

Self-Disintegration in The Modern World: Freeing the Fragmented Self in The Works of Lawrence and Erich Fromm

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ABSTRACT: *21st century individuals, in the overly industrialized civilization, have been molded by a generality of what an average man should be. What he should have, how he should act and what kind of relationships he should form with other fellow men. Yet, he still believes his freedom intact. This paper, aims to study how industrialism from the modernist age as depicted in D.H Lawrence's fiction and non-fiction, has progressed further into enclosing the individual inside a materialist cage labeled as "freedom" turning him into an automaton, one copy of the rest, enmeshing his individuality and spontaneity as an original being, capable of creative achievements, causing his self to disintegrate into different neurotic forms of love and coping. as well as the social psychologist Erich Fromm's empirical analysis of this disintegration in our contemporary society, which has progressed further since the modernist age. Thus, this paper adopts a psychoanalytical and socio-cultural approach based on Erich Fromm's theories of love and disintegration to analyse D.H Lawrence's characters in "The Rainbow" and examine his prophetic insights in relation to the disintegration of the individual in our contemporary society.*

KEYWORDS: Industrialization, Freedom, Self-Mechanization, Disintegration, Symbiotic Union, Modernity

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Introduction :

As 21st century individuals, we have all felt the overwhelming sense of pride and achievement when we bought our first car, our own house or perhaps started our own business in order to grow richer. Most of us have tried to soothe our sadness or loneliness by going shopping, maintaining close relationships with important people in society, and even dreaming of a high-class marriage and a well-paying job. What underlays this however, might be our fragmented sense of self trying to prove its existence, that has arguably disintegrated and reduced to an abstraction due to the new societal terms we came to witness from the industrial revolution onwards which consist of the problem of limiting the individual's freedom and reducing his being to a totality of abstractions or to a "human automaton" living to work and working to live in an endless cycle that enmeshes his individuality and spontaneity as an original being capable of creative achievements.

The problem of the Industrial world, has been discussed by sociologists, economists and writers. However, the depth to which the individual and his self are affected inside this system, can only be studied thoroughly through a psychoanalyst perspective combined with a socio-cultural one in order to examine the serious impact that it has on the individual as a separate entity and not as the social, economic or sociological problem of the herd.

One prominent figure who was interested in studying the issues of the self, and who has dealt with several forms of its disintegration, that the individual inevitably experiences inside the industrial society is the German social psychologist and psychoanalyst Erich Fromm. He has consistently presented us with theories and analyses of the original self in the process of being decomposed and rebuilt into a mechanized one, and highlighted the problems that individuals would face if they are not aware of this automatization of the self and express resistance to it. These are mainly problems of alienation, fragmentation and extreme separateness from the self, the fellow men and nature.

In Erich Fromm's book "The art of loving" he distinguishes an important relation between the rapidly evolving society under capitalism and the disintegration of the self under a growing sense of separateness, anxiety and alienation. He argues that man represents life being aware of itself, and this precise awareness of himself as a separate entity, of his helplessness before the forces of nature and society, makes his separate, disunited existence an unbearable prison.

Fromm believes that this separation and aloneness could lead to insanity, unless man finds a way to cope with the situation.

The deepest need of man, then, is the need to overcome his separateness, to leave the prison of his aloneness. The *absolute* failure to achieve this aim means insanity, because the panic of complete isolation can be overcome only by such a radical withdrawal from the world outside that the feeling of separation disappears—because the world outside, from which one is separated, has disappeared. (Fromm, 1956. P15)

This theory suggests that man of all cultures and contexts is confronted with one dilemma which is, how to overcome separateness and aloneness because the issue springs from the same ground which is the human situation, the condition of human existence. And as modern society has it, the human condition is limited in thought and action, in the sense that, the true individual self that is supposed to be free, spontaneous and creative is not as free as it seems.

Individual freedom: an illusory concept:

Before discussing Fromm's perspective on the answer to the problem of separateness and alienation, it is important to discuss his views on freedom which has been snatched from the individual in the industrialized society, restricting thus all creative activity and productive thinking.

