

# An Ecocritical Reading of D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow*

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper intends to analyze the Ecological elements in D. H. Lawrence's The Rainbow. It investigates the treatment of nature and how man and nature exchange mutual effects, through three generations, as man moves from rural to industrial era. It traces how the three generations of the Brangwens live in contradictions as they live in a transitional era from country life to city life. The environmental awareness of the Brangwens characters make them sensitive to their natural surroundings. Although the first generation women were attracted to the industrial lights, Ursula returns to nature to be in direct connection with nature. Ursula's unity with nature represents human survival from the industrial capitalist civilization. This attitude towards nature mirrors Lawrence's sound ecological inclinations. Lawrence denounces modern intellectual way of life based on dead mechanical principles. He uses his fiction, particularly The Rainbow, as a means to formulate and theorize his nostalgic doctrine of the organic, blood intimacy of nature as a contrast to the anarchy and apocalypse of modern life. He shows very early awareness of the dangers of modern industry and prophetically anticipated the late 20th century ecocriticism. He has a green thumb to point at the man-nature relationship. It discloses how Lawrence artistically reveals the dreadful effects caused by environmental crisis on nature world. It takes these two masterpieces of Lawrence as a model to show the of industrialism on imaginal literary mind, the description of nature in literature, the abuses of nature under the damaging hand of the human being, the ecofeminism that analyses the parallel between the oppressed women and oppressed nature.*

**KEY WORDS:** Ecocriticism, nature, industry, *The Rainbow*, ecofeminism.

## 1. Introduction:

### 1.1. Ecocriticism:

Ecocriticism is considered as an umbrella term in the sense that it is an interdisciplinary approach. It is an area to which diverse disciplines are interconnected. Even though it is an infant area of criticism, many critics agree of its interdisciplinary nature. Ecocriticism is a broad term, referring to number of fields such as ecophilosophy, Eco poetry, Eco ethics, Eco ethology, Eco politics, ecofeminism... etc. Cheryll Glotfelty's broadly defined ecocriticism as "the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of text, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies." (Glotfelty XVIII) Critics almost agrees that the term "ecocriticism" was first coined by William Rueckert in 1978 in his essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism." He discusses the problem of the relationship between human community and natural community. That is to say to find ways to prevent the human community from destroying the natural community. (Rueckert 107) Richard Kerridge defined ecocriticism as a project that "seeks to evaluate texts and ideas in terms of their coherence and usefulness as responses to environmental crisis" (Kerridge) Environmental awareness started to come into existence since the second half of the twentieth century and still growing worldwide. And literature was influenced by this rising awareness. Ecocriticism is one of the most exciting recent developments of literary studies.

It is agreed that modern environmentalism began in the sixties of the 20th century with the fairy tale "A Fable of Tomorrow", in Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). The ecological philosophy

has witnessed a significant growth at the end of the 20th century. Ecocriticism which takes the responsibility to study the relationship between literature and physical environment is an ecological revolution in the literature field. The last ten years of 20th saw the fast development of ecocriticism, and it is one of its main responsibilities to re-interpret the classical works. D. H. Lawrence is considered a seminal thinker ahead of his time in the sense that he heralds the environmental crisis at the turn of the 20th century. He was prophetic of the troubles ahead. With the current understanding and awareness in the background, it is now useful to rediscover the truths of his writings concerning his anticipations.

### 1.2. Lawrence's attitude towards nature:

Nature for Lawrence is a repository of images. He draws his images from every aspect and every phenomenon of nature. Trees, flowers, plants, birds, moors, hills and dales downs and rivers, different natural phenomena as the sunrise and the sunset, the moon, the sun, the stars, the different sound, forms, colours of nature- all inspire Lawrence to a wealth of similes and metaphors. We quite often notice images which are drawn from the most commonplace of nature. His images from nature arrest the attention and excite the admiration of the readers. They are notable for their imaginative range, their suggestiveness, their original and illuminating power and perfect precision. Their originality and freshness are the products of long years devoted to a calm contemplation of nature Lawrence who is considered one of the most devoted lovers of nature. Lawrence reveals in his novels his intricate sense of the pulsations of the natural world which was throttled by industrialization.

Roger Ebbatson in his book *Lawrence and the Nature Tradition: A Theme in English Fiction 1859-1914* argues that the keynote of nature is energy and movement. He is interested in the strength of mountains and fixed rocks, but

he seeks unknown modes of being in images of flux and dynamism. He uses nature images that flow and recoil so that they symbolize the dramatization of human relations. (Ebbatson 28)

Lawrence lived in the period of industrial development of the 20th century, and so he was, as a British novelist, very sensible to perceive the predicaments caused to the natural environment by the human activities. The use of symbols and images and his descriptions and characterization and relationships between man and women and man and nature in Lawrence's fiction all provoke much discussion. All these elements of his fiction are now reexamined in relationship to natural environment. It becomes an important to uncover his presentation of the relationship between man and nature and how he uses the symbols and images in his main novels and show how they embody his views and philosophy related to ecocriticism.

