MYTH AND SYMBOL IN SOME MAJOR NOVELS OF D. H. LAWRENCE

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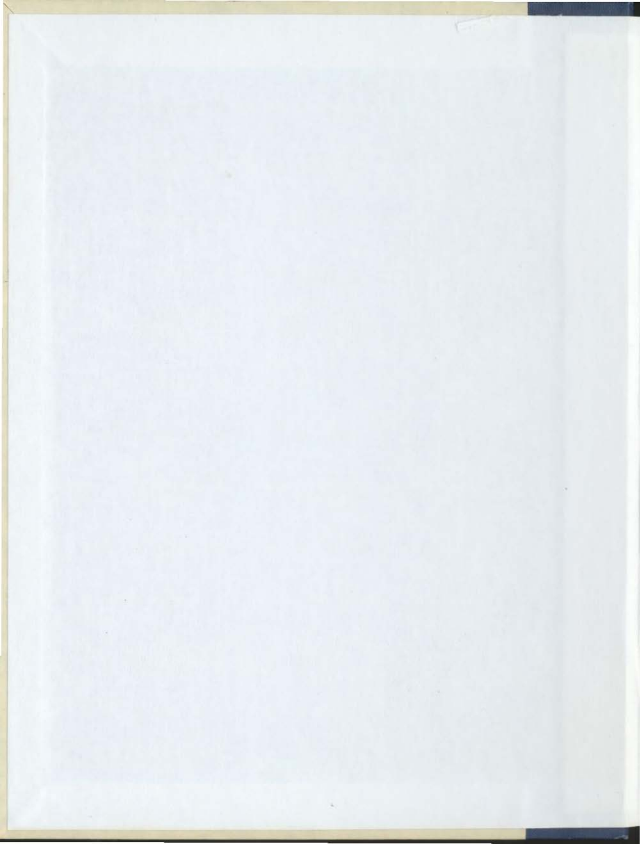

MYTH AND SYMBOL
IN SOME MAJOR NOVELS
OF D.H. LAWRENCE

BY

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This thesis has been examined and approved by

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ABSTRACT

An interest in symbolism and a particular interest in the work of D.H. Lawrence furnish the motive for this study. Three things are apparent in reading Lawrence: (1) His symbolism is more methodical than would appear at first reading and leads into a network of myths. (2) The writing technique used by him corresponds to the process with which he describes the development of his characters. (3) He does not fit comfortably into a literary line of succession but fits in a general way into areas of development within other disciplines.

The most noticeable characteristic of Lawrence's writing seems to be the zealous pursuit of a state of being in which man could reflect the cosmic harmony. By-passing the novels which concentrate mainly upon male relationships and questions of political and religious leadership, one can isolate a number of novels which concentrate on the acquisition of this state of being, and which, in fact, constitute a philosophy of "becoming". The novels which indicate a progression towards the ideal of man living harmoniously in the universe are Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, Women in Love, and Lady Chatterley's Lover. There is, however, a sense of

dissatisfaction at the end of all these novels, a feeling of uncompleted business. By reading The Man Who Died as a key to further development of this theme the line of thought is as finished as a philosophy of becoming can be.

The problem of fragmentation, considered by Lawrence as the major evil resulting from the mechanization of industry, seems even more important in the age of cybernetics. It is in this connection that a comparison of Lawrence with the insights of Jung seem particularly important and rewarding. Also, since Lawrence's death in 1930 there has been a renewed interest in mythology, sparked by new discoveries made in anthropology. All of these things give credibility to notions which Lawrence put forth in purely literary form.

The myth which underlies much of the writing is the myth of Daphne, interpreted not as a fate of vegetation, but of mechanization. Mechanization is a step beyond vegetation because it is no longer rooted in earth and, therefore, completely lifeless. Lawrence works out his own version of life-death. Death for him is another consideration; the life-death debate is really life vs. lifelessness which means life lived creatively from the "quick" or lifelessness as a state of existence without vitality. Loss of vitality for Lawrence was the disaster which

threatened mankind. The coming disaster was not flood or fire (although he uses these metaphors), or a fate imposed by God, but loss of vitality through mechanization, a disaster of man's own making. Although Lawrence uses the symbol of the Ark it is clear that the Ark is woman.

So man is another Adam seeking his lost paradise, and the key to his salvation is the same thing that was the key to his downfall -- woman. The kind of woman who contributes to the downfall and is of no use in redeeming is symbolized by Gudrun, who is the ultimate in the horror of recession into mechanism -- the completely mechanical woman who realizes her predicament. At the other end of the scale is the priestess of Isis, the healer.

No final decision can be made about the total meaning or value of Lawrence's work except to say the work lends itself to interpretation and reinterpretation because his philosophy was a philosophy of becoming and his creed was continuous creation.

Myths and fairytales give expression to unconscious processes, and their retelling causes these processes to come alive again and be recollected, thereby re-establishing the connection between conscious and unconscious. What the separation of the two psychic halves means, the psychiatrist knows only too well. He knows it as dissociation of the personality, the root of all neuroses; the conscious goes to the right and the unconscious to the left. As opposites never unite at their own level (*tertium non datur!*) a supra-ordinate "third" is always required, in which the two parts can come together. And since the symbol derives as much from the conscious as from the unconscious, it is able to unite them both, reconciling their conceptual polarity through its form and their emotional polarity through its numinosity.

(Carl Gustav Jung, *Aion*, II, p. 180)

...I deliberately and consciously give preference to a dramatic, mythological way of thinking and speaking, because this is not only more expressive but also more exact than an abstract scientific terminology which is wont to toy with the notion that its theoretic formulations may one fine day be resolved into algebraic equations.

(*Aion*: II, 13)

...I do not regard the *symbol* as an allegory or a sign, but take it in its proper sense as the best possible way of describing and formulating an object that is not completely knowable.

(*Aion*: II, 73)

Terra Incognita

There are vast realms of consciousness still undreamed of
vast ranges of experience, like the humming of unseen harps,
we know nothing of, within us.

(D.H. Lawrence, 1885-1930, *More Pansies*)

INTRODUCTION

We in the twentieth century are dreaming the philosopher's dream -- to recapture the time when psychology, philosophy, medicine, alchemy, mythology, and theology were one science. What makes the twentieth century exciting is the fact that all the representatives of the above arts or their modern equivalents, including the new breed called "scientists", are simultaneously dreaming this dream. In spite of its woes and complexities the twentieth century is a great time for dreamers -- and D.H. Lawrence was one of them.

A re-reading of D.H. Lawrence in an age which has attained a pitch of mechanism impossible to envisage at the time of his writing, will show how truly he was a prophet of the worst and a seer of the best. Intuitive re-reading now might indicate how his healing insights might be realized, or, if not realized, at least recognized as signposts in a more vital direction.

Lawrence is often difficult to read. In contrast to his many economical, translucent, universal, poetic insights much of his work, especially the novels, seems on first reading to be (to use one of his favourite words) "inchoate", turgid, repetitious, and "off-putting".

The most enjoyable and rewarding approach to Lawrence is one of complete relaxation -- demanding nothing, defining no boundaries, admitting freely at the outset that he is not Virginia Woolf or James Joyce with the particular literary joys that accompany the reading of these great twentieth-century Authors, and freely admitting that his particular treasures do not yield to the grimly analytical literary hunting technique so popular in these times of readily available money for the sole purpose of research. Nevertheless, given the above frame of mind, the treasures will come as imperceptibly and naturally as the dew upon the earth that he loved so much.

Slowly it is borne in upon the reader that Lawrence's work -- poems, essays, literary criticism, travel commentaries, plays, letters, and novels -- is "all of a piece" and full of correspondences with the explanation of one magically hieroglyphed in the depths of another. But the reader who has a penchant for correspondences is bound to have a passion for synthesis as well, so, although one hesitates to say that there has to be a technique for reading Lawrence, at least there has to be a "process" of reading. This is a demanding process not always conducive to the relaxation just recommended. It is, however, synthetically satisfying when one realizes that it is a duplication of the processes that Lawrence's writing embodies.

When one considers more specifically the novels, some of which are the subject of this study, it becomes gradually clear that they progress by a process of shifts of polarities, and of surface and visible signs of inward and invisible tremors and shiftings of a psychological underground -- much as if great cataclysms were taking place underneath the surface of the earth and the amount of change on top depended upon the amount of stress put upon faults or structural weaknesses below. Lawrence is the geologist of the novelists.

He is also a naturalist among novelists; the surface of the earth furnishes the terms of his psychological climate. The forces of human nature are assessed in terms of the forces of nature and its phenomena -- the sun, the moon, light and darkness, the wind, the sea, the woods and specific trees, animals and birds, the rhythm of the tides and seasons, crops and flowers. All of these are symbols, recurring and expanding in meaning.

The network of symbols falls into a pattern of myths -- not formless as his earlier critics thought, but not always immediately recognizable, drawn as they are with eclectic hand from a vast selection of myths -- pagan, classical, oriental, and Christian. They are, however, woven deliberately and with a purpose that becomes increasingly clear in

his later works. Whatever their source, they are used to intensify his underlying concern and to illustrate his main theme -- that the western world with its habit of cerebration and abstraction had lost its phallic consciousness (the consciousness of "godly vitality in a man") and that only by coming back into contact with the source of that vitality through the senses and by touch, will man be able to take his whole and rightful place in the universe.

The novels which seem best to illustrate an expanding awareness of this theme are Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, Women in Love, and Lady Chatterley's Lover, and they are interesting because they are explorations rather than resolutions of the problem of being.

The myth which explains and contains all his lesser myths is unfolded in The Man Who Died, a short work which is in a class by itself, but for the earnest classifier, a fable rather than a novel. It contains all the secrets which Lawrence had found in the book of nature, and his meaning of the story of the healing of the fragmented god. It is a record of the necessity of physical love and of taking the plunge into the underworld of self in order to regain the happy state of ancient times when the sons of god found the daughters of men, before the flood, before the fall -- a journey which results in a psychological rebirth for every man.

It is possible to consider Lawrence fruitfully in a context other than literary, although he has recognizable affinities with Blake who is lately coming into his own -- the main focus of interest being vitality, or Blake's "energy", and it is probably inevitable that Lawrence at the last of his life should write of Christ who was for Blake "pure energy". In his "timeless moments" symbolized by the rose, the wheel, and the flame, he comes near to T.S. Eliot. His similarities to Hardy make Lawrence a literary bridgehead between the Victorians and the twentieth century. He does, however, extend into other fields -- back to the mystic, contemporaneous with psychology and psychiatry, and ahead to the fusion of science and the humanities into the one big science of humanity.

In the attempt to establish this framework long quotations have been necessary since attempted abridgement did not allow the thinkers concerned to speak for themselves.

Lawrence created a mythical-real Midlands country like Hardy's "Wessex". As of Wessex, maps are drawn by literary enthusiasts of Lawrence's country too. But of Lawrence's real country there is no map -- only his writings which, though they may not be a map for Everyman, may help every man to draw his own.

CHAPTER I

THESEUS TO-DAY

The modern mythmaker has a difficult task; he has to be a culture hero in an age of low culture, a culture not of gods or kings and princes but of everyman. How unromantic seems the reversal -- not the god become man but, what must seem to the idealist impossible and ridiculous -- everyman seeking to be the god.

A difficulty soon met in the study of Lawrence's myths and the symbols he uses to convey them is what may be termed "the difficulty of dynamic weaving", that is the embarrassment and unwillingness the reader often feels at being woven into the fabric. Reading Lawrence is rather like viewing a Henry Moore sculpture; the finished product is the responsibility of the viewer or reader and the work of art is finished according to the intuitive comprehension of the one participating. Total agreement with Lawrence is seldom possible but he does demand a dynamic of participation which often leaves the reader in total disagreement with what he himself formerly thought, as well as with Lawrence. The reader of Lawrence cannot remain static. He begins to

realize that Lawrence's meanings are often multi-layered and that the symbols read in conjunction or formulaicly are loaded with implications. The messages thus gathered are becoming increasingly important because Lawrence understood in its early form the malaise of mechanism which plagued the early twentieth century and which expanded to a psychological counterpart to muscular dystrophy and for which now each sufferer must pursue his own personal cure. This is a lifetime search which only the brave pursue.

The magnitude of the search is brought out by Ernst Cassirer in a discussion of Schelling's concepts:

> ... Myth is the odyssey of the pure consciousness of God, whose unfolding is determined and mediated in equal measure by our consciousness of nature and the world and by our consciousness of the I. It discloses an inner law which is fully analogous to the law prevailing in nature but of a higher mode of necessity. Precisely because the cosmos can be understood and interpreted only through the human spirit, hence through subjectivity, what would seem to be the purely subjective content of mythology has at the same time a cosmic significance. [1]

The early Greeks were early adventurers of the spirit, Lawrence a late one. In Apocalypse he deals with the symbolism of the Book of Revelation but in so doing gives much of his own symbolic thinking. Here is the origin of his

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[1] Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Vol. 2 Mythical Thought, p. 9.

phoenix symbol:

> . . . The early scientists took the extant religious symbol-ideas and transmuted them into true "ideas". We know that the ancients saw number concrete -- in dots or in rows of pebbles. And the number three was held by the Pythagoreans to be the perfect number, in their primitive arithmetic, because you could not divide it and leave a gap in the middle. This is obviously true of the three pebbles. You cannot destroy the integrity of the three. If you remove one pebble on each side, it still leaves the central stone poised and in perfect balance between the two wings. And even as late as the third century, this was felt as the perfect or divine condition of being. 2

In his concept of polarities, which underlies much of his thinking and is reflected in the structure of the novels, Lawrence again is indebted to the Greeks:

> . . . Even the first Pythagoreans, who were religious in the conventional way, were more profoundly religious in their conceptions of the two primary forms, Fire and the night, or Fire and the Dark, dark being conceived of as a kind of thick air or vapour. These two were the Limit and the Unlimited, Night, the Unlimited, finding its Limit in Fire. These two primary forms, being in a tension of opposition, prove their oneness by their very opposedness. . . .
> (Apoc. 160-1)

Lawrence was a mythmaker precisely because he tried to understand man in relation to the Cosmos. He differs from

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[2] D.H. Lawrence, Apocalypse, intro. Richard Aldington (New York: The Viking Press, 1966), pp. 158-9.

ancient mythology because the ancients constructed their myths from the actions of the gods who set man in the world and created his conditions of living. Lawrence's myths are a record of man in his sometimes unsuccessful attempts to relate himself to the cosmos and carve out his own conditions of living. His nostalgia for that other mythology explains much of his symbolism. He has a particularly Blakean description of that other time (illo tempore):

> ...The whole cosmos was alive and in contact with the flesh of man, there was no room for the intrusion of the god idea. It was not till the individual began to feel separated off, not till he fell into awareness of himself, and hence into apartness; not mythologically, till he ate of the Tree of Knowledge instead of the Tree of Life, and knew himself apart and separate, that the conception of a God arose, to intervene between man and the cosmos. The very oldest ideas of man are purely religious, and there is no notion of any sort of god or gods. God and gods enter when man has "fallen" into a sense of separateness and loneliness. The oldest philosophers, Anaximander with his divine Boundless and the divine two elements, and Anaximenes with his divine "air," are going back to the great conception of the naked cosmos, before there was God....
>
> (Apoc. . 160)

Even when Lawrence is not talking about Greek mythology or philosophy this thinking underlies much of his work and for want of consideration of this point his work has received some thin critical interpretation.

The same thing has happened in a misunderstanding of his so-called primitivism. He did not deny the value of civilization nor did he advocate going back to primitive culture. He states this clearly in his study "Herman Melville's _Typee_ and _Omoo_":

> The truth of the matter is, one cannot go back. Some men can: renegade. But Melville couldn't go back: and Gaugin couldn't really go back: and I know now that I could never go back. Back toward the past, savage life. One cannot go back. It is one's destiny inside one. [3]

What Lawrence argues for is the redevelopment of the sensuous awareness that early primitive civilizations had before the development of rational abstract thought. He did not advocate a substitution -- rather an expansion. Rational awareness alone he knew did not make for a full life. However much he is quoted out of context by critics this is one of his pervading thoughts -- the redevelopment of old modes of knowing and being to round out our decimated human existence.

This criticism, or to put it positively, this yearning for another mode of knowing, crops up periodically in English thought. Opinions differ on the question of whether Lawrence was a mystic and the debate may not be important. There was, however, in England a certain kind of mystical

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[3] D.H. Lawrence, _Studies in Classic American Literature_ (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1957) p. 148. (First published 1923).

thinking with which Lawrence might have been sympathetic had his rigidly non-conformist background not made such a connection impossible. Charles Williams has dealt with this trend of thinking in a study of the Incarnation in which he quotes the fourteenth-century mystic, Lady Julian of Norwich:

> ... 'For I saw full assuredly', wrote the Lady Julian, 'that our Substance is in God, and also I saw that in our sensualite God is; for in the self point that our Soul is made sensual, in the self point is the City of God ordained to Him from without beginning; into which seat He cometh and never shall remove it .... and as anent our substance and sensualite it may right be cleped our soul: and that is because of the oneing that they have in God. The worshipful City that our Lord Jesus sitteth in is our sensualite, in which He is enclosed: and our kindly Substance is enclosed in Jesus with the blessed Soul of Christ sitting in rest in the Godhead.'
>
> Whatever the Lady Julian meant by 'sensualite', she certainly meant nothing less material or less vital than the whole physical nature; she was not weakening or refining it away.... The operations of matter are a means of the operation of Christ, and the body has not, in fact, as some pious people suggest, fallen a good deal farther than the soul.
>
> ....
>
> The great world and energy of the body have been either deprecated or devotionalized; and by devotionalized I mean turned into a pale imitation of 'substance', of spirit; thus losing their own power and privileges without, in general gaining any others.
>
> ....
>
> The result of this shy spiritualism has been, of course, to leave the Church particularly open to attack. The Church owes more to heretics than she is ever likely (on this earth) to admit; her gratitude is always slightly patronizing. There existed, in the early part of the twentieth century, a convinced and rhetorical heretic named David Herbert Lawrence. Of what exactly he was convinced it is not always

easy to be sure, except on the very broadest lines. He thought that sex was important; he thought physical nature significant; he thought modern industrialism disgusting; he thought men needed leaders -- or a leader; he thought also that each man must find out his own foundations, leader or no leader....

It is the vast union of visible and invisible, tangible and intangible, which is the real business of exploration -- anyhow for Christians.

The hungry sheep look up for metaphysics, the profound metaphysics of the awful and redeeming body, and are given morals Yet they are encouraged to receive the Blessed Sacrament which is defined to be for the body and the soul. Lawrence was a heretic -- good; but he was concerned with a Christian orthodoxy -- the orthodoxy of the blood of Man.

How to discover this? God knows; it cannot be done in study circles. We might certainly consider what has been done -- There is the Lady Julian, there is Dante, there are Donne and Patmore. There is Lawrence .... [4]

The search of every man for his whole alive self seemed to Lawrence to be the search for this deep sensuality of the body that the Lady Julian understood so well, not the mechanical thing which registered the shallow range of fricative sensation but the literally unknown country of which the veins and arteries are the rivers -- a metaphor that he uses in Lady Chatterley. Lawrence believed in a dynamic substance nourished by the sensual nature of man. This is his doctrine of the blood -- as full a statement as he ever made. A sympathetic reading of this statement

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[4] Charles Williams, "Sensuality and Substance", in The Image of the City and Other Essays, selected by Anne Ridler (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 61-3. (Theology, May, 1939)

explains his unending search for "the answering sea".

> We wanted to be all of a piece. And we couldn't bring it off. Because we just aren't all of a piece. We wanted first to have nothing but nice day-time selves, awfully nice and kind and refined. But it didn't work. Because whether we want it or not, we've got night-time selves. And the most spiritual woman ever born or made has to perform her natural functions just like everybody else. We must always keep in line with this fact.
>
> Well, then, we have night-time selves. And the night-self is the very basis of the dynamic self. The blood-consciousness and the blood-passion is the very source and origin of us. Not that we can stay at the source. Nor even make a goal of the source, as Freud does. The business of living is to travel away from the source. But you must start every single day fresh from the source. You must rise every day afresh out of the dark sea of the blood.
>
> When you go to sleep at night, you have to say: "Here dies the man I am and know myself to be." And when you rise in the morning you have to say: "Here rises an unknown quantity which is still myself."
>
> The self which rises naked every morning out of the dark sleep of the passionate, hoarsely-calling blood: this is the unit for the next society. And the polarizing of the passionate blood in the individual towards life, and toward leader, this must be the dynamic of the next civilization. The intense, passionate yearning of the soul towards the soul of a stronger, greater individual, and the passionate blood-belief in the fulfilment of this yearning will give men the next motive for life.
>
> We have to sink back into the darkness and the elemental consciousness of the blood. And from this rise again. But there is no rising until the bath of darkness and extinction is accomplished. [italics mine]
>
> As social units, as civilized men we have to do what we do as physical organisms. Every day, the sun sets from the sky, and darkness falls, and

every day, when this happens, the tide of life turns in us. Instead of flowing upwards and outwards towards mental consciousness and activity, it turns back, to flow downwards further to the great sexual conjunctions, downwards to sleep.

This is the soul now retreating, back from the outer life of day, back to the origins. And so, it stays its hour at the first great sensual stations, the solar plexus and the lumbar ganglion. But the tide ebbs on, down to the immense, almost inhuman passionate darkness of sex, the strange and moon-like intensity of the hypo-gastric plexus and the sacral ganglion, then deep, deeper, past the last great station of the darkest psyche, down to the earth's centre. Then we sleep.

And the moon is the tide-turner. The moon is the great cosmic pole which calls us back, back out of our day-self, back through the moonlit darknesses of the sensual planes, to sleep. It is the moon that sways the blood, and sways us back into the sea of its own darkness, the mind, stage by stage, enjoys the mental consciousness that belongs to this retreat back into the sensual deeps; and then it goes extinguished. There is sleep.

And so we resolve back towards our elementals. We dissolve back, out of the upper consciousness, out of mind and sight and speech, back, down into the deep and massive, swaying consciousness of the dark, living blood. At the last hour of sex I am no more than a powerful wave of mounting blood. Which seeks to surge and join with the answering sea in the other individual. When the sea of individual blood which I am at that hour heaves and finds its pure contact with the sea of individual blood which is the woman at that hour, then each of us enters into the wholeness of our deeper infinitude, our profound fullness of being, in the ocean of our oneness and our consciousness. [Italics mine]

This is under the spell of the moon, of sea-born Aphrodite, mother and bitter goddess. For I am carried away from my sunny day-self into this other tremendous self, where knowledge will not save me, but where I must obey as the sea obeys the tides. *Yet however much I go, I know that I am all the while myself, in my going.* [5] [Italics mine]

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[5] D.H. Lawrence, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Introduction by Philip Rieff (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), *Fantasia*, pp. 210-2.

Here, in this Phoebus myth in modern scientific dress, Lawrence defines his search for sensuality -- "the answering sea", his doctrine of the blood, a tracing of the journey of the outer man inwards, that old mythical journey to the nether world. Lawrence calls this inhuman but to-day he might make a finer distinction and say metahuman. It is well to note that Lawrence puts the function of the mind in a healthy place, "enjoying the mental consciousness that belongs to this retreat back into the sensual deeps." This is the mind linked with the body -- not detached, observing, judging, abstracting. Thorough familiarity with the above passage, even if the reader does not entirely agree with Lawrence as a scientist, explains much of his moon symbolism, the Aphrodite figures which appear throughout the novels, and the blood symbolism which is a ground bass for all his writing. It was a resolution back to elementals that he must have been trying to chart in Lady Chatterley and a division or perversion of this that he was preoccupied with in figures such as Clifford Chatterley who became vegetative and Loerke who grasped the dark knowledge with his mind only. It also emphasizes the individualism that he guards so jealously.

Jung is worth considering, not only for his own sake, but also for the way in which he illuminates the work of Lawrence, whose dark side might be equated with the unconscious

that Jung was exploring, or even the substrata of earth which geologists were analysing in the same period, to determine if in fact Lawrence might be considered the literary spearhead of what has become a popular philosophical-scientific pursuit for a unitive theory of knowledge. Jung approached science with the tools of art; the work in mandalas which he carried on over a long period was rewarding artistically as well as symbolically. Jung was also a competent literary critic. While Lawrence strained ahead in spite of consistently poor health and with the climate of opinion quite against him, Jung was unhampered, and with the skill of a successful practising psychiatrist, able to make contributions to what in time became a popular and pervasive literary theory -- the theory of archetypes, carried further in recent years by theorists of literary criticism such as Northrop Frye and Joseph Campbell.

Jung in the foreword to one of his scientific works throws light on the process that Lawrence was most concerned with, the process of integration of the personality:

> ...I have been requested so often by my readers to discuss the relations between the traditional Christ-figure and the natural symbols of wholeness that I finally decided to take this task in hand.... ... I am not making a confession of faith or writing a tendentious tract, but am simply considering how certain things could be understood from the standpoint of our modern consciousness --

> things which I deem it valuable to understand, and which are obviously in danger of being swallowed up in the abyss of incomprehension and oblivion; things, finally, whose understanding would do much to remedy our philosophic disorientation by shedding light on the psychic background and the secret chambers of the soul. The essence of this book was built up gradually, in the course of many years, in countless conversations with people of all ages and all walks of life; with people who in the confusion and uprootedness of our society were likely to lose all contact with the meaning of European culture and to fall into that state of suggestibility which is the occasion and cause of the Utopian mass-psychoses of our time. 6

In a less closely reasoned and less scientific, but more artistic and intuitive way Lawrence was giving literary expression to these very concerns and undertaking the same tasks. Lawrence himself tried to lose contact with European culture during the period of his Australian journeying. He realized later that he could never do this and came to the conclusion that it was this loss of touch with European culture that accounted for the sickness of the American psyche. Although Jung and Lawrence were working contemporaneously, Jung's work on the archetypes was published in English long after Lawrence's death -- from 1950 on.

While Freud was concentrating on a concept of the ego which alienated him from Jung and Lawrence, Jung was

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[6] C.G. Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 9, Part II, _Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self_, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959) p. x.

formulating a new concept of <u>self</u> which included the ego, the subject of all personal acts of consciousness which is limited by the unknown. It was a similar concept, later articulated in <u>Psychoanalysis of the Unconscious</u> that Lawrence was working out in his novels.

Jung says:

> ... The unknown falls into two groups of objects: those which are outside and can be experienced by the senses, and those which are inside and are experienced immediately. The first group comprises the unknown in the outer world; the second the unknown in the inner world. We call this latter territory <u>the unconscious</u>.
> (<u>Aion</u>: II, 3)

It is precisely this unconscious that concerned Lawrence, the things that he realized could not and perhaps should not be controlled by the will. It is the relation of the unconscious to the ego which forms the "process" of the novels.

Jungian psychology explains Lawrencian behaviour;

> The somatic basis of the ego consists, then, of conscious and unconscious factors. The same is true of the psychic basis: on the one hand the ego rests on the <u>total field of consciousness</u> and on the other, on the <u>sum total of unconscious contents</u>. These fall into three groups: first, temporarily subliminal contents that can be reproduced voluntarily (memory); second, unconscious contents that cannot be reproduced voluntarily: third, contents that are not capable of becoming conscious at all. Group two can be inferred from

> the spontaneous irruption of subliminal contents into consciousness. Group three is hypothetical; it is a logical inference from the facts underlying group two.
>
> (*Aion*: II, 4)

Jung makes the point that the personality as a total phenomenon does not coincide with the ego which is the conscious personality, arising from collision between the somatic factor and the environment and which continues to develop by collisions with the inner and outer worlds. He contends that the most decisive qualities in a person are often unconscious and totally unknown to the ego. This truth, which Lawrence understood, accounts for his seemingly plotless presentation involving an abstract cast of characters -- indicating processes and states of being rather than characterization and resolution.

In Lawrence this exploration of the inner world approximates his "drift toward death" and indicates the perilous deep upon which the little ego floats. Ursula is waiting for Birkin after the drowning of Diana Crich:

> Her thoughts drifted into unconsciousness, she sat as if asleep beside the fire. And then the thought came back. The space of death! Could she give herself to it? Ah yes -- it was a sleep. She had had enough. So long she had held out and resisted. Now was the time to relinquish, not to resist any more.

> In a kind of spiritual trance she yielded, she gave way, and all was dark. She could feel, within the darkness, the terrible assertion of her body, the unutterable anguish of dissolution, the only anguish that is too much, the far-off awful nausea of dissolution set in within the body.
>
> "Does the body correspond so immediately with the spirit?" she asked herself. And she knew, with the clarity of ultimate knowledge, that the body is only one of the manifestations of the spirit, the transmutation of the integral spirit is the transmutation of the physical body as well. Unless I set my will, unless I absolve myself from the rhythm of life, fix myself and remain static, cut off from living, absolved within my own will. But better die than live mechanically a life that is a repetition of repetitions. [7]

It is an amplification of this "nausea of dissolution" that is treated in The Man Who Died.

The complex inner warfare is explained by Jung:

> I have suggested calling the total personality which, though present, cannot be fully known, the self. The ego is, by definition, subordinate to the self and is related to it like a part to the whole. Inside the field of consciousness it has, as we say, free will. By this I do not mean anything philosophical, only the well-known psychological fact of "free choice," or rather the subjective feeling of freedom. But, just as our free will clashes with necessity in the outside world, so also it finds its limits outside the field of consciousness in the subjective inner world, where it comes into conflict with the facts of the self. And just as circumstances or outside events "happen" to us and limit our freedom, so

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[7] D.H. Lawrence, Women in Love, (New York: Avon Publications, Inc., 1920), pp. 176-7.

> the self acts upon the ego like an objective occurrence which free will can do very little to alter. It is, indeed, well known that the ego not only can do nothing against the self, but is sometimes actually assimilated by unconscious components of the personality that are in the process of development and is greatly altered by them.
>
> (Aion: II, 5-6)

This is the key to Ursula and also the key to the complex processes which Lawrence describes so vividly in the chapter "Anna Victrix" in The Rainbow.

Lawrence never pretended to be a scientist; indeed he disliked scientific processes and classifications. Yet the truth that Jung expounded concerning the ego in relation to the self and the role of the unconscious in Aion was the fabric of Lawrence's novels. Since psychology had been operating with inductive methods only since the end of the nineteenth century Lawrence was, in this respect an artist (unlike Blake) working within his time.

There is a temptation to generalize concerning the reason for the swing to the unconscious. Possibly the build-up of admiration for Will, Wit, and Reason became top-heavy from the Eighteenth century on and the pendulum had to swing. In any case science became interested in a most un-Baconian, ineffable and intangible field of study and Lawrence became its literary prophet.

There is always a swing of the artist in society away from the point of social imbalance. Lawrence tried to

explain this. He says in his "Autobiographical Sketch":

> But something is wrong, either with me or with the world or with both of us. I have gone far and met many people, of all sorts and all conditions, and many whom I have genuinely liked and esteemed.
>
> People personally, have nearly always been friendly. Of critics we will not speak, they are different fauna from people. And I have wanted to feel truly friendly with some, at least of my fellow men.
>
> Yet I have never quite succeeded. Whether I get on in the world is a question; but I certainly don't get on very well with the world. And whether I am a worldly success or not I really don't know. But I feel, somehow, not much of a human success.
>
> By which I mean that I don't feel there is any very cordial or fundamental contact between me and society, or me and other people. There is a breach. And my contact is with something that is non-human, non-vocal. 8

In a letter to Edward Garnett, dated June 5, 1914, Lawrence tried to define this non-human, non-vocal thing. This was early in his writing career but his interest never changed and his subsequent definitions of his purpose were redefinitions of this allotropic never-never land:

> You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognisable, and passes thought, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to

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[8] D.H. Lawrence: Selected Literary Criticism, ed. Anthony Beal (New York: The Viking Press, 1966), p. 4. Subsequent references SLC.

> discover are states of the same single radically unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond -- but I say, "Diamond, what! This carbon." And my diamond might be coal or soot and my theme is carbon.)
> (SLC, 18)

In his exposition of shadow, anima, and animus, Jung gives the psychological framework for what later became archetypal literary theory although literature has always dealt with them. It is at this point that Lawrence has so many affinities with Blake. Jung says:

> The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge, and it therefore, as a rule, meets with considerable resistance. Indeed, self-knowledge as a psychotherapeutic measure frequently requires much painstaking work extending over a long period.
> (Aion: II, 8)

This is the process that Lady Chatterley went through, and the young Ursula in Women in Love after her encounter with the horses. As long as the shadow remains personal it can be recognized with effort. When, however, it becomes archetypal, Jung points out that in the case of evil for example, it is a shattering experience to gaze into the face of absolute evil. This was Gudrun's experience with Loerke in Women in Love.

Most of Lawrence's difficulties in his youth and even in his later life were caused by an overstressed relationship with his mother. Jung explains the psychological processes and also their transmutation into myth: The projection-making factor in man is "the spinning woman" or the personification of the unconscious. This enveloping, embracing and devouring element represents the mother:

> If this situation is dramatized, as the unconscious usually dramatized it, then there appears before you on the psychological stage a man living regressively, seeking his childhood and his mother, fleeing from a cold cruel world which denies him understanding. Often a mother appears beside him who apparently shows not the slightest concern that her little son should become a man, but who, with tireless and self-immolating effort, neglects nothing that might hinder him from growing up and marrying. You behold the secret conspiracy between mother and son, and how each helps the other to betray life.
> (Aion: II, 11)

This is the psychology of Sons and Lovers and the explanation of the fate of Clifford Chatterley and Mrs. Bolton.

An adequate confrontation of the world requires a turning from the mother. According to Jung:

> . . . The mother, foreseeing this danger, had carefully inculcated into him the virtues of faithfulness, devotion, loyalty, so as to protect him from the moral disruption which is the risk of every life advanture. He has learnt these lessons only too well, and remains true to his mother. This naturally causes her

> the deepest anxiety (when to her greater glory, he turns out to be a homosexual, for example) and at the same time affords her an unconscious satisfaction that is positively mythological. For in the relationship now reigning between them, there is consumated the immemorial and most sacred archetype of the marriage of mother and son ....
>
> This myth better than any other, illustrates the nature of the collective unconscious. At this level the mother is both old and young, Demeter and Persephone, and the son is spouse and sleeping suckling rolled into one....
>
> (Aion: II, 12)

It will be remembered that the man who had died turned away from "the woman who had been his mother." The woman is, according to Jung, both solace and seductress.

> ... Modern psychotherapy knows that, though there are many interim solutions, there is, at the bottom of every neurosis, a moral problem of opposites that cannot be solved rationally, and can be answered only by a supraordinate third, by a symbol which expresses both sides.
>
> (Aion: II, 180)

This seems to be the function of Lawrence's Holy Ghost. The psychic halves are ambivalent -- the dark and light side of man, or man representing the light and woman the dark side of nature. Both are brought together, healed and enlarged by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is the ultimate triumph for Lawrence and seems to come only after a psychological struggle of which the ancient Harrowing of Hell is the symbol.

> The old nature of man must yield and give way to a new nature. In yielding, it passes away down into Hades, and there lives on, undying and malefic, superseded, yet malevolent-potent in the underworld.
>
> This very profound truth was embodied in all old religions, and lies at the root of the worship of the underworld powers. The worship of the underworld powers, the chthonioi, was perhaps the very basis of the most ancient Greek religion. When man has neither the strength to subdue his underworld powers -- which are really the ancient powers of his old, superseded self; nor the wit to placate them with sacrifice and the burnt holocaust; then they come back at him, and destroy him again. Hence every new conquest of life means a "harrowing of Hell."
>
> (Apoc. 113-4)

Jung restates the philosopher's dream to which Lawrence has made a significant contribution:

> . . . Psyche and matter exist in one and the same world, and each partakes of the other, otherwise any reciprocal action would be impossible. If research could only advance far enough, therefore, we should arrive at an ultimate agreement between physical and psychological concepts. Our present attempts may be bold, but I believe they are on the right lines. Mathematics, for instance, has more than once proved that its purely logical constructions which transcend all experience subsequently coincided with the behaviour of things. This, like the events I call synchronistic, points to a profound harmony between all forms of existence.
>
> (Aion: II, 261)

This is the "other day" -- the tomorrow sought by the man who had died as he loosed his boat upon the current.

