

THEME OF DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY IN DH LAWRENCE'S SONS AND LOVERS

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Abstract: - D. H. Lawrence's novel *Sons and Lovers* examines the emotional dynamics of the Morel family and charts the gradual decline of the middle son, Paul Morel, as he navigates tensions between his romantic life and his family life. Many of the conflicts in *Sons and Lovers* are driven by underlying psychological forces, which even the characters themselves do not understand. This makes it difficult for them to respond in ways that help, rather than worsen, their situations. Lawrence was interested in psychology and loosely incorporates aspects of Freud's Oedipus complex into the plot of the novel. The Oedipus complex is the theory that infant children are attracted to their parent of the opposite gender and that they become jealous of the parent of the same sex. Lawrence's blend of family drama and psychology suggests that people's unresolved childhood pain and confusion can, unfortunately, lead to lives in which many of their emotional needs remain misunderstood and unfulfilled.

Keywords - *Dynamics, Conflicts, Psychological Forces, Oedipus Complex, Family Drama*

INTRODUCTION

Sons and Lovers has been known as a very distinguished literary work which is known worldwide which reflects various trauma theories which is produced by various theoreticians such as Freud, Caruth, Winnicott and many more. It has been considered as the very first masterpiece of David Herbert Richards Lawrence who was one of the most revolutionary and quite sophisticated English writers of the 20th century. His works reflect many autobiographical details in his writings which is majorly famous for its convenience to various interpretations, especially with the theme of Oedipus complex. Yet, in this paper, we will shift our focus from Oedipus complex to the traumatic moods of major characters of the story highlighting their methods to cope with the traumatic periods of their lives

Gertrude Morel was a mother figure and had a central significance for her family, especially for her sons - William and Paul. Gertrude's unhappiness and disillusionment with her husband, Walter, made her a woman who was dependent on her children and was also a dominating and quiet attention seeking mother.

At first, we observe a very strong relationship between Gertrude and William while she is pregnant with her third child, Paul. We see that William is not so happy when he has to stay away from his mother and was very much fond of her from the very first page. As the relationship between Gertrude and her kids, especially William, gains strength slowly, Walter distant away from his family as the unwanted father. The incident where one year old William's hair is cut while

Gertrude is sleeping is a very significant starting point of the disturbing events in their life: "But she knew, and Morel knew, that that act had caused something momentous to take place in her soul. She remembered the scene all her life, as one in which she had suffered the most intensely. ... He was an outsider to her" (Korucu #). This sterilization-like act of Walter straightly represents the only way of a father figure in order to show his masculine omnipotence on the little kid and, obviously in an indirect manner, on his wife. According to Rank: "the importance of the castration fear is based, as Starcke thinks, on the primal castration at birth, that is, on the separation of the child from the mother". When we think that this is also a traumatic event for mother because it is the reminder of the primal departure from her baby, it can be easily realized Gertrude experiences this trauma repetitively. On the other William lives through a castration-like experience far too soon by the hand of his father. When William grows up, there begin some arguments between Gertrude and him because of her dominating attitudes interfering in his private relationships with the girls. Finding a new job with a high salary in London, William, in spite of her dismay, separated from his mother disposing her domination apparently (Korucu #).

Though it seems to be a try to make his own way of shaping his life, it turns out to be a futile effort, because he is unable to find a suitable girl to fall in love and to live with both due to his mother's interference and his wrong preferences. Contradicting the upsetting of departure, he fails to confess and cope with the problem of the fact that he cannot live without his mother. His sickness and uncalled death seems to prove this tragic failure. In a sense, with a Lacanian perspective, he returned to his

mother's womb dying at a young age. According to Freud, children can develop different ways and techniques especially in their games in order to dominate the anxiety at the absence of a mother. The famous fort-da game that Freud witnessed in his nephew is one of the most striking examples for these games. In the absence of his mother, the little boy throws a spool with a string attached to him, making an "o-o-o-o" sound meaning "fort" when it disappears. Pulling the string, he draws back the spool, saying "Da!" meaning "here". (Korucu #)

It can be easily understood that the spool represents his mother. With a Freudian analysis, the little boy subdues his anxiety stemming from the absence of his mother by creating a game in which he can dominate the absence and the presence of the mother represented by the going and the coming of the spool. Hence, the reiteration of this unpleasant experience transforms into an attempt to dominate the spool in the game, and in this sense into a search for pleasure. (Korucu #) After losing her beloved son William, Gertrude's trauma of separation from her loved ones which is accompanied by sickness and death tend to repeat itself as Paul falls sick with pneumonia in the sixth chapter. As in upsetting Tancred, she almost lost her second beloved one as well, but he gets well pulling through the illness. After that "The two knitted together in perfect intimacy. Mrs. Morel's life now rooted itself in Paul" Gertrude's dominating and soul absorbing attitudes ceased by William's death resumed with Paul increasingly. According to Fatima Shaikh: This intimacy started ruining Paul's emotional and professional life because it soon took the shape and form of possessiveness and domination obstructing the natural growth and development of his individual personality. When Paul grew up and felt the urge to establish a life outside the domination of his mother, he was unable to establish a healthy, emotional and sexual relationship with any other women in his life-Miriam and Clara. He always felt his mother was holding him back to her shadow where he felt choked and blocked him for freedom of being. However, Paul tried to establish various relation with the women each of whom it reflected different characteristics of his mother; for example Clara was a women separated from her husband but she doesn't want to get divorced whereas Miriam "was too similar to Gertrude in her ways of dominating over the soul of Paul". Because of her obsessive attitudes, Gertrude also hates Miriam: "She is one of those who will want to suck a man's soul out till he has none of his own left".

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it seems that going through the traumatic events is a destiny in human life especially

under the circumstances of the 20th and 21st centuries full of wars, catastrophes, abuses, individual tragedies and so on. In this study, we have focused on the individual side of trauma under the light of different perspectives of trauma theoreticians

like Freud, Winnicott, Rank, Herman, Caruth and Mitchell. Being the best representative of states of humanity in real life, as Freud confirms, literature has a significant role with its wide spectrum of products, themes, methods and perspectives. Having a strong tendency to be analyzed with psychoanalytic approach, especially with Rank's Trauma of Birth theory, D. H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers is a fertile literary work with its striking and unforgettable characters like Gertrude, William and Paul each of whom lives through traumatic events. We have clarified the forms by which the trauma of birth appears in each character and also examined the tragic but persevering efforts of these characters to cope with trauma in their own ways. (Korucu #)

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