

D.H. LAWRENCE AND NARRATIVE DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

Lawrence's work has almost inevitably been read as an aesthetic production whereby one must eventually agree or disagree with his vision of "reality." Those who assume a formalist standard of taste often find that Lawrence "loses control" of his material; those who offer ideological apologies for his work argue that disruptions in the aesthetic plane are representative of an exploratory genius, often seen as the outstanding characteristic of literary modernism. Both approaches, explicitly or otherwise, rely on the ultimate sanction of the achieved image, transmuted by the author always in control of his material. Yet anyone who reads Lawrence with an eye to what the "tale" says in addition to what the "teller" claims discovers that Lawrence is not in full control of his material, though it cannot simply be argued, on aesthetic or linguistic criteria, that he is out of control. Rather, there exists a "third" state whereby Lawrence both writes and is written, gives us a message with one hand, yet retracts it, as it were, with the other. Because this double-move is preeminently suited to the language of fiction, and because it appears in Lawrence's fiction with the greatest versatility and incisiveness, this dissertation analyzes six of his novels for their rhetorical significance, understood as both an organization of tropes and figures and as a system of persuasive doctrine. A new definition for allegory is proposed, the introduction of thematic and structural "blanks" is examined, and a spread of narrative delays are identified and discussed, all concerned with the central problem of writing novels that direct themselves to the resurrection of a pre-linguistic universe, yet ironically depend more and more upon writing to bring this about. Ideas drawn from Continental philosophy and recent critical theory are incorporated for support and instruction. Attention is also focused on Lawrence's revision processes, often with specific emphasis on unpublished manuscript material.

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PREFACE

So much has been written about D.H. Lawrence: Novelist that yet another study with the seemingly pedestrian aim of locating "narrative design" perhaps requires some explanation. Much of Lawrence's oeuvre--the plays, travel books, and poems in particular--has received only partial and uneven attention compared with the dozens of books and hundreds of articles devoted to the explication or explanation of the narratives. It is instructive to note, for example, that Holly Laird's Self and Sequence and Sandra Gilbert's earlier Acts of Attention are the only comprehensive accounts of Lawrence's poetry available: for a writer who composed over four volumes of verse in twenty years, and whose best work approaches that of Yeats or Rilke or Pound, this is surely astounding, and calls for an investigation of Lawrence criticism if nothing else.

Yet it would be rash to conclude that the narratives themselves have been exhausted, that every possible nuance, every twist in ideology, every social panacea strained out and labelled. In fact, Lawrence criticism in general is conspicuous for its lack of theoretical orientation: the best studies have all tended toward commentary--an acceptance or rejection of Lawrence's ideas as they are transmuted into one or another vague conception of what a novel should be. One either likes Lawrence or one doesn't, and the few serious attempts at analysis (usually formalist or psychoanalytic) tend to mask a less than subtle, ultimately misleading, ideological circularity. One starts with a eulogy or grudge conveniently smuggled into a dialectics of form, establishes the "rightness" or "wrongness" of the aesthetic in question, then "proves" the initial opinion by means of it. Where much is to be gained, the inadequacy of this sleight-of-hand is decisive: in the name of criticism that exceeds opinion, one only sinks away, in Colin Clarke no less than in Eliseo Vivas, into a querulous apologetics, exercising the habit that Lawrence's writing is self-explanatory and that the only question worth asking is one of value. As a result, analysis has been degraded into assessment by paraphrase, with moral

evaluation preempting any sustained consideration of the work itself. If we understand theory as the critique of critical habit, forcing us to reconsider (or consider for the first time) the assumptions behind our beliefs and practices, then the interpretive circularity I have traced leaves one floating, with not a small sense of false security, in a gaping theoretical vacuum. Ironically, as Lawrence's art, so vehemently debated in the commentary, becomes strangely deracinated in the welter of external appropriations of his thought, the reader loses touch with the text at hand; simplified for the sake of a polemical exempla gratia, it is no longer true to its own complexities.