CHAPTER II

THE LABYRINTH

Lawrence was engaged in a quest for the unknown country. He believed that the promised land was underneath our feet,[1] so the unknown country becomes a condition of the search for the state in which man can be fully alive and fully in touch with the cosmos that Lawrence described in his discussion of early Greek religions. Because twentieth-century man is so far from this condition, so far even from wanting to attain it, the object of the search is obscured and the search impeded by just that amount of intuitive awareness of life that modern man has not got. By "life" Lawrence meant the vital spark at the centre of man that each has when he is born, his link with the Cosmos. When this dims he is vegetative, part of the earth, losing the possibility of entering into the action of continuous creation. This is the condition of the peasant in The Man Who Died. Lawrence had what may be termed a nucleolar concept of life which embodies the notion of the "quick", "the prime centre, which is the very first nucleus of the fertilized ovule".

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[1] (Fantasia, 61)

> What is the spinning spider of the first human consciousness -- or rather, where is the centre at which this consciousness lies and spins? Since there must be a centre of consciousness in the tiny foetus, it must have been there from the very beginning. There it must have been, in the first fused nucleus of the ovule. And if we could but watch this prime nucleus, we should no doubt realize that throughout all the long and incalculable history of the individual it still remains central and prime, the source and clue of the living unconscious, the origin. As in the first moment of conception, so to the end of life in the individual, the first nucleus remains the creative-productive centre, the quick, both of consciousness and of organic development.
>
> (Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, 19)

However much Lawrence believed this, it is not a popular belief. Perhaps it would not be too farfetched to say that modern man, in the western world at least, has cut the wrong umbilical cord; he remains attached to his mother but is severed from his world and from his tribe. He has material rights and privileges but is not really an adult.

This problem has been assessed by Joseph Campbell, who has taken cognizance of Van Gennep's[2] pioneer work on the rites of passage and tried to define the modern quest hero, of which breed Lawrence is assuredly one.

> The problem of mankind today, therefore, is precisely the opposite to that of men in the comparatively stable periods of those great co-ordinating mythologies which now are known as

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[2] Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), first published 1908.

> lies. Then all meaning was in the group, in the great anonymous forms, none in the self-expressive individual; today no meaning is in the group -- none in the world: all is in the individual. But there the meaning is absolutely unconscious. One does not know toward what one moves. One does not know by what one is propelled. The lines of communication between the conscious and the unconscious zones of the human psyche have all been cut, and we have been split in two.
>
> The hero-deed to be wrought is not today what it was in the century of Galileo. Where then there was darkness, now there is light; but also, where light was, there now is darkness.
>
> The modern hero-deed must be that of questing to bring to light again the lost Atlantis of the co-ordinated soul. [3]

Campbell is one of many literary students of mythology who show how much Lawrence's ideas are gaining distasteful credence. Never was a truth less willingly faced. Man wants to be the seeker but he shrinks from being the goal of the quest.

> ... It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse. And so every one of us shares the supreme ordeal -- carries the cross of the redeemer -- not in the bright moments of his tribe's great victories, but in the silences of his personal despair.
>
> (Hero with a Thousand Faces, 390)

Underlying much of Lawrence's mythology but never clearly articulated is the myth of the labyrinth. The tyrant

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[3] Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York: Pantheon Books, Bollingen Series XVII, 1949), pp. 387-8.

monster, according to Campbell, is the hoarder of the general benefit. This is implicit in the shadowy figures behind the working of the mines in Sons and Lovers, unstated there, becoming defined in Uncle Tom Brangwen in The Rainbow, reaching a peak of efficiency in Gerald Crich in Women in Love and regressing to a perspicacious madness in Clifford Chatterley. Campbell's explication throws light on the problem which Lawrence tried to solve:

> Theseus, the hero-slayer of the Minotaur, entered Crete from without, as the symbol and arm of the rising civilization of the Greeks. That was the new and living thing. But it is possible also for the principle of regeneration to be sought and found within the very walls of the tyrant's empire itself. Professor Toynbee used the terms "detachment" and "transfiguration" to describe the crisis by which the higher spiritual dimension is attained that makes possible the resumption of the work of creation. The first step, detachment or withdrawal, consists in a radical transfer of emphasis from the external to the internal world, macro- to microcosm, a retreat from the desperations of the waste land to the peace of the everlasting realm that is within. But this realm, as we know from psycho-analysis, is precisely the infantile unconscious. It is the realm that we enter in sleep. We carry it within ourselves forever. All the ogres and secret helpers of our nursery are there, all the magic of childhood. And more important, all the life-potentialities that we never managed to bring to adult realization, those other portions of ourself, are there; for such golden seeds do not die. If only a portion of that lost totality could be dredged up into the light of day, we should experience a marvellous expansion of our powers, a vivid renewal of life. We should tower in stature. Moreover, if we could dredge up something forgotten not only by ourselves but by our whole generation or our entire civilization,

> we should become indeed the boon-bringer, the
> culture hero of the day -- a personage of not
> only local but world historical moment. . . .
> (_Hero with a Thousand Faces_, 17)

Surely this is what Lawrence tried to do in the midst of the modern dilemma when you must not only tell the myth, but be the myth as well now that the old mythic days are gone forever.

The minotaur then that Lawrence or modern man must fight is either the man behind the mechanization of industry, or the results of his machinations. This requires an "unmechanizing" process in himself or in the victims of this process.

Campbell defines this process, the one described by van Gennep, the formula of the rites of passage: separation--initiation--return, what Campbell calls the nuclear unit of the monomyth.

For Lawrence the separation from mother is most painful. The mother substitute takes many forms -- Magna Mater, represented in its evil form by Hermione and on the good side by Ursula; Aphrodite in her most evil form represented by Bertha Coutts, a winter-chilled figure, completely self-centred and predatory, or in a more palatable way by Gudrun. It might almost be a rule in reading Lawrence to assume that his symbols expanded in meaning with his own maturity. Things implicit in _Sons and Lovers_ take shape in _The Rainbow_

and are completely articulated in The Man Who Died. For instance in the symbolism of flowers, the key flower in Sons and Lovers is the maiden blush rose. Flowers are used as symbols with expanding sexual meaning throughout the novels considered but reach a peak in the flame-like leafing of the fig in The Man Who Died. In the same way one may consider some of the women in the novels as Persephone figures -- never released in Miriam, partially released in Ursula, physically and emotionally released in Lady Chatterley, and in complete transformation in the priestess of Isis.

The initiation is from an asexual to a sexual society and does not necessarily refer only to the rites of puberty.

Lawrence also fits into Campbell's construction in the return and reintegration with society which Campbell says

> ... is indispensable to the continuous circulation of spiritual energy into the world and which, from the standpoint of the community, is the justification of the long retreat, the hero may find most difficult of all....
> (Hero with a Thousand Faces, 36)

Again to take the five works under consideration: Paul is determined to return to the world but uncertain as to the method, Ursula at the end of The Rainbow is a more fully realized personality but open to life, at the end of Women in Love she has reached the limit of her possibilities; Lady Chatterley against greater odds and with less in material and

personal possibilities was willing to adventure as widely as circumstances would permit into the far places of the earth; the priestess of Isis had completely faced up to the conditions of her past life in the form of her materialistic mother and her responsibilities of property and was willing to meet a new life in a new form.

The success of this particular venture depended on the truth of the old Greek maxim "know thyself". As Campbell says:

> The two -- the hero and his ultimate god, the seeker and the found -- are thus understood as the outside and inside of a single, self-mirrored mystery, which is identical with the mystery of the manifest world. The great deed of the supreme hero is to come to the knowledge of this unity in multiplicity and then to make it known.
>
> (Hero with a Thousand Faces, 40)

Campbell has been quoted at length because he has stated from the comprehensive viewpoint of the mythologist the unifying concepts of life which added up to continuous creation for Lawrence. In the following passage he deals with the healing of the waste land and the source and forms of energy which were Lawrence's main concern:

> The effect of the successful adventure of the hero is the unlocking and release again of the flow of life into the body of the world....
>
> The torrent pours from an invisible source,

> the point of entry being the center of the symbolic circle of the universe, the immovable Spot of the Buddha legend, around which the world may be said to revolve. Beneath this spot is the earth-supporting head of the cosmic serpent, the dragon, symbolical of the waters of the abyss, which are the divine life-creative energy and substance of the demiurge, the world-generative aspect of immortal being. The tree of life, i.e. the universe itself, grows from this point. It is rooted in the supporting darkness; the golden sun bird perches on its peak, a spring, the inexhaustible well, bubbles at its foot. Or the figure may be that of a cosmic mountain, with the city of the gods, like a lotus of light, upon its summit, and in its hollow the cities of the demons, illuminated by precious stones. Again, the figure may be that of the cosmic man or woman (for example the Buddha himself, or the dancing Hindu goddess Kali);... for the hero as the incarnation of God is himself the navel of the world, the umbilical point through which the energies of eternity break into time. Thus the World Navel is the symbol of the continuous creation: the mystery of the maintenance of the world through that continuous miracle of vivification which wells within all things.
> (Hero with a Thousand Faces, 40-1)

The first half of this quotation is a complete explication of the conclusion of The Man Who Died. The symbol of the tree of life is also used in Lady Chatterley, the golden (paradisal) bird in Women in Love, the spring (fringed with maidenhair) in The Man Who Died. The dancing goddess is implied in the dancing of Gudrun and Connie Chatterley. The world navel is implied in a negative sense for Gudrun in Women in Love. In the light of later classification of myth Lawrence's ideas in Psychoanalysis, Fantasia,

and *Apocalypse* are perhaps more acceptable than when they received their first criticisms.

Some symbols are particularly meaningful to Lawrence -- symbols of life such as the egg, the phallus and the ark (or mortar and pestle), the sun, and the wind. Throughout all his work the four elements are implicit -- earth, air, fire, and water. Fire and the flame become the flux, and the phoenix or the resolution, which is also the Holy Ghost.

Undergirding his work and sometimes barely realized by the reader is the modern equivalent of the Greek *ananke*, which may be explained thus:

> ...The Greek *ananke* or moira is in its normal, or pre-tragic form the internal balancing condition of life. It appears as external or antithetical necessity only after it has been violated as a condition of life, just as justice is the internal condition of an honest man, but the external antagonist of the criminal. [4]

The idea of the lotus and the navel were particularly meaningful because of his belief that the centre of primal consciousness lay in the great nerve centre called the solar plexus, the source of the preconscious mind in man. The navel is:

> ... the mark of our isolation in the universe, stigma and seal of the free, perfect singleness. Hence the lotus of the navel. Hence the mystic

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[4] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 210.

> contemplation of the navel. It is the upper mind losing itself in the lower first-mind, that which is last in consciousness reverting to that which is first.
>
> (Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, 20)

In Apocalypse Lawrence explains the Magna Mater as suggestive of the great goddess of the east, far back in the history of the Mediterranean: "She has brought into the Bible what it lacked before: the great cosmic Mother robed and splendid, but persecuted." (137)

The dragon or serpent is one of the most important symbols "of the fluid, rapid startling movement of life within us. That startled life which runs through us like a serpent, or coils within us potent and waiting, like a serpent, this is the dragon." (142) It can stand for superhuman potency or inward destruction. It is possible that one polarity or the other represented in Lawrence's mind the inward destruction and that the balance of polarities represented the golden serpent.

> ... Man can have the serpent with him or against him. When his serpent is with him, he is almost divine. When his serpent is against him, he is stung and envenomed and defeated from within. The great problem, in the past, was the conquest of the inimical serpent and the liberation within the self of the gleaming bright serpent of gold, golden fluid life within the body, the rousing of the splendid divine dragon within a man, or within a woman.
>
> (Apoc. II, 144-5)

This conquest of the serpent, so vividly portrayed in The Man Who Died is stated in another way:

> The force which we call vitality and which is the determining factor in the struggle for existence, is, however, derived also from the fourth dimension, or region, where the dandelion blooms, and which men have called heaven, and which now they call the fourth dimension; which is only a way of saying that it is not to be reckoned in terms of space and time. [5]

Lawrence defined his own philosophical terms: "When speaking of existence we always speak in types, species, not individuals. Species exist. But even an individual has being."

It is helpful in reading the novels to be aware of what Lawrence does not believe in. In Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious he stated quite clearly that he considered psychoanalysis a pseudo-religion. He reduced Freud's discoveries to the uncovering of repressed incest impulses. He himself wished to discover the pristine unconscious

> ... in which all our genuine impulse arises -- a very different affair from that sack of horrors which psychoanalysts would have us believe is the source of motivity. The Freudian unconscious is the cellar in which the mind keeps its own bastard spawn. The true unconscious is the well-head, the fountain of real motivity. (9)

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[5] D.H. Lawrence, "Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine", in Selected Essays (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1950), p. 64.

Lawrence seemed to feel that psychoanalysis was a deterrent and did not impel men to seek solutions to their problems. He and Freud considered the same problems:

> Man can inhibit the true passional impulses and so produce a derangement in the psyche. This is a truism nowadays, and we are grateful to psychoanalysis for helping to make it so. But man can do more than this. Finding himself in a sort of emotional cul-de-sac, he can proceed to deduce from his given emotional and passional premises conclusions which are not emotional or passional at all, but just logical, abstract, ideal. That is, a man finds it impossible to realize himself in marriage. He recognizes the fact that his emotional, even passional, regard for his mother is deeper than it ever could be for a wife. This makes him unhappy, for he knows that passional communion is not complete unless it be also sexual....
>
> (_Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious_, 10-1)

This is the dilemma which gives rise to the incest problem.

In spite of the optimism which sparkles from his essays, Lawrence may be considered a tragic writer, and the tragedy that he portrays is an old tragedy -- the tragedy of fragmentation. The new thing that he tried to do was to approach directly the problem unsolved in the old nursery rhyme of Humpty Dumpty. Unfortunate fragmented man: Power and authority could not reassemble him, as Lawrence could see and England could testify. Utopia, the idealist's answer, was impossible because it is an outside thing imposed --

a stamp. Who or what could? The old question is continually being rephrased, but Lawrence tried to beat out the answer for the twentieth century, going by the disregarded path that Blake had blazed.

Lawrence's answer is renewal of the spirit through a perfected sex union of which the symbols are the rainbow, the double flame, the phoenix and the Holy Ghost. In the condition of perfect emotional balance the soul of man is fired to purposive constructive activity in the phenomenal world. To those who consider this an easy solution Lawrence sounds this caveat.

> . . . Sex as an end in itself is a disaster: a vice. But an ideal purpose which has no roots in the deep sea of passionate sex is a greater disaster still. And now we have only these two things: sex as a fatal goal, which is the essential theme of modern tragedy; or the ideal purpose as a deadly parasite. Sex passion as a goal in itself always leads to tragedy. There must be the great purposive inspiration always present. But the automatic ideal-purpose is not even a tragedy. It is a slow humiliation and sterility.
>
> (Fantasia, 214-5)

This last he tried unsuccessfully to work out in his leadership novels -- Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent.

The message is this: man must work at "realizing" himself, fully alive and in tune with the universe, through his own effort and empowered by love -- Jung's process of

integration of the personality. This striving for integration or wholeness is the key to the novels. Indeed one way of reading the novels is to picture them as mandalas. Each process is a work of art in that it is a faithful imitation of a life process. The dissatisfaction that often arises in the reading stems from a failure on the part of the reader to realize that the processes delineated are as imperfect as man himself and the results obtained fall short of the glory that we envision for ourselves.

CHAPTER III

THE SPINNING WOMAN

Brescia, Italy, 14 Nov., 1912. To Edward Garnett.

Dear Garnett,--

Your letter has just come. I hasten to tell you I sent the MS. of the Paul Morel novel to Duckworth registered, yesterday. And I want to defend it, quick. I wrote it again, pruning it and shaping it and filling it in. I tell you it has got form -- form: haven't I made it patiently, out of sweat as well as blood. It follows this idea: a woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class, and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow up she selects them as lovers -- first the eldest, then the second. These sons are urged into life by their reciprocal love of their mother -- urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them. It's rather like Goethe and his mother and Frau von Stein and Christiana -- As soon as the young men come into contact with women, there's a split. William gives his sex to a fribble, and his mother holds his soul. But the split kills him, because he doesn't know where he is. The next son gets a woman who fights for his soul -- fights his mother. The son loves the mother -- all the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and the girl, with the son as object. The mother gradually proves stronger, because of the tie of blood. The son decides to leave his soul in his mother's hands, and like his elder brother, go for passion. He gets passion. Then the split begins to tell again. But, almost unconsciously, the mother realises what is the matter, and begins to die. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the end naked of everything, with the drift towards death.

> It is a great tragedy, and I tell you I have written a great book. It's the tragedy of thousands of young men in England.... 1
>
> To Mrs. S.A. Hopkin 23 Dec., 1912
>
> ...
>
> My poems are coming out in January, my novel, Sons and Lovers -- autobiography -- in February. (85)

The foreward to Sons and Lovers which Lawrence sent to Edward Garnett in January, 1913, concludes:

> But the man who is the go-between from Woman to Production is the lover of that woman. And if that Woman be his mother, then is he her lover in part only; he carries for her, but is never received into her for his confirmation and renewal, and so wastes himself away in the flesh. The old son-lover was OEdipus. The name of the new one is legion. And if a son-lover take a wife, then is she not his wife, she is only his bed. And his life will be torn in twain, and his wife in her despair shall hope for sons, that she may have her lover in her hour.

Underlying the obvious OEdipus theme of Sons and Lovers one can detect the nostalgia for Eden and the state of primal innocence that Lawrence always seems to feel. Although Mr. Morel is not on the surface given a sympathetic reading, underneath one can detect a secret admiration for him. Lawrence here is rather like Milton who admired the devil,

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[1] The Letters of D.H. Lawrence. Edited and with an introduction by Aldous Huxley. (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1932), pp. 76-7.

because, as his critics said, he made him such an attractive figure. Secretly Lawrence must have been in sympathy with his father because it was his father who possessed the vital spark that ignited Mrs. Morel into life.

In all his writing Lawrence is aware of cosmic harmony or disharmony reflecting the human condition. His _mises-en-scène_ are always psychological landscapes as well and often tell the reader what Lawrence is going to say. His description of the living conditions of the miners is a commentary on their life. There is tension set up here. Even though at first conditions in the mines are not fully mechanized, and therefore in Lawrencian terms, happier, the first rows of miners' houses are called "Hell Row" even though they are situated by the brookside of Green Hill Lane. The mines have encroached upon the countryside. This was the fate of the Midlands that Lawrence deplored. The colliers and their donkeys are equated with burrowing ants. In _Kangaroo_, a later work, the ants become a symbol for Kangaroo's idea of mechanized men. The purgatorial cleansing and renewing process of the spirit takes place in industry as well. As the mines become larger and more mechanized, Hell Row burns and "much dirt was cleansed away." By equating the idea of dirt with the mines Lawrence implies that they

are disagreeable: "six mines like black studs". 2

In the phenomenal world direction is important. There is an upward movement in the descriptions of the dwellings. "The Bottoms" which replace Hell Row are "substantial and very decent" but marred by the introduction of uninhabited parlours. This lack of life spells tragedy for Lawrence. Because of this "the actual conditions of living in the Bottoms that was so well built and that looked so nice, were quite unsavoury because people must live in the kitchen and the kitchens opened on to a nasty ally of ash pits." The language and composition follows the lower class speech of the miners here. The downward movement is established by Mrs. Morel who has descended to the Bottoms from Bestwood, a significant name. It is easy at first to sympathize with Mrs. Morel. Never does the downward movement become more than social. She clings to her imagined heights and never experiences the psychological rebirth necessary to her full emotional development. She manages to get an end house and enjoys a kind of aristocracy amongst the rest of the women. She is the mythical spinning woman; each early incident of the novel indicates her essential self-centredness. She

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[2] D.H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers (New York: The Viking Press, 1958), p. 1. (First published, 1913).

would have been happy if John Field, her first romantic interest had not also descended to the world of commerce from the career in the ministry which she had planned for him and which she would have been glad to share with him. She kept his Bible "and kept his memory intact in her heart for her own sake."

Mrs. Morel seems superior but this is always at the expense of someone else. It is evident also that if she is not the centre of the scene she writes herself out of it. She has a spark of vitality which lends life to her family circle, but it is always fed with sacrifice -- either hers or that of one of the children. Sacrifice for mother becomes the children's joy; this gradually becomes a wicked inversion of joy. Sacrifice on the part of Mrs. Morel binds the children to her. Morel himself is a generous, outgoing person and the subsequent movement of the novel shows him in a state of tension over the divergent attitude to debt, money, and drink that exists between him and Mrs. Morel. Although he is presented in vivid and vital animal imagery, he is an object of sympathy because he is subtracted from, and, because of his own nature, he cannot make up his deficit. Mrs. Morel consistently subtracts from someone else to rectify the losses she feels in her life. Morel's vitality, which has originally quickened Mrs. Morel and which is his special gift,

seems to work against him. His steady decline has no redeeming passion or illumination. The vital spark is extinguished and he is nullified by Mrs. Morel. Lawrence makes no direct moral judgement but it is plain she is responsible for William's death and Morel's nullification.

The explanation for this lies in one of Lawrence's pervasive thoughts: They have lost touch with nature, the nature of the universe:

> ... Out of the great world comes my strength and my reassurance. One could say "God," but the word "God" is somehow tainted. But there _is_ a flame or a Life Everlasting wreathing through the cosmos for ever and giving us our renewal, once we can get in touch with it.
>
> It is when men lose their contact with this eternal life-flame, and become merely personal, things in themselves, instead of things kindled in the flame, that the fight between man and woman begins. It cannot be avoided; any more than nightfall or rain. The more conventional and correct a woman may be, the more outwardly devastating she is. Once she feels the loss of the greater control and the greater sustenance, she becomes emotionally destructive, she can no more help it than she can help being a woman, when the great connexion is lost. [3]

It is this lack of vital connection that the peasant woman displayed in _The Man Who Died_.

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[3] D.H. Lawrence, "The Real Thing" in _Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D.H. Lawrence_. Edited and with an introduction by Edward D. McDonald (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1936), p. 202.

Nowhere else is Lawrence's ambivalence towards women at such great tension. Sons and Lovers is written entirely with surface admiration for Mrs. Morel. She seems to be the vital centre of the family, she continually absorbs life into herself and, by her sacrificial work, to keep the family on Mr. Morel's poor wages, binds the children to her.

William the eldest child precedes her to the wakes and on her arrival has spent his money winning for her two egg cups "with moss roses on them". The gift of roses, even painted on china, is symbolic of his love. William's affection for his mother is complete. "She knew he wanted them for her .... He would not leave her .... For no other woman looked such a lady as she did."

The denigration of Morel starts early in the novel when Mrs. Morel hears that he is waiting on customers with his sleeves rolled up the day of the wakes at The Moon and Stars.

"Ha!" exclaimed the mother shortly. "He's got no money. An' 'e'll be satisfied if he gets his 'lowance whether they give him more or not."

In later works Lawrence does not completely delineate characters. He tries to get beneath personality to a deeper level of being. It is, however, not because he cannot master

the art of characterization that he does this. Mrs. Morel is a fully delineated character, and perhaps his best. Here he uses language as a symbol of what he could never say except in fiction. Upon rare occasions Mrs. Morel drops into the common speech. Lawrence himself would say that his mother was above the common speech of the miners. Lawrence the author indicates that it was perfectly possible for Mrs. Morel to be as common as Morel in her speech occasionally, and to show a cupidity that Morel himself did not possess.

Critics accuse Lawrence of lack of plot and action -- that the action dissolves into phases and attitudes. However true this may be, Lawrence is a true dramatist in that he sets a good stage at the beginning. His myths have universal validity but localized roots.

The death of life in relationships is accentuated by Mrs. Morel's dry abstraction and Morel's down-to-earth human frailty:

> Mrs. Morel was alone, but she was used to it.... The father was serving beer in a public house, swilling himself drunk. She despised him, and was tied to him.
>
> (5)

The coming child, the third, (Paul) was too much for her:

> "Sometimes life takes hold of one, carries the body along, accomplishes one's history, and yet is not real, but leaves oneself as it were

slurred over."
"I wait," Mrs. Morel said to herself --
I wait, and what I wait for can never come."
(6)

Communication is a problem for Mrs. Morel. She confides in few friends (because of her natural aristocracy) so that what she says is either to herself or to her children, rarely to her husband although he in a rough way understands her. When he arrives home late from his stint at serving in the bar at the Moon and Stars he has a present for her -- a bit of brandysnap and a cocoanut for the children. Mrs. Morel carpingly chokes this generosity in his spirit and he remarks in the rough speech of the miners which she deplores: "Nay, that niver said thankyer for nowt i' thy life, did ter?" As a compromise, she picks up the cocoanut and shakes it to see if it has any milk -- a graceless gesture in terms of human nature. Morel, meanwhile elaborates on the kindness of the man who gave it to him. Mrs. Morel, tired of his babble goes to bed as quickly as possible while he rakes the fire. The scene explains the loneliness of Mrs. Morel and Morel's withdrawal from the domestic scene.

In symbolic action Lawrence indicates often unanalyzed relationships. Paul (Lawrence) has accidentally smashed the face of his sister Annie's doll. His misery over the mishap

is so acute that Annie forgives him. After being forgiven he suggests that they sacrifice the doll:

> "Let's make a sacrifice of Arabella," he said. "Let's burn her."
> She was horrified, yet rather fascinated. She wanted to see what the boy would do. He made an altar of bricks, pulled some of the shavings out of Arabella's body, put the waxen fragments into the hollow face, poured on a little paraffin, and set the whole thing alight. He watched with wicked satisfaction the drops of wax melt off the broken forehead of Arabella, and drop like sweat into the flame. So long as the stupid big doll burned he rejoiced in silence. At the end he poked among the embers with a stick, fished out the arms and legs, all blackened, and smashed them under stones.
> "That's the sacrifice of Missis Arabella," he said. "An' I'm glad there's nothing left of her."
> (57-8)

The waxen drops from the forehead of the doll could be construed as a parallel to Mrs. Morel's sacrifice, and Paul's sacrifice of Arabella a symbol of his resentment at being bound by his mother's sacrifice, this being a common and still largely unadmitted basis of neurosis. There is a later parallel in the death of Mrs. Morel from the overdose of morphia Paul gives her. Again he and Annie seem drawn together in a macabre conspiracy. Juxtaposed with the sacrifice of the doll is the statement: "All the children, particularly Paul, were peculiarly against their father, along with their mother. The family does not share life with Morel;

he retreats into drunkenness and is happy only when he is doing some small household chore with the children helping him -- happily because he is a good workman. Mrs. Morel is coldly dutiful but:

> ... He [Morel] always sang when he mended boots because of the jolly sound of hammering. And he was rather happy when he sat putting great patches on his moleskin pit trousers, which he would often do, considering them too dirty and the stuff too hard, for his wife to mend.
> (63)

> These happy evenings of stories could not take place unless Morel had some job to do. And then he always went to bed very early often before the children. There was nothing remaining for him to stay up for, when he had finished tinkering, and had skimmed the headline of the newspaper.
> And the children felt secure when their father was in bed.
> (65)

Morel is outside, barred out by his children's security and his wife's distaste for him. He uses drink to compensate for the failure of his marriage. Mrs. Morel uses her children.

Paul and Arthur, the youngest child, scour the coppices for blackberries to please their mother. This is almost a votive offering:

> The boy walked all day, went miles and miles, rather than own himself beaten and come home to her empty-handed. She never realised this, whilst he was young. She was a woman who waited for her children to grow up. And William occupied her chiefly.

> But when William went to Nottingham, and was not so much at home, the mother made a companion of Paul. The latter was unconsciously jealous of his brother, and William was jealous of him. At the same time, they were good friends.
> Mrs. Morel's intimacy with her second son was more subtle and fine, perhaps not so passionate as with her eldest.
> (68-9)

Literary criticism usually puts Mrs. Morel and Miriam at polarities -- Mrs. Morel alive and vivid, Miriam sucking the soul out of Paul, who has grown up adoring his mother. Sons and Lovers might also be seen as a study in two generations of women battening upon the souls of their men, Mrs. Morel continually subtracting from Morel and adding bits of Paul to make up her deficiency in living and Miriam subtracting Paul's vivid sensuality to add to her store of religious eroticism. In Miriam we see the symbolism of communion and sacrifice and of the rites of passage which Miriam, a Blakean Thel figure, refuses. Paul and Miriam balk at maturity in different ways.

Van Gennep[4] supplies a clue to the reading of Lawrence in his explication of the rites of puberty which he characterizes, not as the celebration of the appearance of sexual maturity, but the rites of separation from the asexual world,

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[4] Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960).

followed by the rites of incorporation into the sexual world. This is a deviation from popular belief and psychoanalytic theory. In the beginning rites of passage were a sign of the relationship between spatial passage and the social relationship, that is it becomes a figurative opening of doors. It is the significant grasping of these relationships on the deepest level that concerns Lawrence -- as a dynamism or turning into a kind of impersonal force or mana as opposed to the somewhat more frequently understood animism or belief in a personal force. This leads to his reversal of light and dark. Dark is not always evil. His voyage into life becomes a descent into the underworld of darkness, emotion, feeling, as opposed to mechanical, conceptual cerebration which was, he believed, the affliction and downfall of the Anglo-Saxon and European empirical world. Upon this subject Lawrence is inclined to preach rather tediously but his message is one message, the necessity of the organic wholeness of man rather than detached-from-the-body cerebration about feelings. The intuition of the blood is to be followed.

Both Paul and Miriam refuse for different reasons to make the transition to the sexual world -- Miriam by diverting her passion to religion, Paul by backtracking his romantic passion for the benefit of his mother in what surely must be

one of the most subtly horrifying passages in English literature. (212-3). Morel who has refused to take manhood upon him in another way, the way of retreat away from humanity, is aware of this horror.

"At your mischief again?" he said, venomously. Then he begins to eat the pork-pie that Mrs. Morel (symbolically) has bought to please Paul rather than her husband:

> He [Paul] pressed his face upon the pillow in a fury of misery. And yet, somewhere in his soul, he was at peace because he still loved his mother best. It was the bitter peace of resignation.
> (215)

Mrs. Morel has demanded yet another sacrifice.

Lawrence uses flowers as both symbols and <u>mythos</u> commenting obliquely on the emotional situation which confronts Miriam. Everything is in bud, barely sheathed and ready to burst. Miriam's aversion to Paul's love is contrasted with her passion for the flowers. Her excess of affection for them amounts almost to a perversion. She can tame the wild-looking daffodils but not Paul. Paul chastizes her for the thing which she refuses on the human level; she will touch the flowers "clutching them as if you wanted to pull the heart out of them" as Paul says.

> You don't want to love -- your eternal and abnormal craving is to be loved. You aren't positive, you're negative. You absorb, absorb, as if you must fill yourself up with love, because you've got a shortage somewhere.
> (218)

Mrs. Morel is so alive amongst natural things that it is easy to see the charm that she had for her family. The first time that Paul and Mrs. Morel visit the Leivers farm Mrs. Morel notes the lack of interest on the part of Mrs. Leivers for any work on the land. She is completely preoccupied with her indoor work. In a passage which shows her interest in nature and her regret that she cannot share her husband's work, the tragedy of her undeveloped possibilities is revealed. She wishes she could be in Mrs. Leivers' position:

> "Now _wouldn't_ I help that man!" she said. "_Wouldn't_ I see to the fowls and the young stock! And _I'd_ learn to milk and _I'd_ talk with him, and _I'd_ plan with him. My word, if I were his wife the farm would be run, I know." But there, she hasn't the strength -- she simply hasn't the strength. She ought never to have been burdened like it, you know. I'm sorry for her, and I'm sorry for him too. My word, if _I'd_ had him. I shouldn't have thought him a bad husband. Not that she does either; and she's very lovable."
> (128)

It is obvious here that Mrs. Morel would have been the centre of the picture as usual, but she would have _entered into life_.

She would have lived creatively in the productiveness of nature rather than adding to her jigsaw of repressed emotions with bits from the lives of her children and husband.

Throughout the whole canon of Lawrence's work the flowers are an imitation or an intimation of the action. In Sons and Lovers they are almost the narrative. On the way to the Leivers farm

> ... they found a little gate and soon were in a broad green alley of the wood, with a new thicket of fir and pine on one hand, an old oak glade dipping down on the other. And among the oaks the bluebells stood in pools of azure, under the new green hazels, upon a pale fawn floor of oak-leaves. He found flowers for her.
> "here's a bit of new-mown hay," [the harvest symbol, fruition] he said; then again, he brought her forget-me-nots. [symbol of creation] And again, his heart hurt with love, seeing her hand, used with work, holding the little bunch of flowers he gave her. She was perfectly happy. (124)

Paul goes through the little gate into the broad green alley with his mother. These rites of passage can never seemingly later be accomplished with Miriam.

The reader becomes aware of a number of tensions. First the contrast of Mrs. Morel -- quick, bright, vivid, with Miriam always slow, fearful, brooding, heavy. This counterpointing of characteristics runs throughout the novel. It is significant that on this trip Mrs. Morel holds her

bunch of forget-me-nots (her watchword) and is perfectly happy in this stunted version of life,with her imperfect marriage momentarily behind her. When Miriam takes Paul to her garden the same day she shows him her roses -- maiden blush, which will be typical of their relationship throughout. Paul here makes a significant statement. "You don't have much in your garden." He rejects the Edenic state of Miriam because he wants to make his journey into knowledge.

The relationship between the unconscious and consciousness of Paul is worked out by Lawrence. The mother can direct his genius in drawing with her warmth, can bring it into being but he can only realize the worth in his work when he shows it to Miriam. This may be an indirect statement of the fact that he was "unrealized" in his mother but intellectualized and spiritualized in Miriam. All of these were for Lawrence terms of negation.

As he so often does Lawrence works this relationship out in terms of light and warmth:

> He was conscious only when stimulated. A sketch finished, he always wanted to take it to Miriam. Then he was stimulated into knowledge of the work he had produced unconsciously. In contact with Miriam he gained insight; his vision went deeper. From his mother he drew the the life-warmth, the strength to produce; Miriam urged this warmth into intensity like a white light.
> (158)

The "white light" is an indication of intellection without emotion.

Typical of their relationship with fading of light and warmth, is this insight:

> One evening in the summer Miriam and he went over the fields by Herod's Farm on their way from the library home. So it was only three miles to Willey Farm. There was a yellow glow over the mowing-grass, and the sorrel-heads burned crimson. Gradually, as they walked along the high land, the gold in the west sank down to red, the red to crimson, and then the chill blue crept up against the glow.
> (158)

The situation of arrested emotional development is further explained: "The pair stood, loth to part, hugging their books." Paul and Miriam spend most of their time in this emotional cul-de-sac. The communion scene with the white roses traces the tragedy of Miriam and Paul. For the reader of symbols it is self-explanatory. The spiritualization of physical love is evil to Lawrence; the communion symbols are indicative of this perversion and are reminiscent of Blake's "binding with briars/ Their joys and desires".

> ... Almost passionately she wanted to be with him when he stood before the flowers. They were going to have a communion together -- something that thrilled her, something holy ...
> It was very still. The tree was tall and straggling. It had thrown its briers over a

> hawthorn-bush, and its long streamers trailed thick, right down to the grass, splashing the darkness everywhere with great split stars, pure white... Paul and Miriam stood close together, silent, and watched. Point after point the steady roses shone out to them, seeming to kindle something in their souls. The dusk came like smoke around, and still did not put out the roses. ...She looked at her roses. They were white, some incurved and holy, others expanded in an ecstasy. The tree was dark as a shadow. She lifted her hand impulsively to the flowers; she went forward and touched them in worship.
>
> "Let us go," he said.
>
> There was a cool scent of ivory roses -- a white virgin scent. Something made him feel anxious and imprisoned. The two walked in silence. (159-60)

Mrs. Morel's comment after Paul's arrival home from this virgin scene: "It is disgusting -- bits of lads and girls courting." She cuts Paul off at his emotional source and does not find his later behaviour unusual:

> He kissed her forehead that he knew so well; the deep marks between the brows, the rising of the fine hair, greying now and the proud setting of the temples. His hand lingered on her shoulder after his kiss. Then he went slowly to bed. He had forgotten Miriam; he only saw how his mother's hair was lifted back from her warm, broad brow. (162)

Subtly Lawrence makes the reader aware that the motions of love and the eyes of love must perforce be for his mother, the mythical old woman becoming young. Miriam touches the roses; Paul touches his Mother. The sense of touch is very

important. Here is the tragedy of misdirected emotion. It is possible to see in Miriam and Lady Chatterley a kind of split Persephone figure. Miriam is emotionally but not physically developed. Lady Chatterley was physically developed but emotionally unreleased.