Lawrence, being a writer of the early twentieth century, represents the early generation of the writers who struggle to formulate the conception of being that is safe and secure from the excesses of modernity. He expresses in his fiction his preoccupations with the problems of industrial and scientific modernity of which war is one defile product. The current research study aims at rereading D. H. Lawrence's select work *The rainbow* as part of the human literary canon from an Eco critical perspective. The select work under study is his masterpiece; *The Rainbow*. This paper sheds valuable light on the author's treatment of the relationship between human and non-humans and how he uses symbols and images to embody the conscious and subconscious states of his characters, the dehumanizing effects of war and industry on the human relationships and nature and the social conditions of their societies. Thus, from this comes the significance of the current paper. He draws his symbols and images

from nature and religion which constitutes rich sources for him. He exploits such symbols and images for his own purpose. D. H. Lawrence, in his distinguished ways, had the feeling for the unity of man and nature. Novelists turn towards English landscape and explore its symbolic potential. Both E. M. Forster and D. H. Lawrence draw upon a tradition of the novel which centers upon the contrast between Nature and civilization and develop the theme of primacy of emotion and the instinctual in human behaviour.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### 2.1. The Story:

*The Rainbow* deals at length with the history of three generations of the Brangwens living on the Marsh farm. The first generation, Tom Brangwen and Lydia Lensky, live at the village with Lydia's daughter Anna. Tom married Lydia and they seem to have found fulfillment in each other, though they are conscious of fits of latent antagonism. Anna grows up and falls in love with Will, Tom's nephew. Anna finds complete fulfillment in child-bearing, while Tom is drawn into her purely physical world. They have a daughter, Ursula, who revolts against her mother's limited existence. She falls in love with a Polish young man, Anton Skrebensky. They passionately love each other but Skrebensky leaves England to fight against the Boers. He returns after six years and both they have another attempt at passion. Ursula, this time, does not feel fulfillment and leaves him. Skrebensky leaves to India and marries his colonel's daughter. Ursula, having conceived a baby, decides finally to return to Skrebensky. She writes to him. But in the meanwhile she is relieved of the womb. She gets a letter from Skrebensky that he has already married. However, Ursula feels that her lover will come out of 'Eternity to which she herself belongs'. And as a sign of hopeful and

bright future, she sees a rainbow and she understands its promise.

### 2.1. Human-Nature Relationship:

Lawrence's *The Rainbow* is taken to be a typical literary work that dramatizes Lawrence's concept and theory of nature and his ideal type of the relationship between man and nature and his use of symbol and imagery in his novels in general and their key role in Lawrence's novelization. Due to the parallel between suppression of nature and suppression of women, a new term, which is "ecofeminism", was coined to refer to this similarity. And since both nature and women' suppression by men are of Lawrence's main preoccupation in his novels, this study attempts to present a comprehensive ecocritical scrutiny to this kind of master-slave relationship between nature and woman on one part and man on the other part. It is an attempt to present comprehensive, environmentally oriented study of Lawrence's novel *The Rainbow*. It discloses how Lawrence artistically reveals the dreadful effects caused by environmental crisis on nature world. It takes this masterpiece of Lawrence as a model to show the effect of industrialism on imaginal literary mind, the description of nature in literature, the abuses of nature under the damaging hand of the human being, the ecofeminism that analyses the parallel between the oppressed women and oppressed nature. Lawrence was very early aware of the damage of nature caused by human greedy activities. It is of significance to know Lawrence's concept if nature and non-human world is embodied in his fiction in general and the two novels under study in particular. This is what can be called Lawrence's green thinking. He employs symbols and images to paint a beautiful picture of nature and then to show its catastrophic destruction by human activities. Therefore, Lawrence can be read in relation to the preoccupations of the present time. It is an

attempt to bridge the present moment with the world of Lawrence. he is one of the most controversial novelists of the 20th century, and his period is a transition period between the Victorian era and the modern age. His novels and his age are complex and have many developments but also many problems and contradictions. Lawrence lived in the period of industrial development of the 20th century, and so he was, as a British novelist, very sensible to perceive the predicaments caused to the natural environment by the human activities. The use of symbols and images and his descriptions and characterization and relationships between man and women and man and nature in Lawrence's fiction all provoke much discussion. All these elements of his fiction are now reexamined in relationship to natural environment. It becomes an important to uncover his presentation of the relationship between man and nature and how he uses the symbols and images in his main novels and show how they embody his views and philosophy related to ecocriticism.