Fromm argues that one of the most fundamental rights that every human being should have, is the right to be oneself. In other words, to be a person and not a thing, to have the ability to act and feel without any restraints or fears of prosecution. However, the Western industrialized society, according to him, has created another type of man, the consumer man to whom all things are articles for consumption including love and sex. This man, has a persistent illusion that he is a free individualized person whilst he happens to be just a mechanism, an abstraction, an automaton.

Thus, although this man believes in a distorted sense of freedom, his natural powers of thought, love and emotions are not his own. He instead transforms them into the outside, to a society that is based on conformity, the society of the masses. The richer the masses and organizations are, the poorer he is as an individual.

The bigger issue that Fromm stresses in our contemporary world, is that people had already become alienated automatons and part of the masses. Unlike individuals from the 19thc who had a certain level of awareness and growing concern about the human development (or regression) in the modern world. In other words, Fromm insists that people unconsciously repress feelings of anxiety, separateness and alienation because the industrial society, that has caused these issues, is also the one providing misleading remedies to them. These remedies according to Fromm, are disintegrated forms of love, freedom and spontaneity and the reliance on the “entertainment industry” which will be discussed further in the next sections of this article.

The dilemma of the disintegrated self and the solution to it in Fromm’s view varies according to the degree to which the individual has reached separateness. And this precise division of struggle is not only particular to our own contemporary world but could be traced back to the beginnings of the 20th century where the industrial, capitalist world came about to rebuild the new man and make him serve the sole purpose of work, eat and work again, this individual, to quote the modernist English writer D.H Lawrence: “ must eat so much, sleep so much, and work so much and play so much, and love so much, somebody quick.” (*Democracy 10*)

Concern about the human separateness and the disintegration of the self is particular to the works of D.H Lawrence, who, throughout his writings, had been trying to find ways to counteract the disintegration of the self in a world that can no longer be pastoral. Just like Fromm, Lawrence believed that the modern man’s freedom of thought, love, action and creativity has been taken away from him under the concepts of “ideals”. He argues that our understanding of freedom is illusory and that genuine freedom can be attained by developing alternative ways of understanding what it is to be free. He rejects collective solutions to the problems of freedom and sees liberation as an individual experience, so the solutions that Lawrence seeks are related and found in the individual alone not in society as a whole. He writes: “the people must consist of men who are somebody, not men who are something.” (*Lawrence, 2010, play.*)

The inevitable struggle that Lawrence highlights, is one that subdues the individual, forcing him to bargain his individuality for money or commodities. Industrialized society has created a “mould” of the perfect average man. A mold that restricts the freedom of individuals from being their own, separate, original selves and reduces them to “every man to himself and every woman to herself as number one, an infinite number of number ONES.” It ends up subjecting all men to a particular ideal, exactly to the machine that he created.: “the invented ideal world of man is superimposed upon living men and women, and men and women are thus turned into abstracted, functioning mechanical units”

Lawrence consistently deals with these issues in his fictional and non-fictional works, reading him through Erich Fromm’s theories allows for a contemporary theoretical framework that sheds light on his relevance even today that the individual seems to have slipped into an irreversible state of automatization and remoteness from his creative, spontaneous origin and became enslaved to machines and ideals under the illusion of “freedom”.

The quest for self-liberation: Lawrence’s fiction and non-fiction:

Lawrence’s quest, although concerned with liberating the individual from his own chains, resides in the yearning for the collective, for the communion with fellow men and women and the whole cosmos. He believes that

people need genuine connection with others and there is no genuine freedom without this contact, “we cannot bear connection. That is our malady. We must break away and be isolate. We call that free, being individual. Beyond a certain point, it is suicide, perhaps we have chosen suicide.”

Lawrence draws a close relation between attaining the creative freedom and forming human bonds with other individuals and nature, one cannot be achieved without the other. In his essay “We need one another” he writes:

“It is in the living touch between us and other people, other lives, other phenomena that we move and have our being. Strip us of our human contacts and of our contact with the living earth and the sun, and we are almost bladders of emptiness. Our individuality means nothing” (Lawrence, 1974, P25)

Therefore, no degree of individuality and originality can be achieved without a sane union with other individuals. This is perhaps, to Lawrence, the most essential quality needed to establish a balanced being and avoid the state of nonentity and being reduced to a mechanical abstraction.