To a certain degree, it might be argued, such appropriation is inevitable: without an ethical turn, no work of art would ever generate an audience, and no critic hope to be honest about his evaluative principles. This is true enough on both counts; the objection here is not to ethics as such, but to sociological affect (Spilka's "love ethic," for example) as an explicitly thematic concern: the "message" the writer has inscribed for us and which we are then duty-bound to extract. No thought is given to the possibility that such messages might be ambivalent and self-contradictory, that language itself will be the facilitator of such complexity against the text's otherwise polemical stance, and that the moral of the story is also the moral in the story, existing on several different levels of narrative meaning and resistant to topical extraction. It is my intention to offer an alternative to such reductive polemics and/or evaluative confusion by returning afresh to the novels without the aesthetic presuppositions that have dogged previous attempts at moral instruction and close reading. Very simply, Lawrence's work seems to require a little breathing room of its own, and the arrangement of my chapters in chronological sequence--beginning with The Rainbow and finishing with the Chatterley triad--is designed to reevaluate the narratives as narratives and not as exempla for any number of ancillary concerns. Undoubtedly, this kind of close reading will appear somewhat abstract, the explication and explanation of certain passages drawing less from the familiar glossary of "literary" terms or the equally familiar appeal to "common sense," and

more from the resources of formal rhetoric, narrative theory, and philosophical argument. Yet I submit that this apparent abstraction is substantially the effect of the comfortable habit of reading literature as a whole, to say nothing of Lawrence in particular, in the incomplete, but deceptively naturalized, terminology of aesthetic classification. If the reader is patient, and willing to consider that abstraction is perhaps the fault of aesthetic commonplace rather than theoretical explication, he may discover a truly innovatory reading that would only be glossed over or misappropriated through the application of more canonical standards of taste.

The decision to concentrate on the novels, moreover, and specifically on the novels after Sons and Lovers, is motivated in part by the appearance of The Rainbow as the first work of the mature Lawrence--the Lawrence who discovers here a suitable replacement for what he calls "the old stable ego"--and in part by the exigencies of the narrative design that develops from this maturity and freedom. In this sense, I am asserting that the mature Lawrence is also the most interesting and complex Lawrence; whether he can be said to "improve" or "decline" as a novelist is another question entirely, and one tied to aesthetic principles (e.g. novels which follow classical norms of formal harmony are "better" than those which don't) which I attempt to avoid. What needs to be claimed here, however, is that Lawrence was preeminently a novelist, an assertion ironically but no less convincingly underscored by the technical difficulties he faced in this medium: one can identify the long narrative as his métier not only because he is best known as a novel writer, or because he chose to write criticism on the novels but never on the short story or lyric poem, but because it is the medium in which he continually overreaches himself, experiments with his beliefs and doubts to the greatest extent, and invests the kind of attention and continued concern with their expression that is not found in any of his work in other genres. To begin with The Rainbow is therefore to begin with the work which would predictably introduce the narrative patterns representative of Lawrence as a novel writer, patterns we would also expect to become more intricate as the novels lose their social base and become self-determining projects in cultural correction. If

we are to offer an alternative to "aesthetic" formulas--the understanding of the text as objective, internally coherent, and ultimately, if indirectly, reducible to authorial genius and/or superior craftsmanship--then it is only fitting that we begin the reevaluation here.

A word needs to be said about the particular meaning I attach to narrative design. In the sense intended here, "design" is both the deliberate manipulation of ideas and words on a page--the author as il miglior fabbro--and the maturation of a text which appears to follow its own rules as much as those attributable to a controlling consciousness. The copula in the thesis title attempts the desired relationship between author and work: not one of possession, of mastery through the genitive, but of addition, each side of the equation interacting with the other yet resisting a reduction into either a biographical or a linguistic positivism. As such, the use of the proper name "D.H. Lawrence" as the field within which these forces operate leads to a certain referential ambivalence. Which "D.H. Lawrence" is one speaking of--the one who is, as it were, behind and beyond his work paring his fingernails, orchestrating his manuscript revisions with panoptical precision and economy; or the one written in by the text he supposedly manipulates, opposing the cultural message with an internal skepticism otherwise prohibited from entering the plot? Both are irreducibly linked to the historical and grammatical reference "D.H. Lawrence," yet each delivers a different understanding of the relationship between writer, work, and reader, perpetually repositioning the limits of consciousness and deliberation in an attempt to reveal what the art work as a whole expresses and not merely to reiterate its most stentorian ideological codes. Taken together, they constitute an ambivalent textual milieu in which aesthetic filaments circulate but are by no means dominant or even isolatable, except as a heuristic device with the necessary warning, "Yes, but. . . ." To dissolve the ambivalence through dissection, in turn, creates an artificial state in which interpretive clarity impinges upon accuracy and instinct. This is to a certain extent unavoidable if any criticism is to be attempted in the first place, but insofar as this ambiguity also infects

the critical language (one must still designate the proper name), the danger of misrepresentation is proportionally increased. Without resorting to the impractical and inelegant solution of prefacing each nominal reference with a guide to its possible and immediate applications, the reader must, as it were, think on parallel planes, a form of critical attention that is difficult to cultivate but necessary if the concept of "narrative design" is to be properly understood here. At all times, one must remember that the slippage between deliberation and accident is indigenous to the narrative strategy of a Lawrencian text. To forget this is to allow the simplifications of either a monological authorial voice or a linguistic randomness to supplant the much more difficult task of critical reading.