The emotional counterpoint and tension of love between Paul and his mother and Paul and Miriam is shadowed forth in the life of the gardens, and interspersed with abortive religious symbolism as Miriam's love is an abortive love. Mrs. Morel shares her joy in her garden and her discovery of the glories of the snow; all is excitement. But when Miriam and Paul look at the manor garden

> ...It had yew-hedges and thick clumps and borders of yellow crocuses round the lawn.
> "See," said Paul to Miriam, "what a quiet garden!" (165)

Miriam lingers in the garden (always in Lawrence it is possible to catch faint biblical overtones) and when she comes out on to the patch there is Paul fixing a broken umbrella:

> ... his mind fixed on it, working away steadily, patiently, a little hopelessly. She hesitated in her approach, to watch.
> He remained concentrated in the middle of the road, Beyond, one rift of rich gold in that colourless grey evening seemed to make him stand out in dark relief. She saw him, slender and

firm, as if the setting sun had given him to her. A deep pain took hold of her, and she knew she must love him. And she had discovered him, discovered in him a rare potentiality, discovered his loneliness. Quivering as at some "annunciation" she went slowly forward.

....

...."It was William's an' my mother can't help but know," he said quietly, still patiently working at the umbrella.

The words went through Miriam like a blade. This, then, was the confirmation of her vision of him! She looked at him. But there was about him a certain reserve, and she dared not comfort him, not even speak softly to him.

"Come on," he said. "I can't do it," and they went in silence along the road.

(165-6)

Juxtaposed with this scene and its possible erotic interpretation is an account of another excursion:

... Miriam did not live till they came to the church... The place was decorated for Easter. In the font hundreds of white narcissi seemed to be growing. The air was dim and coloured from the windows and thrilled with a subtle scent of lilies and narcissi. In that atmosphere Miriam's soul came into a glow. Paul was afraid of the things he mustn't do; and he was sensitive to the feel of the place. Miriam turned to him. He answered. They were together. He would not go beyond the Communion-rail. She loved him for that. Her soul expanded into prayer beside him. He felt the strange fascination of shadowy religious places. All his latent mysticism quivered into life. She was drawn to him. He was a prayer along with her.

(167)

In this sad and beautiful symbolism is stated the tragedy of Paul and Miriam -- Paul never daring to go beyond the communion rail and Miriam loving him for that.

> ... There were flashes in his blood. But somehow she ignored them. She was expecting some religious state in him. Still yearning, she was half aware of his passion and gazed at him troubled.
> (178)
>
> Paul was raw and irritable, He also wearied his mother very often. She saw the sunshine going out of him, and she resented it.
> (180)

A collage of Paul's comments to Miriam makes a map of their emotions:

> "If you put red berries in your hair," he said, "why would you look like some witch or priestess, and never like a reveller?" ...
> "Why can't you laugh?" he said. "You never laugh laughter. You only laugh when something is odd or incongrous, and then it almost seems to hurt you."...
> "I wish you could laugh at me just for one minute -- just for one minute. I feel as if it would set something free." ...
> ..."When you laugh I could always cry. It seems as if it shows up your suffering. Oh you make me knit the brows of my very soul and cogitate."...
> "I'm so damned spiritual with you always!" he cried ...
> "You make me so spiritual!" he lamented. "And I don't want to be spiritual." ...
> "But there, it's autumn," he said, "and everybody feels like a disembodied spirit then."
> (188)
>
> ... She always wanted to embrace him, so long as he did not want her....
> ... She did not seem to realise <u>him</u> in all this. He might have been an object. She never realised the male he was.
> (189)

> . . . He wanted now to give her passion and tenderness, and he could not. He felt that she wanted the soul out of his body. . . .
> (194)

The cosmos reflects the tragedy:

> One evening about this time he had walked along the home road with her. They stood by the pasture leading down to the wood, unable to part. As the stars came out the clouds closed. They had glimpses of their own constellation, Orion, towards the west. His jewels glimmered for a moment, his dog ran low, struggling with difficulty through the spume of cloud.
> (194-5)

When Lawrence's powers of human description fail, he sends a horse with the message. He explains the symbolism of the horse in Apocalypse:

> Horses, always horses! How the horse dominated the mind of the early races, especially of the Mediterranean! You were a lord if you had a horse. Far back, far back in our dark soul the horse prances. He is a dominant symbol: he gives us lordship: he links us, the first palpable and throbbing link with the ruddy-glowing Almighty of potence: he is the beginning even of our godhead in the flesh. And as a symbol he roams the dark underworld meadows of the soul. He stamps and threshes in the dark fields of your soul and of mine. The sons of God who came down and knew the daughters of men and begot the great Titans, they had "the members of horses," says Enoch....
> The horse, the horse! the symbol of surging potency and power of movement, of action, in man. . . .
> (97-8)

Here is what he says of powers in abeyance as he walks with Miriam and Clara:

> ... They saw, beyond the tree-trunks and the thin hazel bushes, a man leading a great bay horse through the gullies. The big red beast seemed to dance romantically through that dimness of green hazel drift, away there where the air was shadowy, as if it were in the past, among the fading blue-bells that might have bloomed for Deidre or Iseult.
> The three stood charmed.
> "What a treat to be a knight," he said, "and to have a pavillion here."
> (233)

As if to counterpoint this, Paul takes his Mother to Lincoln. As usual the trip with her has all the trappings of a romantic excursion, only this time Mrs. Morel has a slight heart attack. Paul is furiously angry and feels cheated. During the service in the cathedral

> Her face seemed to shine again with joy and peace during the service. And all the time he was wanting to rage and smash things and cry.
> Afterwards, when they were leaning over the wall, looking at the town below, he blurted suddenly:
> "Why can't a man have a _young_ mother? What is she old for?"
> (241-2)

Sons and Lovers lightly sketches the theory of the Holy Ghost which later became Lawrence's dominant theme. Paul's love of Miriam has been a sterile thing leading to no enlarging of vitality. She has been the predator and the

sacrifice -- both sterile pursuits. After Paul has loved Clara both of them radiate from the experience. The old lady who serves them tea presents Clara with flowers, a recognition of the joy in her -- a symbolic gift of three tiny perfect dahlias in full blow. The rites of passage have been accomplished for Paul; he has broken away from the Edenic state in which Miriam inheres.

"You like your little bit of guiltiness, I believe," he said. "I believe Eve enjoyed it, when she went cowering out of Paradise." Richness and fullness are lacking here compared to the scene in Women in Love where Ursula and Birkin dine at the inn. However Paul and Clara have acted to the limit of their rather underdeveloped possibilities and Paul "found himself tumultuously happy, and the people exceeding nice, and the night lovely, and everything good." This feeling Lawrence would attribute to a renewal of the blood.

Paul undertakes to explain the failure in the lives of Clara and her husband, Baxter Dawes:

> ... "It isn't altogether a question of understanding; it's a question of living. With him, she was only half-alive; the rest was dormant. And the dormant woman was the femme incomprise and she had to be awakened."
>
> "And what about him?"
>
> "I don't know. I rather think he loves her as much as he can, but he's a fool.
>
> "It was something like your mother and father," said Miriam.
>
> (317)

But Paul has recognized the vital spark, the thing that Miriam lacks and must smother in other people because it separates them from her.

> "Yes; but my mother, I believe, got real joy and satisfaction out of my father at first. I believe she had a passion for him: that's why she stayed with him. After all, they were bound to each other." ...
>
> "That's what one _must have_, I think," he continued -- "the real, real flame of feeling through another person -- once, only once, if it only lasts three months. See, my mother looks as if she'd _had_ everything that was necessary for her living and developing. There's not a tiny bit of feeling of sterility about her."
>
> (317)

Still, she must die and Lawrence indicates this symbolically. When the doctor has seen Mrs. Morel in her first illness Paul, smoking, tries to brush some ash (always a symbol of death or the failure of vitality) from his coat.

> ... He looked again. It was one of his mother's grey hairs. It was so long! He held it up, and it drifted into the chimney. He let go. The long grey hair floated and was gone in the blackness of the chimney.
>
> (376)

This symbol of the "drift toward death" recurs after the death of Mrs. Morel:

> Paul felt crumpled up and lonely. His mother had really supported his life. He had loved her; they two had, in fact, faced the world together. Now she was gone and for ever behind him was the gap in life, the tear in the veil, through which his life seemed to drift slowly, as if he were drawn towards death. He wanted someone of their own free initiative to help him. The lesser things he began to let go from him for fear of this big thing, the lapse towards death, following in the wake of his beloved. . . .
> (407)

This passage contains the key of Lawrence's thought. He has been supported rather than singular, the condition required for a meaningful relationship; the gap is behind him, a possibility for regression. But his instincts are right. "If nobody would help, he would go on alone."

At the end of this novel Lawrence is plainly saying that one must choose life. The dark journey that Paul makes must be through experience to adult life. He refuses to choose the darkness of death while the spark of life is in him:

> But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked towards the city's gold phosphorescence. His fists were shut, his mouth set fast. He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly.
> (420)

This last image is a recurring one in Lawrence, the bee hive. It indicates his hope for societal life, humanity as an organism, a philosophic and religious concept that

Teilhard de Chardin was formulating about the same time.

Sons and Lovers is dynamic because, even though the reader is unsatisfied with the ending, which is in reality an ongoing, he is woven into it. There is a feeling of involvement with Paul Morel. This has been done very subtly by Lawrence with his symbolism. One has become involved in the strife, the sympathy with Paul's love for his mother, and the distaste, vaguely felt, that she fed upon her sons; his desire for young love and his inability to accept it because of Miriam's battening nature; his desire for sensual fulfilment and his inability to become involved with Clara -- all this spelled out with the surface symbols of the earth -- gardens, flowers, colour and light.

The reader is left in a psychological half light -- turning away from the dark towards the hum and the glow, but not yet in it.

CHAPTER IV

THE MARRIAGE OF EARTH AND HEAVEN

The Rainbow, a chronicle of the Brangwen family, is a diagramatic account of the flux that accounts for the Brangwen history -- a construct of horizontal lines representing the countryside; square, romanesque and gothic arches representing achievements and aspirations; concentric circles representing the outward movement of the women and the inward containing pressure of the men, widening and narrowing horizons, the outward life of the world and the inward life of the blood. The Rainbow and Women in Love were originally intended to be one book containing a consideration of the marriage relationship and an exploration of various kinds of love relationships. It is possible to see in the autobiographical aspect of these novels Lawrence as a kind of modern Ulysses, his quest being to get home *with* rather than to Penelope, and with this tragic exception that home was always an uncertain goal.

Since The Rainbow is the most poetic of Lawrence's novels, it is also the most fertile in symbolism. In it Lawrence, a modern seer and prophet, worker in new ways and maker of new methods, is harking back to a distinctly

mediaeval treatment of mythology insofar as his writings can be read as "a type of" modern Eden, floods, wanderings in the wilderness, and descents into Sheol. In the overlapping of lives and arrival at new planes of being through strife, Lawrence is showing the processes of living and loving in the hope of understanding and alleviating the psychological stresses of his time.

The Marsh Farm at Cossethay may be considered a type of Eden, with the Brangwen family springing out of the earth and earthy -- attuned to the rhythm of the seasons, the spring pulse of the blood of growing animals, and the autumn harvest festivals. There, as in Eden, the woman is the culprit who looks beyond the land and sees the world. "But the women looked out from the heated, blind intercourse of farm-life, to the spoken world beyond."

The movement from earth to art is established:

> It was enough for the men, that the earth heaved and opened its furrow to them....
> But the woman wanted another form of life than this. She faced outwards to where men moved dominant and creative, having turned their back on the pulsing heat of creation.... whereas the Brangwen men faced inwards to the teeming life of creation, which poured unresolved into their veins. 1

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[1] D.H. Lawrence, The Rainbow. New York: The Viking Press, 1961, p. 3. (First published 1915).

Like Eve, the Brangwen woman muses upon the knowledge which will make her family like gods, objective knowledge, moving away from the kind of life that Lawrence is concerned to regain. Like Eve, the Brangwen woman throws the stone that widens the pool from world to web.

> ... Why should the curate's children inevitably take precedence over her children, why should dominance be given them from the start? It was not money, nor even class. It was education and experience she decided.
> ... Why must they remain obscured and stifled all their lives, why should they suffer from lack of freedom to move? How should they learn the entry into the finer, more vivid circle of life?
> (4)

The women of Cossethay, themselves living a myth, made myth of life at Shelly Hall, of the squire and his lady, their relatives and friends.

> ... The lady of the Hall was the living dream of their lives, her life was the epic that inspired their lives. In her they lived imaginatively, and in gossiping of her husband who drank, of her scandalous brother, of Lord William Bentley her friend, member of Parliament for the division, they had their own Odyssey enacting itself, Penelope and Ulysses before them, and Circe and the swine and the endless web.
> (5)

Although the women were more at ease with the Brangwen men "yet if their lives had been robbed of the vicar and Lord William, the leading shoot would have been cut away

from them." Correspondence to Nature is faithful in this book and the family, still rooted in the earth,is the life unit.

As later, in Women in Love, Nature is marred by material progress and the Brangwen family is cut off from the large town of Ilkeston nearby and enclosed in the valley by a canal to the collieries; the subsequent invasion of the Midland Railway made them rich producing supplies for the expanding population.

The first symbolic arch is low and dark, relating the farm to industry and putting the homestead "just on the safe side of civilisation."

> But, looking from the garden gate down the road to the right, there, through the dark archway of the canal's square aqueduct, was a colliery spinning away in the near distance, and further, red, crude houses plastered on the valley in masses, and beyond all, the dim smoking hill of the town.
> (6)

"The dim smoking hill of the town" may be a simple description. Yet, in the light of Lawrence's later symbolism one can be aware of the smoke as sacrifice (of humanity) to the gods of industry.

The rhythm of farm life is parodied by the rhythm of industry, "the rhythmic run of the winding engines, startling at first, but afterwards a narcotic to the brain." Here is

an intrusion of mechanized thinking, the ultimate of which is cerebration excluding natural emotions, the mind-body division.

"In the beginning" the Brangwen men and women were like the old gods, when the gods were like men. The marriage of the first Brangwen sounds in a simple way much like the "star equilibration" that the complex Birkin later longed for:

> ... He [Alfred Brangwen] was spoilt like a lord of creation. He calmly did as he liked, laughed at their railing, excused himself in a teasing tone that she loved, followed his natural inclinations, and sometimes, pricked too near the quick, frightened and broke her by a deep tense fury which seemed to fix on him and hold him for days, and which she would give anything to placate in him. They were two very separate beings, vitally connected, knowing nothing of each other, yet living in their separate ways from one root.
> (7-8)

In the description of the Brangwen family Lawrence adopts the tone of a myth or fairy tale beginning: "There were four sons and two daughters" and continues in the tone of the ancient story-teller. The last child, the Tom of The Rainbow, was sent to school because Mrs. Brangwen had "set her heart on it" but came back to the farm "glad of the active labour and the smell of the land again." He was not a student.

The rites of passage, so painful and lengthy and barely accomplished for Paul Morel, are swift and surprising

for Tom. Here too it may be seen that although the Brangwen women have their Ulyssean myth, the Brangwen men have their myths too -- the Brangwen women:

> ... In the close intimacy of the farm kitchen, the woman occupied the supreme position. The men deferred to her in the house, on all household points, on all points of morality and behaviour. The woman was the symbol for that further life which comprised religion and love and morality. The men placed in her hands their own conscience, they said to her "Be my conscience-keeper, be the angel at the doorway guarding my outgoing and my incoming." ...
>
> Now when Tom Brangwen, at nineteen, a youth fresh like a plant, rooted in his mother and his sister, found that he had lain with a prostitute woman in a common public house, he was very much startled. For him there was until that time only one kind of woman -- his mother and his sister. (13)

In all of the first part of the chronicle there is an Old Testament tone, echoes of Genesis and the Psalms which give the Brangwens a larger-than-life stature for which Ursula later longs.

The critics who see Lawrence in Paul Morel often do not see in Tom Brangwen another statement of Lawrence and the sum of his search. Ton's passage from asexual to sexual life is marred:

> ... Doubt hindered his outgoing.... He had something to lose which he was afraid of losing, which he was not sure even of possessing. This first

> affair did not matter much: but the business of love was, at the bottom of his soul, the most serious and terrifying of all to him.
> (14)

Tom is twenty-eight before he meets and marries Lydia, a Polish widow, housekeeper at the vicarage. "Her self-possession pleased him and inspired him, set him curiously free." Then at a later meeting the feeling comes upon him which Lawrence later described in Fantasia.

> A daze had come over his mind, he had another centre of consciousness. In his breast, or in his bowels, somewhere in his body, there had started another activity. It was as if a strong light were burning there, and he was blind within it, unable to know anything except that this transfiguration burned between him and her, connecting them, like a secret power.
> (33)

The burning light becomes the symbol for love and in describing Tom's journey into love Lawrence uses much of the language of the mystic of the inward and downward path -- "submitted", "suffering the loss of himself," "evolving to a new birth". The wedding ring on Lydia's finger is a closed circle which excludes Tom but later becomes the middle of concentric circles of larger life for both of them.

In a letter to Edward Garnett, Lawrence, writing about The Rainbow, said it was

> ... like one of Tony's clumsy prehistorical beasts -- most cumbersome and floundering -- but I think it's great -- so new, so really a stratum deeper than I think anybody has even gone, in a novel. 2

He must have meant these descriptions of Tom and Lydia. There is no characterization and no action -- simply a setting up of polarities, the use of the symbols of fire and rebirth, of the rivers of blood rearranging the physical and psychological map into a new country and the pervasive notion of the kernel. The movement is a subterranean movement -- the microcosm reflecting cosmic ordering:

> ... Again her heart stirred with a quick, outrunning impulse, she looked at him, at the stranger who was not a gentleman yet who insisted on coming into her life, and the pain of a new birth in herself strung all her veins to a new form. She would have to begin again, to find a new being, a new form, to respond to that blind insistent figure standing over against her.
>
> A shiver, a sickness of new birth passed over her, the flame leaped up him, under his skin. She wanted it, this new life from him, with him, yet she must defend herself against it, for it was a destruction.
>
> As he worked alone on the land, or sat up with his ewes at lambing time, the facts and material of his daily life fell away, leaving the kernel of his purpose clean. And then it came upon him that he would marry her and she would be his life....
>
> But during the long February nights with the ewes in labour, looking out from the shelter into the flashing stars, he knew he did not belong to himself. He must admit that he was only fragmentary, something incomplete and subject. There were

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[2] Letters (editor Huxley), 11 March, 1913, p. 111.

> the stars in the dark heaven travelling, the whole host passing by on some eternal voyage. So he sat small and submissive to the greater ordering.
> (34-5)

When Lydia accepts Tom, Lawrence telescopes in half a page of description the myth of the rites of passage, the separation, the underworld journey, the rebirth from darkness to light, and in an echo of Genesis creates another Eden:

> He had her in his arms, and, obliterated, was kissing her. And it was sheer, bleached agony to him, to break away from himself. She was there so small and light and accepting in his arms, like a child, and yet with such an insinuation of embrace, of infinite embrace, that he could not bear it, he could not stand.
>
> He turned and looked for a chair, and keeping her still in his arms, sat down with her close to him, to his breast. Then, for a few seconds, he went utterly to sleep, asleep and sealed in the darkest sleep, utter, extreme oblivion.
>
> From which he came to gradually, always holding her warm and close upon him, and she as utterly silent as he, involved in the same oblivion, the fecund darkness.
>
> He returned gradually, but newly created, as after a gestation, a new birth, in the womb of darkness. Aerial and light everything was, new as a morning, fresh and newly-begun. Like a dawn the newness and the bliss filled in. And she sat utterly still with him, as if in the same.
> (40-1)

Lydia has come with her child Anna from the darkness, dread, and death of a bitter Polish war experience and England suits her mood. As later for Lady Chatterley, England for her is equated with the underworld.

> ... She was like one walking in the underworld, where the shades throng intelligibly but have no connection with one. She felt the English people as a potent, cold, slightly hostile host amongst whom she walked isolated.
> (46)

Nature brings her back into touch with life:

> ... And there was a strange insistence of light from the sea, to which she must attend. Primroses glimmered around, many of them, and she stooped to the distrubing influence near her feet, she even picked one or two flowers, faintly remembering in the new colour of life, what had been....
> (47)

Lydia always remained to a certain extend a foreigner; she was vague and exclusive:

> ... She lapsed into a sort of sombre exclusion, a curious communion with mysterious powers, a sort of mystic, dark state which drove him and the child Anna nearly mad. He walked about for days stiffened with resistance to her, stiff with a will to destroy her as she was. Then suddenly, out of nowhere, there was connection between them again....
> (57)

The coming of Tom's child puts Lydia into a state of heavy obscurity and "He felt like a broken arch thrust sickeningly out from support." This half state, this thrust at nothing makes Tom draw backward to keep from "being squandered into fragments". The idea of marriage as an arch is symbolically a human progression from the first arch, the mechanical

square arch of the Canal.

Part of Lawrence's quest for the whole human being is tied up with his concept of centres of being and how they are affected by relationships. With the birth of Tom's child Lydia "seemed to lose connection with her former self. She became now really English, really Mrs. Brangwen. Her vitality, however, seemed lowered."

> He wanted to give her all his love, all his passion, all his essential energy. But it could not be. He must find other things than her, other centres of living....
>
> He formed another centre of love in her child, Anna....
>
> ... at last her little life settled on its own swivel, she was no more strained and distorted to support her mother.
>
> (78)

This division of energy results in an emotional _impasse_ from which they must extricate themselves. Lydia cannot be supported by a child. She takes the initiative, fearful that Tom will become like his brother Albert who has consoled himself with a mistress. Tom cannot be supported by a mistress. Suddenly Lydia seems to be the mythical and unknown woman who must swallow her beloved; she is, as in mythology, the totality of things that he desires and who in turn demands all from him. The rainbow arch of love must be a symbol of equilibration -- not of demand.

> ....She was the awful unknown. He bent down to her, suffering, unable to let go, unable to let himself go, yet drawn, driven....
>
> ....
>
> ...Blind and destroyed, he pressed forward, nearer, nearer, to receive the consummation of himself, he received within the darkness which should swallow him and yield him up to himself. If he could come really within the blazing kernel of darkness, if really he could be destroyed, burnt away till he lit with her in one consummation, that were supreme, supreme.
>
> (90-1)

In the mystical language of the way of descent Lawrence has bodied forth his concept of the marriage relationship which results in that new plane of being the ethos of which is the Holy Ghost, the key stone of the arch.

Lawrence proves Jung's theory that when the symbols of religion become meaningless within their intended context they disappear and come to light within another framework. In the following passage birth, baptism, confirmation and transfiguration reappear in the framework of the marriage relationship which was the only way seemingly that Lawrence could be free to attain his own full psychological stature:

> 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. Their feet trod strange ground of knowledge, their footsteps were lit-up with discovery. . . .

> They had passed through the doorway into the further space, where movement was so big, that it contained bonds and constraints and labours, and still was complete liberty. She was the doorway to him, he to her....
> And always the light of the transfiguration burned on in their hearts. . . .
> (91)

In the light of this new relationship Lawrence examines and interprets the old relationships. The family, etched in Old Testament language, takes on a biblical and founding importance. Tom muses on the mystery of Lydia and her former life in Poland, her Polish husband, and their child Anna, whom he loves as his own.

> . . . What was Paul Lensky to her, but an unfulfilled possibility to which he, Brangwen, was the reality and fulfilment? What did it matter that Anna Lensky was born of Lydia and Paul? God was her father and her mother. He had passed through the married pair without fully making Himself known to them.
> Now He was declared to Brangwen and to Lydia Brangwen, as they stood together. When at last they had joined hands, the house was finished, and the Lord took up his abode. And they were glad.
> (91-2)

Lawrence makes verbal use of ancient ceremony and ritual and Old Testament theology. The child Anna reflects the wandering of the Hebrews and the promise of the rainbow, and echoes the old myth of the marriage of earth and heaven in a tightly telescoped bit of symbolic writing. There is

an effect of distancing here. The reader sees Anna, who is capable of such intense emotion, as if through the wrong end of the telescope, a distant, symbolic figure.

> Anna's soul was put at peace between them. She looked from one to the other, and she saw them established to her safety, and she was free. She played between the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud with confidence, having the assurance on her right hand and the assurance on her left. She was no longer called upon to uphold with her childish might the broken end of the arch. Her father and her mother now met to the span of the heavens, and she, the child, was free to play in the space beneath, between.
> (92)

This relationship provides a larger-than-life theatre of living for Anna and a human background that sets her at odds with people who seem little and carping from her vantage point of freedom:

> So Anna was only easy at home, where the common sense and the supreme relation between her parents produced a freer standard of being than she could find outside. Where, outside the Marsh, could she find the tolerant dignity she had been brought up in? Her parents stood undiminished and unaware of criticism....
> (96)

So Anna despises the common people and becomes royal and proud, and Tom Brangwen encourages her. "He stood like a rock between her and the world."

Religion has made no impact upon Lydia. She is a primitive type dwelling with mana and surrounding her family with its power. Tom accedes to this but Anna is only half safe.

> ... It was as if she Lydia worshipped God as a mystery, never seeking in the least to define what He was.
> And inside her, the subtle sense of the Great Absolute wherein she had her being was very strong....
> She shone and gleamed to the Mystery, Whom she knew through all her senses....
> To this she had reduced her husband. He existed with her entirely indifferent to the general values of the world. Her very ways, the very mark of her eyebrows were symbols and indication to him. There, on the farm with her, he lived through a mystery of life and death and creation, strange, profound ecstasies and incommunicable satisfactions, of which the rest of the world knew nothing, which made the pair of them apart and respected in the English village, for they were also well-to-do.
> (99)

Alfred's son Will comes to Ilkeston to work as a draughtsman's apprentice. In Will, described in imagery of the weasel, Lawrence marks the shift of the Brangwen men, sketched out in Albert, continued in Will, from earth to art. However Will develops his art the reader is still conscious of the underlying truth of his nature as first seen by Anna:

> ... He had town clothes and was thin, with a very curious head, black as jet, with hair like sleek, thin fur. It was a curious head: it reminded her she knew not of what: of some animal, some mysterious animal that lived in the darkness under the leaves and never came out, but which lived vividly, swift and intense. . . .
> (102)

The young people, Will, Anna, and Fred go to church. Will has gold-brown fearless eyes like a hawk's "hovering on the edge of her consciousness, ready to come in." "The bells were ringing, they were going up the summery hill in their Sunday clothes":

> ... The sun shone brightly on little showers of buttercup down the bank, in the fields the fool's-parsley was foamy, held very high and proud above a number of flowers that flitted in the greenish twilight of the mowing-grass below.
> (105)

This is Anna's world. In the church:

> The colour came streaming from the painted window above her. It lit on the dark wood of the pew, on the stone, worn aisle, on the pillar behind her cousin, and on her cousin's hands, as they lay on his knees. She sat amid illumination, illumination and luminous shadow all around her, her soul very bright. . . .
> (105)

This is Will's world of stained glass and Anna is aware of "a dark enrichening influence that she had not known before."

In exquisite poetic writing Lawrence describes Will's passion for church architecture. Anna is swept away by Will's mystical passion:

> Almost it hurt her, to look out of the window and see the lilacs towering in the vivid sunshine. Or was this the jewelled glass?
> (108)

The lilacs and the glass symbolize the outer natural curve of Anna and the inner mystical curve of Will. But in Will Anna escapes.

One of the dominant themes of The Rainbow is the theme of continuous creation. In a series of interlocking symbols the reader is made aware of the interpenetrating and shunting effect of lives upon lives and the progression of events indicated by the symbols.

When Anna falls in love with Will she tells him so in the barn dimly illuminated and shining as it was on the night when Lydia and Tom's first child was born. That night Tom took young Anna to the barn wrapped in a shawl to comfort her. Now Tom sees this Anna whom he loves grown up and in love with Will and he is jealous. "The hand of the Hidden Almighty, burning bright, had thrust out of the darkness and gripped him." Will is created in love. This act and symbol is transformed to Will's wood-carving:

> ... He was carving, as he had always wanted, the Creation of Eve. It was a panel in low relief, for a church. Adam lay asleep, as if suffering, and God, a dim, large figure, stooped towards him, stretching forward His unveiled hand, and Eve, a small vivid, naked female shape, was issuing like a flame towards the hand of God, from the torn side of Adam.
> (116)

Will and Anna walk in the harvest field at night. The moon is bright and full and they in their singleness still, must move towards it. Anna says "we will put up some sheaves." There in the moonlight they begin their rhythmical building of sheaves. The sheaves are like arches but because they are not working together but separately the sheaves do not stand up. At last they accept the rhythm that will bring them together. They both must conquer their feelings of apartness. This night they decide to get married.

Anna and Will are married and during the wedding Tom reflects upon the nature of the boundless and the unformed, and the continuity of creation:

> ... He might be getting married over again -- he and his wife. He felt himself tiny, a little, upright figure on a plain circled round with the immense, roaring sky: he and his wife, two little, upright figures walking across this plain, whilst the heavens shimmered and roared about them. When did it come to an end? In which direction was it finished? There was no end, no finish, only this roaring vast space. Did one never get old, never die? That was the clue. He exulted strangely, with torture. He would go on with his wife, he

> and she like two children camping in the plains. What was sure but the endless sky? But that was so sure, so boundless.
>
> Still the royal blue colour burned and blazed and sported itself in the web of darkness before him, unwearingly rich and splendid. How rich and splendid his own life was, red and burning and blazing and sporting itself in the dark meshes of his body: and his wife, how she glowed and burned dark within her meshes! Always it was so unfinished and unformed!
>
> (131)

There is an echo here of Lydia's wedding ring that once excluded him; now the relationship has enlarged the symbol and the symbolic meaning. There is also a contrast in the colours of the stained glass so dear to Will and the same feeling of great distance that the reader had watching Anna between the pillars of smoke and fire. The human creation is continuous in the network of the blood.

In the honeymoon days that follow Will and Anna reach the kernel of reality. In a burst of poetic writing that in the Aristotelian sense "is closest to philosophy" Lawrence treats in the marriage theme all the possibilities of existence, of being and seeming, the seed of the earth, of the mediaeval kernel and husk, the inner and outer realities, and time and eternity meeting at the still point of the turning wheel. Again Will and Anna assume the texture of distant, mythical figures:

> ... So, suddenly, everything that had been before was shed away and gone. One day, he was a bachelor, living with the world. The next day, he was with her, as remote from the world as if the two of them were buried like a seed in darkness. Suddenly, like a chestnut falling out of a burr, he was shed naked and glistening on to a soft, fecund earth, leaving behind him the hard rind of worldly knowledge and experience. He heard it in the huckster's cries, the noise of carts, the calling of children. And it was all like the hard, shed rind, discarded. Inside, in the softness and stillness of the room, was the naked kernel, that palpitated in silent activity, absorbed in reality.
>
> Inside the room was a great steadiness, a core of living eternity. Only far outside, at the rim, went on the noise and the destruction. Here at the centre the great wheel was motionless, centred upon itself. Here was a poised, unflawed stillness that was beyond time, because it remained the same, inexhaustible, unchanging, unexhausted. (141)

With a complicated use of seemingly simple symbols Lawrence indicates the motions which Will and Anna will enact in the curious psychological substratum that determines their destiny. The title of the chapter "Anna Victrix" gives the directional intent. Will and Anna are happy together after their marriage. Will gets up one day at half-past one and looks outside.

> ... The world was there, after all. And he had felt so secure, as though this house were the Ark in the flood, and all the rest were drowned. . . . (143)

In this chapter Will is dark, animal-like and in many ways weak. Anna is light and strong. He compares Anna to a

lion and the reader remembers Will described in mole-like or weasel-like activity, blind to the brightness of the day. "In her was a more real day than the day could give: so warm and steady and restoring..."

> To him, turned towards her heart-pulse, all was very still and very warm and very close, like noon-tide. He was glad to know this warm, full noon. It ripened him and took away his responsibility, some of his conscience.
> (144)

Now Will is happy. He can finish his carving of Eve. She will be tender and sparkling.

In this time of glorious love Will's little laws are broken:

> ... And down went his qualms, his maxims, his rules, his smaller beliefs, she scattered them like an expert skittle-player. He was very much astonished and delighted to see them scatter.
> (146)

Nevertheless Will and Anna are caught in the flux. For Will reality is an inner thing, the kernel:

> He surveyed the rind of the world: houses, factories, trams, the discarded rind; people scurrying about, work going on, all on the discarded surface. An earthquake had burst it all from inside. It was as if the surface of the world had been broken away entire: Ilkeston, streets, church, people, work, rule-of-the-day, all intact; and yet peeled away into unreality, leaving here exposed the inside, the reality:

> one's own being, strange feelings and passions and yearnings and beliefs and aspirations, suddenly become present, revealed, the permanent bedrock, knitted one rock with the woman one loved....
> (146)

> She was less hampered than he, so she came more quickly to her fulness, and was sooner ready to enjoy again a return to the outside world. She was going to give a tea-party.
> ....
> Now he must be deposed, his joy must be destroyed, he must put on the vulgar, shallow death of an outward existence.
> (147)

Lawrence pursues the death-in-life theme in the loss of singularity and privacy:

> ... All the love, the magnificent new order was going to be lost, she would forfeit it all for the outside things. She would admit the outside world again, she would throw away the living fruit for the ostensible rind....
> (147)

Will has an opposite drive inwards which infuriates Anna; he is irresistibly attracted by the church:

> ... In church he wanted a dark, nameless emotion, the emotion of all the great mysteries of passion.
> ... He did not attach any vital importance to his life in the drafting office, or his life among men. That was just merely the margin to the text. The verity was his connection with Anna and his connection with the Church, his real being lay in his dark emotional experience of the Infinite, of the Absolute. And the great mysterious, illuminated capitals to the text, were his feelings with the Church.
> (155)

Anna will not let Will enjoy his church architecture and symbolism. Because she will not let the symbols of the church mean anything to her Will must give them up. She is Magna Mater demanding sacrifice:

> ... She had broken a little of something in him. And at length he was glad to forfeit from his soul all his symbols, to have her making love to him....
> (159)

Lawrence uses animal or bird imagery to indicate a pattern of behaviour which is not human but yet must be accounted for -- an indication that the objective of his intuition is not capable of being grasped in a logical way. He takes the symbol of the hawk which occurred to Anna at first sight of Will, and works out this phase of their love in fierce, predatory, hostile terms until the tenderness of humanity prevails again.

> She fretted, however, at last, over the lack of stability. When the perfect hours came back, her heart did not forget that they would pass away again. She was uneasy. The surety, the surety, the inner surety, the confidence in the abidingness of love: that was what she wanted. And that she did not get. She knew also that he had not got it.
> (164)

The flux of love is paralleled by the flux of the Church and the world, the urge to inwardness that is Will's nature and the urge to outwardness which is Anna's. It is a conflict without resolution; it does not come onto another

plane as does their love. The stained glass world of Will which Tom was able to overcome is a problem to Anna:

> ... But on Sundays, when he stayed at home, a deeply-coloured, intense gloom seemed to gather on the face of the earth, the church seemed to fill itself with shadow, to become big, a universe to her, there was a burning of blue and ruby, a sound of worship about her. And when the doors were opened, and she came out into the world, it was a world new-created, she stepped into the resurrection of the world, her heart beating to the memory of the darkness and the Passion.
>
> If, as very often, they went to the Marsh for tea on Sundays, then she regained another, lighter world, that had never known the gloom and the stained glass and the ecstasy of chanting. Her husband was obliterated, she was with her father again, who was so fresh and free and all daylight. . . .
> (165)

This again, Lawrence can only interpret in the light of natural things which have no human feelings, rooted in earth:

> This frightened her. Always, her husband was to her the unknown to which she was delivered up. She was a flower that has been tempted forth into blossom, and has no retreat. He had her nakedness in his power. And who was he, what was he? A blind thing, a dark force, without knowledge. She wanted to preserve herself.
> (166)

At this point The Rainbow becomes interesting to the student of mediaeval symbolism. Here Lawrence recapitulates

the mediaeval drama of the soul's search for its homeland which can be found in Hugh of St. Victor or earlier still in St. Augustine. Although Lawrence read widely, if not always deeply, in mystical writing it is not possible to know how much this parallel is intentional and how much due to his poetic love for correspondences:

> ... She wanted to be happy, to be natural, like the sunlight and the busy daytime. And, at the bottom of her soul, she felt he wanted her to be dark, unnatural. Sometimes, when he seemed like the darkness covering and smothering her, she revolted almost in horror, and struck at him... ... He wanted to impose himself on her.... She wanted to desert him, to leave him a prey to the open, with the unclean dogs of the darkness setting on to devour him. He must beat her, and make her stay with him. Whereas she fought to keep herself free of him.
>
> They went their ways now shadowed and stained with blood, feeling the world far off, unable to give help. Till she began to get tired. After a certain point, she became impassive, detached utterly from him. He was always ready to burst out murderously against her. Her soul got up and left him, she went her way. Nevertheless in her apparent blitheness, that made his soul black with opposition she trembled as if she bled.
>
> (166-7)

Then follows a remarkable piece of poetic writing in which Lawrence regresses through apocalyptic imagery, and the symbolism of the Annunciation with echoes of the opening chapters of Isaiah, back to simple Edenic imagery -- all of which gathers the force of contrast pinned as it is simply and flatly to a pedestrian sketch of Will's everyday life as

a lace-designer:

> And ever and again, the pure love came in sunbeams between them, when she was like a flower in the sun to him, so beautiful, so shining, so intensely dear that he could scarcely bear it. Then as if his soul had six wings of bliss he stood absorbed in praise, feeling the radiance from the Almighty beat through him like a pulse, as he stood in the upright flame of praise, transmitting the pulse of Creation.
> And ever and again he appeared to her as the dread flame of power. Sometimes, when he stood in the doorway, his face lit up, he seemed like an Annunciation to her, her heart beat fast. And she watched him suspended. He had a dark, burning being that she dreaded and resisted. She was subject to him as to the Angel of the Presence. She waited upon him and heard his will, and she trembled to his service.
> (167)

In the ensuing conflicts between Anna and Will over being and seeming, reality and unreality, all of which centre in their opposing attitudes toward the symbolism of the church so dear to Will, Lawrence himself makes a statement of what might be his own attitude towards symbolism had it ever been seriously questioned. The miracle of the water turned into wine is their battle ground. Anna is disbelieving and factual; Will is believing and intuitive. "The deep root of his enmity lay in the fact that she jeered at his soul."