In his fictional works, this struggle to understand the aforementioned problems of the modern human condition and his quest for self-fulfillment although very apparent in “*Women in Love*”, could arguably be said to have started with the publication of “*The Rainbow*” 1915, which depicts three generations at the backdrop of industrial changes and the experiments of the first seeds of disintegration in the self and society.

Lawrence the “sex-artist”: context and criticism of his works:

Before dealing with “*The Rainbow*” and its depiction of the beginning of disintegration of the self, it is important to establish Lawrence in his context and to try to understand his position as an artist. At the time of the first publication of *The Rainbow* which, brought his reputation to a critical edge, later aggravated by the publication of *Women In Love* (1920) and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1929). Lawrence became known as a “sexual writer who committed “sexual morbidities”. His views on sex, morality and politics set him apart from his contemporary modernists because he stood for his own cause and defended his ideals although the price, he had to pay was high. His famous expression “art for my sake” can make his understanding as a writer concerned with his age, issues of the self and bearing the responsibility to enlighten the individual and make him aware of his critical condition of alienation and separateness, with a prophetic vision that would pierce through the future and reach us today in our industrialized selves.

Criticism of his novels did him no good in this regard, he has been notoriously censored, for he has been thought of as an advocate of sexual promiscuity. But Lawrence’s description of sex was intended as part and parcel of his journey to balance the mind and the body’s impulses and establish the natural order of things between humans who seek a renewing experience in their relationships. He wrote in his letters “nothing nauseates me more than promiscuous sex in and out of season” (Lawrence, letters, P.1111). Thus, the sexual relationships among his characters had one goal, which is the establishment of a healthy mind and body balance between two individuals. But Lawrence knew that this balance in the modern world had lost much of its spontaneity because like individual freedom, sexual life, too, has become conventionalized, commercialized and trivialized.

This commercialization of sex, is what Fromm refers to when he mentions the remedies that modern society offers to the malady of separateness. In other words, the “entertainment industry” mentioned earlier in this article. Fromm argues that “Today, sexual desires and fantasies are not very repressed any more. Sex has become an article of consumption, a very accessible and cheap one.” As Lawrence argues in “Pornography and Obscenity” that pornography “is an invariable stimulant to the vice of self-abuse, onanism, masturbation,” and goes on to assert that “there is an element of pornography in nearly all nineteenth century literature”. while “the mass of our popular amusements just exists to provoke masturbation.” “And this,” he insists, “is, perhaps, the deepest and most dangerous cancer of our civilization.” (Lawrence, 1974, p24). How then should we understand his description of sex in his novels? Especially in “*Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. ”

Lawrence's treatment of sex, is in fact the very opposite of pornography. Because to him, sex was just a symbol of the sacred relationship between man and woman. And this relationship according to him is characterized by a rhythmic flow and is subject to constant, painful but necessary change to attain a wholesome of being in love. In this essay "*We need one another*" Lawrence draws a clear distinction of the mere "conventionalized sex" and the true depth that people should attain in love and marriage. He writes:

"If only we had more sense. But we are held by few fixed ideas, like sex, money, what a person "ought to be" and so forth. And we miss the whole of life. Sex is a changing thing. Now alive, now quiescent now fiery, now apparently quite gone. But the ordinary man and woman haven't the gumption to take it in all its changes. They demand crass crude sex-desire, they demand it always and when it isn't forth-coming then it's Divorce!" (Lawrence, 1974, p38)

Lawrence makes it clear to us that he regards sex as a vital part of any relationship but not the core one. He believes that sex has been reduced to a demand that should be fulfilled because it "ought to be". In this description, sex appears as a scripted act necessary for the development of a relationship between man and woman. This very script, which is characteristic to pornography, takes out the vitality of the sex and reduces it to a mechanical act to be done in order to perversely preserve a relationship devoid of any natural flow or understanding between both parties.

