

## D.H. Lawrence and ‘*Hierosgamos*’

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**Abstract:** D.H. Lawrence's role as a writer has always been questioned by the moral critics of the society. The paper is an attempt to clarify his stand on the difficult question of sexuality and sexual relationships that he tried to answer through his novels and their characters. The study looks into some evidences found in Lawrence's writings which give a hint into his thinking about human relationships and particularly the sexual aspect, which he thought to be the ultimate medium to reach God.

**Keywords:** sacred union, tantra, pagan, kundalini, sacred sexuality

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D.H. Lawrence has been one of the most disputed writers of English. Even though, he was the most ardent preacher of man-woman relationships, he was regarded as the most pornographic writer of his age. Through the past decades, he was mostly misunderstood, until the tide turned to his favour in the 70s – 80s. But still his portrayal of man-woman relationships was considered too sexually explicit. In fact, if these man-woman relationships are read carefully, one can understand a deeper philosophy in Lawrence i.e. the desire to return to the primitive. He wanted men and women to leave behind their superficial knowledge about love, marriage and sex and return to their basic instincts, to the times when they did not know what they were ‘supposed’ to do in the course of a relation. His thoughts about relationships are as true today as they were during his time!

Here I would like to touch upon the point of ‘sacred union’ as depicted in Lawrence's novels, an aspect which he tried to make his readers understand, through the relations between his male-female characters. In his works Lawrence tried to show that many people experience occasional, spontaneous moments of ‘oneness’ or a feeling of happy union with their partner, with nature, with the divine during peak sexual experiences. This is a way of life that celebrates and strives for the union of spirit, mind and body. There are ecstatic moments when one feels totally connected like becoming lost in a sunset or nature's beauty. The basic belief of this system is that the union of masculine and feminine principles (the opposite forces in all creation-yin and yang) will result in transcendence. Sexual union, the physical manifestation of yin and yang principles through men and women is one way to achieve union with God.

The term *hierosgamos* generally refers to the union between two divinities, or between a human being and a god or goddess, or between two human beings (under certain special conditions) i.e. enactment symbolic of the union of the god and goddess aspects of divine being and to provide the ideal for human sexual unions.

A desire to intimately love someone, giving totally in to the feeling, makes one feel the mystery of the cosmos created by God, where a man and a woman, two very different identities, coming from different environments and backgrounds come so close in so intimate a union, which is beyond explanation in words. At that moment of union the difference between love and lust disappears, all that is left, is the desire to fully reach the depths of the soul of the other, where no one has reached ever. Sexual relation between two if reaches its desired union bestows happiness to the two and leads to the creation of another being, but if during the union the two do not submit fully to each other and their egos clash, the very same union, leads to destruction of personalities and is death in itself. ‘An impulse acts in sex, which suggests the mystery of God. When in the union between man and woman exult in a primal condition that annexes the differences between lust and love. Sexuality reciprocates an act of divine manifestation, be it creation or destruction. The reciprocity of sexuality and religion in history brings to the forefront threads of theological allegory between divine providence and the human condition. The metaphysical *hierosgamos* is a preeminent ritual extensively practiced in oriental and Graeco-Roman antiquity.’ (e-text Ordo Antichristianus Illuminati.1)

*Hierosgamos* has its origin in ancient fertility cults/rites which believed that a man is able to reach spiritual completion through ritualised intercourse with a priestess in which the masculine principle combines with – or marries with – the feminine principle, producing a higher state of consciousness. In this ceremony, a local woman, who represented the local goddess, often a priestess (sacred prostitute or *hierodule*) and the land was wedded to a sacrificial king, who represented the community. The king was anointed by the woman, thus receiving a kind of “divine” kingship. After they were united in marriage and celebrated their union in the bridal chamber, the king would be symbolically slain. After a span of time, his wife would seek him and find him resurrected. It was mainly the wife who helped him resurrect.

A modern example of this is in Wicca religion, in which the participants engage in a Great Rite, performed mostly on May 1 (Beltaine night – first day of summer). A man and a woman, assuming the identities

of God and Goddess, engage in sexual intercourse to celebrate the union of the deities as lovers. Essentially a fertility rite, it symbolizes the planting of seed into Mother Earth (or a woman). This rite is supposed to provide an ideal example for human sexual unions. This act was firstly seen as a sacred joining of the male and female principles of the universe, often symbolized by Hermaphrodite, a composite male/female figure representing the fusing of the maleness of the Greek God Hermes with the femaleness of the goddess Aphrodite.

Lawrence had touched upon this aspect in one way or the other, in his novels regarding the sexual relations of his male and female characters. The natural sexual union between man and woman through which each became spiritually whole has been put down as a shameful act. The sexual relations as presented in his novels were the normally experienced relations between two people, but deep within the presentation there is a desire to reach towards a spiritual union, an aspect which has largely been ignored by critics and readers.

In his second novel *The Trespasser* one can for the first time find hints of his search for the divine, through physical union with a human being. In the scene where Helena and Siegmund are lying under a starlit sky, Helena is seized by a sudden ecstatic desire to love the moon and the chosen medium for the fulfillment of this wish is Siegmund:

"Die grosse Blumen schmachten," she said to herself curiously awake and joyous: "The big flowers open with black petals and silvery ones, Siegmund. You are the big flowers Siegmund; yours is the bridegroom face, Siegmund, Like a black and glistening flesh-petalled flower, Siegmund, and it blooms in the Zauberland, Siegmund; this the magic-land."

