D. H. Lawrence's The Rainbow: A Critique of Social Pornography

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ABSTRACT- This paper tries to examine the depiction of social corruption in D. H. Lawrence's The Rainbow (1915). The study will focus on the portrayal of the social perspective upon the issue of pornography and its literary manifestation in the selected novel. Pornography was a kind of social taboo in the first decades of the nineteenth century. That is, pornography, especially in England, was not accepted at all social scales. Yet, it began to occupy the social circumferences by the advent of the twentieth century, the social attitudes towards pornography drastically changed. People began to be accustomed to the flagrant pornographic issues at the time. Consequently, people resented this kind of pornographic attitude. They reacted to its spread in the society in different ways. Lawrence, therefore, uses his novel as a means of critiquing the reality of pornography. In so doing, he attempts to amend such social flaw in the course of his fictional depiction. The study will apply a narrative theory to explore the realistic insights in Lawrence's fictional plot. Therefore, Patrick O'Neill's concept of projection will be applied to identify this reality.

Keywords- Discourse, Lawrence, Narrative, Pornography, Projection, Social Corruption

I INTRODUCTION

David Herbert Richard Lawrence's literature focuses on the "spiritual vacuum" of the human psychology. People who suffer from alienation transform into being victims of their dark moods. The internal mechanism of their individualities is a correspondence between literature and its dramatic structure. It approaches the intrinsic fabrication of human spirituality which id demolished by the cruelty of life. This cruelty is the wasteland of modern social problems. In so doing, he deeply concerned with the ethical crisis. (Adamowski 345). His characters have a diverse interaction with other people would be sometimes negative. Fictional individuals, for example, interact with each other to achieve personal goals which do not relate to their ethical backgrounds. In the same way, the relationship among the individuals would be negative or positive. They exchange some ideas or moral insinuations to compensate for their ethical status. In this case, individuals benefit from their diverse social experience and, at the same time, they make positive progress within the social ethical schemes. The

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individuals are the key elements which contribute to the polish of society and the individuals' morality simultaneously. Nevertheless, the individuals' relations could be negative. They may exploit the ethical features or material belongings for their personal benefits. In such case, neither the morality nor individuals take advantage of the moral codes or materials. They are exploited for the subjective interests of their society (Beal 19).

At the ethical level, the relationship among the fictional individuals should be integrated within personal contexts. Without them the moral perfection will be incomplete. The individuals' relations differ from the one social context to another one. There is a tremendous and powerful event that led to this contextual variation. There are catastrophic events that left their distinctive influence upon the individuals' psyches. The advent of social manners, for example, paved the way for new relative perceptions. Lawrence's fictional people began to interpret the world according to their personal judgment. The rise of secularism, furthermore, is one genuine change that took place in the twentieth century which left the British people in divided attitudes. These attitudes were the sources of their psychic alienation. Lawrence's literature, therefore, discovers the human consciousness and its impact upon society and culture. This impact is divided between illusion and reality in the play's literary context. It refers to the instrumental and intrinsic values in ethical studies. This means that egoism is the selfishness individual practice by a person to attract different benefits for his/her own interests. It also includes subjectivism, psychological allusion, and rational reality. The idea that the best life, for example, is getting what a person wants is called the realization of fact. Such thematic matters are definitive features of Lawrence's literature (Draper 110).

In his fiction, Lawrence seeks to explore the deep-rooted, the elemental, and the instinctual peculiarities in people and in nature. He is at constant confrontation with the atrocities of immorality; and he depicts flagrant immoral scenes in his works in order to critique the ethical deterioration around him. For this reason, his works are mere documentation of how morality took a new social trajectory in his society. Although his early novels are more conventional in style and treatment from the publication of The Rainbow the critics turned away in bewilderment and condemnation (Kermode 174).