The writer proceeds to state the aim behind his interest in sex, which differs from pornography's aim by writing "all I see in our vaunted civilization is men and women smashing each other emotionally and physically to bits, and all I ask is that they should pause and consider. For sex to me, means the whole of the relationship between man and woman...the relationship is a lifelong change and a lifelong travelling and that is sex" (Lawrence, 1974, p39)

Having cleared the "sexual" reputation of Lawrence, and distinguished his aim from what has been attributed to his novels, we can proceed to analyse his novel "*The Rainbow*" and how he deals with the first signs of disintegration caused by the newly industrialized world.

"The Rainbow": first clash with the industrial world:

Lawrence in "*The Rainbow*" depicts a long journey of awareness that Fromm mentions, of the separateness of the self and the characters' struggles to cope with it in often neurotic, inadequate ways. This awareness builds gradually and becomes mostly apparent, and unbearable in the last generation with Ursula who illustrates the novel's quest from different angles and is the most promising character in terms of the fulfilment of the quest. This is because, Lawrence often presents us with a duality of characters those who resort to neurotic coping and those who, despite the hardships, try to reach a certain less painful conclusion and retain a considerable degree of self-integrity.

So, Lawrence's exposition of a modern industrial and material society proceeds without contradiction or interruption through the three generations. This paper will deal only with the characterization of the first generation of the Brangwen family, as it represents the first clash with the industrial world. Our aim is to find out how exactly did Lawrence analyse the struggle of the self in an industrialized society through the complexities that his characters encounters and how he illustrates the solutions to the modern struggle of the self that he thinks adequate to the first generation, but perhaps could be possible no longer, for the following ones.

That is because, the solutions that Lawrence explores in each generation, and in each novel, are not generalizations or standardized solutions to humanity as a whole. Lawrence did not preach for a standardized lifestyle, and his previous argument of the vital change in characters and relationships illustrates this idea. The characters in his novels may reach certain possible realizations but, he stresses that they remain *within* a novel. In her article "*Love of Power*" Lydia Blanchard writes:

But to consider Lawrence's development, through the progress of his fiction, is to see that Lawrence, rather than advocating any one particular life style, was instead moving through a continuing re examination of the advantages and disadvantages embodied in each of many different life styles...in *The Rainbow*, for example, the rural Brangwens have a relatively stable relationship; their children and their grand children, increasingly urbanized, achieve no such balance. (*Blanchard, 1975, p4*)

Having concluded that Lawrence's solutions vary from generation to another, the examination of the first generation suggests that although, the self is deteriorating in the rapidly changing industrial world, the natural world is still present and that may help the characters to find a balance in their relationship with one another as well as a relationship with nature as a whole.

However, before proceeding to analyse the deterioration of the self in the industrial society presented in Lawrence's novel, it is important to note the views about the starting point of this deterioration that both Lawrence and Fromm shared. That is, the emergence from nature and the increasing awareness of the individual about his condition. Fromm stresses:

The human race in its infancy, like a baby feeling one with his mother—still feels one with nature, the soil, animals and plants. However, the more the human race emerges from these primary bonds, the more it separates itself from the natural world, the more intense becomes the need to find new ways of escaping separateness. (*Fromm, 1956, p16*)

This vision explains that the more individuals go further into this new industrial system, the more urging grows the sense of separateness and perhaps the harder becomes the ability to integrate the self into a solid ground. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that neither Lawrence nor Fromm support the theory of regression to the past. They both believed in finding a way to cope with these changes within the present self, in relation to other human beings. In his letter to Lady Cynthia (1915) Lawrence writes : “This love that goes back into the past but not forward into the future-like the love of the dead- is very painful.” This passage clearly expresses Lawrence's stance in regard to the lost pastoral unity, he believes that regression is not the solution and that man, once emerged from the primary bonds aforementioned must embark on an individual, not collective, quest to find himself, to achieve self-renewal.