The attempt to balance expository clarity, however, with a more representative, but also more opaque, textual irresolution courts the danger of inciting an overly diffuse display of secondary criticism--the introduction of a number of terms and critics in defense of the present argument without a formal alignment of their theoretical assumptions. Where possible, of course, and in keeping with central aim of providing a reading of Lawrence's novels and not an encapsulation of different narrative theories, I have eliminated or deemphasized tangential connections between Lawrence's narrative design and its elucidation of certain structural or hermeneutic theories of narrative patterning. Fruitful work can be done, no doubt, in evaluating Lawrence's use of narrators with respect to Genette's delineation of the "focalized" speaker (the frequent point-of-view shifts between "objective" characterization and authorial polemics locate the presence of opposing textual motives), or again in comparing my understanding of the reader's dialectical role with Jauss's hermeneutics or Iser's evolving concept of literary anthropology (both of which outline the mechanics of an "incomplete" work to be activated by the kind of deciphering reader I propose in the "Introduction" below); but such work calls for a theoretical blueprint, and an extended discussion of the philosophical status of "potential" narratives (if no one reads the book, does ^{it} remain incomplete?, etc.), that is too general and digressive for our purposes here. Likewise,

the distinction between Bakhtin's notion of a dialogical text and my own use of dialogue as structural allegory pivots on the all-important issue of artistic control that will almost certainly become a sticking point in Lawrence criticism of the future; though I attempt to draw this distinction as carefully and thoroughly as possible, its practical implications are, once again, beyond the scope of this thesis. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to exclude such theoretical referencing for its inadequate foregrounding in a larger critical history; insofar as theoretical reflection inspires the appropriate critical attitude for an appreciation of Lawrence as I read him, the introduction of certain analytical terms and insights--Paul de Man's notion of allegory, for example, or Derrida's conception of the trace, or Iser's understanding of narrative hierarchies--is justified in providing the proper interpretive texture irrespective of their formal insufficiency. This practice is in truth no different from the habit of quoting more "scholarly" sources, only now the reference is not local (e.g. "x" says "y" about "z") and makes no pretense of hiding its theoretical assumptions behind so-called practical analysis. Because what is at stake is a new way of reading, however, and not merely an occasional redefinition of terms or a reworking of their empirical significance, philosophical unfamiliarity easily inflates into the charge of methodological inadequacy; whereas no one would question the practical reference on its theoretical suitability, the theoretical reference must seemingly justify its own principles as well as those of its application.

The charge of eclecticism may also arise, I suspect, from the apparent oddity of yoking D.H. Lawrence with "theory" in the first place, to say nothing of its antecedents in 20th century Continental philosophy. A study of Joyce can cite Derrida's Ulysses: Grammatophone, one on Ivy Compton-Burnett, Iser's Implied Reader, an examination of Proust brings up de Man's Allegories of Reading, another on Wyndham Lewis, Jameson's Fables of Aggression, and so on; yet with the possible exception of Jameson (and for different reasons, clearly), it is difficult to imagine any of these thinkers even considering Lawrence for critical attention. De Man

discovers allegory, as he defines it, in the Recherche, but Proust's mémoire involuntaire is a long way from Lilly's power ethic in Aaron's Rod, and to locate the same intratextual movement in each is necessarily to court the danger of misinterpretation, if not irrelevance. Yet a similar logic is at work in both cases, and while no archival link is available (it is not a matter of finding where de Man concludes the same about Lawrence), and while the respective analyses arrange different narrative economies, the connection is significant enough, as an instruction in method if nothing else, to offer as precedent. The same can be said for Continental phenomenology, which applies directly to my reading of The Rainbow, but whose complicated history, which would qualify and extend my analysis considerably, has no place in a thesis of this sort. What remains is the touchstone, the structural or thematic skeleton from which the reader can reconstruct a more substantial anatomy. To ask for more is to make unreasonable demands on an attempt at critical reevaluation.