Here she compares Siegmund to a fully blossomed flower, in all its expanse, which can also be compared to be a reference to his maleness.

Between the phrases of this whispered ecstasy, she kissed him swiftly on the throat, in the shadow, and on his faintly gleaming cheeks . . . he was almost afraid of the strange ecstasy she concentrated on him. Meanwhile she whispered over him sharp, breathless phrases in German and English, touching him with her mouth and her cheeks and her forehead.

Helena feels a sudden passion for Siegmund and her resorting to different dialects is due to the fact that when a person is too moved, he/she resorts to the language in which his/her emotions are most comfortably expressed.

"Und Liebesweisen ton'en' – not tonight, Siegmund. They are all still – gorse and the stars and the sea and the trees, are all kissing, Siegmund. The sea has its mouth on the earth, and the gorse and the trees press together, and they all look up at the moon, they put up their faces in a kiss, my darling. But they haven't you – and it all centres in you – my dear – all the wonderlove is in you, more than in them all, Siegmund – Siegmund-".

In her strange excitement, Helena is experiencing the intimate embrace of the nature around her. She feels the moon to be the central aspect that everything is looking forward to and for her centrality of the moon, sun and stars lies in Siegmund. Helena makes love to Siegmund with all the deepest intensity of her soul, and when she moves away from him, she says "no more" (81) as if she were afraid of her own intensity, and what would happen due to this strange ecstasy of their souls.

. . . . Yet as he lay helplessly looking up at her, some other consciousness inside him murmured "Hawwa, - Eve – Mother!" . . . Without touching him, she seemed to be yearning over him like a mother . . . This woman tall and pale, drooping with the strength of her compassion, seemed stable, immortal, not a fragile human being, but a personification of the great motherhood of woman. (*Trespasser*.80-2)

Here in this experience Lawrence has tried to show Helena's ecstatic transport as well as her love for the moon and nature. On the superlative level it seems to be a passionate romantic scene between the two lovers, but in reality, the moon and nature are Helena's lovers and Siegmund is the medium to feel them when she says to him that 'yours is the bridegroom face', she is taking him to be a driving figure, the moon, and even though she is telling him how everything on Earth is loving the moon, she can herself attain that spiritual union only through Siegmund, when she herself becomes the Earth for him and he as Moon pours his rays of love on her. She tells him that everything centres in him, all the 'wonderlove' is more in him than in all of them, for according to Eastern Yogic beliefs, the whole universe is centred in a man's body, the only need is to wake the serpent coiled at the base of the spine, i.e. the Kundalini Shakti.

The agony of Helena's soul comes to peace, after this spiritual union, and in her kiss she seems to 'fuse' her soul in his forever, thereby attaining the supreme soul communion. When Siegmund thinks about her, he also thinks her to be 'a personification of the great motherhood of woman', the all giving Mother, like Mother Earth. One of the basic beliefs of Tantrism is that women possess a more unbounded spiritual energy than men, and a man can achieve realization of the divinity only through sexual and emotional union with a woman.

Another scene portraying the spiritual union between nature (divine) and human being can be seen in *Sons and Lovers* in the first chapter titled 'The Early Married Life of the Morels'. After her fight with Morel,

Mrs. Morel goes out into the garden to cool down her anger, when he turns her out of doors. In this scene Lawrence has used the beauty of nature to soothe Mrs. Morel with its love:

The moon was high and magnificent in the August night. . .

She became aware of something about her, with an effort she roused herself to see what it was that penetrated her consciousness. . . Mrs. Morel leaned on the garden gate, looking out, and she lost herself awhile. She did not know what she thought. Except for a slight feeling of sickness, and her consciousness in the child, herself melted out like scent into the shiny, pale air. After a time the child, too, melted with her in the mixing pot of moonlight, and she rested with the hills and lilies and houses, all swum together in a kind of swoon.

When she came to herself she was tired for sleep. (S&L.34-5)

In this scene, spurned brutally by Morel, Mrs. Morel unconsciously goes to nature for shelter and love. Nature provides her peace, companionship and consolation as a lover. Her soul mingled with the big wide universe, contributing her soul in the vast matrix of the created universe, under the all consuming moonlight. During this union, her self as an individual was finished, and she becomes one with the Creator, as his creation. Her exhaustion after this communion is the same as two lovers feel after making love, for their emotional, spiritual and physical contentment leads them into the arms of sleep. 'In its most profound facet the *hierosgamos* embodies the primal impulse to overcome the consequences of . . . original "Fall", to restore the state of primordial sexuality, broken and condition[ed] by the metaphysical 'other'. Sexual love embodied by the *hierosgamos* is the most multiversal form of our obscure search to annex the duality between Lust and Love, the boundaries between psyche and ego.' (e-text Ordo Antich.1)

The basic requirement for the sacred union is complete, unconditional, selfless love for the other. In this, the partners are in love, are in the process of falling in love, or about to fall in love.