Fromm shares the same belief as Lawrence, he stresses:

Man has transcended nature—although he never leaves it; he is a part of it—and yet once torn away from nature, he cannot return to it; once thrown out of paradise—a state of original oneness with nature—cherubim with flaming swords block his way, if he should try to return. Man can only go forward by developing his reason, by finding a new harmony, a human one, instead of the prehuman harmony which is irretrievably lost. (*Fromm, 1956, p13*)

Following on this idea that the individual has been thrown into a state of uncertainty about the future and an inability to return to his past, the reader of Lawrence's novel “*The Rainbow*”, cannot expect characters to find harmony in nature no more as with each generation, the primary bonds that Fromm mentions disappear further into the past, they can only progress into the future with doubts, anxieties and feelings of not belonging.

This renders his novel complex to understand, precisely because it does not adopt a conventional plot. The “real story” in Lawrence, as Marsh Nicolas argues in “*D.H Lawrence: the novels*” is inside the characters, it does not depend on external events and action. Lawrence does not offer an explicit description of the ugliness and malice of the modern industrial world, instead, Lawrence's plot as Daichies David argues in “*The novel and the modern world*” showed his characters discovering (or failing to discover) their own sense of meaning in their relationships through shared experiences.

Consequently, the ability to understand Lawrence's study of the disintegration of the self through his depiction of a community in its last flare of vitality, and his possible solution to this gradual dying away, could only be done through the analysis of his characters. In other words, this paper aims to study the first generation

of the Brangwens, precisely, their interpersonal and sexual relationships with one another. Following on Fromm's premise that man has to unite himself in some form or another with other man and the world outside. He argues that human relationships and "mature love" are the ultimate forms of union that could solve the problem of shame, guilt, separateness and anxiety.

Erich Fromm: Distorted ways of coping with the industrialized Western civilization:

In his book "*The art of loving*" Fromm stresses ways of coping with separateness that individual's resort to but represent distorted answers to the problem of what he called "pseudo-love". These are mainly, orgiastic sexuality, the symbiotic union which blurs individuality and the union with the group or becoming an "automaton", a clog in the machine. These are just neurotic forms of love and coping according to Fromm, and they only further aggravate the situation.

Fromm raises the question: whether Western civilization and the spirit resulting from it are conducive to the development of healthy love, and affirms that the answer is negative. The attainment of love is a rare phenomenon, and that its place is taken by a number of forms of pseudo-love, which are in reality so many forms of the disintegration of love. And if we contrast this to Lawrence's characterization, only few characters partially succeed in attaining "mature-love" and it is the negative characters who illustrate the morbid state of human condition experiencing pseudo-love inside the capitalist society which transforms the character structure of individuals. Fromm argues:

Capitalism, its specific qualities and which have a profound influence on the character structure of modern man. we witness an ever-increasing process of centralization and concentration of capital. paralleled by the development of the labor movement. Through the unionization of labor, the individual worker does not have to bargain on the labor market by and for himself; he is united in big labor unions, also led by a powerful bureaucracy which represents him vis-à-vis the industrial colossi. An increasing number of people cease to be independent. The individual loses his individuality, where he becomes an expendable cog in the machine. (Fromm, 1956, p 66)

Fromm's idea that capitalism amasses herds to fit in the social fabric without friction, deprives them of a very essential trait in the achievement of self-fulfilment which is individuality and the "quick of life" that is creative, authentic and essential to the development of the self. The outcome is thus, that man becomes alienated from himself, from his fellow men and from nature.

Lawrence had also described this mechanization and materialization of people as a disease creeping into the self and depriving it of essential life experiences. He writes:

It is this mass of unclean world that we have superimposed on the clean world that we cannot bear. When I looked back, out of the clearness of the open evening, at this Littlehampton dark and amorphous like a bad eruption on the edge of the land, I was so sick I felt I could not come back: all these little amorphous houses like an eruption, a disease on the clean earth; and all of them full of such diseased spirit, every landlady harping on her money, her furniture, every visitor harping on his latitude of escape from money and furniture. He whole thing like an active disease, fighting out the health. One watches them on the sea-shore, all the people, and there is something pathetic, almost wistful in them, as if they wished that their lives did *not* add up to this nullity of possession, but as if they could not escape.