Nature for Lawrence constitutes a rich depository of symbols and images which he uses to uncover the unconscious levels of his characters and the central themes of his novels. Suman Prabha Prasad argues that both Hardy and Lawrence possess a very keen eye for aspects of nature and they both have the power of bringing nature vividly and imaginatively before the eyes of the readers. However, Suman sees a difference in the treatment of nature in relation to human beings between the two novelists. In Hardy, nature seems to be either in harmony with human beings or completely indifferent to their lot. But in Lawrence's fiction nature is part of the characters' passionate experience. Characters undergo some experience with some aspects of nature such as flowers, birds, beasts, the sun, the moon..etc. Lawrence in this sense comes a long distance from Hardy or any of his

predecessors. He gives something typically Laurentian. (Prasad 162)

Richard Aldington, in his book *Portrait of a Great Genius, But... : The Life of D.H. Lawrence*, states:

I have said more than once that in many ways Lawrence resembled Ruskin. Both hated industrialism because it is ugly. Both were so pictorial in imagination that they could only express abstractions in terms of symbols. They were alike in sensibility to natural beauty, though Lawrence was the closer observer and the more vivid writer. (Aldington 105)

The title of the novel *The Rainbow* is indicative of nature's healing effect on human dystopia. It symbolically reignites the reviving hope of survival after the flood of industrialism. The title indicates Lawrence's preoccupation with the relationship between characters and nature.

*The Rainbow* deals with the individual fulfillment through marriage and this fulfillment is achieved in harmony with natural environment. The dichotomy between men and women is expressed through their contrasting attitudes towards the physical nature around them. So the novel traces the changing relations between the generations and the impact of modern civilization on human sensibility. According to Julian Moynahan, the theme of *The Rainbow* is salvation. Salvation does not mean heavenly rewards but to a wholesome state of being attainable here and now. Among all the characters, Ursula is selected to symbolize salvation. Earthly achievement can be reached only in relation with another person. The crucial relation in *The Rainbow* is between a man and a woman in marital and sexual experience. (Moynahan 42-43) It is replete with common life events and encounters that symbolize both life-giving forces and death powers.

In Lawrence's opinion, there are two values which together constitute the

salvation of the whole being of human life; the value of spontaneous relatedness (blood-intimacy) and the value of maximum individuation. Lawrence makes it clear in his novels that neither of the two values is sufficient by itself. That is each stands for one essential part of the whole being, but the whole being exists when the two orientations are brought together in balanced, organized unison. That is when the two values are taken together, they constitute Lawrence's vision of life. These two values are represented by the masculine and feminine characters in the novel. These two principles can be put together only in marriage in which the two orientations should be united but keep some distance of separateness, and, thus, achieve the theme of salvation. If these two principles are equally united in proportion in marriage, then it assures wholeness. This means that the characters, in order to fulfill the supreme wholeness of being, they are compelled to obey a double imperative. In other words, they are impelled to look for unison with the other party through marriage, and at the same time they have to forge individuality for themselves.

In the very beginning of the novel, there is the famous passage which gives a description of the two orientations towards life with special reference to the Brangwens who symbolize the two elements of blood-intimacy and maximum individuation. The male characters embody the blood intimacy with the earth, whereas the female characters embody the desire for consciousness, knowledge and articulation. This polarity between men and women of the Brangwens started in the family before 1840, and it continues to exist in the other three generations of the novel. In reality, this division between man and woman is not practical as the two sexes are not so sharply differentiated in common life. Thus, men and women here symbolize two extreme position and attitudes towards life. Men are involved



and rooted in the natural world, while women aspire to the world beyond the farm land and look forward to the institutions of civilization and mental knowledge:

But heaven and earth were teeming around them, and how this should cease? They felt the rush of the sap in spring, they knew the wave which cannot halt, but every year throws forward the seed to begetting, and, falling back, leaves the young-born on the earth. ... Whereas the Brangwen men faced inwards to the teeming life of creation, which poured unresolved into their veins. (pp. 2-3)

The passage is replete with images charged with sexual suggestiveness. Such images as seed, intercourse, smooth and supple body, and intercourse suggest the blood-intimacy that is enjoyed by men. So the nature is powerfully present in the setting and background where the simple life, while the urban city life, in contrary, is implicitly present as a wish-reality in which the women nostalgically look forward to be involved. So the initial description of the setting foresees the coming of the industrial era which brings damage to both human and inhuman lives. The novelist here intertwined the destiny of both human and nature by giving a proto-ecological dimension. The passage contains the submerged metaphor which is the coupling of sky and earth, that is the meeting of human and divine. The earth opens its furrows in a sexual manner annual planting. A critic, Nigel Messenger, points out that 'Lawrence portrays nature as a self-regulating, self-sufficient powers, as the wind dries the wet young wheat. Men share in nature's inert self-sufficiency'. (Messenger 57-58) It is sufficient for them that their land is heaved with its richness to them. This intercourse between earth and sky will be culminated at the end of the novel by the symbol of the rainbow that connects humanity on earth to divinity in the sky. When Lawrence speaks of such images as

men, grain, seeds, cows, and so forth, he does not want the reader to see these things but to feel the pulse of life and sense a particular sense of life. The Brangwen men are in harmony with the position that is selected for them by the unknown forces.