' Central to sacred sexuality is the fact that female sexual ecstasy is itself a cosmic force, different and distinct from male sexual energy. It is an all-consuming ecstasy more powerful and long lasting. . . It is thus essential for the male to be able to flow with and worship female sexual energy. . . Female sexuality crests in an undulating series of waves of several types of physical orgasm, vaginal, uterine and clitoral, merging into chaotic whole body 'climax'- a manifestation of the sexual life force unleashed from the simple act of fertilization. This is why it is likened to the kundalini that lurks in the base of our spines and can rise to the heights of explosive illumination. . . Sacred union is not for the male to draw power from the female into a lone Samadhi. The fulfillment of female ecstasy is all-consuming of the fertilizing act of the male in a ravishing consummation. . . The Shakti energy, which pervades the entire universe is the life force itself, which expresses itself centrally in fertility and reproduction and in the diversity of all life, celebrated in the mystery of the *hierosgamos*. The peak of sacred sex is the full merging of the two, in the fertilization which generates life and the universe anew. It is sourced in the primal fires of fusion and it is fertility overflowing with abundance in paradise.' (Sexual Paradox: Tantra and Sacred Sexuality.11-12)

In his novel, '*The Rainbow*', Lawrence had incorporated abundant scenes which portrayed the mysterious spiritual-physical union between the lovers and the divine. In the first-scene, there is the naked dance of a heavily pregnant Anna, firstly in the glory of her Lord and secondly in front of her husband Will. This dance of hers can be compared to the Dance of Maya which represents the Universe of mind and the Body as Fall from the Cosmic *Hierosgamos*. As the withdrawal from union occurs the female (objective) performs the dance of illusion making the male (subjective) believe that they are many and generating from her womb is the material diversity of the physical-sensual world:

... Where there was no-one to exult with, and the unsatisfied soul must dance and play, then one danced before the unknown. (The Rainbow)

Lawrence is very true in these lines, for when an individual has no other soul about whom she can he/she can be ecstatic and still one feels happy, one is connected to the supreme power and dances to this knowledge.

Suddenly she realized that this was what she wanted to do. Big with child as she was, she danced there in the bedroom by herself, lifting her hands and her body to the unseen, to the unseen Creator who had chosen her, to whom she belonged.

She would not have had anyone know. She danced in secret, and her soul rose in bliss. She danced in secret before her Creator, she took off her clothes and danced in the pride of her bigness. . .

And she had to dance in exultation beyond him. Because he was in the house, she had to dance before her Creator in exemption from the man. On a Saturday afternoon, when she had a fire in her bedroom, again she took off her things and danced, lifting her knees and her hands in a slow, rhythmic exulting. He was in the house, so her pride was fiercer. She would dance his nullification, she would dance to her unseen Lord. She was exalted over him, before the Lord. (The Rainbow)

Here Anna seems to be following a pagan tradition, in the way she dances, and her happiness is due to her return to her primitiveness, leaving behind the bounds of her religion.

And with slow, heavy movements, she swayed backwards and forwards, like a full ear of corn, pale in the dusky afternoon, threading before the firelight, dancing his non-existence, dancing herself to the Lord, to exultation. (The Rainbow)

Will was a staunch believer of Christianity and he understands, that he had been left far behind, and that his wife was connecting her soul to the supreme soul and therefore was dancing in the ecstasy of the realization.

It hurt him as he watched as if he were at the stake. He turned aside, he could not look, it hurt his eyes. Her fine limbs lifted and lifted, her hair was sticking out all fierce, and her belly, big, strange, terrifying, uplifted to the Lord. Her face was rapt and beautiful, she danced exulting before her Lord, and knew no man.

It hurt him as he watched as if he were at the stake. He felt he was being burned alive. The strangeness, the power of her in her dancing consumed him, he was burned, he could not understand. (The Rainbow.169-171)

In this scene, Anna can be seen to represent Maya (Goddess Shakti) whose existence is due to the fall from unity between the genders, where the subject and the object, mind and the body are at first in intimate and divine unity and then eventually begin to separate from their wholeness to become the Dance of *Yog Maya*, the physical world and sensual, sensory experience, which draws one into the world of suffering and mortality, way from the still point of the eternal cosmic mind. Here she can be said to represent Shakti (female energy), the beautiful female dancer, dancing for her Lord, and thereby weaving the fabric of the world.

'The patterns of the dance are not illusion, but neither are they 'real' in this sense of being pure concrete facts. The self is so fascinated by her performance that it believes it is seeing all kinds of different things which are really her movements and gestures. Most important of all, it begins to think--because of her bewildering activity-- that it is itself not one, but many, male and female. The bewildering array of an infinity of separate facts which composes the objective universe and at which we grasp, is presented to our self through what we call our mind and body, the psychosomatic mechanism in which each of our separated selves seems to be isolated and imprisoned. That, too, is part of the activity of the Goddess which as we have seen, can also be symbolized by her fertile womb. All the things which we imagine we experience in time, the whole course of our individual life throughout our immense universe, is generated for us by that dance, or through womb which if only we knew it, is not different from us. All our mental faculties and sense organs, with all the qualities they perceive and co-ordinate, are channels for that energy working towards separation and distinction which shakti represents.' (Tantra & Sacred Sex.3)

In another scene in *The Rainbow*, Will and Anna's teenage daughter, Ursula, feels a great desire to love the moon and bare her soul to it:

As the dance surged heavily on, Ursula was aware of some influence looking-in upon her. Something was looking at her....

She turned, and saw a great white moon looking at her over the hill. And her breast opened to it, she was cleaved like a transparent jewel to its light. She stood filled with the full moon, offering herself. Her two breasts opened to make way for it, her body opened wide like a quivering anemone, a soft, dilated invitation touched y the moon. She wanted the moon to fill in to her, she wanted more, more communion with the moon, consummation . . .

