Chapter—6

Conclusion

This chapter attempts to converge the ideas otherwise studied in detail and in a diversified manner in previous chapters; so that this multifaceted phenomenon of ‘libido’ may be understood in through manner.

All the four major novels, studied in detail in this dissertation were written in ‘essentially a tragic age’ (between 1913-1928). The only rescue available for mankind in such a traumatic environment is ‘life of instinct’. Only the ‘baptism by fire of passion’ accompanied with love and tenderness and a viable relationship of ‘balanced polarity’ can save them from being annihilated.

For Lawrence, ‘libido and its fulfillment’ is not merely a biological function but a great psychic experience. It is a vital experience of tremendous importance on which the life and very being of the individual largely depends. In fact, this is the part and parcel of that cosmic energy which is the very sustenance of life. So the impetus received into it tends to result in a greater revelation of the personality.
In the beginning, the relationship between Gertrude and Walter is based on and sustained by the life of instinct. This relationship begins on the strength of Walter being passionate, impulsive, virile and instinctive. In this phase libido and its fulfillment (not gratification) plays a very significant role in the direction of establishing a ‘balanced polarity’. Unfortunately, later on Gertrude, being puritan, takes recourse to ‘life of mind’. In other words, she begins asserting the life of intellect; starts feeling miserable and makes other miserable. In fact, she loses her faith on ‘religion of blood’. So she becomes incapable of possessing the ‘bliss’ she earlier had.

Paul, the central figure of *Sons and Lovers* strives relentlessly, throughout the novel, to strike a ‘balanced polarity’ – to actualize his true self in compliance with ‘calling of the soul’. Naturally, libido plays a very decisive role in the evolution of Paul’s personality. The personality of Paul, as a matter of fact is a fragmented one. He and his mother are so largely dependent on each other so as to hamper the natural growth of Paul as ‘man.’ Paul swings like a ping-pong ball amidst the three female characters—Gertrude, Miriam and Clara—all having a peculiarly different sort of personalities.
Ultimately, the ‘male’ inside Paul propels him to make efforts to get rid of his obsession with his mother, to unfasten her hold over him and seek fulfillment with other women—Miriam and Clara. He first turns to Miriam for fulfillment of this desire (libido) but is finally disgruntled. Obviously because Miriam is predominantly spiritual and she has nothing but her spirituality to offer him. She does not want to yield her ‘complete self’. It should be noted here, though Paul and Miriam have sex; that is simply gratification and not fulfillment of libido. Failure on the part of Miriam to baptize herself and Paul by fire of passion drives Paul towards Clara, ‘an embodiment of passion’. In fact, in Paul –Clara relationship, there is a sort of ‘baptism by fire of passion’ but not a complete one so as to make Paul actualise ‘his being’.

Finally, after his mother’s death Paul has a sense of ‘nothingness’. This sense of nothingness clearly suggests, apart from other things, the dissolution of the ‘old stable ego’ of Paul. Resultantly, it shatters illusions—a big leap to actualize his ‘true being’.

According to Lawrence no new thing has ever arisen or arises in life save out of the impulse of the male upon the female, the female upon the male. Sexual desire (libido) and sexual act
(coition) are very important in the regenerative process. If it is achieved, it becomes the via media of a delicate balance between sexes and in turn creates the ‘new being’. In The Rainbow, Tom Brangwen’s great adventure is his adventure into the woman Lydia Lenskey. This creates a new awareness within him—the birth of new self within the known and acknowledged self. Lawrence feels that the source of deep human desire is ‘the unknown,’ the primal unknown from which all creation issues. Further in order to become fulfilled we must yield our ultimate will to the unknown. Tom Brangwan realizes this and in order to find himself, he gives himself over to the ‘unknown’ in the woman. Once this is done the promise of rainbow is partially fulfilled. Towards the end of his life he realises that his life had been one long marital embrace, but both he and his wife had stopped just short of the “Great Unknown”; they do not go on to explore the new world which they have glimpsed. The rainbow in the novel symbolises the transfigured life. Tom and Lydia receive the call and respond and are saved.

Contrary to Tom and Lydia, there is relationship of Will and Anna, replete with evils of domination and the egoistical clash of wills. In their context sexual desire (libido) works almost negatively. Being ego dominated, Anna and Will do not recognize
their respective ‘otherness’. In fact, a recognition of this otherness goes with a recognition that man and woman come together rhythmically. The coming together must be spontaneous, must arise from a need below the level of mere mental consciousness. It must not be willed, it must not solely arise from the ego. But Anaa and Will’s coming together is willed from the very beginning. Much more, at a certain phase of their relationship, gratification of the libido becomes the sole aim of Will’s life—that is nothing but lust. So they reject the call of the rainbow and turn towards disintegration—Will to church and Anaa to her role of Magna Mater.

The third love affair in the Rainbow, between Ursula and Skrebensky, fails because it too is willed from the very beginning. The immense energy of the libidinal force could not be harnessed and sex could not become a means of transfiguration and ‘leaping off into the unknown’. In fact Ursula wants something of Skrebensky that he cannot give her. This is because he lacks individuality. His life lies in the established order of the society. So the passion he offers Ursula excludes ‘the unknown’.
Being an open ended novel, Rainbow holds forth the promise of fulfillment. Ursula continues her search for ‘the son of God’ and finds ‘her son of God’ in *Women in Love*.

