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## The Religion of Blood: A Study on D.H. Lawrence

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**Abstract:** David Herbert Lawrence was gifted with a prophetic vision. The novel for him was a medium to communicate his vision of life. He is against the over intellectualism of life. He is of the opinion that science with its over emphasis on reason destroys the intuitional and instinctive life of man. In his pursuit of life man should rely more on the impulses than on the reason. Thus, Lawrence often comes near with the Romantics. He wanted people to be corroborated by the dictates of the blood. In this study we shall make an attempt to focus on the essential element of Lawrence's philosophy-- 'the religion of blood' -- an orientation towards non-intellectualism -- a type of blood-consciousness—a rely on and resort to our impulses.

**Keywords:** impulses, Intellectualism, blood - consciousness

### 1. Introduction

One of the essentials of D. H. Lawrence's philosophy of life is his concern over the impact of the over-intellectualism on human life. Usually an age always leaves its impressions on a writer's mind. A writer often transcribes from life. In other words a writer is a product of the social, political, economic & religious conditions of the contemporary age. Lawrence's philosophy shows this impact. His age was an age of the growth of industrialization & urbanization, the advancement of science, over-intellectualism. In one of his popular novels – 'Lady Chatterley's Lover', Lawrence wrote "ours is essentially a tragic age". Actually Lawrence was here referring to the abstract intellectualism as something fatal to life. He, thus, seems to favor the realization through the blood-consciousness. Lawrence once wrote 'my own life is a belief in the blood'. Lawrence's anti-intellectualism is closely connected with his anti-materialism. It is the disengagement of one's intellect from one's emotions that has led humanity to a materialistic approach towards life. Lawrence felt the deadness of this material civilization which mechanizes the personality and corrupts the will. That is why he sought an escape to Mexico, Australia and Italy; lands which he considered beautiful on account of the preservation and adoration of instincts and Nature. Bonamy Dobree has beautifully summed up Lawrence's disgust of abstract philosophy and materialism in the following words:

"Throughout his career he has been anti-materialistic. Since, materialism for him blunts sensibility, he is for shearing away the relics of dead faiths, of philosophies that clog the free play of the impulses, and he rejects Christianity and Platonism with equal scorn. He is, in short, anarchic, but anarchic with a formative purpose; he would like to found a new religion."

### 2. Advocacy of Non-Intellectualistic Orientation

Lawrence advocates a non-intellectualistic orientation towards life. He passionately believed in the presence of the dark mystery of life, and he knew that this dark mystery cannot be known through intellect, for the intellect kills it in the very process of grasping it. Objective reality and scientific facts had little meaning for Lawrence. He wanted them to be corroborated by the dictates of the blood. Aldous Huxley tells us that when Lawrence was told about the theory of evolution and all the evidence that corroborated it, he merely said, "But I don't care about evidence. Evidence does not mean anything to me. I don't feel it here." Elsewhere he wrote that man knows not only with the mind but also with a host of ganglia and solar plexus, and what he knows thereby constitutes the real knowledge. The sole reason of his rejection of abstract intellectualism is his belief that it deprives life of its thrill and gaiety and saps its vitality. In a celebrated letter to his friend Ernest Collins, he showed his belief in the religion of the blood:

"My own religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true. The intellect is only a bit and bridle. What do I care about knowledge? All I want is to answer to my blood, direct, without fribbling intervention of mind, or moral, or what not."