For contrasting reasons, it might be objected that no sustained attempt is made to compare Lawrence with his contemporaries--Joyce, or Woolf, or Yeats or Wyndham Lewis--nor with his forebears (Hardy, Carlyle) or descendants (Golding, the Lawrence Durrell of the Black Book). Although the "Introduction" and "Kangaroo" chapters attempt to place Lawrence within a selective tradition of novel writers concerned with formal problems of narration and aesthetic distance, it is my measured contention, in light of what is generally understood to be modernist fiction, that Lawrence's amalgamation of insistent homiletics and rhetorical indirection produces novels radically unlike the work of other British authors of the time. Wyndham Lewis lays on much of the social swagger that one finds in Lawrence's power politics, but is also very much concerned with the theoretical directions of a new kind of writing (principally through his connection with vorticism and Pound), and is self-admittedly experimental (witness Tarr) where Lawrence evolves an idiosyncratic style almost despite himself. Pound's expository menu, especially in the deliberately pedagogical mood of his ABC of Reading and A Guide to Kulchur, combines high and low, formal and informal, with a similar, almost

reprimanding, irony found in Lawrence's essays; yet there is no narrative connection, even if we allow Pound token status as a "British" writer, to draw them together in a study of fictional design. Yeats's romanticism, to take yet another example, precipitates a conflict of self and society close to Lawrence's own, and his mystical history/science collected in A Vision finds resonance in Lawrence's study of Thomas Hardy (a sort of Hegelian history of poetic inspiration) and his two books on physio-psychology. Again, however, Yeats remains a poet where Lawrence is preeminently a novelist, and any attempt to read Yeats in terms of narrative design has only the ponderous and largely forgotten John Sherman to go on--clearly not the most important or representative Yeats. Virginia Woolf, on the other hand, is the novelist par excellence of the permeable membrane of consciousness and sustained perspective shifts, but her social vision is never Lawrence's, nor do her narratives ever rupture (even in The Waves) the envelope of aesthetic form that Lawrence's later narratives seem to destroy by trademark. Joyce's verbal plasticity, to take a final example, increasingly becomes the subject of his work and not a device driving against the grain of an otherwise incontrovertible ideological stance; Alan Friedman's assertion that Lawrence fractures feelings as Joyce fractures words is, by indirection, an instructive one.

Lawrence's isolation is less conclusive, however, when we attempt to frame him within modernism as a whole. Although the nature of my analysis is inherently non-historical in such an archival and periodic sense, Lawrence's crisis in writing for society from a position that is necessarily outside of it can be read as a characteristically modernist amalgamation of symbolist and realist belief, the tectonic plates that almost every writer in the modern period confronted in the uneven, cheek-by-jowl construction of what Hemingway aptly termed "a separate peace." From Symbolism comes a filtered Romanticism of the self, a conception of the artist as hero and martyr, and the elevation of the art work (in Lawrence's case, the novel) to the highest form of human expression. From 19th c. realism and its attachments, one gets the opposite thrust of "objective" truth, the levelling of poetic language in the name of common sense and pure description, and the

understanding of the art work as social artefact. Apart from Lawrence's own views on such a division (he usually prefers writers who fall in the second group--Tolstoy, Bennett, Hardy, even Sainte-Beauve [!]-to those in the first--Dostoyevski, Proust, Poe), and apart from his well-documented interest in the scientific, often deterministic, philosophy of Huxley and Spencer as a young man, all of these traits are recognizable as broadly Lawrencian. His insistence on the artist as spiritual governor and true aristocrat, especially in a late work like Apocalypse, finds precedent in Mallarmé and Shelley; yet he is skeptical of Shelley's idealization of love, while Mallarmé's stylistic manipulations would no doubt be another instance of "wetting the flame" in the vein of the hated self-consciousness of Joyce and Proust. Art is a Utopian catalyst in the face of "this world of war and squalor," yet its power is strangely self-effacing in the name of a call to Being that antedates any form of speech. Lawrence defines his mission in 1914 as writing so that England might "alter," yet without losing the temperament of the social reformer, his England (and his social target) almost vanishes from the horizon. The Orpheus who cheats history is also condemned to look back over his shoulder, as the unique Lawrencian demand for simultaneous realization and subjunction becomes the enactment of the conflicting demands of modernism: the need to subdue a chaotic world with a new kind of sacred order, yet also the necessity of grounding this revolution in the historical or metaphysical assurances it rejects.

Although such background material is of unquestionable interest, I decline to develop it in the following chapters: literary history inevitably locates a writer within a definite, if disputable, "period," and suggests that the textual complications faced by Lawrence would not be faced in the same way by Rousseau, say, or by John Ruskin, or again by a St. Augustine. Such an argument, of course, is in one sense water-tight: Lawrence is not Rousseau or St. Augustine, and the fact that he lived and wrote in the twentieth century contributes to this difference as much as anything else does. Yet I submit that the patterns one finds in Lawrence's narratives are not historically determined in the traditional understanding of history as period study, and that his

amalgamation of Symbolism and realism can be seen as a material cause rather than an efficient cause (as Aristotle distinguishes them) of the novels as we find them. As such, several different "histories" vary the grain of any given work, crossing each other at key points without necessarily invoking a chronological order. What brings Lawrence and Rousseau together are similar condemnations of writing as "unnatural" and a similar self-consciousness, displayed within language itself, that such mediation is inescapable. One must keep in mind, however, that Lawrence can be understood apart from an explicit historical framework, whereas that framework may or may not produce a good likeness of Lawrence. With this in mind, the following is offered as a concentrated reading of his novels from The Rainbow through Lady Chatterley's Lover, in the hope that a reevaluation of the work itself will forge new--or reclaimed--ground in the critical appreciation of his narratives.