. . . her naked self was away there beating upon the moonlight, dashing the moonlight with her breasts and her belly and her thighs and her knees, in meeting, in communion. (The Rainbow. 296)

In this scene, the moon can be said to be representing a Goddess, and Ursula is feeling its presence around her as a protector, when she says that 'out of the great distance, and yet imminent, the powerful, overwhelming watch was kept upon her.' In his work *Apocalypse*, Lawrence himself writes, 'Think of the moon, think of Artemis and Cybele, think of the white wonder of the skies, so rounded, so velvety, moving so serene, . . . The moon is a white strange world, great, white, soft-seeming globe in the night sky, and what she actually communicates to me across space I shall never fully know. . . The moon is the great moon still, she gives her soft and feline influences, she sways us still, and asks for sympathy back again. . . Don't think you can escape the moon, any more than you can except breathing. She is on the air you breathe. She is active within the atom. Her sting is part of the activity of the electron.' (52-3). In this scene, Ursula is feeling the same influence of the Goddess Artemis which Lawrence is talking about here, as influence, that held power over the humans since the pagan times.

The sacred marriage is not simply worshipping the female in an epoch of dominion, but it is the relationship of reconciliation between the two sexes and between humanity and nature. In another scene in *The Rainbow* Ursula loves Anton, under the stars, but it is not Anton that she is loving, it's the stars that are lying with her:

. . . And she lay face downward on the downs, that were so strong, that cared only for their intercourse with the everlasting skies, and she wished she could become a strong mound smooth under the sky, bosom and limbs bared to all winds and clouds and bursts of sunshine.

In these sexually explicit lines Lawrence shows Ursula's desire to become the Earth, so that she can be loved by the sky, winds symbolizing sexual passion, clouds are feelings and sunshine of love.

. . . All her passion seemed to be, to wander up there on the downs and when she must descend, to earth, she was heavy. Up there she was exhilarated and free. . . .

up there, the stars were big, the earth below was gone into darkness. She was free up there with the stars. . . . She was free up among the stars.

In these above lines, Ursula makes one feel that she has been made love to by the sky and is now feeling peace after that.

She took him, she clasped him, clenched him close, but her eyes were open looking at the stars it was as if the stars were lying with her and entering the unfathomable darkness of her womb, fathoming her at last. It was not him. (The Rainbow. 430-1)

In this scene, Ursula becomes the Earth and wants the star-filled sky to love her. Her desire is to become 'a strong mound smooth under the sky', for the sky to love her. When she makes love to Anton, it is not him that she is loving, it was her union with the stars, for it seemed 'as if the stars were lying with her.' As Lawrence writes in *Apocalypse*, 'The stars are very remote to us: thinly scattered in enormous, enormous space: comparatively, so lonely and few. (Apocalypse.180) . . . . Now when man first "fell" into knowledge or self-consciousness, I believe the first thing he did was to lie down and gaze at the stars. Then he felt himself back in his old oneness: he was again at one with the mighty and living cosmos. . . .So I believe the stars are the very oldest religion. . . .This star-cult never died. It outlived all the gods, and lingers even today' (Apocalypse.182).

In the novel, *Women in Love*, the sequel of *The Rainbow*, Lawrence once again portrayed the powerful influence of the moon on his characters. One such scene is in the chapter titled 'Moony' where both Birkin and Ursula are affected by the moon's presence:

She started, noticing something on her right hand, between the tree trunks. It was like a great presence, watching her, dodging her. She started violently. . . .

He was touching unconsciously the dead husks of flowers as he passed by, and talking disconnectedly to himself.

'You can't go away,' he was saying. 'There is no way. You only withdraw upon yourself.'

Birkin stood there cursing the moon and throwing dead flower husks on the water.

He stood staring at the water. Then he stooped and picked up a stone, which he threw sharply at the pond. Ursula was aware of the bright moon leaping and swaying, all distorted, in her eyes. It seemed to shoot out arms of fire like a cuttle-fish, like a luminous polyp, palpitating strongly before her.

. . .the moon had exploded on the water, and was flying as under in flakes of white and dangerous fire. Rapidly, like white birds the fires all broken rose across the pond, fleeing in clamorous confusion, battling with the flock of dark waves that were forcing their way in. . . . But at the centre, the heart of all, was still a vivid, incandescent quivering of a white moon not quite destroyed, a white body of fire writhing and striving and not even now broken up, not yet violated. It seemed to be drawing itself together with strange, violent pangs, in blind effort. It was getting stronger; it was re-asserting itself, the inviolable moon. And the rays were hastening in thin lines of light, to return to the strengthened moon, which shook upon the water in triumphant re-assumption. (WL.212-14)

Birkin here seems to be in a sort of conflict with his divine lover, the moon goddess Artemis or Cybele, whereas Ursula here too feels the moon to be her protector. The moon here is symbolic of the female principle, Ursula identifies herself in a sort of bond with it, due to the feminine aspect of both, whereas, Birkin finds the moon's feminine aspect in conflict with his male ego. His is the will to destroy his lover's ego into pieces, which he is trying to break by stoning the moon's image in the pond. But when the moon images broken bits take form again it is to make him understand that it is difficult to break a woman's will, 'it was getting stronger, it was re-asserting itself, the inviolable moon.' (WL.214) Ursula feels the moon to be always looking upon her as a protector. Lawrence writes in his *Apocalypse*:

. . .it is she who would caress our nerves, smooth them with the silky hand of her glowing, soothe them into serenity again with her cool present. For the moon is the mistress and mother of our watery bodies, the pale body of our nervous consciousness and our moist flesh. Oh the moon could soothe us and heal us like a cool great Artemis between her arms. But we have lost her, in our stupidity we ignore her, and angry she stares down on us and whips us with nervous whips. Oh beware of the angry Artemis of the night heavens, beware of the spite of Cybele, beware of the vindictiveness of horned Astarte. . . . And oh, if the moon is against you, oh beware of the bitter night, especially the night of intoxication. (77)

Nature, thus, has a deep spiritual significance for Lawrence.