One can no longer live with people: it is too hideous and nauseating. Owners and owned, they are like the two sides of a ghastly disease. One feels a sort of madness come over one, as if the world had become hell. But it is only superimposed: it is only a temporary disease. It can be cleaned away. (Lawrence, letters)

Thus, the only real answer to the disintegration is the achievement of interpersonal union, or integral fusion with one another in love, not just erotic love, but love of man to man, as a natural bond that prevents the

transformation of humans to mechanical automatons. This integrality, however, proves difficult to achieve because industrialism and the capitalist system do not promote such culture.

Lawrence's depiction of Fromm's distortions in "The Rainbow":

In Lawrence's "*The Rainbow*" All characters require a re-shuffling of the self, its change and its rebuilding under the changing condition of the industrial society. However, we are presented with characters who resort to Fromm's partial distortions already mentioned "pseudo-love". These forms can be formulated under three main areas: orgiastic sexuality, symbiotic union and the union with the group foregrounding characters who lose their individuality. These characters fail and do not find fulfilment nor overcome their separateness.

The orgiastic tendency, as Fromm explains or, the momentary relief attained through sexual orgasm, enables "man to go on for a time without suffering too much from his separateness. Slowly the tension of anxiety mounts, and then is reduced again by the repeated performance of the ritual". (Fromm, 1956, p16)

This neurotic deviation, although not the main area of analysis that can be done to the first generation of the Brangwen family in Lawrence's novel, is apparent in Tom's first physical contact with a prostitute.

Tom's childhood coincides with the establishment of the collieries and marks a starting point to the industrial turmoil. Tom embodies the first signs of disintegration and the first disturbances in the character structure in the slightly and increasingly modernized world. His attitudes and responses to the changes around him highlight a need for adjustment to the old relation between men and women. In other words, the beginning of a search for a new relation that enables the attainment of an integrated self and eases the burden of separateness, or what Fromm refers to as "*mature love*".

However, before Tom's meeting with Lydia the polish lady and on whose relationship this section will focus, he had an encounter with a prostitute, formulating Lawrence's theory that orgiastic sexuality is not the ultimate response to the human struggle and affirming that his, was not a question of "sex" for the sake of "sex".

It is important to note that in his first physical contact (relationship) with the prostitute, Tom was left feeling ashamed and drown into "nothingness" after his disillusioning experience. "The disillusion of his first carnal contact with woman, strengthened by his innate desire to find in a woman the embodiment of all his inarticulate, powerful religious impulses, put a bit in his mouth." (Daleski, 1965, p36). Lawrence tries to communicate through this affair, that physical contact alone does not suffice for the fulfilment of self-renewal, or escaping separateness. There should be compatibility and depth almost a religious one, beyond what cold, casual sexual relationships could ever convey. Dr. F.R Leavis explains this idea in his book *D.H Lawrence: Novelist*: "It suggests that fling of Tom's which, though in his after judgement intrinsically insignificant, nevertheless became a landmark in his life because it left him knowing so finally, that this mere satisfaction of the sexual impulse, was not what he wanted, and could not in fact, bring him satisfaction." (Leavis, 1955, p123)

After this realization, however, Tom unconsciously keeps seeking escape from his condition. He meets and attracts to Lydia because she represents a break with the traditional past. His desire to establish a link with the outside world through his relationship with Lydia, far from Cossethay and his ultimate failure to do so is Lawrence's way to demonstrate that the quest, in all cultures and contexts remains the same and the fulfilment of the quest has to start with the integral self before the "fusion" with the other, asserting the idea that collective solutions are not of interest to the modernist writer and instead, he wants to look inside the individual and extract the vital self that he preserves, or fails to preserve inside himself given the environment that he currently finds himself circumstanced to.