INTRODUCTION: D.H. LAWRENCE AND NARRATIVE DESIGN

"Of anything that is complete there is no more tale to tell."

Study of Thomas Hardy

" . . . it seems that it is the principle of difference, not the nature of the things that differ, that energizes [Lawrence's] writing and shapes his thought."

Diane Bonds, Language and the Self in D.H. Lawrence

"In the appreciation of a work of art or an art form, consideration of the receiver never proves fruitful . . . No poem is intended for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the listener."¹ So Benjamin begins his well-known essay on translation, and with it the injunction against the affective fallacy and an overly facile transmission of cultural meaning. To the reader who comes to D.H. Lawrence for the first time, however, nothing seems further removed from the direction and texture of Lawrence's work than this. As he once confided in his friend Arthur McLeod, "I do write because I want folk--English folk--to alter; and have more sense"; the poet, despite his grave alienation, still implicitly serves the role of Shelley's unacknowledged legislator of value.² As Lawrence will put it a couple of years later, after the outbreak of the war but before the suppression of The Rainbow and before his debilitating visit to Cambridge in March of 1915, "I can see nothing to begin on, but a social revolution. For I write my novels, and I write my book of philosophy, and I must also see the social revolution set going."³ Or, as he wrote to Ottoline Morrell almost contemporaneously, "we must cast all personalities into the smelting pot, and give a new Humanity its birth. Remember, it is not anything personal we want anymore, any of us. It is not honor nor personal satisfaction, it is the incorporation in the great impulse whereby a great people shall come into being, a free race as well as a race of free individuals."⁴

Yet this great hope, which recognizes no barrier between the written work and the social betterment of its audience, and which, in its tone and ambition, seems to belong more to the 19th century socialisms of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris

than to the seemingly detached poetics of some of his contemporaries, was destined to collapse upon itself.⁵ Following Lawrence's disaster at Trinity College ("I went to Cambridge, and hated it beyond expression") came the disaster of The Rainbow ("And I am so sick, in body and soul, that if I don't go away I shall die"), the commercial abortion of Women in Love ("I believe that England . . . is not capable of seeing anything but badness in me, for ever and ever"), the eviction from Cornwall (detailed as "The Nightmare" in Kangaroo, where "the meaning had gone out of everything for him [Somers] . . . He was broken apart"), the humiliating medical examinations ("Never while he lived, again, would he be at the disposal of society"), the difficult times with Frieda, the failure of his Rananim scheme ("Where is our Rananim? If only we had had the courage to find it, and create it, two years ago"), and finally, the exile from England after the Armistice.⁶ What he says of Edward Garnett in one of his letters--"shamefully treated in the hands of life"--could well be said of himself; as he has Somers remark in that same chapter of Kangaroo: "He had always believed so in everything--society, love, friends. This was one of his serious deaths in belief."⁷

One could continue indefinitely in this vein, drawing from the biographies, letters, and the fiction and poetry itself, not only for an account of Lawrence's war-time alienation, but for the disappointments that accumulated throughout his search for social regeneration, be it in Italy or Australia, Old and New Mexico or even in the suburbs of Kandy, to say nothing of the banning of Lady Chatterley's Lover and the confiscation of his paintings in London in 1929. And yet to the end, Lawrence would write of giving "men a new foregathering ground," and of a risen Christ-of-the-flesh who, however allegorized, would serve as the implicit redeemer for what Lawrence once termed "this collapsing life."⁸ It is in fact very difficult to locate a single example of Lawrence's work which does not in some way fail of Benjamin's sanction for "fruitful" art--The White Peacock or The Trespasser perhaps, or some of the earlier lyric poems; but none of the novels after Sons and Lovers can be divorced from the urgency of their social message, nor the essays or articles beginning

with the Hardy study, nor the discursive poems, the allegorical paintings, the novellas, the often fabular short stories, the travel books on Italy and Mexico, nor, finally, the scientific "studies" on what might be called the psycho-physiological temper of the human being, where the vision of the New Humanity is given some of its most astounding instruction. All of what is known as Lawrence's major work, in its noteable range and "oddness," speaks either directly or indirectly to a world which Lawrence took it upon himself to redirect--a saturation of the affective function of literature as insistent and as vatic as anything written in the first half of the 20th century in Britain, and which despite its chronic lack of audience (irony of ironies!) continued to express what "Art and the Individual" names as "the emotions of one man to his fellows," jumping from mind to mind through the diaphanous medium of art.⁹