In another scene in the chapter 'Excuse' in the novel *Women in Love*, Ursula discovers Birkin to be one of the sons of God:

She looked at him. He seemed still so separate. New eyes were opened in her soul. She saw a strange creature from another world, in him. It was as if she were enchanted, and everything were metamorphosed. She recalled again the old magic of the Book of Genesis, where the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair. (WL.77)

In Birkin, Ursula saw his intrinsic otherness, yet at the same time she was connected with this aspect of his otherness. She had always desired to be loved by a son of God and now it was as if the dream was becoming true.

'He stood on the hearth-rug looking at her, at her face that was upturned exactly like a flower, a fresh, luminous flower, glinting faintly golden with the dew of the first light. And he was smiling faintly as if there were no speech in the world save the silent delight of flowers in each other. . . (WL.77).'

The human thus becomes the divine for her even before the intensity of body's/sexual awareness of his body. It is reaching out to the basic elemental life force through his body, particularly sexuality.

And she was drawn to him strangely, as in a spell. Kneeling on the hearth-rug before him, she put her arms round his loins, and put her face against his thigh. Riches! Riches! She was overwhelmed with a sense of a heavenful of riches. . . .

Unconsciously, with her sensitive fingertips, she was tracing the back of his thighs, following some mysterious life-flow there. She had discovered something, something more than wonderful, more wonderful than life itself. It was the strange mystery of his life-motion, there, at the back of the thighs, down the flanks. It was a strange reality of his being, the very stuff of being, there in the straight down flow of the thighs. It was here she discovered him one of the sons of God such as were in the beginning of the world, not a man something other, something more.

This was release at last. She had had lovers, she had known passion. But this was neither love nor passion. It was the daughters of men coming back to the Sons of God, the strange inhuman sons of God who are in the beginning. (WL.77)

Here Lawrence could be trying to revert the process of the Fall of Eve, he might be thinking of going back of daughter of Man (Adam) to the Son of God, through this kind of sexual union, means returning back from, where she had originally come and changing the decision (of expulsion of Adam & Eve) which had changed human life for eternity.

Her face was now one dazzle of released, golden light, as she looked up at him, and laid her hands full on his thighs, from behind, as he stood before her...

It was all achieved, for her. She had found one of the Sons of God from the Beginning, and he had found one of the first most luminous daughters of men. (WL.77)

For Ursula and Birkin, their search of the perfect soul mate was finally over.

She traced with her hands the line of his loins and thighs, at the back and a living fire ran through her, from him, darkly. It was a dark flood of electric passion she released from the darkest poles of the body and established a rich new circuit, a new current of passional electric energy, between the two of them, released from the darkest poles of the body and established in perfect circuit. It was a dark fire of electricity that rushed from him to her, and flooded them both with rich peace, satisfaction. . . . (WL.77)

As she touched him, a living currents fire went into her, from him. It made a sort of living connection between them, bonding them, as had never been between them.

She closed her hands over the full, rounded body of his loins, as he stooped over her, she seemed to touch the quick of the mystery of darkness that was bodily him. She seemed to faint beneath, and he seemed to faint, stooping over her. It was a perfect passing away for both of them, and at the same time the most intolerable accession into being, the marvellous fullness of immediate gratification, overwhelming, out flooding from the source of the deepest life – force, the darkest, deepest, strongest life source of the human body, at the back and base of the loins.(WL.77)

Birkin and Ursula go through a trance like situation. Here Lawrence is talking about the most deepest soul communion and the most beautiful aspect of this communion is that it is not through sexual intercourse but that they get this satisfaction only through the sense of touch.

After a lapse of stillness, after the rivers of strange dark fluid richness had passed over her, flooding, carrying away her mind and flooding down her spine and down her knees, past her feet, a strange flood, sweeping away everything and leaving her an essential new being, she was left quite free she was free in complete ease, her complete self.... He stood here in his strange, whole body that had its marvelous fountains, like the bodies of the Sons of God who were in the beginning. There were strange fountains of his body, more mysterious and potent than any she had imagined or known, more satisfying, ah, finally, mystically – physically satisfying. She had thought there was no source deeper than the phallic source. And now, behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body, from the strange marvellous flanks and thighs, deeper further in mystery than the phallic source, came the floods, of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches.... (WL.272-4)

After their ultimate union, Ursula feels herself to be new human being, has a fulfillment of self and realizes her own being. The strange marvelous fountains of his body can be said to be his hormones – Chakras and the source of this mystical – physical satisfaction can be said to be the first and primary chakra of yogic tantrism.