> She became again the palpitating, hostile child, hateful, putting things to destruction. He became mute and dead. His own being gave him

> the lie. He knew it was so: wine was wine, water was water, for ever: the water had not become wine. The miracle was not a real fact. She seemed to be destroying him. He went out, dark and destroyed, his soul running its blood. And he tasted of death. Because his life was formed in these unquestioned concepts.
>
> She, desolate again as she had been when she was a child, went away and sobbed. She did not care, she did not care whether the water had turned to wine or not. Let him believe it if he wanted to. But she knew she had won. And an ashy desolation came over her....
>
> (168-9)

This is the destructive side of Anna. They have already battled with the destructive side of Will.

Lawrence is strongly putting forth his belief here that cerebration is not possible on all planes of life, that by making everything into facts the real substance of belief is destroyed. There is no resolution to their difference.

Anna believed in human knowledge and the omnipotence of the human mind. Lawrence, using the symbol of the mole describes Will:

> ... Blind as a subterranean thing, just ignored the human mind and ran after his own dark-souled desires, following his own tunnelling nose....
>
> (170)

Here, as so often we see the ambivalence of Lawrence. Anna, in the ignorance of knowledge is bright and intelligent; Will, the seeker of the mysteries is dark and subhuman rather than

metaphysical.

Anna and Will never seem to get back to the still point of their turning world again. The phoenix symbol which Will first carved for Anna in a butter mould takes over as the dominating symbol for this flux in which Lawrence seems to be saying that for them their creation must arise from destruction. And Anna is "victrix" because it must seemingly be Will's beliefs and symbols which are destroyed. Anna jeers at the wood-carving of Adam and Eve and Will destroys it by putting it on the fire.

> Then, when he had gone to work, she wept for aa whole day, and was much chastened in spirit. So that a new, fragile flame of love came out of the ashes of this last pain.
> (171)

Anna is with child and chilled with Will's harshness which she has done much to create. Back at the Marsh Lydia states what will later be Lawrence's controlling idea -- that of the Holy Ghost:

> "Remember child," said her mother, "that everything is not waiting for your hand just to take or leave. You mustn't expect it. Between two people, the love itself is the important thing, and that is neither you nor him. It is a third thing you must create. You mustn't expect to be just your way."
> (172)

It is passages like the following that mark Lawrence as a great writer and a great maker of modern parables. He has taken the Biblical symbols of Paradise and plenty, with the light of Paradise acquiring the potency of the Old Testament refining fire, and the idea of evil entering into Paradise, and has combined them in a perfectly credible manner to say that life does not change and that evil inheres in the good and must be recognized; the unknown must be known. (The hazel catkins, so innocent here, later become loaded with divisiveness in the scene with Ursula, Hermione, and Birkin in Women in Love.) In the following description of Anna, Lawrence seems also to be saying that Paradise is possible:

> Day after day came shining through the door of Paradise, day after day she entered into the brightness. The child in her shone till she herself was a beam of sunshine; and how lovely was the sunshine that loitered and wandered out of doors, where the catkins on the big hazel bushes at the end of the garden hung in their shaken, floating aureole, where little fumes like fire burst out from the black yew trees as a bird settled clinging to the branches. One day bluebells were along the hedge-bottoms, then cowslips twinkled like manna, golden and evanescent on the meadows. She was full of a rich drowsiness and loneliness. How happy she was, how gorgeous it was to live: to have known herself, her husband, the passion of love and begetting; and to know that all this lived and waited and burned on around her, a terrible purifying fire, through which she had passed for once to come to this peace of golden radiance, when she was with child, and innocent, and in love with her husband and with all the many angels hand in hand....

> And, in all the happiness a black shadow, shy, wild, a beast of prey, roamed and vanished from sight, and like strands of gossamer blown across her eyes, there was a dread for her.
> (176-7)

Will is the agent of destruction, for "there ran through her the thrill, crisp as pain, for she felt the darkness and other-world still in his soft sheathed hands." The "sheathed hands" like claws recall the animal imagery that is used by Lawrence to symbolize Will's "otherness" to humanity.

In delicate psychological tracery, which is a parallel to Anna's destruction of Will's carving and symbols, Lawrence indicates the <u>necessity</u> of the rejection of innocence, and the equally strong truth that praise denied will find another object of worship. Anna is still "victrix"; Will's condition seems almost that of the psalmist "the pains of hell gat hold upon me" while Anna moves on to her solution:

> ... He saw the glistening, flower-like love in her face and his heart was black because he did not want it.... Why had she not satisfied him? He had satisfied her. She was satisfied, at peace, innocent round the doors of her own paradise.
> (178)

> ... He would destroy her flowery, innocent bliss. Was he not entitled to satisfaction from her, and was not his heart all raging desire, his soul a black torment of unfulfilment....
> (179)

> She sat in pride and curious pleasure. When there was no one to exult with, and the unsatisfied soul must dance and play, then one danced before the Unknown.
> (179)

And Anna does dance; she dances in exultation like David before the Lord and because Will was like Saul proclaiming his own kingship. Will comes upon her dancing in the firelight in the bedroom naked, in what has become for her a ritual dance:

> And she lifted her hands and danced again, to annul him ... 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.
> (180-1)

"Her dancing consumed him.... He waited obliterated.... The vision of her tormented him all the days of his life, as she had been then, a strange, exalted thing having no relation to himself."

Lawrence uses the corn symbol, as he does many times, to indicate that humanity has plenitude as well as the earth and to say that the same kind of rejoicing must take place for this as was poured forth in the harvest festivals. It is as if Lawrence says unless humanity has its festivals for plenitude the earth dies -- which is really the theme of _The Waste Land_.

In the passages following Lawrence again underlines the necessity of nature, the point he is later to make in _Women in Love_ -- that underneath human nature is a substratum

that the conscious personality, the ego, does not control, the dark layer that lies under the upper regions of consciousness. He also points out that in spite of man's will, woman is his necessity, the alternative to which is death.

Anna is victorious by her dance but her blitheness is threatened:

> . . .The dark, seething potency of him, the power of a creature that lies hidden and exerts its will to the destruction of the free-running creature, as the tiger lying in the darkness of the leaves steadily enforces the fall and death of the light creatures that drink by the waterside in the morning, gradually began to take effect on her. Though he lay there in his darkness and did not move, yet she knew he lay waiting for her. She felt his will fastening on her and pulling her down, even whilst he was silent and obscure.
> (181-2)

The picture has subtly changed. Will is the willful one, not Anna. For Lawrence the will which thwarts nature is always evil. Both Will and Anna resent Will's dependence upon her.

> And she beat him off, she beat him off. Where could he turn, like a swimmer in a dark sea, beaten off from his hold, whither could he turn? He wanted to leave her, he wanted to be able to leave her. For his soul's sake, for his manhood's sake, he must be able to leave her.
>
> But for what? She was the ark, and the rest of the world was flood. The only tangible, secure thing was the woman....
>
> _Why_ was she the all, the everything, why must he

> live only through her, why must he sink if he were detached from her? Why must he cleave to her in a frenzy as for his very life?
> (183)

Out of this wrestling of wills Will comes to a new freedom:

> ... The world might be a welter of uncertainty, but he was himself now. He had come into his own existence. He was born for a second time, born at last unto himself, out of the vast body of humanity ....Now he had an absolute self as well as a relative self.
> (187)

Anna and Will must always struggle with unfulfilment and the disheartening knowledge that they do not know for what thing they are seeking. Will disavows the fabricated world of London and industry and would find surety if he could in Anna. Anna, still unfulfilled, feels like a door half opened. The door symbol reappears upon another plane of meaning:

> ... And from her Pisgah mount, which she had attained, what could she see? A faint, gleaming horizon, a long way off, and a rainbow like an archway, a shadow-door with faintly coloured coping above it. Must she be moving thither?
> ....
> Dawn and sunset were the feet of the rainbow that spanned the day, and she saw the hope, the promise. Why should she travel any further?
> (192)

At this point the rainbow which seems to symbolize a goal, and the arches of time as well, begins to mean another thing to Anna. Perhaps she has found eternity in herself as the seed

bed, the continuing creation. Lawrence does not say specifically. As Anna awaits her second child she becomes the doorway through which new life enters.

> ... She forgot that she had watched the sun climb up and pass his way, a magnificent traveller surging forward. She forgot that the moon had looked through a window of the high, dark night, and nodded like a magic recognition, signalled to her to follow. Sun and moon travelled on, and left her, passed her by, a rich woman enjoying her riches.... With satisfaction she relinquished the adventure to the unknown....
>
> She was a door and a threshold, she herself. Through her another soul was coming, to stand upon her as upon the threshold, looking out, shading its eyes for the direction to take.
> (193)

A possible interpretation of the rainbow symbol is that it is the sum of what one is as well as the promise of one's destiny because for Will, the intuitive artist, the inner directed, the religious symbolist, the rainbow arch has a different meaning and is a different goal, the dark side as opposed again to Anna's light. For Will it means the church and twilight arches, not a natural phenomenon.

Will and Anna go to see Lincoln Cathedral "he eager as a pilgrim". In a cyclic view of time Lawrence progresses from the cathedral to the seed to the flower to circles of radiant silence. Like all great poets he wrestles with the mysteries of time and eternity in symbols:

To Will the church is the perfect womb:

> ... Here the very first dawn was breaking, the very last sunset sinking, and the immemorial darkness, whereof life's day would blossom and fall away again, re-echoed peace and profound immemorial silence.
>
> Away from time, always outside of time! Between east and west, between dawn and sunset, the church lay like a seed in silence, dark before germination, silenced after death. Containing birth and death, potential with all the noise and transition of life, the cathedral remained hushed, a great, involved seed, whereof the flower would be radiant life inconceivable, but whose beginning and whose end were the circle of silence. Spanned round with the rainbow, the jewelled gloom folded music upon silence, light upon darkness, fecundity upon death, as a seed folds leaf upon leaf and silence upon the root and the flower, hushing up the secret of all between its parts, the death out of which it fell, the life into which it has dropped, the immortality it involves, and the death it will embrace again.
>
> Here in the church "before" and "after" were folded together, all was contained in oneness. Brangwen came to his consummation. Out of the doors of the womb he had come, putting aside the wings of the womb, and proceeding into the light. Through daylight and day-after-day he had come, knowledge after knowledge, and experience after experience, remembering the darkness of the womb, having prescience of the darkness after death. Then between-while he had pushed upon the doors of the cathedral, and entered the twilight of both darkness, the hush of the two-fold silence where dawn was sunset, and the beginning and the end were one.
>
> (198-9)

In this passage, reminiscent of Eliot's "and the fire and the rose are one", Lawrence sums up the meaning for Will.

> And there was no time nor life nor death, but only this, this timeless consummation, where the thrust from earth met the thrust from earth and the arch was locked on the keystone of ecstasy. ....
>
> (199)

The doubts of mankind are enacted in Will and Anna. While Will is locked in his timeless ecstasy, for Anna "The altar was barren, its lights gone out. God burned no more in that bush." She points out the knowledgeable-looking gargoyles who knew "that the cathedral was not absolute."

> ... They winked and leered, giving suggestion to the many things that had been left out of the great concept of the church. . . .
> (201)

There is more knowledge for Anna. Here is the mediaeval pattern of the fall:

> Brangwen looked unwillingly. This was the voice of the serpent in his Eden. She pointed him to a plump, sly, malicious little face carved in stone.
> "He knew her, the man who carved her," said Anna. "I'm sure it was his wife."
> (201)

Will's response to this is one of the mysteries of human nature that Lawrence notes but does not try to explain:

> His mouth was full of ash, his soul was furious. He hated her for having destroyed another of his vital illusions. Soon he would be stark, stark, without one place wherein to stand, without one belief in which to rest.
> Yet somewhere in him he responded more deeply to the sly little face that knew better, than he had done before to the perfect surge of his cathedral.
> (202)

For Will the altar had been the mystic door to the great Unknown, but it was narrow and false. "He had lost his absolute" and his "absolute self". He is aware of the life of nature outside the church. "He listened to the thrushes in the gardens and heard a note which the cathedrals did not include." As a symbol he still loved the church. "He tended it for what it tried to represent, rather than for that which it did represent." He mended the organ in his own church and restored the carving and even became choirmaster.

Again in the cathedral chapter Lawrence indicates the problem of fate. Will, submitting to his own limitation of being, is his own fate:

> As he sat sometimes very still, with a bright vacant face, Anna could see the suffering among the brightness. He was aware of some limit to himself, of something unformed in his very being, of some buds which were not ripe in him, some folded centres of darkness which would never develop and unfold whilst he was alive in the body. He was unready for fulfilment. Something undeveloped in him limited him, there was a darkness in him, which he could not unfold, which would never unfold in him.
> (207)

This is a Plotinian echo (the bud in the marble) which Lawrence frequently catches.

For Will the forms are important and his daytime life a dream.

> All his daytime activity, all his public life, was a kind of sleep. She wanted to be free, to belong to the day. And he ran avoiding the day in work. After tea, he went to the shed to his carpentry or his wood-carving. He was restoring the patched, degraded pulpit to its original form.
> (214)

Will and Anna do not attain satisfaction in their marriage and lapse into sensuality; they do not recreate their lives in a vital way:

> Strange his wife was to him. It was as if he were a perfect stranger, as if she were infinitely and essentially strange to him, the other half of the world, the dark half of the moon....
> (233)

Anna becomes an object of sensual Beauty:

> He had always, all his life, had a secret dread of Absolute Beauty. It had always been like a fetish to him, something to fear, really. For it was immoral and against mankind. So he had turned to the Gothic form, which always asserted the broken desire of mankind in its pointed arches, escaping the rolling, absolute beauty of the round arch.
> (234)

Here is another meaning of the symbol, the reading that man's unfulfilled aspiration mounts heavenward.

There is a flood at Marsh Farm and Tom Brangwen is drowned. Lydia withdraws even more from family life. "And she wanted to draw away. She wanted at last her own innocence

and peace." A friendship arises between her and her eldest grandchild, Ursula, who is cut off from Anna's love by the demands of the younger children. A backward glance here helps to understand the Ursula of Women in Love, far from English in her sympathies and far from her home:

> ... At Cossethay all was activity and passion, everything moved upon poles of passion. Then there were four children younger than Ursula...
> So that for the eldest child, the peace of the grandmother's bedroom was exquisite. Here Ursula came as to a hushed, paradisal land, here her own existence became simple and exquisite to her as if she were a flower.
> (251)

The feeling she achieves in the inn with Birkin in Women in Love is a development of this attitude. In Ursula the strands of Lydia's reminiscences of her Polish youth and her young life with Lensky are entwined with a love of Marsh Farm, which make the later Ursula credible. The two wedding rings for Lydia had been expanding circles of living. Lydia, for Ursula becomes a door, this time to the past. Later, Ursula's three rings are the doorway to the future.

> ... Here, from her grandmother's peaceful room, the door opened on to the greater space, the past, which was so big, that all it contained seemed tiny, loves and births and deaths, tiny units and features within a vast horizon. That was a great relief, to know the tiny importance of the individual, within the great past. (258)

Later Ursula will emphasize the feelings of that young Ursula who "was all for the ultimate. She was always in revolt against babies and muddled domesticity."

Growing up, Ursula faces the problem of many who contemplate myths. She faces the fact that the religion which had been another world for her had fallen away from reality:

> ... became a tale, a myth, an illusion, which, however much one might assert it to be true and historical fact, one knew was not true -- at least for this present-day life of ours. There could, within the limits of this life we know, be no Feeding of the Five Thousand, And the girl had come to the point where she held that that which one cannot experience in daily life is not true for oneself.
> (281)

Ursula's weekday and Sunday worlds are broken apart and the weekday world triumphs. No more following the pillar of cloud across the desert. No more "watching the bush that crackled yet did not burn." The suppressing of visions is an attempt to live in the ordinary world.

> She turned to the visions, which had spoken far-off words that ran along the blood like ripples of an unseen wind, she heard the words again, she denied the vision, for she must be a weekday person, to whom visions were not true, and she demanded only the weekday meaning of the words.
> (282)

But she preserves throughout her life this memory:

> On Sundays, this visionary world came to pass. She heard the long hush, she knew the marriage of dark and light was taking place. In church, the Voice sounded, re-echoing not from this world, as if the Church itself were a shell that still spoke the language of creation.
> (274)

In Ursula Lawrence indicates the struggle of the individual for creation of himself from chaos, "So she wrestled through her dark of confusion, soulless, uncreated, unformed." (286)

Young Anton Skrebensky helps Ursula to realize herself. This son of her grandmother's old friend, the Polish Count, helps Ursula to grow up. The first love of these two is an adolescent affair but later Ursula dominates him. At young Tom Brangwen's wedding they dance but afterwards in the stackyards the harvest seems cold and forbidding under the moon. This is a scene poisoned by fear, unwarmed by real love. Anton is afraid to accept his feelings in any other way but a physical way and Ursula is afraid of what she is. They cannot establish a rhythm as Will and Anna did. They are farther into the mechanical world:

> ... All was intangible, a burning of cold, glimmering, whitish-steely fires. He was afraid of the great moon-conflagration of the cornstacks rising above him. His heart grew

> smaller, it began to fuse like a bead. He knew he would die.
> She stood for some moments out in the overwhelming luminosity of the moon. She seemed a beam of gleaming power. She was afraid of what she was.... A sudden lust seized her to lay hold of him and tear him and make him into nothing....
> (319)

This is not a satisfactory relationship. Ursula, like Anna before her, dominates. She is the destructive moon-goddess, the part of woman's nature so feared by Lawrence. The core of him was gone, defeated by Ursula. She had broken him. From this Ursula turns to a homosexual love with a schoolmistress, Winifred Inger. In a compensating movement in deprivation Ursula has a core of suffering and nausea for her situation. Winifred Inger "wanted some fine intensity, instead of this heavy cleaving of moist clay, that cleaves because it has no life of its own". But Ursula's fire, strong enough to dissolve Anton, cannot cleave to the earth of Winifred Inger.

The real foe of the Lawrencean hero or heroine is mechanism as opposed to life. This theme is brought out further in the visit of Ursula and Miss Inger to Yorkshire, to Wiggiston, a company town which has grown up around a new colliery. Here Ursula's Uncle Tom manages the new colliery. The colliery saps the life of the men; their marriage is a little side show according to Tom, comprising only what is left over of their short lives when they come home from the pit.

But, as Tom says, "The most moral duke in England makes two hundred thousand a year out of these pits. He keeps the morality end up." This does not bother Miss Inger who consents to marry Tom. She is earthy, he like a marsh creature: both have areas of dark corruption in themselves which they recognize. This same recognition happens later between Gerald and Gudrun and between Gudrun and Loerke. Winifred and Tom are admirably matched for:

> His real mistress was the machine, and the real mistress of Winifred was the machine. She too, Winifred, worshipped the impure abstraction, in the mechanism of matter. There, there, in the machine, in service of the machine, was she free from the clog and degradation of human feeling. There, in the monstrous mechanism that held all matter, living or dead, in its service, did she achieve her consummation and her perfect unison, her immortality. (349)

Winifred in her consummation in love of the machine is a contrast to Will, whose real love was spiritualized in the church. Lawrence is implying polarities of which the resolution is found in married love. Ursula's reaction to this mechanical world would be to destroy the colliery and let the miners starve or grub in the earth for roots rather than serve such a monster. It is at this point that Ursula grows up in a kind of reversal of the ordinary rites of

passage -- through a dark passage of hatred and disgust and a revulsion from the real meaning of sexuality, blighted as she was by her experience with Winifred Inger.

The idea of flux is implicit in Ursula's struggle. Much of her difficulty lies in her family life. She seems to wrestle against the darkness and the darkness is personified in her mother, Anna, who in the conduct of her life with Will represented, the open, the day, the light. But to Ursula Anna represents "the close, physical, limited life of herded domesticity."

To escape the domestic herd Ursula decides to teach. She almost escapes into the wider world but is constrained by her father to stay and teach in Ilkeston. Lawrence draws a horrifying picture of the educational system in the Midlands -- a mechanical parallel to the mining effort and the explanation of why the mechanical system of industry is possible. Ursula's passage from home life to the world is loaded with portent. Only a sympathetic reading here can make the detached and ironic viewpoint of Ursula and Gudrun in Women in Love credible.

The first sight of Brinsley Street and St. Philips school is depressing:

> ... She was excited. The very forest of dry, sterile, brick had some fascination for her. It was so hard and ugly, so relentlessly ugly, it

> would purge her of some of her floating senti-
> mentality.
> (366-7)

Ursula has the hope of youth as she proceeds toward it on the tram:

> ... She was shut in with these unliving, spectral people. Even yet it did not occur to her that she was one of them. The conductor came down issuing tickets. Each little ring of his clipper sent a pang of dread through her. But her ticket surely was different from the rest.
> (368)

Ursula does not recognize this underworld.

The school itself is a portrayal both of what the colliery will be and of the mechanization in education that made it possible. Humanity is not really crushed out in the colliery. It has never been allowed to develop in the schools:

> ... There it was, this class of fifty collective children, depending on her for command, for command it hated and resented. It made her feel she could not breathe; she must suffocate, it was so inhuman. They were so many, that they were not children. They were a squadron. . . .
> (376)

She saw:

> ... all the schoolteachers, drudging unwillingly at the graceless task of compelling many children into one disciplined, mechanical, set, reducing the whole set to an automatic state of obedience and

> attention, and then of commanding their acceptance of various pieces of knowledge. The first great task was to reduce sixty children to one state of mind, or being....
> (382)

The words "compelling", "mechanical", "reducing", "automatic", "will", "authority" are symbols of the way of life in the Midland mining areas. It hurt Ursula to have to bend her class to this kind of blind will but it was the price of survival in the system and of escape into the larger world, as Lawrence knew from similar experience.

There is no going back as Ursula realizes. Her one friend at the school, Maggie Schofield, has a brother, Anthony, who falls in love with Ursula. He is a gardener, close to the earth as she is. But she must refuse him because of their essential difference. Looking at his beautiful garden (Eden), she realizes the difference.

> ... All this so beautiful, all this so lovely! He did not see it. He was one with it. But she saw it, and was one with it. Her seeing separated them infinitely.
> (416-7)
>
> She liked Anthony, though. All her life, at intervals, she returned to the thought of him and of that which he offered. But she was a traveller, she was a traveller on the face of the earth, and he was an isolated creature living in the fulfilment of his own senses.
> (417)

Here Lawrence states the predicament of the purely sensuous man, a position he is frequently and unfairly accused of

holding.

> She could not help it that she was a traveller. She knew Anthony, that he was not one. But oh, ultimately and finally, she must go on and on, seeking the goal that she knew she did draw near to. (417)

The title of the chapter dealing with Ursula's escape into the world is "The Widening Circle" and in it Lawrence indicates the two movements of life -- the thrust forward to the goal with the Rainbow as symbol, and the cycle of involvement with life, the completion of each of which puts the being upon a new plane. For Ursula two years at St. Philip's School are two cycles, the removal of the family from Cossethay to Willey Green on the edge of the colliery district a centre for Will's new work in Nottingham, is a thrust forward into life.

The pear tree by the wall is a symbol of this:

> ... it was full, thronged with tiny, grey-green buds, myriads. She stood before it arrested with delight, and a realisation went deep into her heart. There was so great a host in array behind the cloud of pale, dim green, so much to come forth -- so much sunshine to pour down. (420-1)

But life will run counter to nature and Will Brangwen must launch out into the modern world and buy a house in a new part of Beldover instead of the part of Willey Green near Sherwood Forest.

> Ursula was rather sad. Instead of having arrived at distinction they had come to new red-brick suburbia in a grimy small town.
> (421)

College is equally disenchanting. The mediaeval idea of education which attracts Ursula is no longer a reality and professors are no longer priests. Being turns into seeming:

> ... The whole thing seemed sham, spurious; spurious Gothic arches, spurious peace, spurious Latinity, spurious dignity of France, spurious naivete of Chaucer. It was a second-hand dealer's shop, and one bought an equipment for an examination....
> ... The college itself was a little, slovenly laboratory for the factory.
> A harsh and ugly disillusion came over her again, the same darkness and bitter gloom from which she was never safe now, the realisation of the permanent substratum of ugliness under everything....
> (434-5)

Here Lawrence, through Ursula, is bringing to light the thought that humanity has betrayed itself:

> Suddenly she threw over French. She would take honours in botany. This was the one study that lived for her. She had entered into the lives of the plants. She was fascinated by the strange laws of the vegetable world. She had here a glimpse of something working entirely apart from the purpose of the human world.
> (436)

In a similar revulsion in <u>Women in Love</u> Birkin seeks solace

in the vegetable world after Hermione attempts to kill him. The question here is whether the seeking of a thing in a state of complete revulsion deprives the search of authenticity. This is solved on a higher level in The Man Who Died.

Ursula reviews her life from her childhood in Cossethay through to her latest loves and friendships -- a history of rejection, yet with an underlay known as Ursula Brangwen:

> ... Always, always she was spitting out of her mouth the ash and grit of disillusion, of falsity.... She seemed always negative in her action.
>
> That which she was, positively, was dark and unrevealed, it could not come forth. It was like a seed buried in dry ash. This world in which she lived was like a circle lighted by a lamp. This lighted area, lit up by man's completest consciousness she thought was all the world: that here all was disclosed for ever. Yet all the time, within the darkness she had been aware of points of light, like the eyes of wild beasts, gleaming, penetrating, vanishing. And her soul had acknowledged in a great heave of terror only the outer darkness. This inner circle of light in which she lived and moved, wherein the trains rushed and the factories ground out their machine-produce and the plants and animals worked by the light of science and knowledge, suddenly it seemed like the area under an arc-lamp, wherein the moths and children played in the security of blinding light, not even knowing there was any darkness, because they stayed in the light. (437)

Anton Skrebensky comes back to England from a six year tour of duty in Africa but although they live together Ursula knows that marriage is impossible. At this point

Lawrence makes a negative statement about the relationship which in its positive form is the arch or rainbow.

> But always there was a foreboding waiting to command her. She became more aware of Skrebensky. She knew he was waking up. She must modify her soul, depart from her further world for him.
> (472).

The relationship in which one personality awakens only by the modification of the other will never arch to the keystone of the Holy Ghost. The young Ursula is striving for a statement of the "star equilibration" which Birkin later will try to explain to her and which she will refuse. She is, however, aware that the relationship is not an expanding one which will recreate itself continually:

> ... His body was beautiful, his movements intent and quick, she admired him and she appreciated him without reserve. He seemed complete now. He aroused no fruitful fecundity in her. He seemed added up, finished. She knew him all round, not on any side did he lead into the unknown....
> (473)

In the repeated symbol of the bead Lawrence underlines Ursula's power to make him feel finished and nullified. The moon in a burst of white light like the blast from a furnace reveals Skrebensky's inability to cope with the mystery of Ursula:

> ... He felt himself fusing down to nothingness, like a bead that rapidly disappears in an incandescent flame...
> (478)

The bead is a parallel to the kernel -- but it is not alive. Life does not arise from the death of the bead.

Skrebensky fears Ursula and the implications she has for him:

> He felt, if ever he must see her again, his bones must be broken, his body crushed, obliterated for ever. And as yet, he had the love of his own living body. ...
> (480)

The things of the dark, in the circle outside the arc-light of so-called reality which Ursula must comprehand, mean death to Skrebensky:

> In the daytime he was all right, always occupied with the thing of the moment, adhering to the trivial present, which seemed to him ample and satisfying. No matter how little and futile his occupations were, he gave himself to them entirely, and felt normal and fulfilled. He was always active, cheerful, gay, charming, trivial. Only he dreaded the darkness and silence of his own bedroom, when the darkness should challenge him upon his own soul. ...
> (481-2)

To screen himself from the darkness and challenge to his soul that was Ursula he marries his Colonel's daughter.

A parallel struggle takes place for Ursula whom the affair with Skrebensky has left etiolated. She realizes that she is to have his child and writes that she will come out to India and marry him, unaware that he is already married. For her, the surface decision is made but the mythical struggle has not yet taken place.

In Apocalypse Lawrence has given his symbolism of horses. In "The Rainbow" chapter, the last of the book, Ursula, heading into the woods (always a symbol of sexual experience), flits through to the open spaces beyond. Lawrence here uses the Old English symbol of Bede's sparrow flitting through the banquet hall with its attendent imagery. She emerges into the wilderness and realizes that a band of horses is following her. Her fear is unbounded as she seeks to escape their massing action; she finally escapes by climbing an oak and dropping down on the other side of a hedgerow. They gallop along the other side of the hedge but cannot come near her. In her terror and weakness, which is also an illness, she plumbs the depths of insentient being, the grey ash from which for Lawrence the phoenix, the new creation, must always rise. This state, uninfused by human spirit, is described:

> As she sat there, spent, time and the flux of change passed away from her, she lay as if

> unconscious upon the bed of the stream, like a stone, unconscious, unchanging, unchangeable, whilst everything rolled by in transcience, leaving her there, a stone at rest on the bed of the stream, inalterable and passive, sunk to the bottom of all change.
> (489)

In her ensuing illness "her soul lay still and permanent, full of pain, but itself for ever." This is the initial requirement for any successful relationship -- the soul enlarged but not obliterated. It is a stronger victory than Will's achievement of "absolute self".

This process of enlargement is described in the last pages of the novel in the kernel and husk symbolism used in the early life of Will and Anna. This time Ursula is released on a wider, or more worldly plane. In her illness Ursula rejects her parents and Anton, and the places where she has lived and worked:

> ... I am trammelled and entangled in them, but they are all unreal. I must break out of it, like a nut from its shell which is an unreality.
> And again, to her feverish brain, came the vivid reality of acorns in February lying on the floor of a wood with their shells burst and discarded and the kernel issued naked to put itself forth. She was the naked, clear kernel thrusting forth the clear, powerful shoot, and the world was a bygone winter, discarded, her mother and father and Anton, and college and all her friends, all cast off like a year that has gone by, whilst the kernel was free and naked and striving to take new root, to create a new knowledge of Eternity in the flux of Time. And the kernel was the only reality; the rest was cast off into oblivion.
> (492)

The rites of passage are marked by a sleep:

> When she woke at last, it seemed as if a new day had come on the earth. How long, how long had she fought through the dust and obscurity for this new dawn? How frail and fine and clear she felt, like the most fragile flower that opens in the end of winter. But the pole of night was turned and the dawn was coming in.
> (492)

For Lawrence the central truth of his myth seems to be that the kernel is the only reality.

> In everything she saw she grasped and groped to find the creation of the living God, instead of the old, hard barren form of bygone living. . . .
> (494)

Lawrence makes very clear that this is hard to do in industrial England with the death-in-life condition of the colliers and the spread of industrial cities, with the church tower standing and them in "hideous obsoleteness".

Then Ursula sees a rainbow in the heavens. The last paragraph of the book is most frequently quoted but the second last describes the process -- the rainbow forming, and Ursula comprehending it as part of the process which, perhaps after all is what Phillip Rieff meant when he said "Lawrence is all going to church and never getting there."[4]

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[4] Phillip Rieff in Introduction to D.H. Lawrence Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious, p. xvi.

> . . .In one place it gleamed fiercely, and her heart anguished with hope, she sought the shadow of iris where the bow should be. Steadily the colour gathered, mysteriously, from nowhere, it took presence upon itself, there was a faint vast rainbow. The arc bended and strengthened itself till it arched indomitable, making great architecture of light and colour and the space of heaven, its pedestals luminous in the corruption of new house on the low hill, its arch the top of heaven.
> (494)

For Lawrence and the men or women who are reflections of himself the myth says that creation is a continuous process of life arising from death, that daily life is the husk, and the kernel of ongoing vitality is the only reality.

CHAPTER V

EVE AND DAPHNE

The psychological drama which is orchestrated on the surface level in Sons and Lovers by light and flowers, and in The Rainbow by planes, arches and concentric circles, seems, in Women in Love to go completely underground.

Jung, in a discussion of archetypes in relation to myth says:

> ... The fact that myths are first and foremost psychic phenomena that reveal the nature of the soul is something they [the mythologists] have absolutely refused to see until now. Primitive man is not so much interested in objective explanations of the obvious, but he has an imperative need -- or rather, his unconscious psyche has an irresistible urge ---to assimilate all outer sense experiences to inner, psychic events. It is not enough for the primitive to see the sun rise and set; this external observation must at the same time be a psychic happening: the sun in its course must represent the fate of a god or hero who, in the last analysis, dwells nowhere except in the soul of man. 1

It might not be too farfetched to say that Lawrence, standing as he does on a crumbling Victorian bridgehead to

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[1] C.G. Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958) pp.5-6.

the Twentieth Century, was psychologically in the place of primitive man who must explain his world in myth and symbol. The modern man must articulate and he must be scientific, but the inner compulsion, the need to explain, is if anything more urgent.

Lawrence writes analogies to Greek, Asiatic, Old Testament and Christian myths. This eclectic method presents no formal background. His writing is an orchestration of myths or mythical themes.

Why did Lawrence put his new myths into old mythologies? Probably because the pattern of behaviour does not change, or one might say the plot of the play does not change; the actors change. The role of the gods has fallen upon man and somehow man has changed. He is not superhuman or even heroic; man is ordinary indeed. Lawrence is taking into account a quality in man beyond humanity, or below humanity -- the field of the unconscious which we must recognize because it contains the lost half of our souls.

It is as if Lawrence were feeling his way amid the chaos of former organizing modes of thought. The best of these was the great chain of being. It was a comfort to the Elizabethan to know that he had a definite place between the stones and the angels, and later, when this comfort was no longer available, there were pragmatic scientific and social

classifications, the latter indeed a great support to many Victorians. None of these comforts are available now. Lawrence's controlling idea is more oriental than western. He wanted man to put himself into cosmic harmony and recognize the quality of life in plants and animals as well as men, to recognize in each thing the sacred centre, or spark of life -- the quick of being. He was exceedingly conscious of the flux of momentary being out of which he believed we continually create ourselves, and of the totality of life which pervades this universe also in process of continuous creation.

This search for harmony in life, the deprivation of which is tragedy, is perhaps best summed up in his appreciation of Etruscan dancers. As he studied the Etruscan wall paintings in Italy Lawrence realized that these gentle people had caught the rhythm and joy of life that he felt was the great need of mankind.

> ... They are just dancing a dance with the elixir of life. And if they have made a little offering to the stone phallus at the door, it is because when one is full of life one is full of possibilities, and the phallus gives life. And if they have made an offering also to the queer ark of the female symbol, at the door of a woman's tomb, it is because the womb too is the source of life, and a great fountain of dance-movements. 2

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[2] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p. 165.

