional, belonging to the sense-consciousness of the body and soul, and not simply mental.”\textsuperscript{12} He makes an important distinction between allegory and symbolism. Allegory is a technique of presenting vision, and its purpose is to clarify abstract through by conveying it through concrete symbols. It is ethical in nature. In it images are use to express certain definite qualities. In myth also, images, which we call symbols, are used to express ideas. But these do not serve any didactic purposes. Through symbols, human experience too deep to be comprehended are narrated. Speaking of allegory and symbols, he says:

Allegory is narrative description using as a rule, images to express certain definite qualities. Each images means
something, and is a term in the argument and nearly always for a moral or didactics purpose, for under the narrative for under the narrative of an allegory lies a dative argument, usually moral. Myth likewise is descriptive narrative using images. But myth is never an argument, it never has a didactic nor a moral purpose, you can draw no conclusion from it. Myth is an attempt to narrate a whole human experience, of which the purpose is too deep, going too deep in the blood and soul, for mental explanation or description…

And the images of myth are symbols. They don’t “Mean something”. They stand for units of human feeling, human feeling, human experience. A complex of emotional experience is a symbol. And the power of the symbol is to arouse the deep emotional self, and the dynamic self, beyond comprehension. Many ages of accumulated experience still throb within a symbol. And we throb in response it takes centuries a rally significant symbol: even the symbol of the cross, or the horsehide, or the horn. No man can invent symbols. He can invent an emblem, made up of images: or metaphors: or images: but no symbols. Some images, in the
course of many generations of men, become symbols, embedded in the soul and ready to start alive when touched, carried on in the human consciousness for centuries. And again, when man become unresponsive and half dead, symbols die.\textsuperscript{13}

Lawrence feels that knowledge should be symbolical, mythical and dynamic for the common people of society. He further point out that there may be two classes in society: a higher, responsible conscious class; and lower classes possession different degree of unconsciousness. Symbols should be realistic in nature. The higher, responsible and conscious classes according to Lawrence, should provide interpretation of symbols to the lower classes.\textsuperscript{14} Again, in the same vein, Lawrence recommends total illiteracy for the lower classes. This leaves us with the image of a society in which the ruling and dictating the symbols to which these inordinate masses given unconscious obedience.\textsuperscript{15}

Through Lawrence’s novels are quite meaningful at the purely realistic level of what the characters says and do, a good deal of their significance can be understood only by realising that they also exist at another level, i.e. symbolic level. In some of his major novels, such as \textit{Sons and Lovers}, \textit{The Rainbow} and \textit{Women in Love}, the full meaning and much of the superb artistry emanate from the symbolic use of imagery.
The flower imagery in *Sons and Lovers*, for example, is not included simply for its picturesque appeal, but for the light it through on certain characters and scene. Like wise, in *The Rainbow* the images of arches and rainbows, recurring throughout the novel, have more than incidental significance, and so is the case with the moon image present in several important exposit in that book and in *Women in Love*. Lawrence has a magnificent gift for natural descriptions; but the descriptions are not included in his work simply as background, for they are often symbolic. His novels are, indeed, saturated with symbolism. No wonder, then, if a detailed study of symbolism in his novels in essential to comprehended fully his mind and art.

Symbols is are a very effective tool in the hands of a great artist like Lawrence. They form an internal part of his nature descriptions and are waved in their texture. Lawrence has expressed his views on symbolism which are found scattered in his letters, his essay, ‘The Dragon of Apocalypse’ and his book ‘Fantasia of the unconscious’. He held the view that basically a symbol was emotive in nature and non-rational in origin. He points out:

You can’t give a great symbol a ‘meaning’, any more than you can give a cat a ‘meaning’. Symbols are organic units of consciousness with a life of their own, and you can never
explain then away, because their value is dynamic, emotional belonging to the sense-consciousness of the body and soul and not simply mental.\textsuperscript{16}

Lawrence maintenance that symbols stand for emotional experience and have nothing to do with any kind of mental origin. Commenting on the nature and function of symbolism, he says:

Many ages of accumulated experience still throb within a symbol. And we throb in response. It takes centuries to create a really significant symbol: even the symbol of the cross, or of the horse-shoe, or the horns. No man can invent symbols. He can invent emblems, made up of images: or metaphors: or images: but no symbols. Some image in the course of many generations of men, become symbols embedded in the soul and ready to start alive when touched, carried on in human consciousness for centuries. And again, when men become unresponsive and half-dead, symbols die.\textsuperscript{17}

It is obvious that a symbol derives its life and strength from emotional experience. Since symbols are without any fixed meaning, it is not possible to explain them rationally. Lawrence laid great stress on contextual nature of symbols because much of their significance and
meaning lawny in individual responses. The full implication of his views could be understood only in relation to his art. Since Lawrence discusses symbolism in particular context, it would not be proper to generalise the nature of his symbol structure.