He sat still like an Egyptian Pharaoh, driving the car. He felt as if he were seated in immemorial potency, like the great carven statues of real Egypt, as real and as fulfilled with subtle strength, as these are, with a vague inscrutable smile on the lips. He knew what it was to have the strange and magical current of force in his back and loins, and down his legs. Force so perfect, that it stayed him immobile and left his face subtly, mindlessly smiling. He knew what it was to be awake and potent in that other basic mind, the deepest physical mind. And from this source he had a pure and magic control, magical, mystical, a force in darkness, like electricity.

It was very difficult to speak, it was so perfect to sit in this pure living silence, subtle, full of unthinkable knowledge and unthinkable force upheld immemorially in timeless force. Like the immobile, supremely potent Egyptians, seated forever in their living, subtly silence.... (WL.277)

... Now she would know him, and he too would be liberated. He would be night free, like an Egyptian, steadfast in perfectly suspended equilibrium, pure mystic nodality of physical being. They would give each other this star-equilibrium which alone is freedom.... (WL.278)

... Quenched, inhuman, his fingers upon her unrevealed nudity were the fingers of silence upon silence, the body of mysterious night upon the body of mysterious night, the night masculine and feminine, never to be seen with the eye, or known with the mind, only known as a palpable revelation of living otherness. . . (WL.278)

His touch on her body had a peace equal to silence a silence, which said everything, despite not a word to be said their bodies despite each others knowledge were as mysterious to each other as the night. The scene of their sexual union is shown very delicately, and beautifully here. As Lawrence is talking about their feelings of that time, he feels that only in the calmness of mind this can be felt. His fingers were touching her naked body to quench his thirst of desire or to answer to the call of his physique. He is compared to silence and to the mysterious night. They are feeling perfect still and silent because they are answering to the call of their soul. As Lawrence objects to the interference of mental things in emotions, so he is saying that with mind we cannot feel it. It can be only felt when we full heartedly and truly answer to the call of our desires, if it is not forced and not out of some compulsion then the sex emotion is the most pleasant thing with which God has blessed us, so only then each one can feel this emotion and that is otherness of mind, to leave the intellectual and surrender to the sensual pleasure and desire only.

... She had her desire fulfilled. He had his desire fulfilled. For, she was to him what he was to her, the immemorial magnificence of mystic, palpable, real otherness.... It was so magnificent, such as inheritance of universe of dark reality, that they were afraid to seem to remember. They hid away the remembrance and the knowledge. (WL. 279)

In this seemingly, sexual instance, Lawrence in general has been understood to have used explicitly sexual language, but if seen between the lines, the whole thing points to a spiritual – sexual union. Here he again and again used the words 'Sons of God' and 'daughters of men'. Here two terms are in views, Christ was Son of God, and in ancient times the king of a land was thought to be God's representative on Earth and last of all, Sons of God, would be divine. On the other hand, daughters of men, would be human, could also be the *hierodules* performing the sacred sexual union. So here it can be said that Ursula and Birkin were the divine and human figures needed for the *hierosgamos*. Lawrence himself compares Birkin to an Egyptian Pharaoh, thus making him a divine figure. Birkin and Ursula go through a sort of tantric-yogic sexual union. The electric current that Birkin later thinks about and Ursula feels, could be the yogic-Kundalini current of the first and basic Chakra – the 'muldhara chakra', from where the yogic power originates. This chakra is situated in the genital portion of a human being and Ursula's feeling of Birkin's thighs from behind could have meant this. Birkin and Ursula go through an oral kind of satisfaction, a kind of trance in feeling each other. When this trance like state passes over, they go through an ultimate sexual union, and experiencing loving the divine in each other. Their relationship with each other succeeds because they have found and worshipped the divine in each other, by means of the most, ultimate and intimate process of loving each other. Their union was the ultimate realisation for both of them, of the intrinsic otherness of the other and realisation of self for both of them.

In his *St.Mawr. And Other Stories*, Lawrence gives a sensitive description of a young man's desire to love the moon, the medium being his young wife. In the story titled 'The Overtone': the moon is humanized:

....And there, down the darkness, he saw a flashing of activity while betwixt black twigs. It was the water mingling and thrilling with the moon. . . .There was vividness then in all this lucid night, things flashing and quivering with being, almost as the soul quivers in the darkness of the eye. He could feel it. The night's

great circle was the pupil of an eye, full of the mystery, and the unknown fire of life, that does not burn away, but flickers unquenchable. . . (SMOS.6-9)

Here in this passage Lawrence is shedding the god image of the moon and humanizing it. The moon's image falls on the water, and the ripples on the water make one feel, that they are intertwined together and making love. Lawrence beautifully compares the night with the pupil of an eye. The night is full of mystery, and the fire of life creates and destroys yet the life desire is unfulfilled and burns on and on.

. . . He had married her, and there was nothing more to own. He owned her, and the night was the pupil of her eye, in which was everything. . . .

It was not all achieved. The moon, in her white and naked candour, was beyond him. He felt a little numbness, as one who has gloves on. He could not feel that clear, clean moon. There was something betwixt him and her, as if he had gloves on. Yet he ached for the clear touch, skin to skin – even of the moonlight. He wanted a further purity, a newer cleanness and nakedness. . . (SMOS.6-9)

In this full moon night the man felt a sense of desire to love the moon, who was beyond him. To him she was like a beautiful, white female but very far away from him, as if he could not touch her beauty, as if he had gloves on, yet it was his deepest desire to love her and be born anew.