On the contrary, their wives stand for a different attitude towards life. They symbolize the 'higher being'. Even though they share the farm life of daily experience such as looking at the calves sucking and hens and geese, they are not content with this 'blind-intercourse of farm life'. Even their houses symbolically face the outside world away from the farms. This symbolically suggests that they are different from there men folk in regard with their attitudes towards life. However, women could not escape from farm life, but they still aspire mentally to transcend it. They strain mentally and emotionally in feeling the excitement of civilization where human dreams are realized and wishes articulated. They are too ambitious that they look forward to the far off world of the cities and governments where secrets were made known and desires fulfilled. These values are opposites and the principal characters symbolize these values. They either obey or disobey.

Thus, the characters of the novel, either male or female, represent the two conflicting impulses in human being and the two conflicting worlds that are the natural world physically existed in the setting of the novel and the civilized industrial commercial world which mentally exists in the women's minds and aspired for by their emotions. And the whole novel is the dramatization of these two attitudes. This conflict between the mental pushing forward of the woman and the sensual stability of the men reflects the conflict between earthly-centred natural world and the industrial world.

Thus, the Marsh Farm represents the symbolic counterpart of the Paradise of Eden. The few initial pages are dedicated

to differentiate between men and women of the Brangwen family. The moving from the Marsh Farm into the outside life of the industrial world is compared to the descending of Adam and Eve from the Paradise of Eden into earth because they disobeyed their God's instruction not to eat from the tree of knowledge. The Marsh Farm is the garden of delight from which the Brangwens are deprived for they desire to get knowledge of the other world outside their instinctive nature.

Once more we are reminded of this symbolic story of Adam and Eve and its connection to the men and women of the novel in chapter XI, when Ursula compares Skrebensky to Adam. She says that Skrebensky is the Son of God who sees the daughters of men fair. He is not son of Adam who is servile. She asks herself if Adam had not been driven out of his native place (Paradise of Eden), the human race would not have suffered and been beggar ever since. Unlike Adam, Skrebensky is in possession of himself, distinct, self-contained and self-supporting.

Instead of tilling the ground and eating free of all the fruits of the Garden of Eden, Eve, tempted by the Satan, had eaten from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, even though they are prohibited to eat from it by God. Adam also ate from it. Consequently, they both are dismissed from the Paradise and descended into earth. Similarly, the Brangwen woman is not content to the world of Marsh Farm, and she looks out and desires to be part of the outside world of cities which constitutes the magic land for her where secrets are made known and dreams are fulfilled. Lawrence depicts her desire for the outside world of the cities as a sinful act which would lead to her and her family's suffering. Thus, her desire to get knowledge can be compared to Eve's desire to eat the fruit of knowledge from the tree of knowledge in the Paradise of Eden as she was persuaded by Satan that if she had eaten from that forbidden fruit,

she would have the knowledge of good and evil and, consequently, be superior to the others. What makes us surmise that is the similarity of the sin, its consequences and the repetitive use of the word 'knowledge' and the verb 'know' in the passages dedicated for the description of Brangwen woman's desire to know the life outside the Marsh Farm, even though Lawrence's use of the word 'knowledge' is sometimes obscure.

The conflict that has been symbolized by men and women in the opening passages of the novel has been transferred now to the character of Tom, the first generation. The conflict was between men who represent rootedness in the nature and the women who represent restlessness and dissatisfaction with life in nature. Now the battlefield of these conflicting impulses is within Tom's character. The opening passage contains sexual images which imply together that the main unifying experience in life is sex. For Lawrence, sex is the main principle of vitality in life and not a mere reproductive function. The imagery and pulse-imitating rhythm of the initial passage suggest that sex is associated with the intuitive mode of life. Ronald P. Draper in his book *D. H. Lawrence* comments on the opening scene:

This is a life in which man, beast, and non-animal Nature are all closely integrated.... This is implicit in the imagery and pulse-imitating rhythm of the opening passage. The Brangwen way of life is brimming over with vitality and the sexual overtones in the language describing in enhance this effect. Its essential characteristic is "blood-intimacy"-identification of the human life-flow with the great life-flow of nature, uninterrupted by the abstractions of "mental consciousness. (Draper 67)

The first section of the novel *The Rainbow* which includes the courtship of Tom and Lydia, contains a collection of recurrent images such as 'root', 'wind',

and 'flower'. These images are objects taken from the physical inhuman world.

The setting of the novel is a farmland and the major characters are farmers, so it is full of the physical objects of the natural world. These natural objects serve as images, similes and metaphors which are indicators of the emotional states and attitudes of the characters involved. This mode is adopted by Lawrence to convey his purpose of clearly stating the interrelationships between the human world and the natural world. Lawrence is not a mere landscape painting, even though his description of the natural world is powerful. He uses language like almost all poets, investing the rich natural world of imagery to define and symbolize human valuable and invaluable qualities.