Lawrence does not belong to any literary movement. Also, he is not a follower of any writer. He is original in his approach and his symbols are, therefore, personal. He believes that all art is symbolic, consciously or coconsciously. In a letter to D.V. Leader handler in Sept., 1929, he remarks:

…all art is au fond symbolic, conscious or unconscious. When I began Lady C., of course I did not know what I was doing – I did not deliberately work symbolically. But by the time the book was finished I realised what the unconscious symbolism was …. The wood is of course unconscious symbolism – perhaps even the mines – even Mrs. Bolton.18

Lawrence attempts to probe the unconscious in man which he comprehended only with the help of symbols. Lawrence’s range of symbols is quite vast and includes all the major objects of nature, the Biblical personage and episodes in natural background and finally wild animals and birds. What is remarkable about Lawrence is that the handles
this wide field of symbolism with a rare degree of perfection. As is well-
know, Lawrence imbibed the spirit of the Bible at any early age. 
Naturally the impact of the Bible is very strong bon him. All his major symbols have their origin in the Bible. The horses dancing in Ursula’s conspicuousness in ‘The Rainbow’ and ‘St. Mawr’ can be linked with the horses in the ‘Apocalypses’. The flood in ‘The Rainbow’ that kills Tom Brangwen and the flood that unites the virgin girl with the gipsy can be associated with the flood in the Bible. When Lawrence writes a poem about feigns, he cannot help associating them with Eye. When he looks a the oblives, he is reminded immediately of the New Testament. While writing about the fish, he remembers that in the beginning, Jesus was called the fish. He members that in the beginning, Jesus was called the fish. Actually there is abundant use of the Biblical personage in a natural background.

The Biblical language exerts a certain fascination over the characters. In the background of their consciousness, the Biblical images keep hovering. In ‘Sons and Lovers’, the boy, Paul, seeking a big red moon life itself over the Hill-tops, thinks ‘of the Bible, that the moon should be turned to blood.”19 While describing Ursula Brangwen’s children in the Paint bow. Lawrence expresses his own fascination for the Christ symbol. Every Sunday she finds herself in ‘a strange undefined place, where here spirit could wander in dreams, unassailed.”20 Ursula
observes Christ from a distance: The White-robed spirit of Christ passed between trees. In fact, it is the beauty and the mystery of the Jesus-symbol that holds her rapt. She felt that:

Jesus was beautifully remote, shining in the distance like a white moon at sunset.

Ursula did not believe in the human existence of Christ. From the instances cited above, it becomes obvious that even when the Christian dogmas have been rejected, the Christian symbolism remains intact and alive in most of the work of Lawrence. What is remarkable in Lawrence is the strange attraction he feels towards the Jesus symbol. Lawrence has considerably enhanced the force of his expression through the use of various objects of nature as symbols. The sun, the moon, frost, water sea, bush, church, cathedral, rainbow, oak tree, corn, horse, lamb and tiger are some of the major symbols employed by Lawrence.

Moon figures prominently as a symbol. Lawrence regards the moon as the symbol of the powerful, possessive female that destroys the male. In ‘The Rainbow’, Ursula represents the moon. The novelist describes the feelings of Ursula as she stands face to face with the moon:

She turned, and saw a great white moon looking at her over the hill. And her breast opened to it, she was cleaved like a
transparent jewel to its light. She stood filled with the moon, offering herself. Her two breasts opened to make way for it, her body opened wide like a quivering anemone, a sort dilated invitation touched by the moon. She wanted the moon to fill in the her, she wanted more, more communion with the moon, consummation.23

Ursula merges with the moon and is totally lost. Skrebensky puts a cloak on her to cover her from the moonlight. She continues to be in a state of trance:

She was not there. Patiently she sat, under the cloak, with sikirebensky holding her hand. But her naked self was away there beating upon the moonlight, dashing the moonlight with her breasts and her keens in meeting in the communion. She half started, to in actuality, to fling away her clothing and fear away, away from this dark confusion and chaos of people to the hill and the moon.24

Ursula is identified with the moon and Skrebenky who lives an unreal existence, cannot face the vital force of life and is, therefore, destroyed by it. The novelist remarks:

She stood for some moments out in the overwhelming luminosity of the moon. She seemed a beam of gleaming power. She was afraid of what she was. Looking at him, at
his shadowy, unreal, wavering presence, a sudden lust seized her, to lay hold of him and tear him and make him into nothing. Her hands and wrists felt immeasurably hard and strong, like blades. He waited there beside her like a shadow which she wanted to dissipate, destroy as the moonlight destroys a darkness, annihilate, have done with. She looked at him and her face gleamed bright and inspired. She tempted him.  