The reason for Tom's failure in the beginning of his relationship and the increase in his feeling of isolation and helplessness, is because he came to his wife without having achieved a fulness of being, he's fragmented. F.R Leavis describes this fragmentation: "However much he argues that he is "good enough by himself", that he is a man who can stand alone, "he must in the starry multiplicity of the night humble himself" and admit and know that without her, he is nothing" (Leavis, 1955, p41)

From this description of Tom's state of being, we assume that the nature of his initial relationship with Lydia is characterized by what Fromm calls symbiosis without integrity. A form of neurotic love that drives one person to absorb and depend heavily on the other to feel their existence. Fromm describes this form of pseudo-love as follows:

Symbiotic union has its biological pattern in the relationship between the pregnant mother and the foetus. They are two, and yet one. They live "together," (*sym-biosis*), they need each other. The foetus is a part of the mother, it receives everything it needs from her; mother is its world, as it were; she feeds it, she protects it, but also her own life is enhanced by it. In the *psychic* symbiotic union, the two bodies are independent, but the same kind of attachment exists psychologically. (*Fromm, 1956, p 21*)

Fromm distinguishes in his description two basic forms of symbiosis, the passive and the active:

The *passive* form of the symbiotic union is that of sub- mission, or if we use a clinical term, of *masochism*. The masochistic person escapes from the unbearable feeling of isolation and separateness by making himself part and parcel of another person who directs him, guides him, protects him; who is his life and his oxygen, as it were. The power of the one to whom one submits is inflated, may he be a person or a god; he is everything, I am nothing, except inasmuch as I am part of him.

The *active* form of symbiotic fusion is domination or, to use the psychological term corresponding to masochism, *sadism*. The sadistic person wants to escape from his aloneness and his sense of imprisonment by making another person part and parcel of himself. He inflates and enhances himself by incorporating another person, who worships him. (*Fromm, 1956, p22*)

Tom's desire to submit to Lydia and the nature of his demands on her renders their relationship impossible in the first years of marriage. Because Lydia insists on preserving her integrity and refuses to indulge in neither form of symbiosis.

"She waited for him 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." (*Lawrence, 1915, p94*)

From this passage, we conclude that Lydia's demands from Tom are in contrast to symbiotic union, demands of mature *love*. Fromm describes this mature love as:

"Mature love is *union under the condition of preserving one's integrity*, one's individual- ity. *Love is an active power in man*; a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others; love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits him to be himself, to retain his integrity. In love the paradox occurs those two beings become one and yet remain two." (*Fromm, 1956, p22*)

It could be argued that the nature of this demand from the part of Lydia, is mainly because she comes from a world more complex and far higher in the degree of separateness and anxiety than that of Tom. She recoils from a mechanized world that reduces her to an abstraction. And this is illustrated in the nature of her relationship with her first polish husband who was a surgeon. H.M Daleski describes this relationship in his book "*The Forked flame: a study of D.H Lawrence*":

“Looking back on her first marriage, she realizes that to Lensky she existed only as one of the baser or material conditions necessary for his welfare in prosecuting his ideas, of nationalism, of liberty, of science, but when his work had failed and he believed that everything had failed and stiffened and died, she rebelled: the individual effort might fail but not the human joy and she belonged to the human joy.” (*Lawrence, 1915, p85*)

Having had the experience of the social automaton and recoiled from it, Lydia expected to find in Tom an answer to her quest for self-fulfillment and he was a fertilizing influence on her regeneration once the conflict between them ceased after two years of marriage.

Resolution of the symbiotic conflict in “The Rainbow”:

Tom and Lydia managed to partially overcome the symbiotic nature of their relationship because Tom learned to accept her as a separate entity from his own. And this is illustrated in the following passage from the novel:

“There were a few moments of stillness. Then gradually, the tension, the withholding relaxed in him, and he began to flow towards her. She was beyond him, the unattainable. But he let go his hold on himself, he knew the subterranean force of his desire to come to her, to be with her, to mingle with her...their coming together now after two years of married life, was much more wonderful to them than it had been before. It was the entry into another circle of existence, it was the baptism to another life, it was the complete confirmation.” (*Lawrence, 1915, p97*)

It can be said that Tom ceased to be in a symbiotic relationship with Lydia after having established another symbiotic relationship with his step-daughter Anna. However, his recognition of his wife’s separateness and integrity as an individual was the first step towards the attainment of a fulfilling relationship. Lawrence shows how the opposed desire to preserve the self and to yield to the beloved can be reconciled; or what Fromm calls the desire to be loved instead of love, regarding love as an object for self-fulfillment rather than a faculty of its own.