Like all other novels of Lawrence, he uses the natural world in *The Rainbow* to evoke the human emotions and qualities. The opening lines of the novel are dedicated for the description of the meadows and farmlands of Derbyshire in a very poetic figurative language that makes the physical world 'teeming with life, growth and decay':

But heaven and earth was teeming around them, and how should this cease? Their life and interrelations were such; feeling the pulse and body of the soil that opened to their furrows for the grain, and became smooth and supple after their ploughing, and clung to their feet with a weight that pulled like desire, lying hard and unresponsive when the crops were to be shorn away. (p. 2)

The passage cited above is full of images that compromise the natural world to the human world of the characters in the novel. Heaven and earth are presented as the great creative force. The life and growth of the flowers resulted from the intercourse between heaven and earth. As shown in the passage the connection between heaven and earth produces life as a result of blood-intimacy, which is the kind of life enjoyed by the first generation

of Brangwens. Tom's parents are presented as 'two very separate beings, vitally connected, knowing nothing of each other, yet living in their separate ways from one root.' (p. 8)

The image of the root which here gives life and nourishment to two human beings is similar to the root that gives life to flowers and nature as a result of the intercourse between heaven and earth. There is here a human counterpart of the organic creative relationship akin to that described in the above passage. The word 'root' has sound implications of growth and development. Similarly, this principle of ideal relationship is also applicable to the relationship of Tom and Lydia. When Tom is marriageable, he seeks to establish a vital, fruitful connection with a woman far away from his previous sexual relationships outside marriage. We are later told that the woman is the root of the family from which keeps the house stability and security and without her-the root- men would have felt 'like straws in the wind, to be blown hither and thither at random. She was the anchor and security'. (p. 19)

Tom represents the person who lives in a transitional period, a period when England was transforming from an agricultural into industrial country in the beginning of the twentieth century. The coming of Tom coincides with the coming of the machine. In his childhood, 'The Marsh Farm' suffers from the invasion of the machine. There are a canal and railway that are constructed and cut off the farm from the city and there is a colliery on the other side of the canal. He represents his generation who lives the social, economical changes and their psychological impact on them. His looking forward to another life and his dissatisfaction of his own destined life are marked for the people of the time.

Therefore, Lawrence depicted him at once both like his male ancestors and different from them. As he grows up he feels, like the earlier Brangwens, that he is held to



the Marsh farm by a 'very strong root', but not with the same zest and enthusiasm as they did. When he meets a girl and her own man who turns out to be fine mannered foreigner, his dissatisfaction with his present life gets intense and more tangible. His is compared to a bull with the help of a simile. He 'balks the mean enclosure of reality, standing stubbornly like a bull at a gate, refusing to re-enter the well-known round of his life' (p. 26). He decides that there is nothing in the world of Cossethay and Illkston that he wants. What he wants now is another world.

Lydia is portrayed as a strikingly different woman from the traditional Brangwen women. It is not only that she is a foreigner, but she represents a new conception of woman-being. While the Brangwen women look out to the far-off world of cities and governments where desires are fulfilled, Lydia had herself been part of that world and she recoils from it. She represents the town woman who gets fed up with it and wants to get out of the stiffening, suffocating circle of town life. She finds some healing from some of her suffering by contact with the open country and the moor. Thus, she is introduced as a woman who feels as if crushed between the past and the future life. She is compared with the help of the simile as an image of a flower that comes above the ground to find a great stone lying above it after her first husband's death. Now, she feels herself opening out to Tom like a flower.

There is the symbolic scene where Ursula and her first love Anton Skrebensky are walking through Marsh Farm. Ursula is confronted by two views which symbolize her two alternative routes for the future:

On the left was the whole black agitation of colliery and railway, and the town which rose on its hill, the church tower topping all. Ursula and Anton Skrebensky

walked along the ridge of the canal between. (p. 307)

In the above passage, Ursula seems in a joint point of two roads, and she has the right of choice which one is to take to her being-fulfillment. The above passage presents the rural inner world in contrast with the outer world of the cities, the Marsh Farm vs. London. Ursula differs from her ancestors in the way that she gains better understanding of the two sides of the conflict. She is not convinced that either can be the channel for the wholeness of being.

Ursula's rejection of the rural nature of the Marsh farm is symbolized by her refusal to marry Anthony Schofield, who is a man of a rural nature and upbringing, a gardener. he is depicted as a lusty passionate animal. She refuses his proposal, even though she sees the Schofield farm as 'the Garden of Eden' and albeit he is physically attractive. Her rejection of Anthony may be because of her education and development of mind which has made a gap between herself and the rural people like Anthony: 'She was a traveler on the face of earth, and he was an isolated creature living in the fulfillment of his own senses' (p. 417). However, it is noted that her education and mental consciousness does not prevent her from enjoying nature in the journey she takes with him. When she is in nature, she feels in oneness with it. And this reveals another characteristic dimension in her personality.