As a cold moonlight, Ursula puts an end to the shadow-like unreal existence of Skrebensky. Moon, ‘the orbed maiden’, also stands for the feminine nature and love in its conventional, romantic sense. In ‘Women in Love’, when Birkin throws stones at the reflection of the moon in water, trying to break it up, her is, in fact, resisting Ursula’s demand for physical love. Ursula is observing all this, whereas Birkin is not aware of anybody’s presence there. The novelist describes the scene in these words:

And he was not satisfied. Like a madness, he must go on. He got large stones, and threw them, one after the other, at the white-burning centre of the moon, till there was nothing but a rocking of hollow noise, and a pond surged up, no moon any more, only a few broken flakes tangled and glittering
broadcast in the darkness,…. Flakes of light appeared here
and there, glittering tormented among the shadows, far off,
in strange places; among the dripping shadow of the willow
on the island. Brikin stood and listened and was satisfied.  

But soon the various fragments were re-uniting and taking a definite
shape again:

Gradually the fragments caught together reunited, heaving,
rocking, dancing, falling back as in panic, but working their
way home again persistently … the cluster growing
mysteriously larger and brighter, as gleam after gleam fell in
with the whole, until a ragged rose, a distorted, frayed moon
easy shaking upon the waters again, reasserted, renewed,
trying to recover from its convulsion, to get over the
disfigurement and the agitations, to be whole and composed
at peace.  

Birkin failed to break the moon which regained its original shape
immediately afterwards. Again moonlight has deep symbolic
significance. It is a source of solace and peace for the troubled souls. In
‘Sons and Lovers’, Mrs. Morel stands all alone in the quiet of the moon-
lit night. Through she is torn by conflicting ideas and is in a disturbed
frame of mind, she definitely feels a little pacified, surrounded as she is by a flood of moonlight. The novelist observes:

She became aware of something about her. With an effort she roused herself to see what it was that penetrated her consciousness. The tall white lilies ere reeling in the moonlight and the air was charged with their perfume, as with a presence…. They seemed to be stitching in the moonlight. She put her hand into one white bin. The gold scarily showed on her fingers by moonlight. She bent down to look at the bibful of yellow pollen; but it only appeared dusky. The she drank a deep draught of the scent. It almost made her dizzy. 28

Thus moon stands for the solace and soothing effect it exerts on the creatures of this universe. Lawrence saw in the moon, not just a symbol of Ursula’s feminine nature, but also a means of expressing her yearning to be free, radiant, presiding, yet finally dependent on the powerful light of her partner, the sun knowing fully well that her life is unfilled, Ursula demands love, but she objects to one-sided love and service:

…. You don’t want to serve me, and yet you want me to serve you. It is so one-sided: 29
Ursula wants to establish mutual relationship on the basis of love, equality and free will.

The sun is a towering nature symbol in the novels of Lawrence and is associated with warmth and vitality. It provides strength to the sagging spirits who feel chilled due to lack of vital force. In ‘The White Peacock’, Lawrence refers to the life-giving power of the sun and says:

The heavy afternoon sunlight came round us warm and revising. We shivered and the untruth went out the our veins and we were no longer children.

Lawrence believes that many of our ills are due to this fact that we have failed to appreciate the power of the cosmic planets like the sun and the moon. We do not have any communion with them with the result that we have not been able to derive the power and energy from. Lawrence refers to the deep and abiding relationship between man and sun thus:

Who says the sun cannot speak to me; The sun has a great blazing consciousness. When I can strip myself of the trash of personal feelings and ideas and get down to my naked sun-self, then the sun and I can commence by the hour, the blacing interchange, and he gives me life, sun-life, and I send him a little new brightness from the bright blood. The
great sun, like on angry dragon, hater of the nervous and personal consciousness in us. As all these modern sunbathers must realise, for they become disintegrated by the very sun that bronzes them. But the sun, like a lion, loves the bright red blood of life, and can give it an infinite enrichment if we know how to receive it. But we don’t. We have lost the sun. and he only falls on us and destroys us, decomposing something in us: the dragon of destruction instead of the life-bringer.\textsuperscript{31}

Lawrence holds man responsible for isolating himself from the cosmic planets. Now, instead of being a source of great energy and potency, the sun has turned against human beings. Lawrence regards the sun and the moon as the symbols of vitality. He writes:

There is an eternal vital correspondence between our nerves and the moon. If we get out of contact and harmony with the sun and moon, then both turn into great dragons of destruction against us. The sun is a great source of blood-vitality, it streams strength to us. Put once we resist the sun, and say: It is a mere ball of gas:- then the very streaming vitality of sunshine turns into subtle distinetative force in us, and undoes us.\textsuperscript{32}
Thus it is acknowledged face that the sun and the moon exercise a deep and lasting effect on human beings. If an effort is made to ignore them, it is bound to invite the wrath of these divine forces. Through his novels and short stories, Lawrence expressed his faith in the cosmic unity. His short story, ‘Sun’ is a fine illustration of his views on the power of the sun on human body and mind. Juliet, the heroine of the story, is a physical and spiritual wreck. Doctors adviser her husband to take her away to the sun. The following dialogue between her and her mother gives an idea of her unhappy state of mind:

‘You now, Juliet, the doctor told you to lie in sun, without your clothes. Why don’t you?’ said the mother.

‘When I am fit to do so, I will. Do you want to kill me?’ Juliet flew at her.

‘To kill you, no : Only to do you good’

‘For God’s sake, leave off wanting to do me good.’

The conversation shows the bitterness of her feelings. However, one day, while still in bed, she seems the sun rising. She develops a sudden urge to go naked to the sun. She controls herself. However, one day, she leaves the house, site down near cypress tress and exposes herself to the sun in all nakedness:

She could feel the sun penetrating even into her hones; nay, farther, even into her emotions and her thoughts. The dark
tensions of her emotion began to give way, the could dark cloths of her thoughts began to dissolve. She was beginning to feel warm right through turning over she left her shoulders dissolve in the sun, her loins, the back of her things even her heels. And she lay half stunned with wonder at the thing that was happening to her. Her weary, children heart was melting, and, in melting, evaporating.\textsuperscript{34}

The effect of the sun is really electrifying. She undergoes a total transformation. She returns home ‘half-seeing, sun-blinded and sun-dazed’- This blindness proves to be a blessing in disguise. Her attitude to her son also changes. So far she has been trying to avoid him, but all of a sudden he is transfigured into an object of love. Sun becomes an obsession with her. The sight of the rising sun gives her an incomparable sense of joy and satisfaction. Every day she visits the cypress tree, undresses herself and absorbs the sun inside her:

She knew the sun in heaven, blue-molten with his white fire edges throwing off fire. And though he shone on all the world, when she lay unclothed he focused on her. It was one of the wonders of the sun, he could shine on a million people and still be the radiant, splendid, unique sun, focused on her alone. With her knowledge of the sun, and her conviction that the sun knew her, in the cosmic corneal sense of the
word, came over her a feeling of detachment from people, and a certain contempt for human beings altogether. They were so unrelemental, so unsounded. They were so like graveyard worms.\(^{35}\)

Juliet develops a liking for the sun and becomes conscious of its great vitality. She is set free from all inhibitions and moves about so fearlessly in nature. For the first time, she is convicted that the sun is the source of all energy, vitality and no ability and suck away all the filthy and unwanted material from human body, once exposed to it. Lawrence points out that in the case of Juliet, exposure to the sun was not a mere sun-bath:

> It was not just taking sunbaths. It was much more than that. Something deep inside her unfolded and related, and she was given. By some mysterious power inside her, deeper than her know consciousness and will, she was put into connection with the sun, and the stream flowed of itself, from her worms. She herself, her conscious self, was secondary, a secondary person almost an onlooker. The true Juliet was this dark flow for her deep body to the sun.\(^{36}\)

Juliet becomes aware of the magical powers of the sun which have changed her life-styled. She sheds fears of the snake. Fear originates from
ignorance and the sun takes away that ignorance, leaving the person quite bold and fearless. Lawrence comments:

The curious soothing power of the sun filled her, filled the whole place like a charm, and the snake was part of the place, along with her and the child.\(^\text{37}\)

In fact, the such brings human being and other wild creatures of the universe close to one another. When the husband of Juliet comes to meet his wife and so, he finds then standing naked to the bright sun in the midst of nature. In this story, on the one hand, the sun has purged Juliet of her physical and spiritual troubles, on the other, it has also aroused her dormant instinct of procreation. In his poem, ‘Sun in Me’, Lawrence speaks of the spiritual resurrection of man with the blessing of the sun. He believes that there is a smaller sun in the human body and bigger sun outside. Man receives spiritual light when both of them are fused.