And he watched the moon, and he watched her light on his hands. It was like a butterfly on his glove, that he could see, but not feel. And he wanted to unglove himself. Quite clear, quite, quite bare to the moon, the touch of everything he wanted to be. And after all his wife was everything – moon, vapour of trees, trickling water and drift of perfume – it was all his wife. . .

. . . He had looked into the whole of the night, as into a pupil of an eye. And now, he would come perfectly clear out of all his embarrassments of shame and darkness, clean as the moon who walked naked across the night, so that the whole night was as an effluence from her, the whole of it was hers, held in her effluence of moonlight, which was her perfect nakedness, uniting her to everything. (SMOS.6-9)

He wanted to feel the moon, as the touch of one's skin to another, and he wanted this touch to be different from any touch that he had ever felt in his life. Then he realized that the medium of this touch could be his wife, and through her touch he could feel the touch of the moon. The touch would bring him out of all his shame and bring him in close unison with the moon, which would in turn unite him with the cosmos.

His wife stood a little away from him as he asked her to take off her things and let him love her there in the moonlight. She refused, but still he persisted in his request for it meant so much to him.

...He ached with the earnestness of his desire. All he wanted was to give himself, clean and clear, into this night, this time. Of which she was all, she was everything. He could go to her now, under the white candour of the moon, without shame or shadow, but in his completeness loving her completeness, without a stain, without a shadow between them such as even a flower could cast. For this he yearned as never in his life he could yearn more deeply.

"Do take me," he said, gently parting the shawl on her breast. But she held it close, and her voice went hard.

"No – I can't," she said. . .

. . . They went down the hill together. And he did not know how he hated her, as if she had kept him out of the promised land that was justly his. (SMOS.6-9)

In this sexually explicit scene, Lawrence had in reality tried to show the young man's desire to love the moon. On a full moon night as this, a desire comes to this man to love the moon, in all his nakedness, without any sense of shame. The night seems to him 'the pupil of an eye', all seeing eye of the creative mystery of the universe. Lawrence again uses these words for the wife of this young man, for accordingly a woman is a source of created mystery for a man. The man's desire to love his wife under the moon, is his desire to love this mystery, that is symbolic of the moon and his wife. His is the desire to love the moon, for the moon is still far beyond him. He wants to feel the 'clear, clean moon' and the medium of that touch could only be through his wife. He wanted to bare himself to the moon, as the sky is to the Earth. He was in a sense feeling himself left out from the universe, on a clear night like this, when one feels the vastness of the universe, and one's own smallness, and the soul craves to be part of the universe, to mingle with the soul of the universe so that moment of experience only his wife was the medium which could make him reach the source of this mystery, which could make him complete, both spiritually and physically. When his wife refuses to fulfill his great need, he is right in bearing her a lifelong grudge, for she had truly 'kept him out of the promised land that was justly his'.

In his work *The Man Who Died*, Lawrence portrays a resurrected Jesus, who comes back to life as a normal human being, and goes through a sort of sacred union with the priestess of the pagan Goddess Isis:

. . . But the temple, facing south and west, towards Egypt, faced the splendid sun of winter as he curved down towards the sea. . . The woman who served Isis stood in her yellow robe, and looked up at the steep slopes coming down to the sea, where the olive-trees silvered under the wind like water splashing. She was a lone save for the goddess.... (TMWD.39)

In this work Lawrence had symbolically compared the priestess of Isis, to the ancient priestesses who worshipped the pagan gods in sacred sexual religious traditions.

She knew her temple so well, for she had built it at her own expense, and tended it for seven years. . . .  
. . . It was Isis Bereaved, Isis in search. The goddess, in painted marble, lifted her face and strode, on thigh forward through the frail fluting of her robe, in the anguish of bereavement and of search. She was looking for the fragments of the dead Osiris, dead and scattered as under, (TMWD.43) dead, torn apart, and thrown in fragments over the wide world. . . . (TMWD.44)

Isis was the ancient Greek goddess, who had searched for her dead husband's scattered body parts, and when she had put him back whole, she had made love to him and conceived Horus. This can be compared to the man who died whose body was made whole and alive by the Priestess of Isis.

She had no interest in men, particularly in the service class. Yet she looked at the sleeping face. . . . a true priestess, she saw the other kind of beauty in it, the sheer stillness of the deeper life. . . . (TMWD.51)

He could not stay in the close, dark, perfumed shrine. He went out again to the morning, to the cold air. He felt something approaching to touch him, and all his flesh was still woven with pain and the wild commandment: *Noli me tangere!* Touch me not! Oh, don't touch me! . . . . (TMWD.55)

The woman of Isis was lovely to him, not so much in form, as in the wonderful womanly glow of her. Suns beyond suns had dipped her in mysterious fire, the mysterious fire of a potent woman, and to touch her was like touching the sun. Best of all was her tender desire for him. Like sunshine, so soft and still. . . . (TMWD.65)

In silence, she softly rhythmically chafed the scar with oil. Absorbed now in her priestess' task, softly softly gathering power, while the vitals of the man howled in panic. But as she gradually gathered power, and passed in a girdle round him to the opposite scar, gradually warmth began to take the place of the cold terror, and he felt: "I am going to be warm again, and I am going to be whole. . . ." (TMWD.71)

The priestess chafed his body with oil and tried to bring it into form with her sacred chanting and the healing touch that had come into her hands through years of praying.