As she rejects the rural way of life, she also refuses the other alternative symbolized by London. The way to London is not for her the typical path to achieve her whole being. Her rejection of this new way of life is symbolized by her rejection to marry Anthon Skrebensky. Her rejection of Anton is emblematic of her attitude towards the industrial horrors of the city life. The way to London is symbolic of the grim seethe of the town. Ursula's desire is 'the smashing of the great machine' (p. 349). Because Ursula

refuses both the two alternatives for self-achieving, she is now in a crossroad. She is now required to create her own way for maximum self. She attempts to find herself in the man's world by participating in public affair as a school teacher, but she comes to the realization that this new world is like a prison peopled by the dead (p. 372). The school is described by the image as "evil". The pupils in the school are reduced to 'a collective inhuman thing' (p. 376). The school is where the children are mechanized into one state of mind, neglecting their individual characteristics. Thus, Ursula finds herself struggling between these two conflicting worlds; the world of summer and flowers, and the other world of work.

Moreover, the university where she joins as a student gives her another negative experience. The university is described as a market where the professors 'middle-men handling ware' and the classes are 'a sort of second-hand curios shop' (p. 434). This experience adds to her disillusionment: 'It pretended to exist by the religious virtue of knowledge. But the religious virtue of knowledge was become a flunkey to the god of material success.' (p. 435). It becomes clear that Ursula's disappointment and despair in the modern world represents Lawrence's critical attitudes towards such social institutions and his belief in the impossibility of human survival through consciousness alone. Thus, at this stage her disappointment is complete. She is not satisfied with playing any social role.

At this stage in the novel, Ursula, equipped with the accumulation of experience, starts to vision a glimpse of the third alternative that is the third route towards self-realization. This third alternative lies in the connection of the old world with the new one, the combination of the rural world of the farm with the urban conscious world of London. She is left alone at the end of the novel waiting for her man to come from the eternity. Her

man comes in the next novel *Women in Love* and her new world is established, and she fulfills her own self.

Ursula is considered the most important characters in the novel for she is the dominant character in the second half of the novel. She is the eldest daughter of Will and Anna. She is the chief figure of the third generation of Brangwens. Although she represents the third generation of the Brangwens, she differs from them in the sense that she is more individual and demanding them. This makes it clear that she will not find her satisfaction and achievement in staying in the Marsh Farm as her elders. She finds herself live in a life different from the pastoral simplicities of the Marsh Farm. She differs from her mother in the sense that she revolts against her mother's absorption in giving birth for children and domestic activities.

As she grows up, she develops her own personal religious concept of salvation. She is attracted by the text "The Sons of God", but she believes that the sons of God are not only Adam and Jesus. For her, the sons of God may be the other men who had not been expelled from Eden. She thinks that her salvation can come from any of those other men. Thus, she symbolizes Lawrence's belief that human salvation lies in the polarity between the two sexes. That is man seeks salvation in woman and vice versa. Graham Hough in his book *The Dark Sun: A Study of D. H. Lawrence* states:

Her salvation must be brought by a man, but a man who appears to her as one of the authentic sons of God. Ursula is very willing to use the language of Scripture, but the content of the words is transformed. Nor can her unchristened heart accept the gospel ethics. (G. Hough 67)

In spite of her stance against religion, she still craves for the Sunday world because of the effects made upon her in her childhood by her family's respect for

religion. Yet she prefers the weekend world to the Sunday world.

She symbolizes the intelligent articulate young member of the rural Brangwen family. She gets a considerable share of education and self-consciousness. She gets what the Brangwen women aspires for but could not arrive at, as it is mentioned in the first chapter. She seeks to fulfill a more individual personality than her female ancestors, so she revolts against the settled institutions and traditional codes. Her grandmother Lydia and her mother Anna have some distinction but they give up their distinctions and power of choice and submit to the conventional conditions of their world. Lydia transfers from the Roman church to the Anglican church. Anna accepts her new father and accustomed herself to the new social environment in the Brangwen family. They are compared to plants that are easily uprooted from their own soil and be planted in another soil. Unlike them all, Ursula is not a plant and has not root. She symbolizes the new woman who is not willing to be enclosed within the social and religious limitations.

The change and difference between Ursula and her forebears symbolizes a change in the class situation. In the early days of the Brangwen, freedom, subtlety and the privileges of education were limited to the gentry like the Skrebenskys and their counterparts, and the working class was deprived of such qualities. But at the days of Ursula, all these qualities become gradually part of the rights of the working class as well. Thus, Lawrence, through the development embodied in Ursula, records the social development that took place in the British society at the time of the novel. Graham Hough goes more than that by saying that while Skrebensky and his class has only the appearance of those qualities, Ursula, the newly emancipated daughter of the working class, embodies those qualities in the real reality. (G. Hough 69) It is

apparent that Skrebensky with all his nonchalance and physical appearance is limited to his own class and his work and he is not able to see beyond his class. Ursula, on the other hand is not content with her own class neither with him. She is bold and eager to go beyond the bounds of her class.