In The Rainbow, Lawrence probes with both subtlety and power into various aspects of relationship – the affinity among humans and their social milieus as conceived in the bulk of his literary productions. In this regard, his works are fertile grounds of the social changes that were taking place. Being so, he documents these changes in fictional styles to come up with new solutions to the social dilemmas of the time. Lawrence view of marriage as a struggle, bound up with the deepest rhythms and most profound instincts, derived from his own relationship with his strong-minded wife (Leavis 98). He explores this and other kinds of human relationships with a combination of uncanny psychological precision and intense poetic feeling. The novel has an acute surface realism, a sharp sense of time and place, and brilliant topographical detail; at the same time their high symbolism, both of the total patterns of action and of incidents and objects within it, establishes a formal and emotional rhythm (Sagar 64).

The purpose of this essay therefore is to analyze the realistic stereotypes of pornography in Lawrence's The Rainbow. The bulk of the analysis will be on the pornographic representations in the novel. Moreover, the analysis is going to highlight Lawrence's discontent with pornography and its negative consequences on the ethics of his social milieus. At this point, Patrick O'Neill's concept of projection will be used to analyze Lawrence's authorial perspective on pornography and its relative issues, such as deteriorating ethics. On the other hand, Mieke Bal's concept of reception is going to be applied to examine the interpretation of Lawrence's The Rainbow as a fictional critique of exiting pornography in his society. Thus, the essay's argument will be that such pornography is a flagrant immoral contradiction with inherited traditional ethnics.

II Analysis and Discussion

The novel exposes the notion of illusion. The obvious meaning of illusion and reality is the "pornopsychological" practice; whereby people tend to obtain things for their values and interests. In addition, it involves the personal feelings of the other things i.e., persons feel that they need a lot of things regardless the others' desires to have them as well. This is the psychological aspect of illusion and reality. Persons want to achieve their needs which they psychologically lack. In psychological illusion, people aspire to gain things by different instruments or means, like money or bribe, to fulfill their purposes. In addition, the psychological illusion includes an escape from exaggerated pride acquired from family surroundings. (Spender 38). Additionally, the illusion has a rational feature. The rational characteristic of pride is that people try to achieve their goals by using clever procedures to obtain what they want. In this way, the cognitive procedures play an important role. People use their knowledge about other people's psychology. They come close by those people and depend on them for subjective interests (Spilka 82). Furthermore, rational illusion takes place in everyday actions. It does not need time to be achieved. It relies on knowing other people and the way they can be exploited. It differs from psychological illusion which needs a long time to be fulfilled. Again, such identity influences the national sense of belonging of certain people (Abu Jweid, 2016: 529).

Lawrence's literature has other literary insights to do with alienation. However, it represents alienation from the racial perspective. Not all charterers suffer from alienation. Only the black characters feel alienated. Such literature depicts the disappointment with the expediency of the British society and the exploitation of the inferior people. This expedience exploitation is really a human dilemma. Discrimination is another behavior related to the educational process. It is also similar to egoism in a negative way when used to exploit the others. It is an ethnical principle attributed to the discussion of negative practices at the colonial agendas. It is basically founded on the idea that exploitation and ethnical discrepancy are the main focus of the play's racial implication of "mutual alienation; whereby they depend on the individual desires of person, and the benefit of utilitarian racism goes to inferior individuals not to their white counterparts (Sanders 65).

The novel copes with the common fraternity standards of the British society. The gap between the play and reality is an obvious factor of the loss of human fraternity. The traditional British society maintained this fraternity for decades. But the inherited traditions dissolved when, suffering, together with "egotism," did not reconcile. At this point, the play stands out as literary exemplification of "materialist decay" which was prevalent in the British society. Such decay dismantled the British ideals of fraternity. Therefore, the British society underwent the consequences of capitalism at the beginning of the twentieth century. Family cultural values were generally modified by the capitalist influence which pervaded British society. The family constitutes the backbone of any society in Britain, but the ills in society can be traced to the distortions in the value system for the family in modern societies. As such, the theme of "loss of the function of the family" can be traced to the requirements of the contemporary family, which has been noticed by outside agencies, as opposed to the former practices of needs met by the family itself. However, the family is surrounded by outside forces and the family environment can be invaded by the public state.