A sun is me

And a sun in heaven

And beyond that, the immense

Sun behind the sun,

The sun of immense distances,

that fold themselves together

Within the genitals of living spare.
And further, the sun within the atom

Which is God in the atom.\textsuperscript{38}

Lawrence holds the view that it is the bigger outer sun which is the ultimate source of light to the inner sun of an individual. If this source of light remains intact, the real, an continues to flourish. But it is possible only when man permits fuller exposure to the cosmic powers. Man acquires cosmic vision only with the help of cosmic power. In Lawrence, while the sun stands for strength and vitality, it stands for power, too. In ‘The Plumed Serpent’ this particular significance of the sun has been emphasized. The Mexican myth of sun worship in ‘The Plumed Serpent’ provides him with the sun as a positive symbol of power. Lawrence employed the symbols of cold ad roost in the different contexts. In ‘Women in Love’, Talking about Gerald, the novelist makes this significant comments:

And was he fated to pass away in this knowledge, this one process of frost-knowledge, death by perfect cold.\textsuperscript{39}

This was a prophetic utterance. In the final scene of the oval, we find Gerald dying in the deep snow of Alpine hills. He moves up the hill in forts and cold and at least meet the tragic death. Thus frost symbolism slow but sure death.

Water has also been used as an important symbol in the novels of Lawrence. He acknowledges the power of water in human life. After the
drawing tragedy in ‘Women in Love’, as Gerald emerges upon the surface of water, he says:

> It is curious how much room there seems a whole universe under there: and as cold as hell, you’re as helpless as if your head was cut off.\(^{40}\)

In fact, it is the desire of Lawrence to explore this Underwood of water which leaves one aghast at its vast reservoir of power. It is not without significance that death in both ‘The Rainbow’ and ‘Women in Love’ occurs through the images of water—Tom’s drawing in flood and again Gerald’s death in snow. Even Mr. Crich dies with these words on his lips: ‘Is there much more water in Denley’\(^{41}\) Death is liquid and insubstantial like water and water as a great natural force put an end to human identity:

> Death of Diana Crich by drawing is a grim reminder of the great force of water. While, on one hand, water is the basic of nourishment of human life on the other hand, it is a great destroyer of life also. In ‘Women in Love’, Gerald is associated with the symbol of water. In fact, the feels quite at ease in water. In the chapter, ‘Diver’, the novelist remarks:

> …. He was immune and perfect. He loved his own vigorous, thrusting motion, and the violent impulse of the very cold against his limbs, buoying him up.\(^{42}\)
Water seems to have a special fascinations for Gerald. As he swims in the lake, the novelist comments:

…. He was alone now, and immune in the middle of the waters, which he had all to himself. He exulted in his isolation in the new element, unquestioned and unconditioned. He was happy, thrusting with his legs and all his body, without bond or conation anywhere, just himself in the watery world.\(^{43}\)

While this contact with water gives a sense of satisfaction it can also tempt a person to his cold and icy grave. Gerald dives down a number of times to discover the dead body. Narrating his experience of the underworld, he remarks:

… it is so cold, actually, and so endless, so different really from what it is on top, so endless-you wonder how it is, so many are alive, why we’re up here.\(^{44}\)

Gerald is persuaded to abandon his efforts to discover the dead body in the bottom of the lake. The ‘cold signifies death and destruction. Already we know that the ‘water party’ has ended in death by water.

In ‘Kangaroo’ and ‘The Boy in the Bush’, Lawrence uses bush as a symbol of ‘the strange untried … the immense remote, the wild, the
watery, the unshared’. Somers feels frightened by what he sees in the bush-something big and aware and hidden. The novelist observes:

But the bush, the gray Charred bush. It scared him…. It was so phantom – Like, so ghostly, with its tall place trees and many dead trees, like corpses, partly charred by bush fires; and then the foliage no dark, like gray-green iron. And then it was so deathly still.45

The stillness of the place heightens the mystery of the bush and its surroundings. Thus bush stands for awe and mystery of nature. In Lawrence, corn is the symbol of fertility and growth/Ursula and Skrebensky move towards the corn field. Some strange kind of feeling grips skerbens:

There he saw, with something like terror, the great new stacks of corn glistening and gleaming transfigured, silvery and present under the nigh-blue sky….46

Again, the fertility of the harvest scene also reminds us that the corn has been ransacked and cut. Destruction is a part of harvest – gathering as well as its ripeness. It symbolises the destructive element in Anna-will relationship. In the chapter, ‘Anna Victory’, the young couple now married, lies as if the heavens had fallen, and he were sitting with her among the ruins in a new world, everybody else buried.