Ursula's waiting for the tram on her first day at Brinsley street school is considered as a shifting point in her life. It is the end of her past childhood of comfort and safety and the new life of uncertainty, and by boarding the tram she rejects to be stuck part of her past and pushes towards the new life. While she is standing waiting for the tram, she remembers her past childhood, her teasing grandfather, her grandmother, the little church school, the Phillips boys, all these things that were dear to her become part of the past as she hears the tram car grinding round a bend:

As she waited at the tram-terminus she reverted swiftly to her childhood; her teasing grandfather,... She mounted into the wet, comfortless tram, whose floor was dark with wet, whose windows were all steamed, and she sat in suspense. It had begun, her new existence. (p. 417)

The passage cited above highlights the opposing qualities of two eras; the rural farming age and the industrial age. The tram which is one of the significant products of industry symbolizes the industrial modern age. Thus it is not a mere drama of Ursula, but that of a whole age. Her memories of her past life in the village are made sentimental and idealized by Lawrence. In contrast, the future is depicted as threatening, filthy and sordid. The tram image is ominous to her new life for it is described in such a way that implies frustration with 'its shadowy grey people', wet floor and steamed windows. Ursula's journey seems to be filled with dangers and unpleasant things more than the earlier Brangwens' journeys are due to the general surrounding different

environment. The earlier generations of the Brangwens live in a rural farming environment, while Ursula lives in the industrial world with all its unpleasant vicissitudes and plagues.

The above passage reveals Lawrence's extreme criticism against industrial world. The urban scene is depicted as sordid and squalid where people are reduced to mere shadows. This stands in contrast to Ursula's ambitions. She comes back to reality. She longs to have security and shelter in the male protection. The sight of the lambs sucking their mothers while she goes to school symbolizes her instinctive desire for such a bliss and life of warmth. She was caught by the sight that she finds it too hard to continue her way to school. At this stage, we find Ursula embodying the duality of two contrast passions; she wants to meet people, to love them, to mix with them, but, due to some limitation within herself, cannot trust and believe in people. Her impulses to love are in conflict with her revulsion and hatred.

When Anton Skrebensky enters her life, she is attracted by him from the very beginning. He represents the outer world for her. Her attraction to him is compared to the bee's attraction to the scent. The image of bee and scent suggest the sweetness and happiness of love. When he compliments her on a particular dress, she is thrilled by his compliments. He represents a new world of sexual awakening for her. She gradually enters into the world of passion through him. It looks very splendid to her. Once after they walk home from the Marsh and he presses his mouth upon hers, she returned home feeling a hot drenching surge within her. And that night goes to bed with electric warmth within her. It is as if a gush of the dawn of a new phase begins in her life. Love is related her to electric fire that suggests heat. Their love is expressed with images that imply warmth and heat. They play with love as if they play with fire and not love. Love is also expressed

as a game in which they exchange kisses recklessly and dangerously. The battle of love is full of challenges and defiance. They stand in their love in defiance against the rules of the whole world, creating their own special world of love. Moreover, each of them represents a challenge for the other. Ursula, with her beauty and radiance, tempts him and challenges him to enter into her world. He accepts the challenges. He is considered as a challenge for her through whom she is going to realize her maximum self. Love for them is a voyage through which each is going to discover the other as well as himself and herself.

She considers her femaleness to be in contradistinction against to maleness in Anton. After the wedding ceremony of Fred Brangwen, they go for a walk in the stackyard. The moon has risen. The stacks of corn seem to be glistening and gleaming in the moonlight. Ursula herself seems to be a beam of gleaming power that controls Anton. They have made a passionate love. Ursula feels much triumphant in this experience. Her soul is full with triumph, while his soul is crushed with agony and annihilation. So she bullies him there. He is the victim consumed and annihilated.

Skrebensky, thus, suppresses his own self for his social self. He is content to be role-player. He fails to establish a lasting relationship with Ursula due to his self-inadequacy. Ultimately, he, like Gerald Crich in *Women in Love*, fails to achieve whole being in both social role and his consummation of love and finally wishes death (p. 479).

Anton Skrebensky is the symbol of physical love in the novel. He could not offer wholeness of being because his characters suffer from limitations. He only emphasizes on the purely physical side of love. This makes him too mechanical. David Daiches notes, "he is too little of a whole personality ever too be able to achieve a proper relationship with a woman". This mechanical aspect of his

personality is clear in his relationship with Ursula. During his second visit to the Marsh Farm, his physical love is made clear. He and Ursula go to a barge, where Ursula compares him to the bargeman in this brief episode. She knows that the bargeman gives her a very pleasant feeling whereas Skrebensky makes her feel sterile and fruitless as if the world were ashes. The bargeman behaves as a whole being and so he seems to be very pleasant while Skrebensky places emphasis only on physical love. Irrespective of the importance of physical love in life, it cannot provide full satisfaction. Ironically, Skrebensky himself, on their way back, is absorbed in thinking why he is not able to satisfy the whole of a woman, both her body and soul and why his desire is limited only to physical part.