Then slowly, slowly, in the perfect darkness of his inner man, he felt the stir of something coming. A dawn, a new sun. A new sun was coming up in him, in the perfect inner darkness of himself. He waited for it breathless, quivering with a fearful hope. . . . "Now I am not myself, I am something new. . . ."

And as it rose, he felt, with a cold breath of disappointment, the girdle of the living woman slip down from him, the warmth and the glow slipped from him, leaving him stark. She crouched, spent, at the feet of the goddess, hiding her face.

Stooping, he laid his hand softly on her warm, bright shoulder, and the shock of desire went through him, shock after shock. So that he wondered if it were another sort of death; but full of magnificence.

Now all his consciousness was there in the crouching, hidden woman. He stooped beside her and caressed her softly, blindly, murmuring inarticulate things. And his death and his passion of sacrifice were all as nothing to him now, he knew only the crouching fullness of the woman there, the soft white rock of life. . . . "On this rock I built my life". The deep-folded, penetrable rock of the living woman! The woman, hiding her face. Himself bending over, powerful and new like dawn.

He crouched to her, and he felt the blaze of his manhood and his power rise up in his loins, magnificent.

"I am risen!"

Magnificent, blazing indomitable in the depths of his loins, his own sun dawned, and sent its fire running along his limbs, so that his face shone unconsciously.

He untied the string on the linen tunic, and slipped the garment down, till he saw the white glow of her white-gold breasts. And he touched them, and he felt his life go molten. "Father!" he said, "why did you hide this from me?" And he touched her with the poignancy of wonder, and the marvellous piercing transcendence of desire. "Lo!" he said, "this is beyond prayer." (TMWD.72)

This comes closest to the example of *Hierogamos* from Lawrence's works. Here Lawrence in undertones talks about the ancient religion of the Goddess. It was in Egypt that this religion and its priestess's importance, held the most glorious recorded period. It was this religion which founded Egypt and made it a land of secrets. Egypt's monuments, her art, her culture, and her religion ring true and attest to the Goddess-given sexuality and sensuality of the mortal body. It was this priesthood and its sacred sexual rituals for the purification of men and fertility of the land. These rituals were performed anciently by the priestesses of Isis. They believed that man was made in the image and likeness of God and the woman as per the Goddess. The religion of the Goddess believed that human beings are the spirit off springs of God and Goddess, the Heavenly Father and Mother. That the spirit bodies, were created in Heaven as the physical bodies were created on earth, through a sexual union of God and Goddess. The spirits existed before the earthly life, but did not live until the spirit entered the physical body at birth.

In the religion of the Goddess, it is the priestess who literally takes upon herself the sins and transgression of the man. The priestess was a guide who lead men on the path to the divine. Men were cleansed and brought to higher levels of spirituality by these priestesses. It is she who guides the souls of men to the underworld of death, but it is only possible if the soul is able to recognize the priestess in death. The priestesses have always been known to be very sensual and sexual: It was understood that a woman who does not thoroughly enjoy sex can never be a priestess. The priestess's attitude towards her own body helps a priestess become what she is. The purpose of these rituals was to lead men and women to become gods and goddesses. In that moment of orgasm that the French call *Le petitmont*, the little death, a priestess was able to communicate with the souls of men. 'The body is controlled by the brain, and the brain has conditioned itself from its beginning to shut out all extraneous things. When the spirit enters the body at birth, when the Breath of Life breathes the spirit into the body and it becomes a living soul, it enters a body that is already controlled by the brain. The struggle between the spirit and brain is one sided, and the brain subdues the spirit so the "mind" is as much a slave to the brain as the "soul" is a slave to the body. It is only when the soul can be set in harmony with the mind that spiritual knowledge can be attained, and it is spiritual knowledge that allows one to survive death and be born again. (Theory of Sex; Sabrina A set.7)

Thus men seeking spiritual wholeness went to the Temple to visit priestess or *hierodules*, with whom they made love and experienced the Divine through physical union. This ritual was highly revered among the Sumerians and Babylonians. In ancient sources (Herodotus, Thucydides) there are many traces of hierogamos, starting perhaps with Babylon, where each woman had to reach, once a year, the sanctuary of Militta (Aptrodite or Nana/Anahita), and there have sex with a foreigner, as a sign of hospitality, for a symbolic price. In the novel, *The Man Who Died*, this instance can be compared that the temple priestess of the ancient pagan goddess Isis, performs *hierogamos*, with a stranger, to make him whole both physically and spiritually.

In the novel on the one hand Lawrence too, refers to Mary Magdalene, as a whore, whereas on the other side he says that she 'washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with her hair, and poured on precious ointment.' (TMWD.69) This ritual was observed by a bride for her bridegroom. In some records it has been said that Mary Magdalene, was Jesus's wife and belonged like him to a royal household, the House of Solomon, Like Jesus belonged to the House of David. Their relation was the real *hierogamos*, Jesus became the sacrificial king of the rituals and Magdalene, the priestess, the holy whore. Records also say that she was put down in history as the whore, because she was the nearest to Jesus and his legacy would have passed on to her. How could the Christians think to be ruled by a woman? So she was wronged, the facts hidden (which have now been recovered in a cave of Nag Hammadi) and she put down into history as a whore. Lawrence had tried to put down these facts in hidden under tones and symbolically in his novel.

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