In _Women in Love_ Lawrence works out many of the theories which he later put down in _Fantasia_, but the gentle joy of the Etruscan dancers is not achieved by any of the characters. In _The Rainbow_ Ursula and Gudrun are very close. The distaste which Ursula felt for the numerous children that her mother produced and for whom Ursula had to take so much responsibility, was never extended to Gudrun. Ursula represents the light, outgoing nature, Gudrun the artistic, self-contained dark side; they are sympathetic and belong together. However, neither of them relates to the parents and thus they are cut off from the full development of a family relationship. Their problem is the opposite of Paul Morel's. Gerald Crich is also problem-ridden because of his failure to relate to his father. Birkin, the most fully developed of these four main characters fails to relate to the world. The marriage relationship, the rock upon which Lawrence ultimately pins his hope of salvation, is rejected by both girls at first. It is worth noting that the family does not provide a setting for this novel. Ursula, Gudrun, and Gerald have antipathy to their families; Birkin does not seem to be involved in family life at all.

The town of Beldover offers no positive advantage to Ursula and Gudrun. It represents an underworld, soulless and mechanized. The group of townspeople turning out to see the

Crich wedding, the opening incident of the novel, "were chiefly women, colliers' wives of the more shiftless sort. They had watchful, underworld faces".

In this novel it is noticeable that Lawrence is no longer interested in characterization but rather in the currents of feeling or polarities between his characters. The development (it is development rather than action) proceeds by tensions -- sometimes creative, sometimes destructive. There is a hint of this process in Ursula "having always that strange brightness of an essential flame." "Her active living was suspended, but underneath, in the darkness, something was coming to pass." In contrast to this inner involvement of Ursula Gudrun is detached as she watches the wedding guests going into church:

> ... She saw each one as a complete figure, like a character in a book, or a subject in a picture, or a marionette in a theatre, a finished creation. She loved to recognise their various characteristics, to place them in their true light, give them their own surroundings, settle them forever as they passed before her along the path to the church...[3]

She notes Gerald Crich with "a strange guarded look, the unconscious glisten, as if he did not belong to the same creation as the people about him." Later he becomes a thing

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[3] D.H. Lawrence, Women in Love. (New York: Avon Publications, Inc. 1920), p. 13.

of ice; even here "he looked so new, unbroached, pure as an arctic thing." She notes Hermione Roddice, "the most remarkable woman in the Midlands" a Rossetti figure clothed in decadent yellows and greys and browns. She is a mental creature drifting along with "a peculiar fixity of the hips," "full of intellectuality and heavy, nerve-worn with consciousness."

In contrast to Ursula's essential flame Hermione "had no natural sufficiency, there was a terrible void, a lack, a deficiency of being within her." Rupert Birkin is groomsman at the wedding. "His nature was clever and separate." He was "always on a tight-rope, pretending nothing but ease." Ursula notes in him "a certain hostility, a hidden ultimate reserve in him, cold and inaccessible".

Gudrun is attracted to Gerald and Ursula to Birkin. Birkin, of the four, is the one who most perfectly has realized his being -- in the way that Lawrence uses "realizes" -- meaning the achievement or creation of self from the chaos of living. Birkin is conscious of having done this, and of the necessity of defending this singleness of self against the erosion of other people and of situations. Ursula is piqued, attracted, and annoyed by him. It is at the wedding, symbolizing a state which none of them can approach with happiness, that the polarities are set up between Gudrun and

and Gerald and Ursula and Birkin, which continue throughout the novel -- ramifications of being which Lawrence intends to explore. It is clear when Birkin finally gets to the church that he realizes that Hermione, with whom he has been on intimate terms, represents death to his being. "He avoided her look.... He did not want to receive her flare of recognition." Without this flare or flow of psychic and natural powers between people, no adequate relationship can flourish according to Lawrence.

It becomes clear to the reader now that Lawrence has developed his technique of writing symbolically which now demands a technique of reading, a technique of involvement. Formerly he used animal imagery and movements to heighten human characteristics. Now they become signposts as well. Lawrence believed that animals had pure and developed qualities that humanity had not got and he uses these to indicate unrealized attributes and unconscious attitudes which he does not always put into words and for which the reader must develop an awareness. An example of this is a description of Birkin at the wedding breakfast. He has tried to cancel out Hermione, he has seen Ursula, he is trying to be separate: "He resembled a deer, that throws one ear back upon the trail behind, and one ear forward, to know what is ahead." Involved in conversation with Mrs. Crich he says:

> "People don't really matter,"...
> "Not many people are anything at all,"... "They jingle and giggle, It would be much better if they were just wiped out. Essentially, they don't exist, they aren't there." (23)

The relationship between Gerald and Birkin is defined early. They are friends. Lawrence, through Birkin, is exploring the possibility of the male-male relationship adding a fuller dimension to the male-female relationship. This point Birkin never resolves. At the wedding Gerald and Birkin argue about individuality which Gerald declares would give rise to a spontaneous cutting of throats. Birkin insists that if a man has his throat cut he has wanted it so. "A man who is murderable is a man who in a profound if hidden lust desires to be murdered." Gerald will be shown with the Lawrencean "drift towards death". In spite of their argument:

> ... Yet the heart of each burned from the other. They burned with each other inwardly. This they would never admit. They intended to keep their relationship to a casual free and easy friendship, they were not going to be so unmanly and unnatural as to allow any heart-burning between them.... (32)

Soon after the wedding Birkin, as inspector of Ursula's school district comes to Ursula's classroom. Hermione, seeing his car comes in also. Under the guise of arguing

about a botany lesson and how Ursula should teach it, the clues to all their later psychological shiftings are given. Birkin had not noticed that the hazel and willow catkins were out but indicates that Ursula should emphasize the maleness and femaleness of the catkins and the process of polinization. Ursula objects that crayon colour in the books will make them untidy. Hermione seems fascinated with the catkins. Hermione and Birkin argue whether being conscious of the difference in the catkins is good for the children and Birkin accuses Hermione of grasping the eternal apple, of coveting knowledge rather than feeling. "You don't want to _be_ an animal, you want to observe your own animal functions, to get a mental thrill out of them." He proves to Hermione that what she thinks is passion is really _will_. "You have no sensuality. You have only your will and your conceit of consciousness, and your lust for power, to _know_." Ursula, puzzled, asks if Birkin _wants_ sensuality:

> "Yes," he said, "that and nothing else, at this point. It is a fulfilment -- the great dark knowledge you can't have in your head -- the dark involuntary being. It is death to one self -- but it is the coming into being of another."
> (39)

Birkin explains the kind of knowledge not found in the head.

> "In the blood," ... "when the mind and the known world is drowned in darkness -- everything

> must go -- there must be the deluge. Then you find yourself a palpable body of darkness, a demon.
> (40)

This is the doctrine of the blood which is fully articulated in Fantasia.

As is so often the case in reading Lawrence, clues to one work are contained in other works. The clue to Hermione is found in his "Study of Thomas Hardy". Discussing Clym in The Return of the Native:

> What is Clym's altruism but a deep very subtle cowardice, that makes him shirk his own being whilst apparently acting nobly; which makes him choose to improve mankind rather than to struggle at the quick of himself into being. He is not able to undertake his own soul, so he will take a commission for society to enlighten the souls of others. It is a subtle equivocation.
> Phoenix 414

The life of sensuality, the opposite of the mental knowledge of Hermione, is represented by Pussum, an Egyptian abstraction. This is Lawrence at his least convincing. Like Blake, he had a horror of abstraction, yet sometimes, trying to catch the essence of a being as he does with the Pussum, he simply abstracts the Egyptian idea of sensuality and pins it onto a little wraith from the demi-monde. The Pussum is fated to be the victim of man's whims --

of Halliday, leader of the cafe society set that Birkin frequents when in London, and of Gerald. This Bohemian set is another kind of underworld for Lawrence, one which makes a mechanical use of sex, Lawrence's idea of one kind of modern tragedy. "Sex as an end in itself is a disaster: a vice." By juxtaposing the carved figure of an African woman in labour with an impression of the Pussum Lawrence conveys the mindless stress towards sensation. Gerald sees:

> ... vividly with his spirit the grey, forward-stretching face of the negro woman, African and tense, abstracted in utter physical stress. It was a terrible face, void, peaked, abstracted almost into meaninglessness by the weight of sensation beneath. He saw the Pussum in it. As in a dream, he knew her.
> (72)

Birkin sees in it:

> Pure culture in sensation, culture in the physical consciousness, really ultimate physical consciousness, mindless, utterly sensual. It is so sensual as to be final, supreme.
> But Gerald resented it. He wanted to keep certain illusions, certain ideas like clothing.
> "You like the wrong things, Rupert," he said, "things against yourself."
> (72)

It is at this point that a technique of Lawrence's writing comes out that is hard to pinpoint -- a paradoxical approach frequently used. It is Gerald, the user of men, the exponent of medhanism in business who sees the ultimate

horror of Pussum. It is Birkin, the exponent of separate being, who appreciates the African carving as a work of art. Gerald looks at the Pussum with "her inchoate look of a violated slave, whose fulfilment lies in her further and further violation" and notices her face "like a small, fine mask, sinister too, masked with unwilling suffering."

For her part the Pussum:

> ... never wanted to hear of Gerald again, unless, perhaps, she were in difficulty; because after all, Gerald was what she called a man, and these others, Halliday, Libnidnikov, Birkin, the whole Bohemian set, they were only half men. But it was half men she could deal with. She felt sure of herself with them. The real men, like Gerald, put her in her place too much.
> (74)

The Pussum's male counterpart in the novel is Mino the cat. The animals in situations analagous to human situations are able to make a commentary that is not possible to translate into human terms. It is Lawrence's attempt further to define man's place in the natural world in a meaningful way without giving rise to tiresome theories which in any case could not be stated without being distorted. Gerald's subsequent defection to mechanism is tragic because he has within him greater possibilities. It is he who is able to see the Pussum "vividly with his spirit".

This mechanistic binding of society takes place on a higher social level as well. Hermione insists that Ursula

and Gudrun should visit her home, "Breadalby", a Georgian house with Corinthian pillars which was, with its landscaping and little coloured figures of guests "as final as an old aquatint" according to Gudrun. This is a pot-pourri of antiquated aristocratic possessions and mores and types. In it the reader can see the vain attempt of the English aristocracy to preserve old forms which have lost their meaning. The atmosphere and Hermione's attitude "was mental and very wearying". Ursula feels the stress:

> . . . She [Hermione] stood so near to one, pressing herself near upon one, in a way that was most embarrassing and oppressive. She seemed to hinder one's workings.
> (76)

Hermione's effect is mechanically detrimental. She has no centre, no connection -- only will.

Birkin, so unsatisfactory on the London scene, and indeed part of this scene, is the one who works to understand the deeper connections which are cut off by what Lawrence refers to as "consuming, destructive mentality." He explains to Hermione why he is copying a Chinese drawing of geese. His explanation implies the earth, air, fire, and water psychology of the Greeks which underlies much of Lawrence's own symbolism.

> I know what centres they live from -- what they perceive and feel -- the hot, stinging centrality of a goose in the flux of cold water and mud -- the curious bitter stinging heat of a goose's blood, entering their own blood like an inoculation of corruptive fire -- fire of the cold-burning mud -- the lotus mystery. (81)

There is a parallel here between this incident and Gerald trying to understand the Pussum. The corruptive fire is also the cleansing fire properly used. Lawrence's technique seems to involve fragmentary flashes of insight onto little understood situations, often by the people least likely to be considered authorative. The technique is part of the statement that we live in a fragmented world as fragmented souls.

It is in connection with some of his barely explained animal symbolism that Lawrence benefits by the reading of Jung:

> I usually describe the supraordinate personality as the "self," thus making a sharp distinction between the ego, which, as is well known, extends only as far as the conscious mind, and the <u>whole</u> of the personality, which includes the unconscious as well as the conscious component. The ego is thus related to the self as part to whole. To that extent the self is supraordinate. Moreover, the self is felt empirically not as subject but as object, and this by reason of its unconscious component, which can only come to consciousness indirectly, by way of projection. Because of its unconscious component the self is so far removed from the conscious mind that it can only be partially expressed by human figures; the other part of it has to be expressed by objective, abstract symbols. The human figures are father and son,

> mother and daughter, king and queen, god and goddess. Theriomorphic symbols are the dragon, snake, elephant, lion, bear, and other powerful animals, or again the spider, crab, butterfly, beetle, worm, etc. Plant symbols are generally flowers (lotus and rose). These lead on to geometrical figures like the circle, the sphere, the square, the quaternity, the clock, the firmament, and so on. The indefinite extent of the unconscious component makes a comprehensive description of the human personality impossible. Accordingly, the unconscious supplements the picture with living figures ranging from the animal to the divine, as the two extremes outside man, and rounds out the animal extreme, through the addition of vegetable and inorganic abstraction, into a microcosm. These addenda have a high frequency in anthropomorphic divinities, where they appear as attributes.
>
> Archetypes (187-8)

Although Lawrence has an entirely different idea from Jung as to the origin of archetypes, the use he makes of them is similar. The house party at Breadalby, from Hermione as the incantatory pythoness goddess to the nobility as prehistoric water animals can be read with the above as a gloss. The goose, although not mentioned here is an oriental symbol of sexuality as a force, with not as wide a connotation as the snake. The clock symbolism, later used for Gudrun, indicates the extent of her dislocation.

Jung is helpful on the symbolism of the lotus and womb frequently used by Lawrence in this novel. It is not the province of this paper to trace the sources of the symbols, but it is safe to assume that both Jung and Lawrence

read Eastern religious literature, especially Indian and Chinese, and that they had parallel interests in Egyptian and Biblical sources. It is the pervasiveness of these symbols that is noticeable.

> In India the lotus-flower (padma) is interpreted by the Tantrists as the womb. We know this symbol from the numerous pictures of the Buddha (and other Indian deities) in the lotus-flower. It corresponds to the "Golden Flower" of Chinese alchemy, the rose of the Rosicrucians, and the mystic rose in Dante's Paradiso.
>
> Archetypes 363

Lawrence is concerned with "loss of connection" with the vital and original sources of life or of institutions. This is pointed up in an exchange between Alexander, Hermione's brother, and Hermione's house guests. Alexander is going to church; the rest are going bathing -- an exercise willed by Hermione. He explains:

> ... "I must go to church and read the lessons. They expect me."
> "Are you a Christian?" asked the Italian Countess, with sudden interest.
> "No," said Alexander. "I'm not. But I believe in keeping up the old institutions."
> "They are so beautiful," said Fraulein daintily.
> "Oh, they are," cried Miss Bradley.
> (91)

Gudrun then regards the bathers, the socially correct, the spiritually uncommitted.

> "Aren't they terrifying? Aren't they really terrifying?" said Gudrun. "Don't they look Saurian? They are just like great lizards. Did you ever see anything like Sir Joshua? But really, Ursula, he belongs to the primeval world, when great lizards crawled about." ....
> ...They all dropped into the water, and were swimming together like a shoal of seals. Hermione was powerful and unconscious in the water, large and slow and powerful. Palestra was quick and silent as a water rat. Gerald wavered and flickered, a white natural shadow. Then, one after the other, they waded out, and went up to the house.
> (93)

With these symbols Lawrence implies that society has sunk to a depth below humanity. When the bathers wade out and go to the house the reader unconsciously carries over the force of their water-world personalities. They achieve a kind of evil harmony in the water which seems impossible as a positive achievement on land.

Another symbolic technique employed by Lawrence is the use of folk tales or legends in modern setting as he does in the sophisticated charade which Hermione arranges for the first evening of her house party, or the use of the device of three rings later between Ursula and Birkin. In this incident Lawrence suggests the idea of Hermione as goddess meddling with the fates of the guests. In this episode the theme of the novel is projected:

> Hermione rose and slowly pulled the gold-embroidered band that hung by the mantel, clinging to it for a moment, then releasing it suddenly. Like a priestess she looked, unconscious, sunk in a heavy half-trance. [This note of Hermione as Pythia is recurring]
> (83)

A servant brings silk robes, shawls, and scarves which Hermione has collected out of her love for beautiful extravagant dress. Hermione decides that Ursula, Gudrun and the Contessa shall dance together. "The idea was to make a little ballet, in the style of the Russian Ballet of Pavlova and Nijinsky." The subject is finally decided -- Ruth, Naomi and Orpah.

> ... The inter-play between the women was real and rather frightening. It was strange to see how Gudrun clung with heavy, desperate passion to Ursula, yet smiled with subtle malevolence against her, how Ursula accepted silently, unable to provide any more either for herself or for the other, but dangerous and indomitable, refuting her grief.
>
> Hermione loved to watch. She could see the Contessa's rapid stoat-like sensationalism, Gudrun's ultimate but treacherous cleaving to the woman in her sister, Ursula's dangerous helplessness, as if she were helplessly weighted, and unreleased.
> (84)

It is in events like Hermione's house party, itself with the mythical quality of the princess's ball, where the symbolism is of many kinds and tightly woven, proceeding with inferences and flashes of intuition rather than broadly stated or clearly defined, that Lawrence can be seen as a

conscious and meaningful artist with a coherent message. The component parts of the house party episode are scarcely credible individually but worked into an artistic whole are, in a sinister way, quite acceptable.

The attempt of Hermione to kill Birkin presents more difficulties in reading. There is much unstated irony here. It will be remembered that Birkin has told Gerald that to have a murderer one must have a murderee. He had also told Hermione that her skull should be cracked (39). In their revulsion from the kind of life they lead both Birkin and Hermione drift towards death. In her attempt to kill Birkin the full extent of Hermione's perversion is manifest:

> . . . Then swiftly, in a flame that drenched down her body like fluid lightning and gave her perfect, unutterable consummation, unutterable satisfaction, she brought down the ball of jewel stone with all her force. . . .
> (97)

Her own fingers deaden the blow; her natural slowness prevents a second attempt and Birkin escapes. She proves that the satisfaction that she should obtain from the act of love is provided by the act of ultimate hate, thus marking the extent of her perverse nature.

One is not convinced that Birkin's solution of sitting naked amongst the primroses is a satisfactory one even from his point of view, which seems now to be a longing for primal

innocence -- indeed an Eveless Eden. His sensuality has become impersonal:

> But they [the primroses] were too soft. He went through the long grass to a clump of young fir-trees, that were no higher than a man. The soft sharp boughs beat upon him, as he moved in keen pangs against them, threw little cold showers of drops on his belly, and beat his loins with their clusters of soft-sharp needles. There was a thistle which pricked him vividly, but not too much, because all his movements were too discriminate and soft. To lie down, and roll in the sticky, cool young hyacinths, to lie on one's belly and cover one's back with handfuls of fine wet grass, soft as a breath, soft and more delicate and more beautiful than the touch of any woman.... Nothing else would do, nothing else would satisfy, except this coolness and subtlety of vegetation travelling into one's blood. . . .
> (98-9)

Hermione and Birkin represent extremes of ignorance of, and identifying completely with, Nature. One wishes that Lawrence were saying that truth is somewhere between. But at this point this is what he does say:

> It was necessary to go back into the world.... He knew now where he belonged. He knew where to plant himself; along with the trees, in the beds of the delicious fresh-growing leaves. This was his place, his marriage place. The world was extraneous.
> (99)

Birkin at this point seems like a modern counterpart of a vegetation god with the notable exception that the life-

principle is missing. He partakes in but does not create life. "He was weary of the old ethic, of the human being, and of humanity." This is simply an extension of his ideas as told to Gerald's mother at the wedding -- "Human beings do not really matter."

In Women in Love in particular the reading is a process which progresses by contrarieties and perversities. Lawrence seems to be saying "not this, not this," but does not actively indicate any solutions. It would seem that Birkin, seeking Nature as the antidote to mechanism has mistaken the means for the end. There is no equilibration between Birkin and Hermione.

> He wondered again how much of his heaviness of heart, a certain depression, was due to fear, fear lest anybody should have seen him naked lying with the vegetation.
> (99-100)

The vegetation is a substitute for humanity. Hermione "became rapt, abstracted in her conviction of exclusive righteousness." Hermione, in spite of her perversion has the "tone" of a religious.

An attitude to nature becomes an exercise in contrarieties. Birkin identifies, and too closely, with non-human nature. Gerald, on the other hand, must subdue it. He keeps his sensitive Arabian mare at the railway crossing

while the colliery trains pass even though she is mad with excitement:

> Gudrun was looking at him with black-dilated, spellbound eyes. But he sat glistening and obstinate, forcing the wheeling mare which spun and swerved like a wind, and yet could not get out of the grasp of his will, nor escape from the mad clamour of terror that resounded through her, as the trucks thumped slowly, heavily, horrifying, one after the other, one pursuing the other, over the rails of the crossing.
> (101)

There is a sickening battle of wills between Gerald and the mare; he subjugates her in her terror and wounds her with his spurs:

> Gudrun looked and saw the trickles of blood on the sides of the mare, and she turned white. And then on the very wound the bright spurs came down, pressing relentlessly. The world reeled and passed into nothingness for Gudrun, she could not know any more.
> (102)

The blood, which for Lawrence is the channel for the highest kind of communion, can also be used to indicate a kind of perverse power. It indicates the ambivalent nature of man. Gudrun is half attracted by this appalling cruelty on Gerald's part, fascinated by the subjugation of the mare. As they walk on this feeling is further intensified by a fascination that lays hold upon Gudrun which emanates from

the ugly mining district itself. Hers is a flawed nature. Her artistic sensibilities leave her open to the attractions of the miners:

> "It has a foul kind of beauty, this place," said Gudrun, evidently suffering from fascination. "Can't you feel in some way a thick, hot attraction in it? I can. And it quite stupifies me."
> (105)

Lawrence describes the same takeover in Mrs. Morel except that Mrs. Morel reacts to the outgoing vitality of the miners and Gudrun does the reverse:

> ... Now she realised that this was the world of powerful, underworld men who spent most of their time in the darkness. In their voices she could hear the voluptuous resonance of darkness, the strong, dangerous underworld, mindless, inhuman. They sounded also like strange machines, heavy, oiled. The voluptuousness was like that of machinery, cold and iron.
> (106)

Gudrun is a modern Daphne figure here and will be again in the snow -- two representations of mechanism, the modern substitute for vegetation:

> ... There came over her a nostalgia for the place. She hated it, she knew how utterly cut off it was, how hideous and how sickeningly mindless. Sometimes she beat her wings like a new Daphne, turned not into a tree but a machine. And yet, she was overcome by the nostalgia. She struggled to get more and more into accord with the atmosphere of the place, she craved to get her satisfaction of it.
> (106)

Gudrun is fascinated by the mechanical underworld of the miners. Here perhaps is the key for Gerald's later fascination for her. He is able to use and subdue this world in the same way he used and subdued the mare. Gudrun allows her emotions to be involved; she is swayed rather than served by them:

> Like any other common girl of the district Gudrun strolled up and down, up and down the length of the brilliant two-hundred paces of the pavement nearest the market-place. She knew it was a vulgar thing to do; her father and mother could not bear it; but the nostalgia came over her, she must be among the people. Sometimes she sat among the louts in the cinema; rakish-looking unattractive louts they were. Yet she must be among them.
> (107)

The miners "belonged to another world, they had a strange glamour, their voices were full of an intolerable deep resonance, like a machine's burring, a music more maddening than the siren's long ago." By using the sirens Lawrence, in a completely inverted image, gives full import to the strength Gudrun feels in this perverted attraction.

In Lawrence's system, described in Fantasia, full life comes with a fourfold polarity of childhood becoming eightfold at maturity and which in turn polarizes with the same centres in the opposite sex. Failure to achieve this complete polarization is tragic. In Palmer and Gudrun this kind of

failure is shown. Palmer is an electrician brought into the mines under Gerald's new scheme. He is attracted by the mechanization of the mines as Gudrun is. He also is attracted to Gudrun although he really wants Ursula. It is a mind-body split:

> ... He liked to have Gudrun about, as a fellow-mind ... But he was really impersonal, he had the fineness of an elegant piece of machinery. He was too cold, too destructive to care really for women, too great an egoist. He was polarized by the men. Individually he detested and despised them. In the mass they fascinated him, as machinery fascinated him. They were a new sort of machinery to him -- but incalculable, incalculable.
> (108)

This sharpness of mind and lack of natural feeling resulted in "a sense of power, and of inexpressible destructiveness, and of fatal half-heartedness, a sort of rottenness in the will."

In oblique fashion light is thrown on this condition by a discussion which Ursula and Birkin have in which the tree of life suddenly becomes a tree of death. Birkin confesses that he cannot get his life right from the source and feels that it has been blighted in the bud. This is one of Lawrence's strongest statements about the illness of humanity:

> "And why is it," she asked at length, "that there is no flowering, no dignity of human life now?"

> "The whole idea is dead. Humanity itself is dry-rotten really. There are myriads of human beings hanging on the bush -- and they look very nice and rosy, your healthy young men and women. But they are apples of Sodom, as a matter of fact, Dead Sea Fruit, gall-apples. It isn't true that they have any significance -- their insides are full of bitter, corrupt ash.
> "But there are good people," protested Ursula.
> "Good enough for the life of today. But mankind is a dead tree, covered with fine brilliant galls of people."
> (115-6)

Birkin maintains that creation would be clean and beautiful without the dry rot of humanity: he is the constant spokesman for the idea that humanity is not significant in Nature:

> "If only man was swept off the face of the earth, creation would go on so marvellously, with a new start, non-human. Man is one of the mistakes of creation -- like the ichthyosauri. If only he were gone again, think what lovely things would come out of the liberated days; things straight out of the fire."
> (117-8)

In spite of Birkin's dislike of humanity and disavowal of love there is something in him that would make him save the world, the same kind of disease that attacked Hermione -- the inability to love turning into a kind of do-good spirit of reform:

> And it was this duality in feeling which he created in her, that made a fine hate of him quicken in her bowels. There was his wonderful,

> desirable life-rapidity, the rare quality of an utterly desirable man: and there was at the same time this ridiculous, mean effacement into a Salvator Mundi and a Sunday-School teacher, a prig of the stiffest type.
> (119)

A seemingly harmless chapter entitled "Mino" recounts a visit of Ursula to Birkin, now established in rooms in an old mill. Mino is Birkin's cat; the chapter might well be called "The Fable of Mino" because, contained in the story of the cat is Birkin's philosophy of love -- or lack of it. For Ursula love is the most desirable human relationship. Birkin wants to say that there is something beyond love which is non-human in which field a fuller expansion of being takes place. Since Birkin (or Lawrence) cannot be specific about the value of this transference to a new mode of being, its desirability is questionable. Birkin does his best however:

> "I can't say it is love I have to offer -- and it isn't love I want. It is something much more impersonal and harder -- and rarer."...
> "You mean you don't love me?"...
> "Yes, if you like to put it like that. Though perhaps that isn't true. I don't know. At any rate, I don't feel the emotion of love for you -- no. And I don't want to. Because it gives out in the last issues".... At the very last one is alone, beyond the influence of love. There is a real impersonal me, that is beyond love, beyond any emotional relationship. So it is with you. But we want to delude ourselves that love is the root. It isn't. It

> is only the branches. The root is beyond love, a naked kind of isolation, an isolated me, that does not meet and mingle, and never can.
> (133)

Possibly what Lawrence is trying to say in this chapter is that the answer to many of humanity's problems may lie in the simplicity of the unconscious; old human problems cannot be solved in old terms but only by analogy with the non-human world:

> "There is," he said, in a voice of pure abstraction, "a final me which is stark and impersonal and beyond responsibility. So there is a final you. And it is there I would want to meet you -- not in the emotional, loving plane -- but there beyond, where there is no speech and no terms of agreement."...
> (134)

> "What I want is a strange conjunction with you --" he said quietly: "-- not meeting and mingling; -- you are quite right: -- but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings: -- as the stars balance each other."
> (135)

At this point Mino the cat, slim, elegant, and kingly, subdues a little stray female cat -- a wild one from the woods which has come into the garden. Mino is disdainfully sure of his superiority. At last

> In a lovely springing leap, like a wind, the Mino was upon her, and had boxed her twice, very definitely, with a white, delicate fist. She sank and slid back, unquestioning. He walked after

> her, and cuffed her once or twice, leisurely, with sudden little blows of his magic white paws.
> (136-7)

> "Mino," said Ursula, "I don't like you. You are a bully like all males."
> "No", said Birkin, "he is justified. He is not a bully. He is only insisting to the poor stray that she shall acknowledge him as a sort of fate, her own fate, because you can see she is fluffy and promiscuous as the wind. I am with him entirely. He wants superfine stability."
> (137)

In human terms the Pussum would be the stray, but Lawrence has already stated that the stray is not his ideal.

At this point analogy is not efficacious. The two non-human extremes, balance of stars and the cuffing of promiscuous cats, do not seem to establish feasible guidelines for human behaviour -- and Lawrence has to deal with humanity.

In "The Water Party" -- a reception given by the Crich family to neighbours and townspeople the action-inaction, life-in-death, death and rebirth themes are emphasized. Towards the end of an evening of celebration Diana Crich falls from the pleasure launch into the lake and is drowned. Gerald tries unsuccessfully to save her. Some bitter truths arise from this incident, one being that Diana is only a cipher in this family of encrusted <u>mores</u> and that her death does not really matter to anyone. Birkin says:

"Better she were dead -- she'll be much more real. She'll be positive in death. In life she was a fretting negated thing."

Gudrun accepts the realization that she can never go beyond Gerald, that "he was the final approximation of life to her." In the word "approximation" Gudrun's doom is sealed. It means that her life will be a copy of life; she will never create herself continually from the living centre or "quick" of herself. Gudrun is also aware of her default:

> ... She sat wanting connection with him. Strenuously she claimed her connection with him, across the invisible space of the water. But round her heart was an isolation unbearable, through which nothing would penetrate.
> (167)

Birkin is quick to say that Diana Crich is better dead, yet he is challenged by Ursula that he does not want to die. But Birkin replies:

> "There is life which belongs to death, and there is life which isn't death. One is tired of the life that belongs to death -- our kind of life. But whether it is finished, God knows. I want love that is like sleep, like being born again, vulnerable as a baby that just comes into the world."
> (171)

Birkin seems to be working out a theory of the Old Adam dying and the new Adam being reborn beyond physical passion into a

kind of effortless Eden.

In the final analysis the community seemed to enjoy the tragedy of Diana's death. Gudrun deteriorates:

> Gudrun had a wild idea of rushing to comfort Gerald. She was thinking all the time of the perfect comforting, reassuring thing to say to him. She was shocked and frightened, but she put that away, thinking of how she should deport herself with Gerald: act her part. That was the real thrill: how she should act her part. (175)

The shallow feeling leads to action. Ursula, deeply in love with Birkin, is pressed into waiting and non-action.

Nowhere is Lawrence's drift toward death more evident than in the chapter "Sunday Evening". It is an elaboration of the labyrinth theme. The outside of the labyrinth is death; time and space, mechanical measures are the traps. Ursula is in a mood of bitter ripeness when she feels that she must fall from the tree of life into death, a development from life. In her body she feels the anguish of dissolution. In a soliloquy strangely reminiscent of Lady Julian she enquires:

> "Does the body correspond so immediately with the spirit?" she asked herself. And she knew, with the clarity of ultimate knowledge that the body is only one of the manifestations of the spirit, the transmutation of the integral spirit is the transmutation of the physical body as well. Unless I set my will, unless I absolve myself from the rhythm of life, fix myself and remain static, cut off from living, absolved within my own will. But better die than live

> mechanically a life that is a repetition of repetitions. To die is to move on with the invisible. To die is also a joy, a joy of submitting to that which is greater than the known, namely, the pure unknown. . . .
> (177)

On Sunday evening Birkin finally comes; Ursula is overcome with pure gem-like hatred of him. "He was the enemy, fine as a diamond, and as hard and jewel-like, the quintessence of all that was inimical." In a sense Birkin has what he wished for -- a relationship beyond the connection of love or sense of obligation. "She saw him as a clear stroke of uttermost contradiction, a strange gem-like being whose existence denied her own non-existence." For Ursula it is "a transfiguration of hatred." (182)

Ursula realizes that her hatred is an abstract thing. It is as if she is moved by a force that she neither recognizes nor controls.

Birkin, a more "realized" person, is also more aware. He becomes ill, and in his illness he has a sane facing about which stops his drift towards death. Here is the typical Lawrencean life-death debate:

> He lay sick and unmoved, in pure opposition to everything. He knew how near to breaking was the vessel that held his life. He knew also how strong and durable it was. And he did not care. Better a thousand times take one's chance with death, than accept a life one did not want. But

> best of all to persist and persist and persist for ever, till one were satisfied in life.
> (183)

Birkin's problem is that he wants to live on his own terms which are vastly different from, or beyond, depending upon point of view, that of his own society:

> On the whole, he hated sex, it was such a limitation. It was sex that turned a man into a broken half of a couple, the woman into the other broken half. And he wanted to be single in himself, the woman single in herself. He wanted sex to revert to the level of the other appetites, to be regarded as a functional process, not as a fulfilment. He believed in sex marriage, But beyond this, he wanted a further conjunction, where man had being and woman had being, two pure beings, each constituting the freedom of the other, balancing each other like two poles of one force, like two angels, or two demons.
> (183)

As he is lying ill Birkin muses upon his battle against the world and against women and comes up with a bit of mythology reminiscent of that of androgynous man in The Symposium. He resents what he feels to be the calm assumption of power in woman:

> It was intolerable, this possession at the hands of woman. Always a man must be considered as the broken-off fragment of a woman, and the sex was the still aching scar of the laceration. Man must be added on to a woman, before he had any real place or wholeness.
> (184)

Birkin makes a proper use of myth to explain to himself the state of mankind:

> In the old age, before sex was, we were mixed, each one a mixture. The process of singling into individuality resulted into the polarisation of sex. The womanly drew to one side, the manly to the other. But the separation was imperfect even then. And so our world-cycle passes. There is now to come the new day, when we are beings each of us, fulfilled in difference. The man is pure man, the woman pure woman, they are perfectly polarised. But there is no longer any of the horrible merging, mingling, self-abnegations of love. There is only the pure duality of polarisation, each one free from any contamination of the other. In each, the individual is primal, sex is subordinate, but perfectly polarised. Each has a single, separate being, with its own laws. The man has his pure freedom, the woman hers.... Each admits the different nature in the other. (185)

This modern myth shows the complete shift from outer to inner. Plato's object of desire is superpersonal, outside of man drawing him outward. Lawrence's object of desire is the unmixed self consolidating man within himself. Plato never gave a final answer -- perhaps because man is infinitely complex and one answer would not do. Lawrence hopes that man is simple and that one answer will do. This will be "the new day".

At the same time Lawrence indicates another kind of salvation, one in which he might believe wholeheartedly. Gerald comes to visit Birkin while he is ill. They speak of

Gerald's young sister Winifred, an unusual, artistic child. Hermione has suggested Gudrun as art instructor for Winifred. Birkin approves because "every true artist is the salvation of every other." And later: "Only artists produce for each other the world that is fit to live in."

During Gerald's visit Birkin contemplates another possible facet of existence:

> . . . Suddenly he saw himself confronted with another problem -- the problem of love and eternal conjunction between two men. Of course this was necessary -- it had been a necessity inside himself all his life -- to love a man purely and fully. Of course he had been loving Gerald all along, and all along denying it. (190)

He suggests to Gerald a modern version of the Blutbruderschaft of the old German knights -- to be true to each other, of one blood all their lives. This proves another blind alley in Birkin's labyrinth, yet the closing words of the novel express his belief in this kind of love.

In dealing with the problems of Gerald's father, and incidentally Gerald, Lawrence attacks the problem of reality, of being and seeming. Mr. Crich seems to the world a kind of demi-god; he is the industrial magnate who has the welfare of the miners at heart. This is really not out of kindness. There has been in his life a reversal of religious values within his context of goodness:

> He had been so constant to his light, so constant to charity and to his love for his neighbour. Perhaps he had loved his neighbour even better than himself.... He had always the unacknowledged belief that it was his workmen, the miners, who held in their hands the means of salvation. To move nearer to God, he must move towards his miners.... They were unconsciously, his idol, his God, made manifest. In them he worshipped the highest, the great, sympathetic, mindless Godhead of humanity.
>
> And all the while, his wife had opposed him like one of the great demons of hell. Strange, like a bird of prey, with the fascinating beauty and abstraction of a hawk, she had beat against the bars of his philanthropy, and like a hawk in a cage, she had sunk into silence.... And because she was his prisoner, his passion for her had always remained as keen as death. . . .
>
> (198)

The plight of the hawk in the cage, and the supremacy of the carrion bird is symbolic of the perverted domesticity of the first family of Beldover. In it Lawrence highlights part of the malaise of the Victorian age. The dislocation of values did not necessarily mean relocation of them but rather a diminishing of them in such a way that the dislocation is ignored. The outer calm of family life is maintained but the dislocation shows up in the children.