The novel's pornographic scenes, moreover, have made some critics, the British social and capitalist classes in society are the most powerful, arrogant and bloodthirsty in the world and that everybody suffers from its effects. Additionally, despite their being a tiny minority, English people are the ruling class because they not only own and profit from the means of production, but also control the state in order to maintain their power and profits. Furthermore, and government policies are considered as the main sources of this problem based on the politician's view. However, based on economists' views, the free market causes the breakup of the traditional British family, not free welfare. These claims include free-market forces, which are forced upon us by capitalist society, are responsible for breaking up the working-class family in Britain. This is obviously evident in the novel's fictional incidents.

According to Lawrence, pornography is conveyed in narrative fiction in an aesthetic manner. This is because Literature does not cover the aesthetic realm of pornography which should be taken into consideration. But, like all cultural manifestations, it is a product of the socioeconomic and ideological conditions of the place and time in which it is written, whether or not the author creates works that incorporate ideology in the form it evolves. As literature reflects real life, it provides options of interest to social critics. Literary works might be inclined to instil ideologies in the readers or might demand that the reader criticize ideologies i.e., literary texts do both. The Rainbow asserts that the best form for social critics is realism, because it resents and depicts the real world and its injustices, socioeconomic and ideological contradictions and encourages the material and historical.

Lawrence's The Rainbow tells the story of Brangwen family in three generations. The novel parades love stories and encounters that were gradually changing during the British industrial life. Tom Brangwen and the Polish girl Lydia are the protagonists of the major love stories which the novel tackles. In fact, the authorial projection focalization factor is the "telling voice" in the course of the narrative incidents. O'Neill relates the presence of such narrative stances in a work of art which seriously deals with realistic problems. The author utilizes his/her fictional events as simulation of these problems. In The Rainbow, the projection is directed

towards the pornographic scenes which Lawrence resents: "Lensky, married to the young doctor, became with him a patriot and an émancipée. They were poor, but they were very conceited. She learned nursing as a mark of her emancipation" (50). This marriage is not favored by Lawrence since it violates the ethical standards of any ideal society.

O'Neill tackles the peculiarities of the authorial projection as "the most important, most penetrating, and most subtle means of manipulation available to the narrative text, whether literary or otherwise" (116). This projection is recognized among the world's finest fictional compositions. The reason of this acclaim lies in literature handling the crucial dilemmas of the social problems in universal appeal. The manipulation of dramatic techniques, such as dialogues are renders him prevalent appreciation. Authors from different parts of the world would follow and imitate its writing style to reflect their contemporary affairs in their own writing styles. What is more, it would a cardinal figure of social intricate problems. The typical structure of its literary works contains transcendent impressive themes of effective styles. Lawrence's The Rainbow deals with the same matter in the light of such claims when characters undergo pornographic experience: "Lydia, tempered by her German blood, coming of a different family, was obliterated, carried along in her husband's emphasis of declaration, and his whirl of patriotism" (50).

Genette discusses the very sense of this narrative events which are described as a fictional figuration of the literary individuality (186). In a similar way, Lawrence's The Rainbow transmits the accurate intrinsic as well as extrinsic attributes of his compatriots. The intrinsic characteristics of his literary style involve the characterization of the fictional characters. The choice of his character's role is highly precise. Each one represents one personality manifestations. A character might represent a whimsical personality suffering from pornographic complexities. While another characters typify abnormal personality. To such a degree, the novel transfers various personalities through literary works. As for the extrinsic attributes of his dream, and it is interested in the fringes of the British society. In other words, literary works have excessive ambition. They fiercely fight for preserving wishful thinking and eager endeavors. For all that, they do not recognize the aftereffect of this optimistic aspiration. When they do not accomplish such dreams, slumps into dissatisfaction; and they convert into being agonized of by desperate and pornographic anguish. Similarly, Lawrence conveys his rejection of pornography through his authorial projection voice: "The days went on as before, Brangwen went out to his work, his wife nursed her child and attended in some measure to the farm" (100).