Without some understanding of this Lawrencian telepathy, it would be impossible to read him, much less to admire him or to find in his "pollyanalytic" intelligence the antidote, as F. R. Leavis did, to a diseased civilization. One could not even be offended by him, either for ethical or formal reasons, if one did not first recognize the translucency he attributes to the work of art, not only in his own critical statements (the purpose of the novel, as he concludes in "Why the Novel Matters," is to depict "man alive"; "all the critical twiddle-twaddle about style and form," on the other hand, "all this pseudo-scientific classifying and analyzing of books in an imitation-botanical fashion, is mere impertinence and mostly dull jargon"), but in the urgency with which his books and essays are written.¹⁰ The Plumed Serpent, he claims, "is my most important thing so far," a judgment that is not even conceivable on so-called "artistic" grounds, while the earlier Study of Thomas Hardy becomes a full-blown metaphysics that rivals Hegel not only in method but in the confidence by which a synthesis of historical conditions will be achieved in present-day England: the precise counterpart to the rainbow vision that unites world and imagination at the close of the contemporaneous novel. With John Middleton Murry, he organizes a small publication, kept afloat by subscription, to act as a vehicle for what he will frequently term his

"philosophy" (as Murry's Athenaeum will do later). In the pages of The Signature, the first chapters of "The Crown" appear, and later, independently, "The Reality of Peace" and "Education of the People" are composed, the former an extension of the (now binary) doctrine of consumer and consumed, the latter a sort of instruction- book-cum-manifesto combining the practical tips of a Renaissance pedagogical manual with the urgent tone of nineteenth-century economic idealism. Like Ruskin, whose uneasiness with donnish isolation made him inscribe his colossal Fors Clavigera "To the workmen and labourers of Great Britain," Lawrence's vision is instrumental, egalitarian (though not in the political or religious sense), and above all, distrustful of the intervention of language and rhetoric. As he has Birkin phrase it in Women in Love, "Words make no matter anyway. The thing is between us, or it isn't."¹¹

But if this resistance to the gravity of language and its protracted compositional effects promotes a social message without additives or refractions, it is nevertheless relayed with a rhetorical energy that seems to assert itself whenever "words" are most decisively thrust aside. This casts a shadow on the litmus "what Lawrence means is . . ." as being chronically penultimate as a critical measure of the novels, poems, and essays, taking for its premise what is yet to be proved. For F.R. Leavis, of course, such doubts are merely pedantic side-tracking, for Lawrence is not only "the great creative genius of our age," but one whose literature resists any hint of internal contradiction. Lawrence is who he claims to be (or who Leavis claims him to be), his genius the unique ability to empty out every verbal cue into action and fact. Compared with Eliot, who is his whipping boy on so many occasions, and who appears in Leavis's last book as a kind of artistic jongleur, lapping up the vomit of "exhibitionistic" French habits (a Francophilia "he had contracted at Harvard," no less), Lawrence is the very voice of sanity, an unwavering barometer against the "stupefying and inhuman boredom of service in the assembly-line," and the "potent inspiration and source of strength" in the face of our "technologico-Benthamite philistinism."¹² The rhetoric in Leavis is always strong, the cultural sweep broad, and the invective personal;

Lawrence speaks what is taken to be the "truth," and no thought of the possibility that Lawrence speaks several truths, some of them contradictory and effective only within the "as if" structure of writing, should ever enter between author and listener. To argue against the performative ideology (especially to argue for the work's ability to condition and deflect that ideology through verbal measures) is to count oneself one of those dégagé moderns who, as Lawrence cuts them so sharply in his poem "There Are No Gods," lounge in the sitting room smoking cigarettes, or jazz about the countryside in their motorcars.