Charity becomes a passion with Mr. Crich:

> Sometimes, it seemed to Mrs. Crich as if her husband were some subtle funeral bird, feeding on the miseries of the people. It seemed to her he was never satisfied unless there was some sordid tale being poured out to him, which he drank in with a sort of mournful, sympathetic satisfaction.

> He would have no raison d'etre if there were no lugubrious miseries in the world, as an undertaker would have no meaning if there were no funerals.
> Mrs. Crich recoiled back upon herself, she recoiled away from the world of creeping democracy.... (200)

It was "a relationship of utter interdestruction."

It is this Victorian refusal to face reality which Lawrence is condemning. Part of the unsatisfactory feeling in the reading of his novels is the feeling of malaise in the reader; somehow the reader enters into the process of the novel. Subtly the poison of unreality is distilled into the next generation of Criches. The false purity, "the white flame," the "white flower of snow" which Mr. Crich attributed to his wife becomes in Gerald an icy quality. He seems a frozen arctic thing, yet he is usually depicted with the sun gleaming through him as if the qualities in abeyance in him might be released. It is easy to read Lawrence and miss the slow dance of qualities that spells out the fate of the characters.

Mr. Crich is the embodiment of the Victorian assurance that the thing you dislike will go away if you pretend it is not there. Now in his dying moments he turns to Gerald for compassion, but the two of them had always been opposed:

> ... For Gerald was in reaction against Charity: and yet he was dominated by it, it assumed supremacy in the inner life, and he could not

> confute it. So he was partly subject to that which his father stood for, but he was in reaction against it. . . .
> The father won shelter from Gerald through compassion. But for love he had Winifred. She was his youngest child, she was the only one of his children whom he had ever closely loved. . . .
> (201)

So the changes of charity, compassion and love are rung. The notes are dull and flat. The original, biblical meanings are never even considered, let alone understood. The many-faceted words are fragmented into components of half-meaning. Gerald has become the unwilling physical embodiment of his father's mental life. The old wise man has become the sorcerer and Gerald the half-knowing victim.

This family situation has been dealt with at length because Lawrence thought that much of the breakdown of Victorian society rested here. His own difficulties, which were the normal difficulties of the modern working man on the way up the professional ladder, were considered specifically in Sons and Lovers, but the decay of the aristocracy was the evil anticipated as far back as The Republic. Birkin modernizes it for Gerald when he explains to him why Gudrun would be willing to teach in a public school but not to act as private tutor to Winifred:

> "The difference between a public servant and a private one. The only nobleman to-day, king and only aristocrat, is the public, the public. You are quite willing to serve the public - but to be a private tutor -."
> (192)

This is getting close to the democracy that Plato feared.

There is no real hero in Women in Love but a case can be made for Gerald as a true tragic figure. He has heroic qualities and it is clear how deliberately he was flawed by the conditions of his life:

> During his childhood and his boyhood he had wanted a sort of savagedom. The days of Homer were his ideal, when a man was chief of an army of heroes, or spent his years in wonderful Odyssey. He hated remorselessly the circumstances of his own life, so much that he never really saw Beldover and the colliery valley. . . .
> (204)

School, which he hated "was so much death to him." He chose a German university, tried war, then travel in savage regions. His mind was curious and cold and took hold of sociological ideas of reform as mental amusement and as a reaction against the positive order -- "the destructive reaction".

Here is outlined a modern Odyssey -- the unsuccessful search for the self which results in a reaction against the society which denied and repressed that self which was the object of the search. Then in a psychological about-face Gerald embraces the enemy as friend. The underworld of the miners becomes his milieu:

> He discovered at last a real adventure in the coal-mines. His father asked him to help in the firm. Gerald had been educated in the science of mining, and it had never interested him. Now suddenly, with a sort of exultation, he laid hold of the world.
> (204)

Lawrence assumes the tone of the teller of myths or fairy tales and in a sense Gerald is a parallel of Hermione. His progress is like that of a prince; indeed he is an industrial prince, more famous than his father.

> ... Four raw new towns, and many ugly industrial hamlets were crowded under his dependence. He saw the stream of miners flowing along the causeways from the mines at the end of the afternoon, thousands of blackened, slightly distorted human beings with red mouths, all moving subjugate to his will....
>
> ... Suddenly he had conceived the pure instrumentality of mankind. There had been so much humanitarianism, so much talk of suffering and feelings. It was ridiculous. The sufferings and feelings of individuals did not matter in the least. They were mere conditions, like the weather. What mattered was the pure instrumentality of the individual. As a man as of a knife: does it cut well? Nothing else mattered.
>
> (205)

This Aristotelian thought points up the horror involved when, feeling divorced from thought, the educated man makes a game of his world.

Gerald contemplates the obsolete mines which he must take over from his father and does not hesitate to break the neck of the old workings.

> And it was his will to subjugate Matter to his own ends. The subjugation itself was the point, the fight was the be-all, the fruits of victory were mere results.... What he wanted was the pure fulfilment of his own will in the struggle with the natural conditions....
>
> (206)

Lawrence uses the mechanization of the mines to explain the process of reversal in values which led to the derangement of industrial life. The elder Crich had not been able to come to terms with the conflicting ideas of love and business; he was the victim of a false idealism. When Gerald was still a boy Thomas Crich had been forced by the Masters' Federation to close down the mines because the miners would not accept a wage reduction. Because he had to deny work to his men he overcompensated them. They in turn were swept away by an equally false idea that all men were equal. Thomas Crich felt guilty because he had great possessions; the mob was driven by cupidity and the desire to share these possessions without earning them. The false concept of love created chaos in the machine. Chaos was strengthened by free teas, and donations of food and milk with which the elder Crich salved his conscience.

> And then it came to an end, and the men went back to work. But it was never the same as before. There was a new situation created, a new idea reigned. Even in the machine, there should be equality. No part should be subordinate to any other part: all should be equal. The instinct for chaos had entered. Mystic equality lies in being, not in having or doing, which are processes. In function and process, one man, one part, must of necessity be subordinate to another. It is a condition of being. But the desire to chaos had risen, and the idea of mechanical equality was the weapon of disruption which should execute the will of men, the will for chaos.
> (208-9)

In the Crich family's struggle with industry Lawrence mirrors the problems of industrial England with Beldover as the symbol, and the reader is not unaware of the implied criticism obtained by echoing I Cor. 12:12 ff. Lawrence does not say that charity is possible in industry; he merely says that Gerald's solution is the one that has been used and that it is financially successful. Gerald solves the chaos created by his father's division of sympathy and will by the elimination of sympathy and the unification of will.

> Gerald was a boy at the time of the strike, but he longed to be a man, to fight the colliers. The father however was trapped between two half-truths, and broken. He wanted to be a pure Christian, one and equal with all men. He even wanted to give away all he had, to the poor. Yet he was a great promoter of industry, and he knew perfectly that he must keep his goods and keep his authority. This was as divine a necessity in him, as the need to give away all he possessed -- more divine even, since this was the necessity he acted upon. Yet because he did <u>not</u> act on the other ideal, it dominated him, he was dying of chagrin because he must forfeit it....
> (209)

Gerald has no scruples:

> ... What mattered was the great social productive machine. Let that work perfectly, let it produce a sufficiency of everything, let every man be given a rational portion, greater or less according to his functional degree of magnitude, and then, provision made, let the devil supervene, let every man look after his own amusements and appetites, so long as he interfered with nobody.
> (209)

On the surface Gerald is successful -- but he is also mad. He has superimposed his will upon matter; he is the God of the machine. "He had his life-work now, to extend over the earth a great and perfect system in which the will of man ran smooth and unthwarted, timeless, a Godhead in process."

Mechanization becomes a religion:

> ... The miners were reduced to mere mechanical instruments. They had to work hard, much harder than before, the work was terrible and heart-breaking in its mechanicalness.
>
> But they submitted to it all. The joy went out of their lives, the hope seemed to perish as they became more and more mechanised. And yet they accepted the new conditions. They even got a further satisfaction out of them. At first they hated Gerald Crich, they swore to do something to him, to murder him. But as time went on, they accepted everything with some fatal satisfaction. Gerald was their high priest, he represented the religion they really felt.... It was the first great step in undoing, the first great phase of chaos, the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic ... It was pure organic disintegration and pure mechanical organisation....
>
> (212-3)

There is an echo of Birkin's words to Gerald here -- "there must be a murderer and a murderee." But the mines are successful even if human relationships no longer exist. The miners do not know Gerald; Gerald regards the men as ciphers. They would not have the passion for murder. This is the other side of the coin. Birkin wants to be beyond passion, but individualized, not nullified. Gerald represents pure

mechanization by force of will; Birkin indicates the same trend in organic terms, but he wishes to preserve individuality.

With a sparkle of irony this unheroic struggle concludes with a pleasantly spoken bias towards disaster:

> ... He had a set of really clever engineers, both mining and electrical, and they did not cost much. A highly educated man costs very little more than a workingman. His managers, who were all rare men, were no more expensive than the old bungling fools of his father's day, who were merely colliers promoted. His chief manager, who had twelve hundred a year, saved the firm at least five thousand. The whole system was now so perfect that Gerald was hardly necessary any more.
> (214)

The process has been a two-way process. The triumph of will means the death of the individual self of the miners but the wielder of will has died too. Sometimes in the evenings Gerald is overcome by fear and searches his face in the mirror. "There it was, shapely and healthy and the same as ever, yet somehow, it was not real, it was a mask." His centres of feeling are drying up. He has no centre, no sense of equilibrium. Birkin saves him from fear by his "quick sufficiency in life". Equilibration depends on a polarized "other".

Gerald and Gudrun, Ursula and Birkin struggle with the perversity in their natures. The blood, Lawrence's gospel of salvation, has also its diabolic counterpart. Winifred, as one

of her art lessons, wishes to draw Bismark, her pet rabbit. The rabbit fights as he is removed from his hutch. Gerald and Gudrun, scratched and bleeding as they subdue the rabbit, which shows all the mystery and terrifying behaviour of a really wild thing, are drawn together as if in a mystic rite in an obscene knowledge shared over the rabbit. They are both without belief and without a centre of meaning. The diabolical bloodletting that the rabbit achieves as he lacerates their arms assumes the meaning of a ritual. It is an inversion of the idea that Birkin would have had with Gerald in his Blutbruderschaft.

Birkin fights what he believes to be the diabolical, the shadow of the moon in the water -- a symbol to him of the domination of women, Ursula in particular, and he stones it furiously. As Ursula appears and stops the stoning their old stumbling blocks appear. Birkin sees a golden light (like the moon) in Ursula which is her spirit and which he wants her to surrender to him. Ursula wants love, a sort of bodily submission -- Birkin surrendering to her. They cannot agree and Birkin has a flash of insight: "While ever either of us insists to the other, we are all wrong. But there we are, the accord doesn't come." (232)

Again comes the interweaving of dark and light, being and seeming, by which the novel progresses. As Gerald

consents to a debased blood pact with Gudrun, a kind of initiation into depravity, Birkin moves from the diabolic symbol of the moon as symbol of female domination to the symbol of his goal, the bird of paradise "that could never be netted, it must fly by itself to the heart." For him this means the dropping of the self-assertive will and entering into a condition of complete trust. The self-assertive will is typical of Gerald and Gudrun.

Birkin is not simple. The processes of creation and dissolution and the flux out of which his being must come are complex. He remembers a sensual, African woman's figure at Halliday's apartment and considers that in her black race the relation between the senses and the outspoken mind had broken, leaving mystically sensual experience ... "the principle of knowledge in dissolution and corruption."

Birkin sees a similar fate awaiting the white races:

> There remained this way, this awful African process, to be fulfilled. It would be done differently by the white races. The white races, having the arctic north behind them, the vast abstraction of ice and snow, would fulfil a mystery of ice-destructive knowledge, snow-abstract annihilation. Whereas the West Africans, controlled by the burning death-abstraction of the Sahara, had been fulfilled in sun-destruction, the putrescent mystery of sun-rays.
> (234)

Birkin sees Gerald as the symbol of this icy dissolution. "And was he fated to pass away in this knowledge, this one process of frost-knowledge, death by perfect cold?" Birkin realizes that two extremes do not constitute an ideal.

> ... There was another way, the way of freedom. There was the paradisal entry into pure, single being, the individual soul taking precedence over love and desire for union, stronger than any pangs of emotion, a lovely state of free proud singleness, which accepted the obligation of the permanent connection with others, and with the other, submits to the yoke and leash of love, but never forfeits its own proud individual singleness, even while it loves and yields. (235)

The star equilibration is modified into human possibility by the rejection of sun and ice and the dissolution of knowledge. It is as if Birkin wins his human victories by playing a vast game of cosmic checkers. It is in this mood that he goes to propose marriage to Ursula. Will Brangwen is not really in favour of the marriage and Ursula declares that she is being bullied. She goes into a hard and gem-like state of opposition -- another indication of a kind of geological state change under great pressure. This, translated into psychological terms, is the best way of accounting for the change of state of feeling under psychological pressure, part of which is not even realized. Gudrun is in accord with Ursula's mood. Together they represent aspects of women.

> Ursula saw her men as sons, pitied their yearning and admired their courage, and wondered over them as a mother wonders over her child, with a certain delight in their novelty. But to Gudrun, they were the opposite camp. She feared them and despised them, and respected their activities even overmuch.
> (243)

Ursula is the Great Mother; Gudrun is perilously near the Great Whore.

Birkin calls on Gerald the night Ursula refuses him. Gerald is alone "bearing the stress of his own emptiness". During the evening in a strange scene they wrestle, physically close. It is apparent that for Gerald a homosexual relationship seems the answer to his fast-growing problem of how to avoid the feeling of annihilation by separation. He feels incapable of loving a woman. Gerald feels unreal; Birkin represents reality for him.

Unreality and reality are represented in the women by Hermione and Ursula. It is noticeable that Gudrun and Ursula are complementary rather than opposite. Gudrun and Hermione together represent the negative, Gudrun the dark and Hermione the dead. But no symbolic role remains static. Now Hermione is like the moon:

> ... One half of her was lost to life. Her self was all in her head, she did not know what it was, spontaneously to run or move, like a fish in the water, or a weasel on the grass. She must always know.
> ... She was apt, mentally, to condescend to women such as Ursula, whom she regarded as purely emotional.
> (269)

Hermione represents the outer-directed life, Ursula the inner, emotional life. Hermione, like Gerald, becomes more abstract, symbolic, and progressively unreal. This impression is built up by references to her incantatory voice, her oracular pronouncements, the unearthly light on her face, the verbal icon of the pythoness before the oracle. At other times she assumes a pseudo-religious role of mother superior. Hermione and Ursula tear at Birkin's nature. He considers a picaresque approach to life, episodic, not bothering with a meaningful meshing of human relationships.

Lawrence uses the fairy-tale approach of the three rings to make an exposition of the kinds of love to be considered. Birkin has bought three rings for Ursula in a second-hand shop. He gives them to her, not specifying that they are engagement rings. She likes a round opal, red and fiery, set in a circle of tiny rubies. He likes a rose shaped sapphire with small brilliants. Seemingly ignored is a squarish topaz set in a frame of steel -- possibly the symbol of a workable compromise since the other two so obviously represent star equilibration and passion, possibly reference to Hermione.[4] The opal fits, but Ursula points out that it

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[4] This may refer to something which must be refused. In an essay, "Foreword to The First Lady Chatterley", Frieda writes "Even such a little thing that might have looked pretentious, as a topaz ring I offered him with the Richthofen arms on it, he would not take. He looked at -- it was nice for a little while. "No," he said "that isn't for me." (Frieda Lawrence, The Memoirs and Correspondence ed. by E.W. Tedlock, Jr. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1964, p. 453).

is an omen of ill luck. Birkin asserts that luck is vulgar and that he does not want what luck would bring. Obviously he wants her to accept all three rings. His nature is to synthesize to achieve harmony. The concomitant to this is necessarily the awareness of differences, Birkin's besetting irony. Synthesis is more difficult and more subtle than compromise and Lawrence indicates that Ursula may not be up to it with only emotions to work with. Ursula was "still at the emotional personal level", loving to analyse people and their motives:

> ... He was not very much interested any more in personalities and in people -- people were all different, but they were all enclosed in a definite limitation, he said.... They were all essentially alike, the differences were only variations on a theme. None of them transcended the given terms.
> (281)

The dark and light, death and life themes enter into the quarrel that is inevitable between two people who are attracted to each other yet feel and think in different modes. Ursula accuses Birkin of begging a true emotional relationship in favour of a degraded submission to Hermione balanced off by a feeling of excessive spirituality. Birkin admits to himself that he is perverse and spiritual on one hand and degraded on the other, yet he cannot think that Ursula is right. Birkin is capable of self-analysis; he realizes that

self-destruction, translated into spirituality is a kind of stimulant. But Ursula's emotional intimacy seems no better than Hermione's abstract spiritual intimacy:

> ... Fusion, fusion, this horrible fusion of two beings, which every woman and most men insisted on, was it not nauseous and horrible anyhow, whether it was a fusion of the spirit or of the emotional body. Hermione saw herself as the perfect Idea, to which all men must come: And Ursula was the perfect Womb, the bath of birth, to which all men must come! ... Why could they not remain individuals, limited by their own limits?...
> (285)

Birkin's feeling is one of nausea -- an existential complaint.

Birkin is incapable of action but needs none as Ursula returns to him freely and upon his own terms. It is useless for the reader to try to understand Birkin's terms more fully than they have been given; he does not really understand them himself. It is a new unknown relationship that he strives for. Ursula "wished he were passionate, because in passion she was at home. But this was so still and frail, as space is more frightening than force." Ursula has already contemplated "the space of death" but is unable to consider the space of life.

Lawrence reverses the primitive idea of rites of passage. This is rather a rebirth from sexuality, not to asexuality but beyond sexuality:

> He drove on in a strange new wakefulness, the tension of his consciousness broken. He seemed to be conscious all over, all his body awake with a simple, glimmering awareness, as if he had just come awake, like a thing that is born, like a bird when it comes out of an egg, into a new universe.
> (287)

In the following fusion of myths and transference of symbols all Lawrence's themes seem to focus. Many are biblical and connected with the themes of The Rainbow. Birkin had wondered, looking at Will Brangwen the night he proposed to Ursula, how such an uncreated person could have been her father. Now it seems that some of the creation Will sought for may be attained by Ursula.

Birkin and Ursula come to Southwell Minster, the cathedral that Will had loved as a spiritual revelation. It is dusk, the golden lights showing "like slabs of revelation in the shop-windows."

Birkin loves the cathedral in a different way. "It looks like quartz crystals sticking up out of the dark hollow" -- not spiritual.

"All praise to thee my God this night" the bells sing:

> ... So to Ursula's ear, the tune fell out, drop by drop, from the unseen sky on to the dusky town. It was like dim, bygone centuries sounding....
> (288)

Compare this section to the aisles of praise in The Rainbow, and the timelessness:

> ... She stood in the old yard of the inn,
> smelling of straw and stables and petrol.
> Above, she could see the first stars....

Again:

> ... 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. And
> he was one of these, one of these strange
> creatures as from the beyond, looking down at
> her, and seeing she was fair.
> (288)

"One of the sons of God" is what the young Ursula in <u>The Rainbow</u> had hoped that Anton Skrebensky might have been.

> He [Birkin] 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.... But his eyes had a faintly
> ironical contraction.
> (288)

The old yard of the inn smells of petrol but this is a new nativity. Ursula feels transcendent; Birkin is one of the super race of giants in Genesis -- an outward and upward movement. There is a modulation of imagery -- inward, oriental, mystic, non-Christian, and Birkin sees Ursula as the golden flower or lotus. There is a serpent too in this Eden which is the old serpent. "But his eyes had a faintly ironical contraction." Birkin is aware of himself. He did not leave himself on the other side of his experience.

It would seem that Birkin had achieved his paradisaical bird. Yet: something was tight and unfree in him. He did not like this crouching, this radiance -- not altogether." The scene is too idyllic to admit perversity but there is paradox. It is Birkin who wants a new birth. It is Ursula who is completely changed. She is conscious of the life-source of Birkin's body:

> 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....
> (290)

"They were glad, and they could forget perfectly. They laughed, and went to the meal provided." They ate the simple meal in the inn and suddenly there is the Edenic atmosphere of Paradise Lost -- the paradisaical meals of Adam and Eve before the intrusion of the serpent. All is noble and simple.

Ursula and Birkin now have complete freedom, complete being. But there is still the troublesome task of preserving this perfect freedom in a societal relationship. They resign their positions. One thing is certain, the new freedom cannot flourish in the English Midlands.

Now comes another of Lawrence's paradoxes. It is almost certain that, admiring old cultures as he did, what he wanted to say was that Ursula and Birkin had achieved the connection with the life force that people like the ancient Egyptians achieved. As they drive on to spend the night in Sherwood Forest:

> 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, subtle silence.
> (293)

What actually comes through is that deep as the experience of Ursula and Birkin is, the Egyptians are more subtle and have more knowledge and force.

A parallel movement takes place between Gudrun and Gerald, with Mrs. Crich a point of comparison analagous to Hermione. For Lawrence the flowering of life is a physical flowering but his decay is usually a decay of energy. This is seen in Mrs. Crich as she is told that Thomas Crich may not live through the night. She has produced children but her essential energy has remained unharnessed:

> Mrs. Crich sat perfectly impassive, as if she had not heard. Her bulk seemed hunched in the chair, her fair hair hung slack over her ears. But her skin was clear and fine, her hands as she sat with them forgotten and folded, were quite beautiful, full of potential energy. A great mass of energy seemed decaying up in that silent hulking form.
> (301)

Gerald, feeling like one half of a scales that cannot equilibrate, depends on Gudrun for his balance.

After his father's death Gerald feels suspended over a pit of nothingness. He has been held together by his father's slender thread of life. He has nothing within himself to buoy him up. Gudrun at this time is a bath of life to him but he is full of "pent-up darkness and corrosive death." They are capable of violent sensation. Gerald too has a rebirth experience, and feels that Gudrun's effluence is a healing to his damaged and seared brain. Gerald does not get past a mother-child experience emotionally; Gudrun is incapable of a real relationship, summed up in her thought -- "Ah, this awful, inhuman distance which would always be interposed between her and the other being!" She is incapable even of the merging that Birkin despises. She too suffers from nausea. As she watches Gerald dress she thinks: "It is like a workman getting up to go to work, And I am like a workman's wife." (321)

"But an ache like nausea was upon her: a nausea of him."

Lawrence seems to imply that because of the imperfections of the world, because of the mechanization of life and dwarfing of pure relationships, that a good relationship is scarcely possible. Neither Birkin nor Gerald is committed to marriage -- Birkin because he still believes that marriage is not a broad enough base for society and that open, unashamed homosexual relationships should complete it; Gerald, ready to bow to the convention that marriage is the base and be miserable in it. Yet both men would marry. Neither Ursula nor Gudrun is willing. In the generation from Will and Anna of The Rainbow to Women in Love, faith in marriage and the family as the basis of society has disappeared.

Ursula and Birkin finally decide to be married, and in Birkin's feeling Lawrence states as clearly as he ever does the meaning of the arch, the rainbow, the Holy Ghost.

> In the new, superfine bliss, a peace superseding knowledge, there was no I and you, there was only the third, unrealized wonder, the wonder of existing not as oneself, but in a consummation of my being and of her being in a new one, a new paradisal unit regained from the duality. Nor can I say "I love you," when I have ceased to be, and you have ceased to be: we are both caught up and transcended into a new oneness where everything is silent, because there is nothing to answer, all is perfect and one. Speech travels between the separate parts. But in the perfect One there is perfect silence of bliss."
> (341)

One might say that Lawrence, the seeker for unity, composed a myth of duality with the pen of ambivalence.

The Brangwens have moved into town and Ursula and Gudrun go to the empty house to collect Ursula's belongings. Ursula gives her opinion of her parents and their life:

> It all seems so _nothing_ -- their two lives -- there's no meaning in it. Really, if they had _not_ met and _not_ married, and not lived together -- it wouldn't have mattered, would it?...If I thought my life was going to be like it ... I should run.
> (345)

This seems to bear the warning that the fine flame of living must be kindled fresh by every generation, that meaning thins out and each generation must find its own meaning.

Gudrun and Gerald plan to go away with Ursula and Birkin. As they start off Gudrun and Gerald visit the Pompadour Cafe on their one night in London. The Pussum visits their table and they talk to her, but the connection with this old set is broken. The Pussum returns to her companions. "Gudrun watched her curious walk, stiff and jerking at the loins. They heard her level toneless voice distinctly."

In the phrase "jerking at the loins" we have a symbol of the disintegration by mechanization of this shallowly sophisticated society, an urban paralled to the

mines at Beldover. Lawrence believed the fountain of true passional feeling was the loins. It will be remembered that Hermione walked this way also.

The seed, the symbol of new life, is used in the flight from England to the continent -- a record of Lawrence's own disgust for England. As the ship draws away from England Ursula and Birkin

> ... seemed to fall away into the profound darkness. There was no sky, no earth, only one unbroken darkness, into which, with soft, sleeping motion, they seemed to fall like one closed seed of life falling through dark, fathomless space.
> (357)

The landing at Ostend is like disembarking from the Styx into the underworld -- "desolate, forlorn, nowhere -- grey dreary nowhere". At last Ursula has a good thought about her childhood. The division between her childhood and her life is made by this journey. Birkin has harrowed hell by the pursuing of his emotions past the point of dissolution and on to wholeness. Ursula has not gone as far so her experience is a purgatorial one amongst the grey shadows. She is confused by time in a way that Birkin never is. In a picture reminiscent of the little, distanced figure of Anna in The Rainbow "it seemed she had no identity, that the child she had been, playing in Cossethay church-yard was a little creature of history, not really herself. (359)

The couples meet at Innsbruck, which is a kind of Eden and promised land, a place that Gerald had been happy in as a young man. It was a place where they would shake off the fetters of England and be free. They seem to be brilliantly lighted, exalted by the snow; they feel more than human. It is a far cry from the paradisaical dinner at the little inn when Ursula thought of Birkin as one of the giants in Genesis. This has a hard sophistication and brittleness. There is an unspoken irony in the portrayal of these sophisticates seeking prelapsarian bliss.

The snow world changes them. Gerald and Gudrun "were separate, like opposite poles of one fierce energy. But they felt powerful enough to leap over the confines of life into the forbidden places, and back again".

Gudrun's inability to form a meaningful relationship is apparent at last when the couples travel to a little mountain inn. Gudrun looks out of the window and sees "the centre, the knot, the navel of the world, where the earth belonged to the skies, pure, unapproachable, impassable."

> It filled Gudrun with a strange rapture. She crouched in front of the window, clenching her face in her hands, in a sort of trance. At last she had arrived, she had reached her place. Here at last she folded her venture and settled down like a crystal in the navel of snow, and was gone.

> Gerald bent above her and was looking over her shoulder. Already he felt he was alone. She was gone. She was completely gone, and there was icy vapour round his heart. He saw the blind valley, the great cul-de-sac of snow and mountain peaks, under the heaven. And there was no way out....
> (368)

This is the psychological landscape of those who cannot love. It is Gerald who later settles down in the navel of snow and is gone.

The world navel, the marriage of earth and heaven -- these macrocosmic symbols have no echo in the microcosm. Gerald is becoming the creature of ice that Birkin feared he would be, and he is without the gleam of sun which formerly shone in his icy moments. Gudrun has found her religion.

For Birkin the cold is an enemy. "I couldn't bear this cold, eternal place without you," he says. "I couldn't bear it, it would kill the quick of my life." But for Ursula the reality is gone. A man going into a barn with a lantern and showing up the cattle in their dark stalls reminds her of her home and the Marsh and her childhood. There is a kaleidescope of reality and unreality:

> ... There was another world, like a view on a magic lantern; the Marsh, Cossethay, Ilkeston, lit up with a common, unreal light. There was a shadowy unreal Ursula, a whole shadow-play of an unreal life. It was as unreal, as circumscribed as a magic lantern show. She wished the slides could all be broken. She wished it could be gone for

> ever, like a lantern-slide which was broken. She wanted to have no past. She wanted to have come down from the slopes of heaven to this place with Birkin, not to have toiled out of the murk of her childhood and her upbringing, slowly, all soiled....
> (376)

Gudrun, on the other hand, remembers, and is diabolical in a temptation to use her power. She sees Gerald as an instrument which she, god-like, could use to further any kind of ambition she might have. She sees the kingdoms of the English world. Here is an ironic parallel to Gerald's use of the mines:

> ...The colliers' wives, with their linoleum and their lace curtains and their little girls in high-laced boots. She thought of the wives and daughters of the pit-managers, their tennis-parties and their terrible struggles to be superior each to the other, in the social scale. There was Shortlands with its meaningless distinction, the meaningless crowd of the Criches. There was London, the House of Commons, the extant social world. My God!
> (384)

Outwardly Gerald's success in industry matters; inwardly Gudrun knows it is a bad joke. Yet she listens to Loerke, the depraved little sculptor who is at the inn. Loerke is doing a large sculptured frieze for a factory in Cologne. He believes that industry has taken the place of the church and as he describes his sculpture the contrast is implicit. Modern critics have emphasized this decline in values:

Cologne -- Cathedral -- sculpture to the glory of God; Cologne -- factory -- frieze -- men at a fair where in their leisure time they are being worked by machinery instead of working it, the ultimate in mechanization:

> ... peasants and artizans in an orgy of enjoyment, drunk and absurd in their modern dress, whirling ridiculously in roundabouts, gaping at shows, kissing and staggering and rolling in knots, swinging in swingboats, and firing down shooting galleries, a frenzy of chaotic motion.
> (389)

Gudrun runs parallel to Birkin's experience. She recognizes in Loerke, symbolized by the bat, rabbit and brown seal -- rapid, flicking creatures -- the depths of degradation. "He seemed to be the very stuff of the underworld of life. There was no going beyond him." Birkin likens him to a sewer rat. Gudrun however, sees in him even greater depravity: Loerke shows her a photograph of one of his works of art -- a little naked girl, small feet folded one over the other sitting sideways on a massive stallion. Her head is bowed in shame and grief. Gudrun objects to the horse; it is stiff and brutal, not sensitive. Loerke argues, but Ursula knows he is hedging.

> "It isn't a word of it true, of all this harangue you have made me," she replied flatly. "The horse is a picture of your own stock, stupid brutality, and the girl was a girl you loved and tortured and then ignored."
> (396)

Ursula hastens on with a commentary about Loerke's theory of art which might well be Lawrence's statement to the world about myth:

> "As for your world of art and your world of reality," she replied, you have to separate the two, because you can't bear to know what you are. You can't bear to realise what a stock, stiff, hide-bound brutality you are really, so you say 'it's the world of art.' The world of art is only the truth about the real world, that's all -- but you are too far gone to see it."
> (397)

Now Ursula feels she must leave this frozen place so full of depravity. Gudrun is aware that this is another passage for Ursula, one that she cannot emulate. "Spiritually, so to speak, you are going away from us all." Ursula explains that a new space to be in is what is required. To find the new space is Birkin's journey to the Blessed Isles according to Gudrun. Ursula speaks in terms of another planet. Gudrun thinks that life in any new plane would be under the same terms, with love as the supreme thing. But Ursula indicates that she has accepted Birkin's view. She says:

> ... Love is too human and little. I believe in something inhuman, of which love is only a little part. I believe what we must fulfil comes out of the unknown to us, and it is something infinitely more than love. It isn't so merely human.
> (403)

The departure of Ursula and Birkin seems to remove the checks and balances for the other pair. They are together without love and incapable of it, yet incapable of breaking away. Gerald plans to leave, but for the first time there is a flaw in his will. He is like Ulysses in Circe's cave. Gudrun turns to Loerke who can follow her, not in physical sensationalism but into the dark and subtle recesses of her mind, playing upon her artistic sensibilities with corrosive suggestiveness. Loerke despises Gerald and his will:

> ... And he, Loerke had understanding where Gerald was a calf. He Loerke, could penetrate into depths far out of Gerald's knowledge. Gerald was left behind like a postulant in the ante-room of this temple of mysteries, this woman. But he, Loerke, could he not penetrate into the inner darkness, find the spirit of the woman in its inner recess, and wrestle with it there, the central serpent that is coiled at the core of life.
> (415)

The symbol of the calf points up the strength of Loerke's position and the fact that Gudrun is now simply an intensification of what she was the day she danced in defiance of the Highland cattle, symbols of the brute male force that she must subdue. It was then that she had slapped Gerald's face. The "central serpent that is coiled at the core of life" is the symbol of the vital force that is evil or good by the extent of individual victory. This

is the obverse side of the same image used in _The Man Who Died_. Gerald now echoes Hermione's inverted lust as he longs to kill Gudrun, not without a certain amount of sympathy from the reader. However Gudrun is an impressive advocate for herself as she muses upon the advantages of escaping to Dresden with Loerke and engaging in a bloodless _liaison_ in the false world of art:

> ... I don't delude myself that I shall find an elixir of life in Dresden. I know I shan't. But I shall get away from people who have their own homes and their own children and their own acquaintances and their own this and their own that. I shall be among people who _don't_ own things and who _haven't_ got a home and a domestic servant in the background, who haven't got a standing and a status and a degree and a circle of friends of the same. Oh God, the wheels within wheels of people, it makes one's head tick like a clock, with the very madness of dead mechanical monotony and meaninglessness. How I _hate_ life, how I hate it. How I hate the Geralds, that they can offer one nothing else. (427-8)

Gudrun, who has despised Ursula's space, is a prisoner of time -- "the terrible bondage of this tick-tack of time, the twitching of the hands of the clock, this eternal repetition of hours and days".

Gudrun's tragedy as prisoner of time is quietly horrifying as it so calmly underlines the general human tragedy:

> ... She could never escape. There she was, placed before the clock-face of life. And if she turned round as in a railway station, to look at the book-stall, still she could see, with her very spine, she could see the clock, always the great white clock-face. In vain she fluttered the leaves of books, or made statuettes in clay. She knew she was not <u>really</u> reading. She was not <u>really</u> working. She was watching the fingers twitch across the eternal, mechanical, monotonous clock-face of time. She never really lived, she only watched. Indeed, she was like a little, twelve-hour clock, vis-a-vis with the enormous clock of eternity....
> (428-9)

Gudrun, without the capacity to love, stands outside humanity. Her alternatives are Gerald -- "Such a lot of little wheels to his make up. He was more intricate than a chronometer-watch", and Loerke,whose probing, inhuman actions have reduced him to the symbol of a beetle.

Gudrun decides to leave Gerald and she and Loerke spend her last afternoon in the snow together. They have finished a picnic when Gerald comes up. Loerke upends the thermos and as the coffee dregs fall upon the snow he says "Nothing left." Then Loerke offers Gudrun the last of the Schnapps with the insult "Gnädiges Fraulein" -- a reminder of the time when he addressed her as "Frau" and was corrected in her attempt to renounce Gerald and their pretended marriage. Gerald, driven to frenzy, knocks him down and strangles Gudrun, the thing he has been wanting to do, but stops in time and sets forth into the snow, swept on the

wave of his own nausea for Gudrun and Loerke and the untenable facts of his life. In the snow far up on the mountain he finds a half-buried crucifix. He feels overborne by the sense that he will be murdered and feels that this will be the action of Christ. He dies in the snow.

Lawrence leaves the reader with the message that the macrocosm and the microcosm are not in harmony. Birkin, musing at the scene of Gerald's death thinks:

> ... Whatever the mystery which has brought forth man and the universe, it is a non-human mystery, it has its own great ends, man is not the criterion....
> (440)

Birkin is in love with creation, yet seemingly determined to bypass humanity.

> ... If humanity ran into a cul de sac, and expended itself, the timeless creative mystery would bring forth some other being, finer, more wonderful, some new more lovely race, to carry on the embodiment of creation. The game was never up. The mystery of creation was fathomless, infallible, inexhaustible, forever....
> (440-1)

In the time-space world Birkin is limited. The possibility of a different ending for Gerald, if he had accepted the possibility of Birkin's love, haunts him. He can live with Ursula "But to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too, another kind of love". He

will not believe Ursula's pronouncement that this would be false and impossible.