Roger Dataller observes: ‘…. What the Health was to Hardy, so was the Mine to Lawrence….47 Son of a minor, Lawrence was deeply
affected by mines. The poor workers worked in deep mines. Their unhappy and miserable life influenced the whole generation. Here was Lawrence, a sensitive young boy who understood the depth of darkness in the life of the poor workers. In Lawrence, mines are associated with darkness. The influence of his father, a coal mine worker, lingers on. Lawrence worship the earthen perhaps because in his heart of hearts, he has great regard for his father. That is why darkness finds frequent references in his novels. H.T. Moore points out: This was probably a development of the image of mine-darkness which must have always haunted him.\textsuperscript{48} Lawrence had observed the mines and their darkness, from close quarters. In ‘Women in Love’, the novelist remarks: “on the left was a large landscape, a valley with collieries… white and black smoke rose up in steady columns.’\textsuperscript{49}

Growing darkness, on the one hand, means unhappiness and misery in the life of mine workers. On the other hand, darkness indicates that increasing industrialisation has given a setback to natural beauty. In ‘The Rainbow’, Lawrence emphasizes will’s darkness from the moment he enters the novel. He is like:

Some mysterious animal that lived in the darkness under the leaves and never came out, but which lived vividly, swift and intense.\textsuperscript{50}
Thus Lawrence uses this language of darkness persistently. He feels that light and darkness are important symbols in human life. Ursula-Birkin relationship rises above physical relationship. It is the merging of the souls. When physical existence becomes insignificant, darkness vanished from life. The unification of souls releases light which ends human loneliness and brings meaning and purpose to life. Light means understanding the real and deeper purpose of life. Ursula and Birkin are groping in the dark and when they talk of light, they see the purpose of life. When Ursula is teaching the children in the class, Birkin appears there all of a sudden. As they discuss things, Birkin continues the conversation. ‘It is so dark’, he said, ‘shall we have the light?’

It is Birkin who is the source of light. He brings light to Ursula. The novelist observes:

She looked like one who is suddenly wakened.

In the novels of Lawrence, mines have a very significance. Alivina’s visit to the mines of her father permits her a glimpse into the flow sensuous currents below the surface of ordinary life. Lawrence has close personal knowledge of the mines and he associates the darkness of the mines with the dark current which flows below the surface of normal life. The result is that avian comes out of the mine totally changed with a new vision. The surface world has changed.
It is now a velvet surface. A velvet surface of golden light, velvet-pile of gold and pale luminosity….

Later, when she surrenders to cicio, the same images of dark, destructive doom that Alvina experiences in the mine are evolved again.

The wood and mines are important symbols in ‘Lady Chatterley’s Lover’. Here wood and the gamekeeper stand for growth. The wood symbolises the tradition and greatness of he old England that was smashed during the war. Lawrence remarks:

Clifford loved the wood; he loved the old Oak-trees.

He felt they were his own through generations…

Clifford feels attached to the woods which represent the greatness and glory of the past traditions. The wood still retains some of its old mystery. In the novels of D.H. Lawrence, sea occupies a very important place and symbolises the dark power of nature. In fact, Lawrence likes things in motion. The movement and energy of the sea appeal to him. In ‘Kagaroo’, Somers and his wife, Hairiest are deeply impressed by the power of the sea. Both of them visit the sea-shore. A glimpse of the sea convinces them of its vast power. The novelist writers:

… the wild pacific rolling in one the yellow sand: the wide fierce sea, that makes all the built over land dwindle into
non-existence…. Perhaps the heavy earth-despising swell is part of its pacific nature.\(^{55}\)

Hairiest is enraptured and declares that she cannot feel happy until she lives besides the pacific. While Hairiest expresses her deep liking for the sea, Somers says:

I wish it would send a wave about fifty feet high round the whole coast of Australia.\(^{56}\)

Again in ‘The Rainbow’ Ursula visits the sea-shore and finds herself face to face with eternity. The sea of sternity keeps striking against the rock of time. This proves beyond doubt that the furiously raging sea with its immense power and energy really appeals to Lawrence. The sea is perhaps the most potent symbol of power of nature in motion. Lawrence wrote in 1908…

I never admire the strength of mountains and fixed rocks, but the strength of the sea that leaps and foams frantically and slips back in a make under wash…. I am fascinated by that sort.\(^{57}\)

In this way, Lawrence acknowledge the supremacy and wild power of the sea.

Lawrence has used flowers with deep symbolic meaning. In ‘Sons and Lovers’, flowers, are a flaming experience for Miriam. Paul passed along a fine row of sweet-Pease….
Miriam followed, breathing the fragrance. To her, flowers appeared with such strength she felt she must make them part of herself. When she bent and breathed a flower, it was as if she and the flower were loving each others. 58

Thus flowers are utilised in arousing sex-instinct. The doormat feelings of sex become potent and come to dominate the thinking and behaviour of the young couples. One evening in summer, Mirian and Paul are going over the fields by Harold’s Farm on their way home from the liberty. So it is only three miles to the Willey Farm. There is a yellow glow over the moving grass. Gradually as they walk along the high land, the gold in the west sinks down to red, red to crimson and then the chill blue creeps up against the glow. The novelist observes:

They came not upon the high road to Alorton, which ran white between the darkening fields…. He followed her across the nibbled pasture in the dusk. There was a coolness in the wood, a scent of leaves of honey-suckle, and twilight … she wanted to show him a certain wild rose bush she had discovered. She knew it was wonderful. And yet, till he had seen it, she felt it had not come into her soul. Only he could make it her own, important, she was dissatisfied…. Coming to the edge of the wood, they saw the sky in front, like
mother-of-pearl, and the earth growing dark. Some whether
on the outermost branches of the pinewood the honey suckle
was streaming scent.\textsuperscript{59}

For the first time, flowers, their colour and smell and bloom are used by
Lawrence for stimulating sex-instinct.