### 2.3. Nature vs. Industry:

Lawrence's concept of duality also applies on the natural rural world and industrial urban world. Nature is looked at as a source to provide the industrial machine with all its needs to run the wheel of production, irrespective of the damage caused to nature. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* deals with this dual unjust relationship between nature and the severe industrial hand. The three generations, in the novel, are alienated from nature in the course of time. Nature and characters are organically interrelated so that the natural context of the novel convey the emotional and psychological states of the characters.

Some expanding symbols have structural function in the novel as the whole novel is unified by the use of some expanding symbols as the church, the arch and the rainbow. Quite early in the novel, Lawrence introduces the symbol of the arch, suggesting the wholeness of being. When Tom and Lydia attain fulfillment, he invokes the image of the completed arch to describe their fulfillment. This offers a dynamic human norm against which the vitality of all other relations can

be measured. Will also goes to the arches in the cathedrals, but these arches are false arches that are incapable of offering any real fulfillment. Will, through the arches, seeks some mystic merger with God, which is symbolized in his love of the church. But this would deny the fulfillment of individuality. Fulfillment is not to be attained through merger, but it is to be attained through spontaneous relatedness that preserves one's distinct individuality. Will seeks this merger with Anna, negating her distinct identity and individuality, as well as rejecting the external world. But Anna defies him. She fights him like a hawk and she emerges triumphant over him in this battle. Will is annihilated.

While the arch is used to unite the first two generations, through the success of Tom and Lydia and the failure of Will and Anna, Lawrence critically explores the modern world through Ursula's experience of it. She fails with Anton Skrebensky, for Skrebensky has been reduced to a mere nothing by the modern abstraction called the State. Her miserable life as a teacher is caused by the utter impersonality of human relations at the school. Moreover, she is disillusioned at the college by the sterile and vulgar commerce thriving there. The mining town of Wiggiston which is a veritable inferno on earth shows the corrupting dehumanizing impact of industrialization. But Ursula does not allow all these experiences to contaminate her soul. There is a brief moment of acceptance of defeat when she writes to Skrebensky to take her back as his wife. But she recovers her vitality after her encounter with the horses. So Lawrence makes her see the vision of the rainbow that symbolizes the promise of hope for the future. The novel ends with the vision of the rainbow. This recurrence of some of the central symbols unifies the novel as an integral whole.

Julian Moynahan points out that there are three expanding symbols in the novel: arch, rainbow and cathedral. These



expanding symbols compose an elaborate structure of meanings in themselves, and this structure is related to the design of *The Rainbow* as a whole. (Moynahan 53)

The arch figure is introduced quite early in the novel during a description of an unhappy moment in the marriage of Tom and Lydia Brangwen. During her pregnancy, Lydia lapses into a kind of somber exclusion, a curious communion with mysterious powers, a sort of mystic, dark state. Tom feels frightened and depressed by her change of mood. His state of anxiety is imagined by the novelist in the simile of a broken arch:

The tension in the room was overpowering, it was difficult for him to move his head. He sat with every nerve, every vein, every fiber of muscles in his body stretched on a tension. He felt like a broken arch thrust sickeningly out from support. (p.60)

This figure of the arch is presented again as a symbol of the wholeness of being achieved by Tom and Lydia through their marriage. He alone is compared to a broken arch as in the passage above, but he with his wife together form a complete unbroken arch under which their daughter, Anna finds space, safety and security to freely play:

Anna's soul was put at peace between them. She looked from one to the other, and she saw them established to her safety, and she was free... She was no longer called upon to uphold with her childish might the broken end of the arch. Her father and her mother now met to the span of the heavens, and she, the child, was free to play in the space beneath, between. (p. 95)

## 2.2. Conclusion:

This study is an attempt to comprehensively, ecocritically investigate and analyze the selected novel under study through the contemporary awareness of the environmental crisis and the symbolic expression of human-caused

dangers of ecosystems in the novel. This novel is *The Rainbow*. Therefore, in order to cover the topic comprehensively, the paper is divided into two main sections. In the first introductory section, the paper intends to introduce the conception and chronological development of ecocriticism to present the theoretical foundation of the study. The second part of the first section introduces Lawrence's philosophy and his ecological vision. This introduction is necessary for it gives the best entry into the novel that leads to a closer investigation of the ecocritical insights of the novel and the symbolic and iconographic structure of every novel. The second section of the paper is entitled "Discussion". It is composed of three parts; the story, the man nature relationship and nature vs. industry. Nature-related episodes and descriptions are abundantly used in his novel *The Rainbow*. They are highly evocative and their meanings are expanding. This second section is dedicated to study the healing influence of nature on man and how man's alienated defiled behaviour destroyed the beautiful spontaneous primitive characteristics of the wild natural life in *The Rainbow*. It also sheds considerable light on the symbols and images in *The Rainbow*. Symbols and images contribute to the unity of its structure. Thus, it focuses on the comprehensive investigation and analysis of the ecological aspects. They are also used to reveal the dehumanizing effects of industrialism on the human relationship and nature as well. He approaches poetry in his poetic prose and use of symbols and images. The third section is dedicated to conclude the findings of the study and presenting a summary of what has been discussed in the previous sections

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