Lawrence's mythologyzing in Women in Love forces the reader to the unwilling conclusion that there are no final and satisfactory answers to be found for the problems of modern life. The ancient Egyptians with their secret of vital force, the Etruscans with their joyous vitality, the Aztecs, were able to produce some people who lived vitally and not mechanically. The twentieth century, blighted as it is by war and mechanical living, can only produce from remnants of unscarred tissue an approximation of perfection. (cf. Gerald, the brain-scarred, seeking Gudrun, who can offer only a half-cure.)

Only for Ursula can life be near perfection; she is content with Birkin -- although possibly not as content as she would have been had he not insisted on the perfectibility of human love in the cross-polarization of the male-male relationship. Marriage is an unequal bargain, which should shatter the star equilibration he wishes to achieve as a permanent state. Because of the failure of this relationship he feels his life incomplete. Gudrun and Gerald could not hope to approximate fulfilment. Theirs was a sinking of natures without the upward redirection that a real harrowing of the depths achieves. Lawrence's message seems

to be one of isolation -- of the self from the true self, the self from the beloved "other", the self from society -- balanced against the fight to attain the self, the equilibrated relationship which merges into a third self, and the possibility of a societal community.

The so-called hero of the myth is not hard to describe. He is a culture hero -- Birkin-Lawrence. He is of this earth and now. The women of the myth are never quite believable; they tend to fragment into mythical forms -- Earth Mother, Great Whore, Mother Superior. The trouble with modern myths is that they are not finished. Lawrence tried to say what the problems were; the ancient myths presented their solutions or their punishments. These were the actions of the gods. Lawrence is saying that the myths are in process and are the actions of men. He was not an optimist about man's ability to solve his problems but he was an optimist about the joy to be found in living and his praise of creation strikes a fresh note in the twentieth century. Yet there is the question of what to do with the tragic figure of Gudrun, staring at the great clock and not knowing how to "redeem the time".

CHAPTER VI

THE DEFECTION OF THE GODS

One of Lawrence's underlying ideas was that the old gods had gone. One possible way to read Lady Chatterley is, broadly speaking, as a defection of the gods -- the intellectual and landowning gods -- a defection which made England the waste land or underworld that it alternatively seems in this novel to be.

Mark Schorer in his 1957 introduction to a 1957 edition of Lady Chatterley's Lover says:

> ... Lady Chatterley's Lover, like everything that Lawrence wrote, is an affirmation of life values as against the mechanization of human nature. This, his general subject matter, may be broken down into two major themes; the relation of men and women, and the relation of men and machines. In the works as they are written, the two are one, and his most subtle and penetrating perception, the knowledge that social and psychological conflicts are identical, is so firmly integrated in the structure of his books that it is almost foolhardy to speak of his having two themes when in fact he had one vision. But a vision has both a background and a foreground, and one may say perhaps without distortion, that the men and machines relationship is the background, the man and woman relationship, the foreground. 1

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[1] D.H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, New York: Grove Press 1957. Introduction by Mark Schorer. p. xxi. (Lady Chatterley first published by Giuseppe Orioli, Florence: 1928).

One of the earliest assessments of the characters in Lady Chatterley was made by Horace Gregory and, because he was an astute and objective critic, his observations still seem valid.

> ... Chatterley himself seems monstrously unreal, and is to some degree the Gerald of Women in Love grown into middle-age. He is to be taken as the living image of everything that Lawrence hated in European civilization; he is the symbol of impotent power generated by wealth, he is sexually and spiritually maimed by the war (Captain Herbertson raised to the nth degree), and his male-blind Samson-urge is converted into the bitterness of the post-war London literary set that Lawrence knew only too well. 2

Gregory also submits that Lady Chatterley is a bigger-than-life figure of the woman in "Look! We Have Come Through!" and represents the union of the nobility with the proletariat, as did the marriage of Frieda with Lawrence. Of Mellors he says: "The doctrine that Mellors preaches is of the individual against the world, and his success is symbolized by the sexual relationship with a lady.

Because Lawrence was a poet his meaning was conveyed most truly in symbols, and much of the meaning of the seemingly simple story of Lady Chatterley is to be found on its highest level in The Man Who Died which is the final key to the greatest part of his thinking. Clifford, on a very much lower plane, is a man who died in both ways, physically and

spiritually. Connie is an ordinary and none-too-morally passionate reflection of the priestess of Isis, also in search of the "clue" which is the cure for fragmentation. Mellors reflects two symbols -- the natural flame of life of the game cock, and wounded suffering of life denied and the healing of withdrawal of the man who had died. Mellors and Clifford are both wounded men. The Man Who Died is mythical, fabulous, archetypal; Lady Chatterley is ordinary, almost believable, local: they do, however, say the same things. The Man Who Died has the mythical quality of distancing that Lawrence uses in The Rainbow. Lady Chatterley is firmly grounded in time easily charted by the growth of the flowers in the wood and gardens (spring into summer), and spatially in the diminishing wood between Tevershall and Wragby, "the rather forlorn home of the Chatterleys". Connie is completely ordinary and never achieves the cosmic quality of other Lawrencian characters, for instance Gudrun, who can visualize herself as a little daily clock trapped by the fact of the great cosmic clock. The Chatterleys represent the very ordinary level to which the post-World-War-I aristocracy had fallen.

Variations on the theme of lack of communication are struck early in the novel. The cure for this for Lawrence is always touch, physical touch. "Out of touch" is always a warning:

> There was no communication between Wragby Hall and Tevershall village, none.... At first Connie suffered from the steady drizzle of resentment that came from the village... It was not that she and Clifford were unpopular, they merely belonged to another species altogether from the colliers... You stick to your side, I'll stick to mine! A strange denial of the common pulse of humanity. (13)

There is a barely apprehended implication that the death-in-life situation would never have been realized if Clifford had not been a casualty of the war. After two years at Cambridge and technical mining studies at Bonn Clifford "had become a first liuetenant in a smart regiment, so he could mock at everything more becomingly in uniform." Sir Geoffrey, his father, he felt was a hopeless anachronism "chopping down his trees, and weeding men out of his colliery to shove them into the war" and wanting Clifford to marry and produce an heir. In 1917 he did marry Connie. "Connie was well-to-do intelligentsia, but he was aristocracy." "But early in 1918 Clifford was shipped home smashed, and there was no child. And Sir Geoffrey died of chagrin." Clifford preserved the outward appearance of health in spite of the fact that he was helpless and impotent and had to propel himself in a wheeled chair.

Lawrence is an author who has to be read, not read _about_. Consequently criticism of him is frequently unsatisfactory simply because critics tend to take stated stances. Julian Moynahan however gives a modern assessment of Clifford with which it is hard to quarrel:

> The narrative presentation of Clifford is carefully handled so as to prevent the reader ever coming at the character directly. His utterances are invariably hedged round with interpretative comment by the narrator or by Connie which draws out the depraved implications of what he says and does. He is always an illustration of disconnectedness; never for a moment does he emerge as a man who has suffered a terrible wound and is to be pitied for it. If even briefly the reader could feel with him as a human being, then his whole characterization would seem terribly cruel, and Lawrence's demonstration would be fatally flawed. But the truth is that Clifford in this novel is himself a man entirely defined by his functions. There is nothing left over to pity. Riding about the estate in his motorized chair he is a kind of mechanical centaur, who because he is only half human, is not human at all. Voidness cannot be villainous, nor can it become an object of sympathy. [3]

At first Connie is able to cope with the fact that Clifford needs her to be there "to assure him he existed at all". She is the connection with life for Clifford but "vaguely he knew she was out of connection: she had lost touch with the substantial and vital world." His world, since he has turned a talent for words into authorship, is the world of the waning post-war aristocracy and glib literary people -- a lightweight intelligentsia. But underneath the artificial brilliance of this contrived world is the menace of the other world in which Tevershall pit-bank was burning, and sending a sulphurous stench into Wragby itself.

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[3] Julian Moynahan, The Deed of Life: The Novels and Tales of D.H. Lawrence. (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 155.

The loss of vital connection means for Lawrence a loss of "blood knowledge" and intuitive awareness. The disease at Wragby is a reflection of the uneasiness of the community. The blood metaphor is utilized to assess the malaise:

> ...The colliers at Tevershall were talking again of a strike, and it seemed to Connie there again it was not a manifestation of energy, it was the bruise of the war that had been in abeyance, slowly rising to the surface and creating the great ache of unrest, and stupor of discontent. The bruise was deep, deep, deep.... The bruise of false inhuman war. It would take man years for the living blood of the generations to dissolve the vast black clot of bruised blood, deep inside their souls and bodies. And it would need a new hope.
> (56-7)

This is as clear an assessment of the Chatterley ineffectiveness as can be made. The spread of fear in the colliers is like Clifford's paralysis and impotence. Mentally Clifford is still alert but "the bruise of the too great shock was gradually spreading in his affective self." The blood itself is diseased.

The tree of life becomes the symbol of the paralysis. When there are no vital correspondences between people communication stops. Lack of a living continuum results in the intellectualization of feeling and the preservation of outward forms without inward meaning.

> ... When Clifford was aroused, he could still talk brilliantly, and, as it were, command the future: as when, in the wood, he talked about her having a child, and giving an heir to Wragby. But the day after, all the brilliant words seemed like dead leaves, crumpling up and turning to powder, meaning really nothing, blown away on any gust of wind. They were not the leafy words of an effective life, young with energy and belonging to the tree. They were the hosts of fallen leaves of a life that is ineffectual.
> (56)

"The only reality was nothingness, and over it a hypocrisy of words." The tree is a meaningful symbol in later contrast to Connie's identification with the living woods.

Part of the preservation of the outer form would be the matter of an heir to Wragby, so dearly desired by Clifford's father. The depersonalization of the situation is indicated by the equanimity with which Clifford contemplates this necessity as they walk in the woods which Clifford loves. Connie, who does not really balk at a rather unsatisfying extramarital encounter, feels the impossibility of finding an acceptable stud humiliating. "She would sift the generations of men through her sieve, and see if she couldn't find one who would do. -- 'Go ye into the streets and byways of Jerusalem and see if ye can find _a man_.'" Connie is aware of the timeless difficulty involved in this particular search. Clifford sees this as a temporary interruption to the "harmonious thing" that

their "steadily-lived life" will be.

At this moment the gamekeeper appears and helps to get the motorized chair started homewards and then comes along because Clifford admits that the engine on his chair is not strong enough for uphill work. Connie has a momentary impression of him "curiously full of vitality, but a little frail and quenched." Clifford has no vitality.

Connie later must take a message from Clifford to the gamekeeper. Like Red Riding Hood she must go through the remnants of the forest with its symbolic sexual overtones. The forest and the keeper's cottage change with the emotional tone which is important to note throughout the book:

> In the wood all was utterly inert and motionless, only great drops fell from the bare boughs, with a hollow little crash. For the rest, among the old trees was depth within depth of grey, hopeless inertia, nothingness. (74)

> As she came out of the wood on the north side, the keeper's cottage, a rather dark, brown stone cottage ... looked uninhabited, it was so silent and alone. But a thread of smoke rose from the chimney, and the little railed-in garden in front of the house was dug and kept very tidy. The door was shut. (75)

The descriptions fall into a pattern of the psychological landscape. The practised reader of Lawrence has been told

that Connie has within her depth within depth of grey and that the keeper is silent and alone, that his garden is railed, his door is shut.

At the rear of the cottage Connie comes upon the gamekeeper bathing and unaware, "his white slim back was curved over a big bowl of soapy water, in which he ducked his head, shaking his head with a queer, quick little motion ... quick, subtle as a weasel playing with water, and utterly alone."

The symbolism of the weasel denotes a subtle quick identification with non-human nature and the slipping away from human control. There is a distancing -- the gamekeeper from the human world and Connie from the naturalness of the gamekeeper's world which is filled with the mysterious animal kind of vitality that is divorced from social _mores_.

This insight into the life of the gamekeeper brings Connie to an awareness of many things -- herself "old, at twenty-seven, with no gleam and sparkle in the flesh", Clifford saying of the gamekeeper "perhaps he was an officer's servant, and improved on his position" but "it does them no good, they have to fall back into their old places when they get home again", and the buffoon-like quality of Clifford himself "his tongue lolling out of his mouth as he panted after the bitch-goddess" (Success), Clifford's Aunt

Eva, Lady Bennerley, best of the last generation of the aristocracy "perfect at the social sport of coolly holding her own, and making other people defer to her." Aunt Eva has a chilling philosophy:

> "So long as you can forget your body you are happy," said Lady Bennerley. "And the moment you begin to be aware of your body, you are wretched. So, if civilization is any good, it has to help us forget our bodies, and then time passes happily without our knowing it."
> (85)

It is as if the world were not founded upon human feelings and sympathies. The great world of the lesser gods, of the diminished aristocracy, is structured upon social position -- not even power, simply the assurance to take up the higher position. This is Clifford's mode of thought; he would take any child produced by Connie, whoever the father might be, and make him heir to Wragby. Training, not birth, would fit him for his position.

Connie is not well. Her London doctor sees her problem, of roots, hers and Clifford's, intertwined in a meaningless fashion:

> ... "You're spending your life without renewing it. You've got to be amused, properly, healthily, amused. You're spending your vitality without making any. Can't go on you know. Depression! Avoid depression!
> (90)

So Connie gives over some of her tasks relating to Clifford's welfare to Mrs. Bolton, the district nurse, a common woman of Tevershall with a prodding mind and an aspiration to work into the life of the aristocracy. She is a widow; her husband was the victim of the soulless industrialization of the mines. Mrs. Bolton is an example of perverse use of vitality. She is attractive as a character because she has a kind of vitality that springs from the good life she had had with her husband. He had been killed in the mines when very young, but they were deeply in love and "in touch". As Mrs. Bolton later confided to Connie "When I look at women who's never really been warmed through by a man, well they seem to me poor dool-owls after all, no matter how they may dress up and gad." (196) Mrs. Bolton is vital for the same reason that Mrs. Morel was. She squanders this vitality later upon Clifford. This is the middle term of the Lawrencean death-life debate. For this abandonment of him to the care of a hired woman Clifford never forgave Connie. What was death to Connie was life to him. He feels that "the fine flower of their intimacy" was ruined. Connie feels differently. "The fine flower of their intimacy was to her rather like an orchid, a bulb stuck parasite on her tree of life." (96) This is the prevailing symbol of Clifford and Connie.

Mark Schorer noted Lawrence's apprehension of the identical nature of social and psychological conflicts. The parallelism of nature again depicts them both:

> ...It was as if thousands and thousands of little roots and threads of consciousness in him and her had grown together into a tangled mass, till they could crowd no more and the plant was dying. Now quietly, subtly she was unravelling the tangle of his consciousness and hers, breaking the threads gently, one by one, with patience and impatience to get clear. But the bonds of such love are more ill to loose even than most bonds; though Mrs. Bolton's coming had been a great help.
> (96)

Now that Mrs. Bolton is there Connie can escape from Clifford's society at ten in the evening and play the piano and sing "Touch not the nettle ... for the bonds of love are ill to loose." "She had not realized till lately how ill to loose they were, these bonds of love." It was a pseudo-love resting upon a false intimacy. Meanwhile Mrs. Bolton weaves bonds of unhealthy interest in Tevershall around Clifford's curious, prying mind. Here the phoenix is indeed the symbol of Lawrence's writing. There is a constant flux, destruction and rebuilding by which progress is made.

Mrs. Bolton invades Connie's life as well. It is at her suggestion that Connie goes to look at the wild daffodils behind the keeper's cottage. Mrs. Bolton and Connie share

a love of flowers and a thwarted love of life. It is significant that Connie should go back to the place where she had momentarily been aware of life. She thinks of the gamekeeper bathing "his thin white body, like a lonely pistil of an invisible flower." The phallic image is complicated because the keeper had not been aware of Connie. The viewer and viewed must both be aware or else there is no vital correspondence. In Connie's thoughts are juxtaposed two ideas -- the world with its carrion-bodied people and the assurance that she believes in the resurrection of the body. She thinks of the grain of wheat falling into the earth and dying; she also thinks that when the crocus comes forth in the winds of March she too will emerge. This interlayering of death and life themes and the inversion of refocussing of images builds a climate or impression without direct statement. For instance, the crocus is mentioned by Mellors in his letter at the end as the symbol of frail but enduring quality of life.

"Pale beyond porch and portal", Connie thinks of the words from "The Garden of Proserpine". The world is pale and cold. "But it was the breath of Persephone, this time; she was out of hell on a cold morning." By this time Connie is identified with Persephone, and she is thinking that the thing to do is to pass the porches and portals. The flowers

unerline the theme; light and colour intensify. There were brightly lit celandines at the edge of the woods, the first windflowers (the wind is a symbol of the life force), "the pallor of endless little anemones", "a few first bleached little primroses".

> Till she came to the clearing, at the far end of the wood, and saw the green-stained stone cottage, looking almost rosy, like the flesh underneath a mushroom, its stone warmed in a burst of sun. And there was a sparkle of yellow jasmine by the door; <u>the closed door</u>. . . .
> (99) [Italics mine]

This is the portal. Connie, in spite of her previous, rather meaningless sexual experiences, is a kind of Blakean Thel figure. She has been physically but not psychologically over the portal.

Connie does the thing that she had come to do; she sits down and looks at the daffodils, aware of their life:

> . . . And then, being so still and alone, she seemed to get into the current of her own proper destiny. She had been fastened by a rope, and jagging and snarring like a boat at its moorings; now she was loose and adrift.
> (99)

This is the closing image in <u>The Man Who Died</u>. It is used here as the beginning of the symbol of the body as boat on the current of life.

Connie's drift into life has a gruesome counter-action. Mrs. Bolton

> ... was thrilled by her contact with a man of the upper class, this titled gentleman, this author who could write books and poems, and whose photograph appeared in the illustrated newspapers. She was thrilled to a weird passion.... In truth, the very fact that there could *be* no love affair left her free to thrill to her very marrow with this other passion, the peculiar passion of *knowing*, knowing as he knew.
> (116)

Mrs. Bolton accepts the thing that Connie rejects -- the excitement of knowledge, and the suppression of passional experience. She becomes a source of gossipy literary material for Clifford when she "talks Tevershall". She is "Mrs. Gaskell and George Eliot and Miss Mitford all rolled in one, with a great deal more, that these women left out," and given with "such a peculiar, flamey zest". This is the language of the cock -- but life once removed.

Here Lawrence gives his philosophy of the novel and the hope he has in it -- a hope particularly illuminating for this particular process. He indicates the vicious kind of thing that is done by novelists employing the technique of Mrs. Bolton (or Clifford).

> ... It is the way our sympathy flows and recoils that really determines our lives. And here lies the vast importance of the novel, properly handled. It can inform and lead into new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness, and it can lead our sympathy away in recoil from things gone dead. Therefore, the novel, properly handled, can reveal the most secret places of life: for it is in the *passional* secret places of life, above all, that the tide of sensitive awareness needs to ebb and flow, cleansing and freshening.
>
> But the novel, like gossip, can also excite spurious sympathies and recoils, mechanical and deadening to the psyche. The novel can glorify the most corrupt feelings, so long as they are *conventionally* "pure". Then the novel, like gossip, becomes at last vicious, and, like gossip, all the more vicious because it is always ostensibly on the side of the angels. "And he was such a *bad* fellow, and she was such a *nice* woman....
> (117-8)

Through his interest in Tevershall talk Clifford becomes fascinated with his own mines and realizes that his Bitch-goddess, Success, has two faces:

> Now he realized the distinction between popular success and working success: the populace of pleasure and the populace of work. He, as a private individual, had been catering with his stories for the populace of pleasure. And he had caught on. But beneath the populace of pleasure is the populace of work, grim, grimey, and rather terrible. They, too, had to have their providers. And it was a much grimmer business, providing for the populace of work, than for the populace of pleasure. While he was doing his stories, and "getting on" in the world, Tevershall was going to the wall.
> (125)

The gods turn to underworld demons. The technical fascination of mining takes hold. "It was far more interesting than art, than literature ... In this field, men were like gods, or demons, inspired to discoveries, and fighting to carry them out." An inversion of the rebirth theme takes place. Clifford makes a literal descent into the underworld of the mines and studies the workings. Now he is reborn. "He had been gradually dying, with Connie, in the isolated private life of the artist and conscious being." Now he takes life from the coal; the stale air of the colliery is like oxygen to him. With Mrs. Bolton's encouragement he becomes triumphant in the mines, but at home with her he becomes increasingly a child. He turns from the diversions of his friends to the radio -- from men to machine. He becomes a kind of creature "with a hard, efficient shell of an exterior and a pulpy interior, one of the amazing crabs and lobsters of the modern industrial and financial world." Lawrence strives for depersonalization which gets to the substratum of being which underlies character but sometimes achieves the Prufrockian scuttling crab-like horror of personalities that have regressed into mere matter.

The more Clifford loses touch with Connie the more important it becomes to him to preserve the outward form of

intimacy, the more he must tell her that he worships her, that he lives for her sake. "What man with a spark of honor would put this ghastly burden of life-responsibility upon a woman, and leave her there, in the void?" Connie hurries away from this death-in-life situation to the gamekeeper's hut which she has discovered and for which she has requested a key. It is a small place in the woods where he keeps his tools and sets the pheasants. It is beyond the world of industry and far in spirit from walled-in Wragby. It is in the last remnant of the green world. It is in the wood that Clifford hoped would be "safe from trespassers". "Now she came every day to the hens, they were the only things in the world that warmed her heart."

> Then, one day, a lovely sunny day with great tufts of primroses under the hazels, and many violets dotting the paths, she came in the afternoon to the coops and there was one tiny, tiny perky chicken tinily prancing round in front of a coop, and the mother hen clucking in terror. . . .
> (133)

Connie is fascinated by the chicks which bring home to her "her female forlornness". One day the gamekeeper puts one of the baby chicks into her hand.

> "So adorable! So cheeky!" she said softly.
> The keeper, squatting beside her, was also watching with an amused face the bold little bird in her hands. Suddenly he saw a tear fall on to her wrist.
> (135)

It is the tear, so desolate and forlorn, that brings the gamekeeper back from his cherished privacy, his shield against ill health and a bad marriage and his hatred of women. "She had cost him that bitter privacy of a man who at last wants only to be alone." But he takes her into the hut and loves her tenderly.

Given Lawrence's definition of a novel which "can inform and lead into new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness, and it can lead our sympathy away in recoil from things gone dead. Therefore, the novel, properly handled, can reveal the most secret places of life," it is difficult to see how the lovemaking of the hurt and lonely, slightly unwell gamekeeper and the rather ordinary Scots lass could possibly be described as pornography -- although it is debatable how successfully words can raid this particular inarticulate.

Whether the reader is intrigued or repelled, Lawrence uses it to drive home the fact that life is not simple. If Lady Chatterley were simply the account of an idyllic escape of two harrassed people into the woods to make love, it could have had a happy ending, or had it been simply pornography, the reader would not be forced to consider Connie as representing a modern dilemma which Lawrence calls "woman's will". It is modern in spite of the fact that

Blake considered it very thoroughly in his day. Considering the peace which this first interlude of love has given her:

> Her tormented modern-woman's brain still had no rest. Was it real? And she knew, if she gave herself to the man, it was real. But if she kept herself for herself, it was nothing. She was old; millions of years old, she felt. And at last, she could bear the burden of herself no more. . . .
> (137)

This is a contrast to her earlier, detached experiences. Mellors, on a lower level of experience faces the problem of the Man who Died -- the painful re-entry into life of a wounded and suppressed body. It is Mellors who visualizes the implication of taking up the rhythm of living:

> "It's life," he said, "There's no keeping clear. And if you do keep clear you might almost as well die. So if I've got to be broken open again, I have."
> (138)

He is aware too, as Connie is not, of the evil inherent in the simplest living in society, of society as the dragon swallowing up life, of the encroachment of Tevershall mines upon the woods, of the "sharp wicked electric lights at Stacks Gate! An undefinable quick of evil in them! And all the unease, the ever-shifting dread of the industrial night in the Midlands."

> ... Soon it the world of mechanized greed would destroy the wood, and the bluebells [symbol of creation] would spring no more. All vulnerable things must perish under the rolling and running of iron.
>
> He thought with infinite tenderness of the woman. Poor forlorn thing, she was nicer than she knew, and oh! so much too nice for the tough lot she was in contact with....
>
> (140)

In another way Connie is "broken open" when she calls at the neighbouring farm, Marehay, and holds the Flint's little red-headed baby -- the perky, cheeky, vital, human counterpart of the chick. The life of the baby emphasizes the death-like atmosphere of Wragby and presents the distinct possibility of carrying out Clifford's suggestion regarding an heir.

On the way home from Marehay Mellors stands in Connie's path, literally and symbolically. They stop in the woods and the ideagram which Lawrence uses for their passional awareness is the same used later to describe the gamecock in The Man Who Died -- "rippling, rippling, rippling, like a flapping overlapping of soft flames, soft as feather, running to points of brilliance." Yet with his customary perversity Lawrence indicates the alternative of perfect giving -- the woman's will. "She must not become a slave."

> Ah! yes, to be passionate like a Bacchante, like a Bacchanal fleeing through the woods, to call on Iacchos, the bright phallus that had no independent personality behind it, but was pure

> god-servant to the woman! The man, the individual, let him not dare intrude. He was but a temple-servant, the bearer, and keeper of the bright phallus, her own.
> So, in the flux of a new awakening, the old hard passion flamed in her for a time, and the man dwindled to a contemptible object, the mere phallus-bearer, to be torn to pieces when his service was performed. She felt the force of the Bacchae in her limbs and her body, the woman gleaming and rapid, beating down the male; but while she felt this, her heart was heavy. She did not want it, it was known, and barren, birthless; the adoration was her treasure. . . .
> (161)

Under the guise of old myth Lawrence presents part of the story of modern fragmentation -- the same problem that the priestess of Isis faced. Nor is Clifford free, for he has given his life to the Bitch-goddess in the form of word trickery in the intellectual world and industrial exploitation in the business world -- a substitution for the kind of cerebral and fruitless lovemaking in which he ordinarily would have engaged.

When Connie comes home from Marehay, from the joy of holding the baby and of her love for Mellors, there is a subtle modulation. From fleeing through the woods Connie _is_ the woods. She wants to be alone with her thoughts so flatters Clifford into reading Racine while she

> ... was like a forest, like the dark interlacing of the oak-wood, humming inaudibly with myriad unfolding buds. Meanwhile the birds of desire were asleep in the vast interlaced intricacy of her body.
> (163)

Clifford reads on unheeding "clapping and gurgling with unusual sounds." Again there are two movements here. The adoration of another fertilizes the self. In Connie the power works until she becomes part of the world of nature. She seems to be the wood -- symbol of life. Clifford is attracted to her. He becomes more mechanical, and his voice sounds more like the radio. He becomes like a rapacious bird, all cold and inflexible will. Connie is repelled. There is the outward movement of adoration, expansion of self, identification with nature and attraction, as against the movement of rapacity, contraction of self, repuslion of outward values and finally aversion to others. "She shuddered a little, afraid of him. But then, the soft warm flame of life was stronger than he, and the real things were hidden from him." The flame is the controlling image at the end of the novel.

"The dark interlacing of the oak wood", symbol of life and the soft warm flame of life finds a death-like echo in Clifford. The dread of night and the void and death are upon him. "He was a network of nerves." He does not see the warm flame of life and thinks Connie cold and callous. She does not even kiss him goodnight. She has forgotten. "She only wanted her own way." "The lady loves her will." This technique of inversion and echo builds by impression

of symbols rather than straightforward outline of idea.

Mrs. Bolton, with a faint cue from Connie, starts the rumour of an heir for Wragby. Life would be new at Wragby, the source of what Connie and Mellors consider death to the countryside, and the centre of Clifford's industrializing efforts. The results of this are seen with growing horror by Connie on her way by car to Uthwaite:

> ... the long squalid straggle of Tevershall.... It was as if dismalness had soaked through and through everything. The utter negation of natural beauty, the utter negation of the gladness of life, the utter absence of the instinct for shapely beauty which every bird and beast has, the utter death of the human intuitive faculty was appalling....
> (180)

Connie contemplates what the England of her day is producing:

> ... A new race of mankind, over-conscious in the money and social and political side, on the spontaneous, intuitive side, dead -- but dead! Half-corpses, all of them: but with a terrible insistent consciousness in the other half. There was something uncanny and underground about it all. It was an underworld....
> (181)

The masses are encroaching:

> But at the corner a policeman held up his hand as three lorries loaded with iron rolled past, shaking the poor old church. And not till the lorries were past could he salute her ladyship.
> (184-5)

As a rule Lawrence is too engaged with his polemic to be a master of irony. Yet irony is implicit in his description of the workings of the new industrial gods and their grim games:

> As she rose on to the high country, she could see on her left, on a height above the rolling land the shadowy, powerful bulk of Warsop Castle, dark grey, with below it the reddish plastering of miners' dwellings, newish, and below those the plumes of dark smoke and white steam from the great colliery which put so many thousand pounds per annum into the pockets of the Duke and the other shareholders. The powerful old castle was a ruin, yet still it hung its bulk on the low skyline over the black plumes and the white that waved on the damp air below.
>
> A turn, and they ran on the high level to Stacks Gate. Stacks Gate, as seen from the high-road, was just a huge and gorgeous new hotel, the coningsby Arms, standing red and white and gilt in barbarous isolation off the road. But if you looked, you saw on the left rows of handsome "modern" dwellings, set down like a game of dominoes, with spaces and gardens: a queer game of dominoes that some weird "masters" were playing on the surprised earth. And beyond these blocks of dwellings, at the back, rose all the astonishing and frightening overhead erections of a really modern mine, chemical works and long galleries, enormous, and of shapes not before known to man. The head-stocks and pit-bank of the mine itself were insignificant among the huge new installations. And in front to this, the game of dominoes stood forever in a sort of surprise, waiting to be played. (182-3)

The old order is changing and who is responsible? Now the gods are men; the attackers are also the attacked:

> Now they are pulling down the stately homes, the Georgian halls are going. Fritchley, a perfect old Georgian mansion, was even now, as Connie passed in the car, being demolished. It was in perfect repair: till the war the Weatherleys had lived in style there. But now it was too big, too expensive, and the country had become too uncongenial. The gentry were departing to pleasanter places, where they could spend their money without having to see how it was made.
> (185)

Agricultural England is being blotted out by industrial England and the encroachment of the miners. Carbon is really the theme here:

> ... Perhaps they were only weird fauna of the coal-seams. Creatures of another reality, they were elementals, serving the elements of coal, as the metal-workers were elementals, serving the element of iron. Men not men, but animas of coal and iron and clay. Fauna of the elements, carbon, iron, silicon; elementals.... They belonged to the coal, the iron, the clay, as fish belong to the sea and worms to dead wood. The anima of mineral disintegration!
> (190)

Contrast the woods:

> ... Yellow celandines now were in crowds, flat open, pressed back in urgency, and the yellow glitter of themselves. It was the yellow, the powerful yellow of early summer. And primroses were broad, and full of pale abandon, thick-clustered primroses no longer shy....
> (196)
>
> The cottage stood in the sun, off the wood's edge. In the little garden the double daffodils rose in tufts, near the wide-open door, and red double daisies made a border to the path. There was the bark of a dog, and Flossie came running.
> (197)

The flowers here are double and some are red. The door is open, the dog welcomes the visitor.

For Lawrence man is not the measure. It is as if he is saying "Nature is the measure of authenticity." He insists that man must be born again through love and this must happen to Connie. He uses the elemental sea in the account of Connie's rebirth experience. The measure of authenticity of experience seems to be the feeling of identification with something <u>other</u>, yet Lawrence jealously guards identity, in the sense of wholeness of self:

> And it seemed she was like the sea, nothing but dark waves rising and heaving, heaving with a great swell, so that slowly her whole darkness was in motion, and she was ocean rolling its dark, dumb mass....
> (207)

From this pure and passional love that has made her completely a woman Connie turns to the discussion of the mines that are making Clifford completely a machine. Connie waits for Clifford to go to the woods on a Sunday morning. There is a mock-heroic beginning to the walk which presages disaster. "His chair came puffing along with a sort of valetudinarian slow importance. As he joined his wife he said: 'Sir Clifford on his foaming steed!'" To her question "Why is Tevershall so ugly, so hideous?" Clifford answers that the miners build their own Tevershall --

"Every beetle must live its own life." Clifford does not consider the miners human.

In this late novel carbon is still the theme. Clifford seems to become a mouthpiece for some of Lawrence's less optimistic views of man in a speech that sounds like Jung on the subject of the subliminal unconscious:

> "No wonder the men hate you," she said.
> "They don't!" he replied. And don't fall into errors: in your sense of the word, they are not men. They are animals you don't understand and never could. Don't thrust your illusions on other people. The masses were always the same, and will always be the same. Nero's slaves were extremely little different from our colliers or the Ford motor car workmen. I mean Nero's mine slaves and his field slaves. It is the masses: they are the unchangeable. An individual may emerge from the masses. But the emergence doesn't alter the mass. The masses are unalterable. It is one of the most momentous facts of social science. Panem et circenses! Only today education is one of the bad substitutes for a circus. What is wrong today is that we've made a profound hash of the circuses part of the program, and poisoned our masses with a little education."
> (218)

Clifford concludes his speech with the thought that now what the masses need is whips, not swords, a sharp contrast to the alternating theme of tenderness which runs through the novel. The chair puffs on and Connie watches it "jolt over the wood-ruff and the bugle, and squash the little yellow cups of the creeping-jenny. Now they made a wake through the forget-me-nots." Clifford (symbolically) passes the

path to the hut; he cannot get there in his chair. Again the mock heroic note is introduced "Oh captain, my captain, our splendid trip is done." There is a subtle horror in the idea of the chair, a mechanized ship tearing through the waves of hyacinths. The subsequent failure of the chair (or himself) brings out all of Clifford's latent meanness. In the end he brutally and cruelly uses the keeper as a substitute for his machine. The irony is underlaid by the fact that the keeper substitutes for him sexually as well.

The appalling failure of Clifford as a man and his own mechanization pointed out earlier by the introduction of the radio as a substitute for people is caught up again here in the failure of the motor.

> ... The chair seemed to strangle immediately. She stood inert. Clifford, seated a prisoner, was white with vexation. He jerked at the lever with his hand, his feet were no good. He got queer noises out of her. In savage impatience he moved little handles and got more noises out of her. But she would not budge. No, she would not budge. He stopped the engine and sat rigid with anger.
> (226)

Fragments of their conversation pass through Connie's mind as she sits looking at the trampled bluebells -- "Nothing quite so lovely as an English spring." "I can do my share of the ruling." "What we need to take up is whips, not swords." "The ruling classes."

Finally Mellors and Connie push Clifford home. "It's obvious I'm at everybody's mercy!" said Clifford, yellow with anger. He is at his managerial worst, Mellors has forced his strength to push the heavy chair and Connie hates Clifford for his boorishness.

That night Connie spends with the gamekeeper in his cottage. They discuss his life:

> "And you do think it's important, a man and a woman? she asked him.
> "For me it is. For me it's the core of my life: if I have a right relation with a woman.... And tenderness is not to be mistaken."
> "We are a couple of battered warriors," said Connie.
> (245)

Their conversation underlines the fact that relationships are not black and white. The reader's sympathy is with the keeper, yet much of his unhappiness has been caused by his own withdrawal and compromise. In the morning Connie says "I would like to have all the rest of the world disappear and live with you here." But Mellors knows the world. "It won't disappear," he says.

At Wragby Connie lays plans to leave for a Venetian holiday with Hilda, her sister. When she comes back she will discuss divorce with Clifford. Clifford tolerates her going because he hopes for the heir to Wragby and cheers himself with gambling with Mrs. Bolton.

One afternoon Connie goes to the hut and there is a thunderstorm. She and the keeper talk about the possible coming of their child. Connie feels as if the hut is an ark in the storm. They are safe and she pleads that he will look forward to the child's coming with hope but this he seemingly cannot do. He gives his ideal of life which is to exist for happiness and not work for money. He deplores the mad race for money. His mood of despair does not suit her and Connie rushes out and dances naked in the rain -- eurythmic dance-movements that she had learned in Dresden. Mellors joins her and she runs with him pursuing nearly to the wide riding, the scene of the failure of the motor chair:

> She was nearly at the wide riding when he came up and flung his naked arm round her soft naked-wet middle.... Then suddenly he tipped her up and fell with her on the path, in the roaring silence of the rain, and short and sharp, he took her, short and sharp and finished, like an animal.
>
> He got up in an instant, wiping the rain from his eyes.
>
> "Come in," he said and they started running back to the hut.
>
> (266)

Here there are two Lawrencean choices. Either this scene is a parallel to the idea of the miners as elementals and this is a bacchantic scene in the manner of nature worshippers. Or, a number of psychological blocks gave way

simultaneously resulting in a cataclysmic underground "carbon" movement which juggles the conscious self into unpredictable action. Sir Clifford does not take a charitable view of Connie's prolonged absence in the thunderstorm and Mrs. Bolton goes to meet Connie in a successful effort to stave off a search party.