It is ironic, therefore, that Leavis should call attention to an oddity in Lawrence's writing which effectively mitigates this filiation between writer and reader: the solipsistic circle of communication in Aaron's Rod which prompts him to describe this novel as "very like a dialogue intérieure."¹³ Daniel Schneider, in his book D.H. Lawrence: The Artist as Psychologist, will make similar mention of the dramatic format which allows Lilly and Aaron to play off against each other as projections of Lawrencian attitudes, rather than as autonomous, realistic figures who carry messages to be assimilated by the reader.¹⁴ With Aaron as the "weak Lawrence" and Lilly as the "strong Lawrence" (Schneider's terms), the novel organizes itself as an extended dialogue, where the possibilities of a leadership ethic and its inherent drawbacks are enacted on a fictional stage, Lawrence playing actor, manager, and audience too in an ideological stage-direction by no means as inflexible and uncomplicated as it initially appears to be. Though Schneider's defense of the work as "Lawrence's effort to contemplate honestly his existential situation" yields little information about the narrative peculiarity that gives shape to it (and swings him into a thematic apology for form characteristic of the realist/contextualist school of Barbara Hardy, Alan Friedman, and John Worthen), his focus on the reflected, rather than projected, audience allows an unexpected rapprochement with Benjamin.¹⁵ In a novel blatantly given over to a politics of transfiguration, there are already signs of an internal resistance to the intended transmission of value.¹⁶

Nor is this textual dialogue an anomaly in Lawrence, even if we concede that such an explicitly biographical division appears only in Aaron's Rod. Within Women in Love, for example, we find a similar "complex" isolating Ursula and Birkin from the surrounding plot, so much so, in fact, that the development of Ursula as an independent, realistically credible character is disrupted by her function as a respondent to Birkin's emerging philosophy. In Kangaroo, moreover, Ben Cooley speaks with a Lawrencian rhetoric that repeatedly disinters Somers's suspiciously hasty rejection of Australian politics, while in The Plumed Serpent, Kate Leslie's indecision disagrees so violently with her "realistic" portrayal that we sense a structural discourse working against the grain of the story as such. Connie Chatterley's weaknesses, finally, are reasserted in the last draft of the Chatterley sequence, qualifying the "tenderness" that both Mellors and Lawrence seem to find so therapeutic and instructive. Even in Aaron's Rod itself, not only do Lilly and Aaron act as alter egos for each other, but Del Torre, Argyle, and even Levison all rehearse the trial of male bonding and the "leader-cum-follower" relationship that this novel develops. In each of these works, something "uncanny" occurs (to use J. Hillis Miller's word) which prohibits us from simply concluding, "this book is about male dominance, a pagan revival, or the ethics of tenderness," and which forces us, on the contrary, to consider the structure of the particular novel as a scene of conflict between ideology and counterideology, between the assertion, directed at the reader, that "this is how it should be," and the counterassertion, directed at its rhetorical opposite, that "this 'should be' is precisely a repeat of what it attempts to cure."¹⁷

The relationship of opposites, however, is not a field within which Lawrence exercises a final authorial control, but rather a certain fictive engagement (the life "as if") which vigilantly assures a final suspension of any adjudication of value. The perpetuity of "as if" protects, structurally considered, against what increasingly becomes for Lawrence the fixity of all cultural and intellectual behavior. It is the power of literature, with its multiplicity of linguistic

worlds, that it can divorce itself from the empirical and the affective, leaving open what realistic plot and characterization inevitably bring to a close. The plot must end, travels arrive at a destination, the puppets, as Thackeray reports, be put in their boxes; but fiction, by allowing for a rhetoric that speaks to its own rhetoric, circumvents the referential in a way that "reality," empirically considered, can never do. In Lawrencian mathematics, as we will see, one fictional Rananim equals ten in the hand, even as Lawrence never loses the pressing desire to make evident what remains secondary and imaginative. This derivative, opaque quality of language, always condemned as deceptive, useless, or inhibitory in his writing, becomes the very tool by which D.H. Lawrence makes his distinctive mark as a writer.

It might, at this point, be helpful to take an example. To instance Lawrence's most sophisticated and perhaps best known novel, Women in Love operates at key points as a series of conversations between Birkin and Ursula, with the latter providing the resistance to Birkin's ideology where it becomes strident and one-sided. In a sense, it is difficult to isolate any one of these dialogues for an introductory exposition: they belong not only to the novel as we have it, but emerge through a series of textual alterations that transform the original second volume of The Sisters (begun in 1913) into the published work of 1920. For Women in Love in particular, the revision process is a vital clue to a fundamental change in narrative design, plotting the pivotal transformation from Ursula's egalitarian hope in The Rainbow to Birkin's separatist ideal of marriage and Blutbrüderschaft. All of the later novels, in turn, will react to the sense of estrangement that Women in Love is the first to delineate, justifying my concentration on key narrative revisions from the unpublished manuscripts of 1915-1917, but leaving an introductory excerpt somewhat unprotected and arbitrary. Nevertheless, with some textual and biographical background, and an allowance for a certain lack of narrative context, the appearance of what can be called a "structural allegory" in Women in Love will perhaps become clear.