### 3. **Blood-consciousness—A Substitute of Intellectualism**

In a letter to Ernest Collins dated 17 January 1913, he wrote, "I conceive a man's body as a kind of flame, like a candle flame forever upright and yet flowing; and the intellect is just the light that is shed onto the things around. And I am not so much concerned with the things around; - which is really mind:- but with the mystery of the flame forever flowing, coming God knows how from out of practically nowhere, and being itself, whatever there is around it, that it lights up. We have got so ridiculously mindful, that we never know that we ourselves are anything- we think there are only the objects we shine upon. And there the poor flame goes on burning ignored, to produce this light. And instead of chasing the mystery in the fugitive, half lighted things outside us, we ought to look at ourselves, and say 'My God, I am myself!' That is why I like to live in Italy. The people are so unconscious. They only feel and want: they don't know. We know too much. No we only think we know such a lot. A flame isn't a flame because it lights up two, or twenty objects on a table. It's a flame because it is itself. And we have forgotten ourselves. We are Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. We cannot be. 'To be or not to be' - it is the question with us now, by Jove. And nearly every Englishman says 'Not to be'. So he goes in for Humanitarianism and such like forms of not- being. The real way of living is to answer to one's wants. Not 'I want to light up with my intelligence as many things as possible' - but 'for the living of my full flame - I want that liberty, I want that woman, I want that pound of peaches, I want to go to sleep, I want to go to the pub, and have a good time, I want to look a beastly swell today, I want to kiss that girl, I want to insult that man.' - Instead of that, all these wants, which are there whether-or-not, are utterly ignored, and we talk about some sort of ideas. - I'm like Carlyle, who, they say, wrote 50 vols. on the value of silence. - Send me some drawings, if ever you have any quite to spare. - I liked your photograph, but it wasn't very much of a revelation of you. - I like immensely to hear about your art. Write me when you feel you can write a lot."

Lawrence recommended blood-consciousness as a substitute of intellectualism. Almost all his novels exhibit his belief in the rightness of what he called blood-consciousness. Marvin Mudrick finds 'The Rainbow' - "The first English novel to record the normality and significance of physical passion". Julian Moynahan acclaims 'the deed of life' in lady Chatterley's lover, 'the exploration of vital possibilities as opposed to cerebral and abstract perspective.' The same stand is taken almost all of his other novels. The fact is that Lawrence was disgusted with the dominance of the sterile intellect over the authentic inward passions of man. He had a violent hatred of the mechanized world of the 20th century that stood for the suppression of one's instinctive response of life. He wanted to realize life through his physical sensations. This oft-quoted letter might give one the impression that Lawrence was totally against the intellect, and he wanted to put his absolute reliance on his instincts. However, this is a rather erroneous interpretation of his belief. What he advocated is a kind of synthesis of the rational faculty with instinctive response. He appreciated characters who are fully integrated beings, characters like Birkin in 'Women in Love'.

### 4. **Co-relation between His Anti-intellectualism & His Anti-materialism**

There is an essential co-relation between D.H.Lawrence's anti-intellectualism and anti-materialism. The materialistic approach in human beings, according to Lawrence, is born when the intellect and the emotions are alienated. This disassociation of man's intellect from his emotional approach towards his surrounding phenomena results in the materialistic outlook towards the whole humanity and Nature itself. Human beings can liberate themselves from materialism if they adore instincts and nature. Lawrence's disgust of abstract philosophy and materialism is described by Bonamy Dobree in the following words—

"Throughout his career he has been anti-materialistic. Since materialism for him blunts sensibility, he is for shearing away the relics of dead faiths, of philosophies that clog the free play of the impulses, and he rejects Christianity and Platonism with equal scorn. He is, in short, anarchic with a formative purpose; he would like to found a new religion."

D.H.Lawrence hated the modern mechanical life, therefore an anti-intellectualistic approach grew in him. He is not a delineator of life like Henry Fielding [Tom Jones], not just a story teller like George Eliot [The Middlemarch], not an interpreter of social life merely like Jane Austen. He explores the depth of life - the deep truth of life. His characters differ from Fielding's [as Sophia in Tom Jones], and Jane Austen's [as Emma in Emma], George Eliot's [as Dorothea Cassabons in The Middlemarch]. Lawrence's Ursula [in The Rainbow and in Women in Love] bears comparison with Henry James' Isabel (The Portrait of a Lady).

### 5. **Conclusion:**

Lastly, here, an effort has been made to interpret that Lawrence in his favour of blood consciousness delivered his message of freedom powerfully. He was an advocate for his religion of the blood. Obviously, Lawrence's 'BELIEF IN THE BLOOD' reminds us of Kubrick's "The truth of a thing is the feel of it, not in the think of it."

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