After dinner Clifford decides to be nice to Connie so he reads to her from a quasi-religious book upon the universe "physically wasting and spiritually ascending". Connie refers to the author as a "wind-machine" with a mind tacked on to a physical corpse, and predicts a lovely life in the universe, the life of the human body. (The wind itself is a symbol of life force. It too is mechanized). Clifford remarks:

> "My dear, you speak as if you were ushering it all in! True, you are going away on a holiday: but don't please be quite so indecently elated about it. Believe me, whatever God there is is slowly eliminating the guts and alimentary system from the human being, to evolve a higher, more spiritual being."
>
> "Why should I believe you, Clifford, when I feel that whatever God there is has at last wakened up in my guts, as you call them, and is rippling so happily there, like dawn?"
>
> (282)

On the way to London with Hilda after a last night with Mellors Connie tells Hilda "you have never known either real tenderness or real sensuality: and if you do know them,

with the same person, it makes a great difference." She had come "to the very heart of the jungle of herself. She felt now, she had come to the real bedrock of her nature and was essentially shameless."

The Venetian holiday seems only an interlude for receiving letters about the scandal which Mellors wife Bertha is creating since she does not wish to give him a divorce, and the assessment of the types of people who frequent house parties and who travel on the continent. Relentlessly Lawrence presses home the fact that there is no good solution -- only a possible one full of temporizing. Mellors has to leave his position as gamekeeper and goes to London. Connie, her father, and Hilda come to London too. There Connie and Mellors discuss his quarrel with society, and the reason he thinks he is a poor marriage risk:

> ... I could have got on in the army, easily, but I didn't like the army. Though I could manage the men all right: they like me and they had a bit of a holy fear of me when I got mad. No, it was stupid, dead-handed higher authority that made the army dead: absolutely fool-dead. I like men, and men like me. But I can't stand the twaddling bossy impudence of the people who run this world. That's why I can't get on. I hate the impudence of money, and I hate the impudence of class. So in the world as it is, what have I to offer a woman?"
> (332-3)

For Connie the courage of his tenderness is enough. The disgust and disillusionment Mellors feels for the wielders

of authority is magnified and intensified in The Man Who Died.

There is a dragging now and the reader is weary. The symbols disappear and the symbolic actions. The process of reading seems to say that men are prisoners of their own stupidity. Clifford refuses to believe that Connie would not come back to him, and when he does he has hysterics and gradually lapses into a state of infantilism with Mrs. Bolton as Magna Mater, but not without making it plain that he would not divorce Connie and not without the side benefit of added business acumen which comes to him as he regresses. Connie goes to Scotland to wait for the baby and for Mellors' divorce. Mellors gets a menial job on a farm and assesses the feeling of the country but, as he writes to Connie:

> ... I'm frightened really. I feel the devil in the air, and he'll try to get us. Or not the devil, Mammon: which I think, after all, is only the mass-will of people, wanting money and hating life. Anyhow I feel great grasping white hands in the air, wanting to get hold of the throat of anybody who tries to live, to live beyond money, and squeeze the life out. There's a bad time coming....
> (363)

Mellors writes on, having admitted an inimical world, humanly speaking:

> ... I feel my inside turn to water sometimes, and there you are, going to have a child by me. But never mind. All the bad times that ever have been haven't been able to blow the crocus out: not even the love of women. So they won't be able to blow out my wanting you, nor the little glow there is between you and me. We'll be together next year....

Then the reader remembers that in the early days when she first visited the gamekeeper's cottage Connie (herself a Persephone figure) amid the cold winds of Persephone, had thought of the resurrection and the winds of March when she would emerge with the crocus.

Part of the impact of _Lady Chatterley's Lover_ is that the reader is left with a groundswell of vague uneasiness. One feels that in spite of its intensely lyrical qualities and the closely-knit and expertly managed symbolism of the first two-thirds of the novel, the last third drags and the conclusion is unsatisfactory.

It is possible to work up a good case of annoyance with Lawrence for using dialect for Mellors. Critics who say that Lawrence backtracked into dialect because this was his father's speech and that it was in his father that he finally recognized the qualities of vitality and tenderness which he so passionately advocated, may be right. On the other hand, although it is an effective shield used as a symbol for withdrawal from society and identification with nature for the sensitive Mellors, surely Lawrence was not

naive enough to think that the body of English people whom he most wanted to influence -- and he did admit that he wanted to influence them -- would be attracted and not repelled by this. This is an open question. On the other hand, Lawrence makes the point that Clifford and Mellors were both wounded men. Mellors recognized his wounds and admitted the healing process. Clifford ignored the necessity of vital connection both as a healing process and as a condition of living.

There is no doubt that Lawrence felt that the act of pure passional love between one man and one woman was the symbol of the otherness and individuality and also the union which resulted in the holy ghost or flame in which the continuous process of creation and fulfilment -- resurrection in a new form if you like -- could take place. There is a question that Lawrence was attempting the impossible, that is complete explication of a symbol.

There is no doubt that although Clifford is easy to dislike, Connie and Mellors are not easy to like. The reader's credulity is strained. Would it be possible, given the experience that both Connie and Mellors had, to be so completely naive? If the answer is yes, perhaps the strength of _Lady Chatterley_ lies in its weakness and what Lawrence was

trying to say was this: Once the defection of the modern gods is recognized, that even very ordinary people, broken by circumstance and imprisoned by the cruelty of an insentient society, if they have the courage to love purely and deeply, may create a warm climate of hope in which it is possible to live -- in the words of The Man Who Died "with a desireless resoluteness, deeper even than consciousness."

CHAPTER VII

THE GREATER DAY

The Man Who Died is the key to all of Lawrence's work. Why not consider it first instead of last? Because reading Lawrence is a process on the part of the reader as well as a technique on the part of the writer. The formula for understanding might be: the reader is to the process what the artist is to the archetypes (or philosophy or to his place in the universe). Reading brings one nearer to understanding the central truth but requires a dynamics of becoming. Lawrence was a mythologist because he tried to understand the individual and mankind and put him and ultimately "them" into relation with the Cosmos. Finding one's place in the universe is a process, rarely to date successful, and writing about it carries with it the assurance of about the same amount of success.

It is questionable whether Lawrence really valued success. He may have wished for a little more financial recognition and he certainly wished for more understanding of what he was trying to do, but success is a concomitant of

the little "personal" world that Lawrence was trying to get beyond. He would, I think, be joyful if he thought that what he said was considered relevant in a new, harsher, and even more mechanical and technological age than the one in which he wrote -- one in which the leisured classes, that is the former working classes, will be forced to consider "how to live". And some of those will have time and ability to consider "why"?

For these people The Man Who Died may be required reading.

The question underlying Lawrence's writing is the old Socratic question of "How to be?". It was Mellors' question which always divides into being and seeming, living or dying, and how to know which is which. Is the dark evil and the light good? Is the beautiful always good and the evil ugly -- or are they sometimes in opposite roles? Or poles? Then there is the question of polarities, out of flux and equilibration. Lawrence answers in one way -- Life is good. So then the question is how to live -- the old Socratic question -- "How to be?".

All of Lawrence's work may be read as a search -- the search of man for himself. It is surprisingly Greek -- "Know thyself" -- the thing that happened to Constance Chatterley when "she came to the very heart of the jungle of

herself." The search, not all charted by Lawrence, takes modern man through many relationships in which emotions are realigned and values transposed. In this late work Lawrence seems to say that the phenomenal universe holds the solution for the man who has died and made the underworld journey -- the literal harrowing of hell. There must be, and is, a continuous creation of meaningful life and man must connect with it.

About the same time that Lawrence was working on this concept, Teilhard de Chardin was working out his theories of life expanding towards the Omega point with an increasing number of human beings operating in life with increased intuitive awareness. Teilhard was a religious, a philosopher, and a scientist all of which Lawrence was not. Yet it may be that Lawrence, who was continually skirmishing about the frontiers of science, was trying to create for his fictional characters the milieu that would make a more expanded life possible -- the thing that Teilhard declared was happening in reality.

In The Man Who Died Lawrence is going through, step by step, the process that every man must go through if he really wishes to live. Lawrence makes the distinction, rarely if ever pointed out, between the perpetually re-created living universe and the connection made by the individual man with its life. For Lawrence life is in, and apprehended

by, the senses and must come or _return_ by the senses. _The Man Who Died_ is essentially a statement about this and about the necessity of physical love in its highest sense -- selective and right in the economy of the phenomenal world.

The Man Who Died is a confrontation of the problem of fragmentation. Whether one considers this problem under the myth of Osiris, or the crucifixion, or the modern man in search of his soul, the component parts are the same. The problem of fragmentation is this: the god (or man) is broken. He is broken by the people and for a reason -- so that they may be made whole. But they cannot be whole unless he is. The problem of fragmentation cannot be solved by one Being, god or man. This involves individual acceptance and recognition of wounds and the courage to trust a member of the betraying society for healing. There must be a healer as well as a victim. The god dies and is fragmented. The god wants to be whole. He is alienated by his wounds and his death. He is out of touch with humanity even though his mission may have been to, or for, society. There is a loss of physical awareness. Someone must be aware of this fragmentation and must care enough to do something about it. This involves compassion.

The individual (or healer) must see and join, and solve (or salve) the problem or wound. The god must submit to the joining as well as the breaking. This is also the salvation of the individual who joins. It is the pattern upon which society must be built and must rest. It is the Omega point of Teilhard. It is the goal of Lawrence's Holy Ghost. It is not impossible with Lawrence's often unstated Biblical undergirding that there is the specific Pauline statement of the Body of Christ.

Of course there is a paradox. Who is healer and who is healed? The healer is also healed. The man who had died went out as a healer and was healed. The priestess in searching for the lost clue to heal her god was also healed. The fusion of healer and healed results in a third thing -- the flame, the Holy Ghost, the continuance of creation.

The gamecock is the symbol of life, vitality, or the vital principle, and a symbol of the necessity of freedom to live. The man who died is the symbol of the nausea of disillusion with life, or alternatively its victim, and the symbol of the necessity to connect completely with it (the vital principle). The middle term -- the thing which the cock had not got to have to live and which the man must have is _awareness_. The cock must be; the man must _be_ and _see_ -- or in wider connotation be sensually aware. Awareness is the

key word. It was this lack of awareness that separated Ursula from Anthony Schofield, the gardener.

The gamecock and the man are the victims of the same thing -- the unthinking cruelty of the peasant mind. The gamecock, shabby at first, is resplendent with brave feathers by the time the fig-trees were leafing. The peasant who owns him is poor and dirty and rather lazy, as is his wife. But there is a clue to the gaminess of the cock. He was answering the crowing of other cocks "beyond the walls, in a world he knew nothing of." There is another explanation too: "By some freak of destiny, he was a dandy rooster." There is a place given for destiny. The working of the peasant mind will never be caught more truly than in the next words:

> "He will surely fly away one of these days," said the peasant's wife.
> So they lured him with grain, caught him, though he fought with all his wings and feet, and they tied a cord round his shank, fastening it against the spur, and they tied the other end of the cord to the post that held up the donkey's straw pent-roof.
> (164)

Here is the seed of ultimate, even if unrecognized, evil -- jealousy of vitality and suppression of it.

D.H. Lawrence, St. Mawr and The Man Who Died. New York: Vintage Books, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1953, p. 163. (The Man Who Died first published 1929).

> ... He was tied by the leg and he knew it.
> Body, soul and spirit were tied by that string.
> Underneath, however, the life in him was grimly unbroken. It was the cord that should break. . . .
> (164)

One morning, just before dawn, the impulse for freedom is so strong that the cock escapes, snapping his string.

> At the same time, at the same hour before dawn, on the same morning, a man awoke from a long sleep in which he was tied up.... He had not wished it. He had wanted to stay outside, in the place where even memory is stone dead.
> (165)

The man is in an agony of revulsion from life, yet strength comes from this revulsion. (This is important in the novels). "There was a crash and a wave of light.... And the strange, piercing keenness of daylight's sharp breath was on him. It meant full awakening." Awareness comes through the senses and in terms of the sea and "breath".

How different is the man's coming into life from the cock's:

> Slowly, slowly he crept down from the cell of rock, with the caution of the bitterly wounded. Bandages and Perfume fell away, and he crouched on the ground against the wall of rock, to recover oblivion. But he saw his hurt feet touching the earth again with unspeakable pain, the earth they had meant to touch no more, and he saw his thin legs that had died, and pain unknowable, pain like

> utter bodily disillusion, filled him so full that he stood up, with one torn hand on the ledge of the tomb.
> (166)

"He was alone; and having died, was even beyond loneliness."

"He went on with scarred feet, neither of this world nor of the next." He is completely without connection.... "driven by a dim, deep nausea of disillusion, and a resolution of which he was not even aware."

The man who had died was roused from his half-consciousness by the crowing of the escaped cock, "a sound which made him shiver as if electricity had touched him". The cock has connected him with the world.

The cock sails down from a tree in his bid for freedom, the peasant appears and asks the man to stop him and the man who had died spreads his shroud so that the cock is driven back. The peasant catches the cock but is stupified at the sight of the dead-looking man. The man says he is not dead, but has been taken down too soon:

> ..."Yet if they discover me, they will do it all over again...."
> He spoke in a voice of old disgust. Humanity! Especially humanity in authority! There was only one thing it could do....
> (168)

The peasant in terror offers him shelter, fearful too lest he should be seen with the malefactor and taken before the authorities. The man followed him _feeling_ the silky young wheat under his dead feet and _seeing_ the buds of the scarlet anemone, in another world:

> ... In his own world he was alone, utterly alone. These things around him were in a world that had never died. But he himself had died, or had been killed from out of it, and all that remained now was the great void nausea of utter disillusion. (168)

The loneliness, the void, the nausea have a curiously modern existential ring.

He goes to the peasant's house and is fed by the peasant's wife. The peasant ties up the cock. The necessity for life and the necessity for desire are here:

> But the stranger had no desire for food. Yet he moistened a little bread in the water, and ate it, since life must be. But desire was dead in him, even for food and drink. He had risen without desire, without even the desire to live, empty save for the all-overwhelming disillusion that lay like nausea where his life had been. Yet perhaps, deeper even than disillusion, was a desireless resoluteness, deeper even than consciousness. (169)

Where life had been, disillusion now is.

The atmosphere of death is real to the peasants. "Perhaps really he was a dead king, from the region of terrors.

And he was still cold and remote in the region of death, with perfumes coming from his transparent body as if from some strange flower." The man regards the peasants "limited, meagre, inevitable parts of the natural world." But there is between them mutual compassion and gentleness.

The man is attracted to the warmth of the sun and sees for a moment "the first green leaves spurting like flames from the ends of the enclosed fig-tree, out of the bareness to the sky of spring above." The flames are of life; the fig is a sexual symbol, the tree is enclosed. The man had once cursed such a tree so that it would never bear fruit. The cock cowers in a corner. When he looks again he sees the world "bright as glass", "the bare fig-tree with little jets of green leaf ... and he was not of it, for desire had failed."

"Yet he was there, and not extinguished." There is an echo here of "and the darkness comprehended it not." Night comes and he sleeps.

The sun draws him again. "He still wanted to feel the cool air of morning in his nostrils, see the pale sky overhead. He still hated to be shut up." The senses are aware; the revulsion is from death and enclosure.

The man comes out; the cock crows "a diminished, pinched cry, but there was that in the voice of the bird

stronger than chagrin. It was the necessity to live, and even to cry out the triumph of life." Lawrence uses all his adjectives meaningfully. "Diminished" is sound and sight; "pinched" is tactile. The man sees the courage of the cock.

> ... The brave sounds rang out, and though they were diminished by the cord round the bird's leg, they were not cut off. The man who had died looked nakedly on life, and saw *a vast resoluteness* everywhere flinging itself up in stormy or subtle wave-crests, foam-tips emerging out of the blue invisible, a black and orange cock or the green flame-tongues out of the extremes of the fig-tree. They came forth, these things and creatures of spring, *glowing with desire* and with assertion. They came like crests of foam, out of the blue flood of the invisible desire, out of the vast invisible sea of strength, and they came coloured and tangile, evanescent, yet deathless in their coming. The man who had died looked on the *great swing into existence* of things that had not died, but he saw no longer their tremulous desire to exist and to be. He heard instead their ringing, ringing, defiant challenge to all other things existing.
> (171)
> [Italics mine]

"And always the man who had died saw not the bird alone, but the short, sharp wave of life of which the bird was the crest." (This is Mellors and Connie naked in the rain at the wide riding.)

> ... and it was not the bird he saw, but one wave-tip of life overlapping for a minute another, in the tide of the swaying ocean of life. And the density of life seemed more fierce and compulsive to him even than the destiny of death....
> (172)

Contrasted to the cock the peasant has no fire, no flaminess. The man wonders why the peasant should be lifted up. "Let the earth remain earthy ... I was wrong to seek to lift it up." The man has compassion for the peasant but now no wish to interfere with him. "So the man with scars let the peasant go from him, for the peasant had no re-birth in him." Rebirth is a condition of life.

When dawn comes he goes to the garden. He had been betrayed in a garden and buried in a garden. Lawrence does not say so but the implication is that rebirth is a process from "given" conditions; the conditions and therefore the process is different for every man. Lawrence then gives another reading to "Do not touch me." The man says to Madeleine " I am not yet healed and in touch with men." Madeleine speaks of the triumph he will forgo if he does not return to his old life. But he replies:

> "My triumph," he said, "is that I am not dead. I have outlived my mission, and know not more of it.... I am glad it is over, and the day of my interference is done. The teacher and the saviour are dead in me; now I can go about my business, into my own single life....
>
> "I don't know what I shall do," he said. "When I am healed, I shall know better. But my mission is over, and my teaching is finished, and death has saved me from my own salvation.... Now I can live without striving to sway others any more. For my reach ends in my finger-tips, and my stride is no longer than the ends of my toes. Yet I would embrace multitudes, I who have never truly embraced even one....
>
> (174)

He warns Madeleine of excess. He wanted to give without taking spiritually and she physically: "The greed of giving". Madeleine sees "not the Master she had so adored, the young, flamy, unphysical exalter of her soul." She now sees a man "middle-aged and disillusioned, with a certain terrible indifference, and a resoluteness which love would never conquer." But Madeleine had misunderstood the "touch me not".

> ... He was risen, but not as man; as pure God, who should not be touched by flesh, and who should be rapt away into Heaven. It was the most glorious and most ghostly of the miracles. (176)

The man comes back to the peasant's house "sick with relief at being alone again." With the peasants he can be alone but not with his friends. The peasants, like the earth, make no demands. The peasant woman brings him food; he has turned away from life in the sickness of death in life. (This is a condition, unrealized or realized, that many of Lawrence's characters display). The peasant woman he knows, wishes that he would desire her:

> ... And he, who had never known a woman, would have desired her if he could. But he could not want her, though he felt gently towards her soft, crouching, humble body. But it was her thoughts, her consciousness, he could not mingle with.

> ... He could not touch the little, personal body, the little personal life of this woman ...
> Risen from the dead, he had realised at last that the body, too, has its little life, and beyond that, the greater life. He was virgin, in recoil from the little, greedy life of the body. But now he knew that virginity is a form of greed; and that the body rises again to give and to take, to take and to give ungreedily.
> (177-8)

The man knows that he is risen for the greater life but knows there is time later for this; he is driven neither to take nor to give.

The peasant comes home and thanks him for the money which he has given the woman for food. When the peasant would help him to rise he says "touch me not" and "I am not yet risen to the Father." To the cock he says "Surely thou art risen to the Father, among birds." The cock is so plainly a part of the larger life of the world.

On the third day he goes again to the garden thinking of the life beyond the little personal life. Madeleine is there "and the woman who had been his mother," and a woman named Joan. Madeleine brings him money which he takes saying that he cannot speak to the women, he is not yet ascended and must go:

> He looked at her, and saw she was clutching for the man in him who had died and was dead, the man of his youth and his mission of his chastity and his fear, of his little life, his giving without taking.
> (179)

Now, with no connection with his people or his mission he must learn to be alone:

> ... The sun and the subtle salve of spring healed his wounds, even the gaping wound of disillusion through his bowels was closing up. And his need of men and women, his fever to have them and to be saved by them, this too was healing in him. Whatever came of touch between himself and the race of men, henceforth, should come without trespass or compulsion....
> (179)

The wound in the bowels has a double symbolism. Lawrence uses "compassion" in the biblical sense of "bowels of compassion" with all its meaning of physical stirring of feeling. Because the mob did not have this Christ was wounded and without their healing he cannot feel deeply. Compassion must involve "feeling with" rather than performance of the same action directed only by a sense of duty which is a mental stress. Looking at his mission from the other side of death the man thinks "the fig-tree may be barren if it will, and the rich may be rich." "There is nothing to say, and I am alone within my own skin, which is the walls of all my domain."

> ... For in the tomb he had left his striving self, which cares and asserts itself. Now his uncaring self healed and became whole within his skin, and he smiled to himself with pure aloneness, which is one sort of immortality.
> (180)

Because the power of healing is still in him towards anything which moves his compassion the man decides to go into the phenomenal world as a healer. With a rare and possibly unnoticed bit of irony Lawrence indicates that the man makes a concession to the peasant world. (Because it is part of the phenomenal world and not to be changed or because it is inevitable that the different will be eliminated? Lawrence does not say.) He cuts his hair and beard after the "right" fashion and buys the "right" clothes, and gives the peasant money. Also he buys the cock from the peasant:

> ... Yet even now he did not go quite alone, for under his arm, as he went, he carried the cock, whose tail fluttered gaily behind, and who craned his head excitedly, for he too was adventuring out for the first time into the wider phenomenal world, which is the stirring of the body of cocks also...
> (181)

Later the reader will be aware (by the kind of apprehension without teaching which the man saw beyond his mission) of how subtly the cock and the man and the lost clue of the priestess of Isis merge in this multi-layered myth.

The man views the world with the wisdom brought from the other side of death:

> "Strange is the phenomenal world, dirty and clean together! And I am the same. Yet I am apart! And life bubbles variously. Why should I have wanted it to bubble all alike? What a

> pity I preached to them! A sermon is so much more likely to cake into mud, and to close the fountains, than is a psalm or a song. I made a mistake. I understand that they executed me for preaching to them. Yet they could not finally execute me, for now I am risen in my own aloneness, and inherit the earth, since I lay no claim on it.. (181)

There are layers of life and conditions of life. One must be aware of them.

> ... First and foremost, forever, I shall be alone. But I must toss this bird into the seethe of phenomena, for he must ride his wave. How hot he is with life! Soon, in some place, I shall leave him among the hens. And perhaps one evening, I shall meet a woman who can lure my risen body, yet I leave me in my aloneness.... (181-2)

The man overtakes some former friends who are talking of him. They do not recognize him. He says in answer to the question of why he carries the cock that he is a healer and the bird has virtue, (an unspoken Lawrencean parallel to Socrates' -- "a cock to Aesculapius" -- cured by death?)

> "You are not a believer?"
> "Yea! I believe the bird is full of life and virtue."
> They walked on in silence after this, and he felt they disliked his answer. So he smiled to himself, for a dangerous phenomenon in the world is a man of narrow belief, who denies the right of his neighbour to be alone.... (183)

The man identifies himself and slips away and stays in a small inn. There he bargains with the innkeeper for a kingdom for the cock and a battle with the common cock of the inn yard. If the cock loses he shall be eaten. But he kills the common rooster and the man leaves him king of the inn yard and of the hens.

> And he left his bird there, and went on, deeper into the phenomenal world, which is a vast complexity of entanglements and allurements: And he asked himself a last question:
> "From what, and to what, could this infinite whirl be saved?"
> (183)

"The nausea of the old, wound broke out afresh, and he looked again on the world with repulsion, dreading its mean contacts."

In this mood of revulsion the man stands near a temple of Isis looking down at the sea and a beach. Above on the headland the priestess of Isis gazes upon the same scene. She serves Isis the Bereaved, Isis in Search (for Osiris, the fragmented god).

> ... She was looking for the fragments of the dead Osiris, dead and scattered asunder, dead, torn apart, and thrown in fragments over the wide world. And she must find his hands and his feet, his heart, his thighs, his head, his belly, she must gather him together and fold her arms round the reassembled body till it became warm again and roused to life, and could embrace her, and could fecundate her womb.... And through the years she found him bit by bit, heart and head and limbs and body. And yet she had

> not found the last reality, the final clue to
> him, that alone could bring him really back
> to her. For she was Isis of the subtle lotus,
> the womb which waits submerged and in bud, waits
> for the touch of that other inward sun that
> streams its rays from the loins of the male
> Osiris.
> (188)

This is the mystery of the young priestess, daughter of one of Anthony's captains and no stranger to the splendours of Rome. The golden splendours of Anthony do not appeal to her. She, as an old philosopher explains to her, is like the lotus which awaits "the penetration of the flooding, violet-dark sun that has died and has risen and makes no show." "Rare women wait for the re-born man". So she waited, serving Isis "whilst her mother, who loved affairs, controlled the small estate and the slaves with a free hand."

Under the simple story the action becomes diagramatic. The priestess, never awakened into life, always waiting, and the man who had died, called back into life where humanity had never been personal[2] look down upon two slaves on the beach, an adolescent boy and girl engaged in the killing of pigeons. The girl allows one to escape and the boy beats her for it, thinks he has killed her, and in

---

[2]"If I had kissed Judas with live love, perhaps he never would have kissed me with death." (205)

a frenzy first of fear and then of relief, couples with her like a young animal. It is an echo of the cock -- the momentary overlapping of the waves of life.

The man seeks shelter at the shrine and a slave charged with his welfare brings the priestess to see him asleep and to look at the wounds of his hands and feet. He is a malefactor the slave thinks. The flame of the phenomenal world overlaps the world of the temple. Looking at the sleeping man's face, "a true priestess she saw":

> There was a beauty of much suffering, and the strange calm candour of finer life in the whole delicate ugliness of the face. For the first time, she was touched on the quick at the sight of a man, as if the tip of a fine flame of living had touched her. It was the first time. Men had roused all kinds of feeling in her, but never had touched her with the flame-tip of life. (193)

She rebukes the slave whom she found repulsive. "The slaves were so embedded in the lesser life ... So she wrapped her dream round her, and went to the temple." The stranger is to come to her when he wakes up.

> ... Re-born, he was in the other life, the greater day of the human consciousness. And he was alone and apart from the little day, and out of contact with the daily people. Not yet had he accepted the irrevocable noli me tangere which separates the reborn from the vulgar.... (194)

The priestess of Isis is sure that the man who had died is Osiris and she trembles upon the edge of life. But he is troubled. The world of cruel touching has tortured him to death yet, "I am a physician, yet I have no healing like the flame of this tender girl ... like the first pale crocus of the spring." Still he eats shell-fish from the rocks "with relish and wonder for the simple taste of the sea." He debates his courage; the touch of life will take him so much further than the touch of death.

The priestess comes and asks if he is Osiris and he answere "Yes, if thou wilt heal me!" "They sat in silence in the warmth and glow of the western sun; the man who had died, and the woman of the pure search." The sun falls on the naked twinkling bodies of the slaves watched over by an all-tolerant Pan.

At night he goes to the temple and the priestess comes. Lawrence has painted her throughout in dun gold and ivory, creamed over with her dream and luminous but not shining. For the man his death wounds are an agony as he contemplates life. "She turned to the statue in the ritual of approach, softly swaying forward with a slight lurch, like a moored boat, tipping towards the goddess."

> "Ah Goddess," he said to the idol, in the vernacular.
> "I would be so glad to live, if you would give me my clue again."

> For here again he felt desperate, faced by the demand of life, and burdened still by his death.
> (204)

There is an unspoken contrast with the anointing scene of Mary Magdalen here. The priestess anoints his wounds:

> ... so that the sound of his wounds grew dimmer and dimmer, suddenly she put her breast against the wound in his left side, and her arms round him folding over the wound in his right side, and she pressed him to her, in a power of living warmth... and the wailing died out altogether....
> (206)

The priestess heals him with love. "He laid his hand softly on her warm bright shoulder." The dun gold of the priestess is now bright.

Here also is a new concept of "the rock". "He knew only the crouching fulness of the woman there, the soft white rock of life...." This is a contrast to the peasant woman with her "little personal" life whom he could not desire. As they leave the temple he says: "Lo, Isis is a kindly goddess; and full of tenderness. Great gods are warm-hearted, and have tender goddesses."

The man is aware that the mother of the priestess and her Roman overseer plot against him. The mother is jealous for her daughter's property.

> It was the life of the little day, the life of little people. And the man who had died said to himself: "Unless we encompass it in the greater day and set the little life in the circle of the greater life, all is disaster."
> (200)

In the fulness of spring, when the priestess has conceived, the man knows that he must go away, that they must be separate. "And even she wanted the coolness of her own air around her."

One calm still night the Roman overseer directs the slaves to entrap the man. As they steal up the hill to his cave the man who had died goes down to the sea and to the boat which had brought them.

> ... The slave who sat in the boat sat motionless, holding the oars, for the sea was quite still. And the man who had died knew him.
>
> So out of the deep cleft of a rock he said, in a clear voice:
>
> "Art thou not that slave who possessed the maiden under the eyes of Isis? Art thou not the youth? Speak!
>
> The youth stood up in the boat in terror. His movement sent the boat bumping against the rock. The slave sprang out in wild fear, and fled up the rocks. The man who had died quickly seized the boat and stepped in, and pushed off. The oars were yet warm with the unpleasant warmth of the hands of the slaves.... The man who had died rowed slowly on, with the current, and laughed to himself: "I have sowed the seed of my life and my resurrection, and put my touch forever upon the choice woman of this day, and I carry her perfume in my flesh like essence of roses. She is dear to me in the middle of my being. But the gold and flowing serpent is coiling up again, to sleep at the root of my tree.
>
> "So let the boat carry me. To-morrow is another day."
> (210-1)

One feels that it might be better not to analyse this complex, seemingly simply-constructed myth, since apprehending is better than teaching. There are several things to ponder at least. At the last the words the man speaks to the slave might have been spoken to himself. It was love that made the difference between fear and fulfilment. Lawrence, like Jung, is an alchemist out of time and realizes the transforming properties of love. There is a parallelism that is pure poetry. There is the bright, flame-crested natural world of the cock, the world of the biological thrust; the dark, olive-stained, fish-rich, salt-water-encrusted world of the slaves, a world of twinkling bodies and careless copulation; there is the dun-and-ivory-shaded world of the priestess waiting for the glow of the dark sun. The fourth is hinted at -- the world of hope which is another day, "the greater day". There is the world of the cock and the man and the fragmented god. There is the selfish world of Madeleine and the little personal world of the peasant woman and the pure and dreamlike world of the priestess. There are polarities too -- the world of compulsion and compassion,of death and life which must be resolved -- and the varying viewpoints of the man from beyond death looking upon life and the compulsive egotistical mob looking fearsomely to death.

The man who had died went into the same current and in the same boat as the slaves had done. They were slaves and he was free. And as he went he said "But the gold and flowing serpent is coiling up again, to sleep at the root of my tree."

A true work of art has no final bound. Perhaps what Lawrence was trying to say is the same thing that Teilhard de Chardin was trying to say -- that humanity has just begun, and to those who can see, the serpent in the garden of Eden and the gold and flowing serpent are one.

CONCLUSION

Lawrence is one of the first writers of the twentieth century who can be studied in relation to its very real problem of fragmentation. Not only was he acutely aware of the problem but he lived in the part of the world where it first showed in an acute form.

If one subscribes to a cyclic view of history it is possible to see Lawrence in the same situation as the ancient Greeks, trying to make of the fragmentary knowledge available to him a coherent account of the universe and having to fall back upon his intuition to do it. The Greeks saw creation carved out of chaos -- the idea of the informing of matter. Lawrence's view was microcosmic -- the idea of man carving himself out of chaos. This idea pervades the novels but is most concisely stated in _The Man Who Died_ in which the peasant is considered in two lights -- as part of the earth and its "little personal" life, or as one who had the possibility of inheriting the greater day.

It would be easy to say that divine aid is never available to Lawrence. But in this matter we have to consider his ambivalence, or his method of flux and resolution. At some points in the reading of the novels the

reader feels that the higher plane of living is only achieved in the Holy Ghost and that the Holy Ghost is created by the action of two people. However in his later writing Lawrence emphasized "connection" with a power already in the universe. This is the point at which it is a temptation to accuse Lawrence of Pantheism because he so obviously admired the ancient Greeks for their close relationship with a power which they considered to be everywhere. The statement of "the third thing" was given in simple terms by Lydia to Anna in The Rainbow. It was given a cosmic significance by Mellors, and the idea of "connection" was defined in The Man Who Died.

Lawrence, however, was aware of the tenuousness of "connection" and indicated that the way to God is now found only through the Holy Ghost, the way Jesus himself indicated. In his essay "Resurrection", in which he used the symbolism of the wheel of fire, with God and Christ at the flaming axis, he leaves man with the Holy Ghost:

> Only the Holy Ghost within you can scent the new tracks of the Great God across the Cosmos of Creation. The Holy Ghost is the dark hound of heaven whose baying we ought to listen to, as he runs ahead into the unknown, tracking the mysterious everlasting departing of the Lord God, who is for ever departing from us.
>
> ....
>
> The Almighty has shifted his throne, and we've got to find a new road.
>
> (Phoenix 728-9)

This was written toward the end of Lawrence's life, and is not the most comforting of religious philosophies. Yet he was consistent in his search for the new road or new ways of connection, which for him meant living in cosmic harmony.

Much of what he wrote was misunderstood. What he tried to make clear in the novels was summed up in another of his posthumous essays, "We Need One Another", in which he wrote, rather wearily:

> I am so tired of being told that I want mankind to go back to the condition of savages. As if modern city people weren't about the crudest, rawest, most crassly savage monkeys that ever existed, when it comes to the relation of man and woman. All I see in our vaunted civilization is men and women smashing each other emotionally and psychically to bits, and all I ask is that they should pause and consider. (<u>Phoenix</u> 194)

The kind of relationship he strove for was one of awareness and delicate balance: this was also the object of Birkin's search.

It was the search for this condition of being that occupied Lawrence in the novels considered in this study. The achievement of this would enable people to live together rhythmically and in tune with the universe. The novels are unsatisfactory in so far as they are records of failure to achieve this. On the other hand they indicate lines of

progression and glimpses of how this hope may be achieved. For instance, in the circular dance of the natives which Kate watches in The Plumed Serpent, or in the performance of the porpoises which entranced Gethin Day in "The Flying Fish", one can see the ultimate in awareness and harmony which the modern world so sadly lacks. These are indeed outside the scope of the novels surveyed, yet what Lawrence was plainly saying was that old cultures had the magic (but did not have the power of cerebration) and that a high species of animal had it (but they were not human). Without losing what we have we must attain the intelligent capacities of feeling that will put us into a condition of cosmic harmony.

The whole canon of Lawrence's works is a network of correspondences. The more they are read the more they yield in symbolic meaning. Sometimes the reader feels that he exaggerates and that it is hard to agree with him. Yet however much the reader disagrees, he must admit that Lawrence, especially in the novels, works steadily toward the central truth of how to live.

The Platonist is dissatisfied with Lawrence because he seems to be a Platonist in reverse. Always bearing in mind that he was not a philosopher, we may say that because of their place in time they have to be at polarities, Plato working outward and Lawrence inward. The same accident of

time puts Lawrence on the immanent end of the transcendence-immanence pole.

One thing Lawrence did bravely was to face the problem of evil. Again it is easy to be critical of the way he did it, but again one must place him in time, at the end of the Victorian period when facing evil was not the thing to do. The problem is the same that is faced by the author of the Book of Job and by modern theologians -- the task of understanding life in terms "beyond evil". This understanding was a condition of the kind of life that Lawrence wanted to live -- a full life in a fully comprehended universe, that is a universe in which he could be freely and fully aware of the beauty and expanding possibilities that life contains. It was a large ambition, but, given these conditions as an objective, all of his mythology falls into place, and, because an interested reader of Lawrence is an involved one, it is a challenge to see the imperfections indicated by his work and to continue the mythmaking in the kind of continuous creation in which he believed.

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