In *Women in Love* we find two aspects of libido—redemptive and destructive—in function. In the relationship between Ursula and Birkin libido works in a redemptive manner resulting ultimately in their regeneration. In the relationship between Gerald and Gudrun it works destructively leading to their disintegration.

Ursula and Birkin base their standard of values on pure being. Rejecting the dynamics of property ownership they find in love the ultimate harbinger of real happiness. Initially Birkin corrupted by his experience, (especially with Hermoine Roddice), though desirous of love is unwilling to forfeit his proud singleness. However, after Ursula’s flouncing off, Birkin makes the final commitment. His heart wins over his mind and he wants her to return to him. He affirms his faith in ‘otherness’. Ursula and Birkin, however, acknowledge only independent ‘otherness’, involving neither mastery nor subservience. Such sort of ‘otherness’ naturally suggests absence of ego.
In this way, both Ursula and Birkin who choose love as the vehicle of their adventure into the unknown are affirmed by it. Their true union is marked both by transformation and transcendence to a better state of "tenderness" instead of sexual greed. It should be noted that this union of ideal and physical response achieves Ursula's childhood dream about ‘the sons of God seeing the daughters of men’.

On the other hand the trio of Gudrun, Gerald and Loerke suggests the process of disintegration. Love between Gudrun and Gerald is a matter of self assertion, another form of hatred. Characteristically enough they do not seek affirmation of the other. In other words there is no recognition of the ‘otherness.’ So their love becomes a struggle for supremacy where the assertion of the one implies the annihilation of the other. Naturally, sexual communion between such ego dominated male and female is not going to prove a ‘leap into the unknown.’ In fact this is nothing but satiation of their lust. Owing to inherent fallacies of their personalities they meet their destined end. Gerald is ultimately destroyed and meets his icy death while Gudrun remains wedded to soulless abstraction of pure art. It should be noted that at first Gerald, by virtue of the will, destroys Pussum and later he himself
is destroyed by Gudrun by the power of this diabolical will—an agent of ego. Further, sexual perversions of Gudrun and Loerke’s take them back to the pre-adamic days because they do not venture forth into the great adventure of the ‘the unknown’. This failure on their part leads them towards disintegration.

*Lady Chatterley’s Lover* opens up new parameters of sexual relationship which broadens out into a comprehensive vision for the awakening and resurrection of mankind through, what Lawrence calls phallic reality which is beyond mere sex. We find, in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, hatred for libido, gratification of libido and fulfillment of libido in the relationships between Clifford-Connie, Michaelis-Connie and Mellor-Connie respectively. After her marriage, Connie has been trapped in Clifford’s dead and barren world of intellect. There is no space for the life of instinct. In fact their marriage is a nullity because a marriage is no marriage unless it is basically and permanently phallic. So there is no blood correspondence in their relationship. Clifford is not only physically disable but also emotionally paralyzed. Hence, in their relationship, there is complete denial of the ‘life of body’. Such a situation is really unbearable. Sexual desire (libido) of Connie finds no physical expression, so it causes loss of vitality and suffocation.
In such a state of fiasco, only sex coupled with love and tenderness can save her from being annihilated and it is Mellor who is responsible for her awakening and resurrection. Before Mellor-Connie there is one interlude of sexual relationship between Michaelis and Connie. It should be noted that sex devoid of love and tenderness is meaningless. The sexual relationship between them clearly reflects this aspect. There is simply gratification of libido and no real sex at all. Though Connie’s relationship with Michaelis make her aware again of her pent-up sexual desire yet it makes her strongly detached and discontented, because Michaelis wants from it only the swift success of consummation and has no obligation to the spirit. Obviously he has no regard for Connie herself and there is no tenderness which is prerequisite of sexual fulfillment.

Awakening to the phallic consciousness requires ‘oneness out of twoness’. This accomplishment of ‘oneness out of twoness’ does not occur immediately with the first sexual contact between Connie and Mellors. It is only in their third sexual encounter that they have mutual orgasm which brings Connie into a oneness she has never known. She is consumed by the pure element—fire and water—as she is at first conscious, then unconscious of the episode.
The flame of orgasm unites both Connie and Mellors into a ‘oneness’ and a ‘blood consciousness’.

We must note that this coming together of Connie and Mellors is the soft delicate union of pure creation. By way of attaining oneness they attain an ecstatic state of being. In this way Mellors provides an outlet for the repressed desire (libido) of Lady Chatterley. In fact, this sexual awakening of Connie is a means for blossoming into greater womanhood.

Thus, we can say that Lawrence does not believe in unbridled gratification of libido. Libido has, basically, two dimensions. It may either be redemptive or destructive. When the act of coition is mixed with love and tenderness, it is redemptive and when this act of coition is devoid of love and tenderness, it becomes simply lust—a destructive aspect of libido. Thus, for Lawrence, sex is meaningful only when it is coupled with love and tenderness tending towards the “leaping off into the unknown.”