Genette contends that narrative fiction portrays the characters' formal metamorphoses even in different genres. They embody the reconciliation between ambitious persons with their bleak. In this fashion, literary persons do not go along with their hope. They fall into depressed disillusionment and spiritual deterioration. Even though they are few in number, they are illustrative patterns of subjective quests that are destined to pessimistic temper. By the same token, Lawrence exposes pornography: "Lydia had visited him then, taking Anna with her. It was when the girl was fourteen years old. Since then she had not seen him. She remembered him as a small sharp clergyman who cried and talked and terrified her, whilst her mother was most strangely consoling, in a foreign language" (250). In addition, Lawrence's authorial voice is similarly reflected against pornography: "Lydia Brangwen, the mother, also came and saw the impressive, inviolable body of the dead man. She went pale, seeing death" (259).

the narrative attributes of literary works are mere embodiment of the authorial dissatisfaction with some intricate social matters (Bygrave 44). Furthermore, literary works are meticulous representation of the author's obsession with a certain problem and how it could be solved (Edmiston X). Finney describes the focalization factor as follows: "projection is a term coined by Genette to distinguish between narrative agency and visual mediation, i.e. projection" (X). Lawrence, in The Rainbow, approaches the issue of pornography implicitly through this kind of projection: "Lydia still resented Lensky. When she thought of him, she was always younger than he, she was always twenty, or twenty-five, and under his domination" (265). Furthermore, projection Point of View "confuses speaking and seeing, narrative voice and focalization. Hence, the need for Genette's term" (Edmiston 144). But first, the following section outlines the aspects of the focalization factor which are relevant to the analysis of fictional texts. In The Rainbow, the same idea is reflected in order to critique pornography: "She [Lydia] had been afraid of his [Tom's] dark eyes upon her. They did not see her, they were fixed upon her. And he was hard, confident" (265).

The authorial obsession with any problem is considered as a way of expression through narrative events (Bal 40). as such, the narrative events become an authorial vehicle to contemn any social flaw outside the text (Abu Jweid, 2015: 131). Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan focuses on the essence of focalization narrative factor in terms of "mediation"; and "the story is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'prism, 'perspective, 'angle of vision,' verbalized by the narrator though not necessarily his" (71). Consequently, the focalization factor ranges between the narrative voice and vision. Here, this authorial vision corresponds to Lawrence's critique of pornography: "She thrilled with the excitement of it, and accepted. During the courtship, his kisses were a wonder to her. She always thought about them, and wondered over them" (265).

Furthermore, Rimmon-Kenan's assertion of the authorial projection is of paramount importance since it provides us with the typical narrative peculiarities. The narrative plot "is presented-transformed into the narrative text through a double mediation, namely 'a 'voice' that 'speaks' and 'eyes' that 'see'" (O'Neill 85). Here, the narrative voice, says O'Neill relates to the fictional narrator; and narrative 'eyes' relate to the "focalizer" (86). Therefore, the narrative focalizer is the fictional vision; and it is narrative "perspective" per se (86). In The Rainbow, Lawrence tells us indirectly of his view of pornography: "She [Lydia] had never quite recovered from her prostration of the first days, or nights, of marriage. He had taken her to Vienna, and she was utterly alone with him, utterly alone in another world, everything, everything foreign, even he foreign to her" (266).

Manfred Jahn, furthermore, describes the narrative events as the fictional world by which the plot is "focalized through" via a form of narrative "virtual camera" (260). All the three models are the authorial voice projected in The Rainbow. The function of these modes is to attack pornography and its immoral aspects: "Then came the

real marriage, passion came to her [Lydia's], and she became his slave, he was her lord, her lord. She was the girl-bride, the slave, she kissed his feet, she had thought it an honour to touch his body, to unfasten his boots. For two years, she had gone on as his slave, crouching at his feet, embracing his knees" (266). These events exemplify the "restriction of field and one constant point of view" (Genette 52). This aspect of projection also exemplifies Lawrence's critique of pornography and its psychological effect upon the characters in The Rainbow: "Lydia Brangwen rocked herself on the bed, thinking aloud" (268).