In Lawrence, rose is the symbol of marriage-consumption in its
beauty. He creates in ‘Sons and Lovers’ this communion among the
roses: Almost passionately she wanted to be with him communion
together-something that thriller her, something holy…. Paul looked into
Miriam’s eyes. She was pale and expectant with wonder, the lips were
parted, her dark eyes lay open to him…. Her soul quivered. It was the
communion she wanted … and she walked home slowly feeling her
should satisfied with the holiness of the night.\textsuperscript{60} Thus Lawrence has made
an effective use of the rose as a symbol of mellowness and rich sensual
satisfaction.

‘Whiteness’ is a dominate symbol in Lawrence. The use of the
colour ‘white’ repeatedly applied to Helena Brings before us the image of
a Christian innocence and this is how she sees herself. Her quasi religious
approach to sexual union is applying to Lawrence. She can never love
Sigmund, through one right she satisfied his passion completely.
It restored in him the full ‘will to live’. But she felt it destroyed her. Her should seemed blasted.\textsuperscript{61}

She makes a willowing self-sacrifice the whiteness of her dress is in contract with his ruddy face and hands like scarlet flowers in the fire-flow which represents his passion. Fire witness also symbolises destruction. In ‘Women in Love’, there are predated references to the ‘Whiteness’ of Gerald. ‘Whiteness’ of Gerald’s body turns into the magic, hideous white fire.’\textsuperscript{62} In the chapter ‘Rabbit’, glancing at him, gadroon ‘revealed again the mocking, white-cruel recognition.\textsuperscript{63} As the struggle with the rabbit goes on, gorilla looks at Gurdon. The novelist remarks: ‘He looked at her, and the whitish, electric glean in his face intensified.\textsuperscript{64} When Gerald first kisses gurus, the novelist comments:

There seemed a faint, white light emitted from him, a white aura, as if he were a visitor from the unseen.\textsuperscript{65}

Against Gerald was one of these strange white wonderful demons from the north, fulfilled in the destructive frost mystery.\textsuperscript{66} The novelist believe that ‘the white races, having the Artic north behind them, the vast abstraction of ice and snow, would fulfill a mystery of ice-destructive knowledge, snow=abstract anihilation.\textsuperscript{67} In the chapter, ‘Monday’, Ursula Looks at the moon which ‘seemed so mysterious with its white deathly smile.\textsuperscript{68} She moves away hurriedly ‘cowering from the white
Birkin threw stones at the reflection of moon of the surface of water and it was, at once, ‘flying as under in flakes of white and dangerous fire.’ Places of moon seemed to be flying away ‘like white body of fire writing and striving and not even now broken open, not yet violated. Seemed to be drawing together. Here ‘whiteness’ stands for death. Birkin attempts to destroy the moon. Similarly Gerald is also heading towards ruin and self-destruction.

Wild animals and other creatures have been employed for their symbolic significance. In Plumed serpent’, the serpent represents the power of the flesh and eagle, the power of heaven and vision. But although the contraries are a face of life. They do not constitute a negative and disruptive force. In Lawrence, serpent is the favorite symbol of the unconscious or earth wisdom. The opposite principles is the eagle or the spiritual vision. Lawrence presents an integrated picture of these two things.

Horse is perhaps the most significant symbol in Lawrence. It represents vitality which is the key to the understanding of Lawrence and his vision of life. The horse dominated the mind of the early and primitive races. Its power was acknowledged by people in various ways. In ‘St. Mawr’, horse stands for savage maleness that civilization wants to destroy. It is the symbol of the unconquerable maleness that Lawrence is
celebrating. It is the symbol of surging potency and power of movement and action in man.

The incident in which Gerald forcibly keeps the frightened mare near the taint-engine, is open to various interpretations. It symbolises increasing hold of mechanical and industrial forces over the primitive and natural forces. Lawrence remembered very well the incident when Major Thomas Philip Barber, the local coal-owner had made his horse stand at Moor green crossing while a colliery engine moved past. In fact, it had imprinted itself on Lawrence’s imagination as a child. Thus horse and rider for him a symbol of the human will bullying the body or the instincts the lie of nature long before he knew that a symbol was. The Bible confirmed the symbol.