We can however, only partially assume that Lydia and Tom have succeeded in overcoming the desire to be loved and absorbed in a symbiotic union in terms of their interpersonal relationship. That is because, their success is not integral inasmuch as they ultimately withdraw from the outside world and build one of their own, refusing to participate in the outside world is limiting and not fruitful in terms of the development of the self. This is what Fromm calls “egotism à deux” or two against the world. It is a form of neurotic coping as well.

“One can often find two people “in love” with each other who feel no love for anybody else. Their love is, in fact, an egotism à deux; they are two people who identify themselves with each other, and who solve the problem of separateness by enlarging the single individual into two. They have the experience of overcoming aloneness, yet, since they are separated from the rest of mankind, they remain separated from each other and alienated from themselves” (*Fromm, 1956, p46*)

This new nature of relationship between the couple ultimately limits their opportunities for self-fulfillment and keeps them separated and alienated still from the outside world.

“They were a curious family, a law to themselves, separate from the world, isolated, a small republic set in invisible bounds. The mother was quite indifferent to Ilkeston and Cossethay, to any claims made on her from the outside...To this she had reduced her husband. He existed with her entirely indifferent to the general values of the world.” (*Lawrence, 1915, p103*)

The egotism à deux that the first-generation experiences rely mainly on orgiastic sexuality to function. Although the two have recognized their differences and integrity, sex remains a means for Tom to feel alive, since he had been cut out from the outside world, yet he still feels helpless, alone and isolated.

“What was missing in his life, that, in his ravening soul, he was not satisfied? He had had that friend at school, his mother, his wife and Anna? What had he done? He had failed with his friend, he had been a poor son; but he had known satisfaction with his wife, let it be enough; he loathed himself for the state he was in over Anna. Yet he was not satisfied. It was agony to know it. ...what had he known but long material embrace with his wife! Curious that this was what his life amounted to! At any rate it was something, it was eternal. He lay with his wife in this arm and she was still his fulfilment, just the same as ever”(*Lawrence, 1915, p129*)

This first generation can be said to have achieved a degree of self-renewal in their interpersonal relationship after overcoming the symbiotic union, but they could not develop integral relationships with other individuals, they remained enclosed in a form of egotism à deux, but their relationship was more successful than the novel's next generation who had known more brutal conflicts due to the advance in industrial society and the changes that had taken place inside the individual's psyche. As mentioned before, the more entangled the individual is in the industrial society, the further he is from achieving the quest of self-renewal.

Conclusion:

To conclude, Fromm and Lawrence both saw in the industrial world a superimposed limitation on individual freedom and integrity. This restricted freedom is disguised in the form of ideals, entertainment and the objectification of the individual. Foregrounding a sort of union with the group and the subdual of the masses, gradually decreases the individual's capacity to wonder and think for himself, of ways to ease his separateness and anxiety that he has long been repressing and numbing under the capitalistic system of work and entertainment. In addition to the element of sex and symbiosis in relationships that force the individual to “act” according to what “he ought to be” losing thus a major part of his integrity. This fragmentation and disintegration of the natural, spontaneous, vivid self, has been foretold by D.H Lawrence who, throughout his novels, has depicted the growing malice and danger of this system on the individual. Although his fiction does not rely on a dramatic plot to illustrate his ideas, his characters experience psychological changes and exchange ideas that can be very telling about the future of mankind under the command of the machine that he created. Dealing with the first generation of the Brangwen family of “The Rainbow” opens new ways of interpretation of the following generations in their quest for self-renewal or self-rehabilitation. Later on, in “*Women in Love*” Lawrence voices this fragmentation and the difficulty to find a compromising balance in the industrial world through conflict in his characters, and the way man and woman try to rely on a symbiotic union to escape the separateness. He illustrates through Birkin, how difficult the idea of attaining “mature love” as Fromm describes is in a world that demands symbiosis without integrity. The question that should be asked is, how far have we gone into the automatization of individuals in our contemporary society? Have we got solutions left to preserve integrity or are we too self-swallowed in our egotism to even notice the mechanization of our wills...?

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