The internal projection, Genette explicates the idea of narrative reception vision that involves the character's command of "thoughts or perceptions" (192). Being so, the core conceptual "internal projection includes not only the narrative position within the fictional texts, but also attitude as well as cultural, moral, and ideological orientation" (Rimmon-Kenan71). In an evident way, the narrative concept of fictional reception cannot possibly be stretched to subsume the characters only. In a similar manner, reception is the way by which we perceive the notion of pornography in The Rainbow: "He [Tom] rose and opened the door. She [Lydia] stood on the threshold in her night-dress, as she had climbed out of bed, black eyes staring round and hostile, her fair hair sticking out in a wild fleece. The man and child confronted each other" (65). In the main events of the novel, receiving the whole notion of pornography is typical to the concept of reception: "Then suddenly, Anna looked round, as if she thought he would be gone. She saw the face of the man lying upturned to the ceiling. Her black eyes stared antagonistic from her exquisite face, her arms clung tightly to her mother, afraid" (66).

In the external narrative kind "the narrator says less than the character knows; this is the 'objective' or 'behaviorist' narrative" (Prince 43). Moreover, Bal contends that in the receiving the "characters also is focalized, but they are focalized from without, which means that the narrative's center of interest is a character in the same way as reception, but its development is seen from the outside" (63). Reception, furthermore, comprises the mere narrative orientation of the world outside the plot. Consequently, the fictional narrator, or "focalizer" is separated in a neutral way, and reception is autonomous within the narrative boundaries. This occurs as a narrative object (through which a literary character could be perceived) is "focalized, but nothing clearly indicates whether it is actually perceived" (Bal 4). In The Rainbow, Lawrence depicts his characters in a way similar to reality that is charged with flagrant unethical pornography: "She [Lydia] was now the transfigured, she was wonderful, beyond him. He [Tom] wanted to go. But he could not as yet kiss her. He was himself apart. Easiest he could kiss her feet. But he was too ashamed for the actual deed, which were like an affront" (98). Furthermore, this pornography is represented in the following quotation: "She stopped in the field again and kissed him, clinging to him passionately, in a way he could not understand. He could not understand. But he left it all now, to marriage" (128).

In narratology, reception is commonly defined as "every narrative first of all has an extradiegetic narrator who produces it [diegesis]" (Bal 61). Accordingly, reception tells the main narrative events. However, if the events are interrupted by another narrative within the main story, it is called the intradiegetic narrator who represents "any character within that primary narrative who also produces a narrative" (60). Therefore, reception is

subordinate to the extradiegetic narrative point of view. Most importantly, the reader is the determining agent which perceives the story events whether they are extradiegetic or intradiegetic. Lawrence, in The Rainbow attracts our attention to pornography through his fictional characters: "She [Lydia] waited for him [Tom] to meet her, not to bow before her and serve her. She wanted his active participation, not his submission. She put her fingers on him. And it was torture to him, that he must give himself to her actively, participate in her, that he must meet and embrace and know her, who was other than himself" (98). This scene is intensified in the following quotation: "She sighed, and seemed to wake up, then she kissed him again. Then she loosened herself away from him and took his hand. It hurt him when she drew away from his breast" (128).

According to David Lodge, reception is considered as a "voice in which a variety of conflicting ideological positions are given a voice and set in play both between and within individual speaking subjects, without being placed and judged by an authoritative authorial voice" (86). These polyphonic ideas are similar to Lawrence's portrayal of pornography in The Rainbow; the following quotation exemplifies this claim: "There was that in him [Tom] which shrank from yielding to her [Lydia], resisted the relaxing towards her, opposed the mingling with her, even while he most desired it. He was afraid, he wanted to save himself" (98). They have pornographic relationship: "My love," she said, her voice growing rapturous. And they kissed on the mouth, in rapture and surprise, long, real kisses. The kiss lasted, there among the moonlight. He kissed her again, and she kissed him. And again they were kissing together. Till something happened in him, he was strange. He wanted her. He wanted her exceedingly. She was something new" (127-128).