Be ye not as the horse or as the mule which no understanding whose mouth must be held in with bit and birdle.72

Even Plato develops the same symbol into an allegory of the soul as Charioteer … intellect driving a team of horses, one white and compliant, the other black and hardly to be controlled passion. Through his life, Frieda, Lawrence came in contract with the work of European psychologist. This gave him further understanding of horse symbolism.
Lawrence also wrote a letter for the periodical, “The Laughing Horse”, in which he observes: In modern symbolism, the Horse is supposed to stand for the passion…. Thus the horse comes to occupy a vast range and depth of significance.

Rabbit in ‘Women in Love’ embodies and symbolises the dark freeness and impetuosity of nature. Gerald is simply unable to bear and relish the sight of it: “Gurdun saw Gerald’s body tighten; say a sharp blindness come into his eyes.73 The mechanical force as embodies and represented in Gerald comes into a violent tussle with the natural forces which throbs within the rabbit. The rabbit has been spoken of as ‘demon-like beast’, ‘something like a dragon’, unearthly’. Gerald is amazed to find ‘all that force in a rabbit’. The rabbit later has been shown ‘obeying some unknown incantation’. Under the impact of this incantation, ‘round and round the court it went, as if short from a gun, round and round like a furry meteorite, in a tense hard circle that seemed to bind their brains.’74 Thus the rabbit symbolises the mysterious force of nature struggling against the subjugation and domination of the mechanical force, represented in Gerald.

Rainbow, as a symbol, has given rise to various interpretations and hence it has created some controversy too. Lawrence presents the rainbow as a symbol of hope. At one stage, Ursula expresses deep dismay
and disillusionment with the world. For her, it was ‘all husk and shell lying by … ‘where she could see nothing else’ Lawrence gives a new vision to Ursula. It is the vision of a new existence. The novelist observes: ‘But the pole of night was turned and the dawn was coming in.’ This was the dawn of a new world. After the transformation of Ursula, she could see ‘the swelling and the heaving contour of the new germination.’ Thus rainbow is the symbol of the emerging new world, a symbol of regeneration in the future.

The ordinary, untrained and uninitiated reader is sure to miss nature symbols as the moon, the snow, the horse, the snake, the plumed serpent, the white peacock etc. as he is wading through the novels of Lawrence who obviously superimposes his own meaning and notion on such symbols. For example, to such a reader the moon has all the pleasantness and brightness of life about it and it could not be in any was equated with either death or the possessive female. To him the horse, for that matter, could not have any special significance except that it is quite a strong animal to reckon with.

Lawrence by way of discovering his own meanings in these symbols, cannot be said to describe nature for the sake of nature; he in a way, is exploiting nature for his own purposes. As a matter of fact, with a view to exploding and subverting the conventional and age-old beliefs of
the contemporary society, he is precisely trying to thrust forward his own pre-conceived ideas through the medium of nature symbols. In fact, the novels of Lawrence, including the nature descriptions in them, yield acceptable and understandable meaning only on the symbolical level. In this connection, Edward Shanks writes:

They are, in fact, the symbols by meaning of which Mr. Lawrence expresses what continually occupies his mind, the belief that somewhere there must exist some appeasement for the intolerable yearnings which possess the mind of man. Whether there is such an appeasement or not does not concern us here: it is enough if we have disentangled this as the chief motive force of his work. We have still to consider whether he is wise in presenting his symbols under the appearance of men and women from the coal-grimed Midlands. There are obvious disadvantages in this method. Of course, in this respect, something may be said in favour of Lawrence. Most of his nature symbols have a history and mythical background of their own. Erudite and scholarly readers, quite well-versed in myths of different land sand civilizations, are in a position to appreciate the full significance of nature symbols.
There is noteworthy difference between Wordsworth’s approach to nature and that of Lawrence. Whereas the former looks upon all objects of nature as the symbol of God and thus on the spiritual level does not distinguish one object from the other; Lawrence finds some objects of nature as dark and the others as luminous, some as life-imparting and some as death-dealing.
REFERENCES


24. Ibid., p. 319.

25. Ibid., p. 321.


27. Ibid., pp. 279-80.

28. Sons and Lovers, p. 35.


32. Ibid., p. 29.


34. Ibid., pp. 530-31.

35. Ibid., pp. 542-43.

36. Ibid., p. 535.

37. Ibid., p. 537.


47. Rodger Dateller, *Elements of D.H. Lawrence’s Prose Style*, p. 48


49. *Women in Love*, p. 207


55. *Kangaroo*, p. 30.