Additionally, Bal postulates a decisive relationship among several "polyphonic" voices within the broad context of narrative events (40). Bal explicates novelistic conventions of narrative reception through a fictional complicated literary manner. He profoundly highlights the importance of fictional reception for clarifying the narrator's position in the main events. He also considers reception to be a distinctive characteristic of the works of fiction which tackles social issues (3). In The Rainbow, likely, Lawrence deals with a social issue i.e., pornography:

His [Tom] blood beat up in waves of desire. He wanted to come to her [Lydia], to meet her. She was there, if he could reach her. The reality of her who was just beyond him absorbed him. Blind and destroyed, he pressed forward, nearer, nearer, to receive the consummation of himself, he received within the darkness which should swallow him and yield him up to himself. If he could come really within the blazing kernel of darkness, if really he could be destroyed, burnt away till he lit with her in one consummation, that were supreme, supreme. (99)

As already argued, the characteristic of Bal's notion of narrative reception encompasses the authorial insights in a literary works. The author utilizes the narrative perspective to shed light on a specific theme in order to unravel the complexities of the social reality. Therefore, the narrative text becomes the author's medium of exposing the social defects which he/she wants to mitigate through critical "agreement or disagreement" (109). In this sense, the literary work becomes the author's ideal means of projecting his/her disagreement with a certain social phenomena in order to amend it via fictional corrective themes. Similarly, Lawrence amends the phenomena of social pornography in the novel. As such, The Rainbow mingles the author's (Lawrence's) and the characters' (like Tom and Lydia) voices. These characters are detached from the author's voce because they interact with each other in the course of the fictional plot. For example, Tom and Lydia are embodiment of critiquing pornography in society: "He was kissing her throat. She turned and looked at him. Her eyes were dark and flowing with fire. His eyes were hard and bright with a fierce purpose and gladness, like a hawk's. She felt him flying into the dark space of her flames, like a brand, like a gleaming hawk" (120).

She [Lydia] set her sheaves against the shock. He saw her hands glisten among the spray of grain. And he [Tom] dropped his sheaves and he trembled as he took her in his arms. He had over-taken her, and it was his privilege to kiss her. She was sweet and fresh with the night air, and sweet with the scent of grain. And the whole rhythm of him beat into his kisses, and still he pursued her, in his kisses, and still she was not quite overcome. He wondered over the moonlight on her nose! All the moonlight upon her, all the darkness within her! All the night in his arms, darkness and shine, he possessed of it all! All the night for him now, to unfold, to venture within, all the mystery to be entered, all the discovery to be made. (127)

III Conclusion

This essay has discussed the depiction of corrupt pornography in Lawrence's The Rainbow. The essay has found that Lawrence sought out new models of expression in his novel. He writes in a traditional fictional form that has an unshackled habit and fixed form. In so doing, Lawrence harkened back to the experiments of organic forms of the early twentieth century through spontaneous, flexible, alive, and direct literary utterances. To convey the instinct of people, the emotional intensity of human relationships, the novel repeats and develops symbols or layer clauses in ritualistic cadences or unfold parallels with social issues.

Vehemently social, the vital and even ecstatic encounters with nature, sex, and raw feeling in Lawrence's The Rainbow assert the primacy of the unconscious and instinctual self, from which he felt the cerebral-intellectual self had alienated the English middle classes. He had vision; he responded intensely to life; he had a keen ear and piercing eye for vitality and society. Accordingly, he created new voices for middle classes individuality and concreteness of things in nature, and for the individuality and concreteness of people.

Lawrence's social sketches are as impressive in their way as in his The Rainbow. He seizes both on the symbolic incident and on the concrete reality, and each is presented in terms of other. He looked at the pornographic world freshly, with his own eyes, avoiding formulas and clichés; and he forged for himself a kind of utterance that, at his best, was able to convey powerfully and vividly what his original vision showed him.

For this reason, the essay has applied O'Neill's concept of projection and Bal's concept of reception to interpret both the authorial rejection of immoral pornography and its effect on society. In so doing, Lawrence; in a restless fictional pilgrim, had uncanny perceptions into the depths of physical things and an uncompromising honesty in his view of human beings and the world. Thus, Lawrence offers new senses regarding the taboo issues of his time towards pornography. His precise utterances and flagrant pornographic scenes are realistic sketches of how social live was changing to mere corruption.

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