The passage I have in mind occurs in "Water Party." Birkin, in one of those scenes that seem to be inserted solely for the recital of his philosophical menu, begins to expound on the "river of darkness" and the "spasm of universal dissolution" that increasingly identifies the contemporary world as he pictures it. The bulk of the ensuing dialogue, only part of which will be quoted here, was added to manuscript TSII in 1917, and reflects the mood of a sharply alienated Lawrence whose pharmacy for what he considered a decaying and senseless England becomes an increasingly bitter medicine, not only in these revisions to Women in Love, but also in the different tone that essays like "The Reality of Peace," "Democracy," and the original publications on American literature take in contrast to the earlier study of Hardy and even the more philosophically cautious "The Crown."¹⁸ As a result, Birkin's polemic is insistent, and lugubriously so: "It is reality, nevertheless . . . that dark river of dissolution. You see it rolls in us just as the other rolls--the black river of corruption. And our flowers are this--our sea-born Aphrodite, all our white phosphorescent flowers of sensuous perfection, all our reality, nowadays."¹⁹ As he continues, "Dissolution rolls on, just as production does . . . It is a progressive process--and it ends in universal nothing--the end of the world, if you like. But why isn't the end of the world as good as the beginning?" (WiL, 164-5). After Ursula responds rather drily, "I suppose it isn't," Birkin brings his chiliastic history home: "Oh yes, ultimately . . . It means a new cycle of creation after, but not for us. If it is the end, then we are the end--fleurs du mal, if you like. If we are fleurs du mal, we are not roses of happiness, and there you are" (165). And, finally, in the transition from Baudelaire to Spengler, these beginnings and ends are reemphasized in their discontinuity: "After it [the end], not out of it. After us, not out of us" (165).

All the while, Ursula has been providing a refrain of interrogatives, at first as a bit of the ingenue--"Why alarming?"; "What does?"; "But what other?"--and then, in a reversal of this ignorance, as someone who hits at the heart of Birkin's overstatement. A careful reading of Lawrence's war-time essays, beginning with "The Crown," inevitably

reveals a rhetorical caesura between a historical or naturalistic fate and the individual perspective which otherwise engages it, a world of independent, meta-volitional forces on one hand and the tether of reactions from a previous unbalancing on the other. As Lawrence puts it in "The Reality of Peace, "All the time we are active in these two great powers [life and death], which are for ever contrary and complementary"; yet these two powers are not entirely complementary, for there is also the ardent wish for death to "smash the great obscene unison" which "centuries" of life and love have wrought.²⁰ On one hand, a synthetic balance is put forth, while on the other, Lawrence inevitably finds himself taking a stand for one side against its opposite: fate, and history (the system), pit themselves against the individual's existential situation.

In Women in Love, this talk of a "consummate balance" is replaced, in turn, by the historical necessity of one of its constitutive opposites--that of the death-knowledge that now appears as the only road to future salvation. The logic is no different from that organizing the fluid boundaries between a more philosophically rarefied opposition of necessity and free-will; yet in this revised calculus of part and whole, a peculiarly moral insistence on a funereal devolution leaves the equation suspiciously imbalanced. The exposure of an inflated perspective masquerading as a metaphysical a priori is all too evident--and Ursula jumps on it. Just as Birkin has drowned process in product, reduced the signifying process to the signified itself, so Ursula incisively resurrects point-of-view: "You want us to be deathly"; "Ha! . . . You only want us to know death" (WiL, 165). Birkin's sin is one of reification, or, to use the rhetorical term, metalepsis, whereby cause and effect are reversed and any reactive qualities in his thought are hidden within a universal, or at least inescapable, fate. Ursula, suddenly aware of this rhetorical exchange, secures the coefficient that Birkin repeatedly cancels, grounding his philosophy in the cultural and personal categories he wishes to escape.

In my chapter on Women in Love below, this problem of action and reaction will be expounded at greater length. The question that interests us here is how Ursula can appear to

control Birkin's argument (by announcing his blindness), yet be so evidently ignorant of his meaning at other times. If one approaches this uneasy coincidence by way of a realistic poetics, its oddity is either reduced to one of its constituent factors (i.e. Ursula as effective countervoice or pliable dupe), or reinterpreted as evidence of Lawrence's genius in creating "real" characters. In the former group, Peter Balbert's response to feminist and "classical" positions on the question of Ursula's narrative value serves as representative; into the latter, almost all of Lawrence's apologists enroll at one time or another, especially the significant group of critics who attempt to defend Lawrence's narratives on the grounds that their inconsistencies, in Barbara Hardy's words, evolve from "powerful episodes [that] are yoked together not in easy thematic supplement, or in smooth progress, but with the irregular rhythm and question-marks of life."²¹ In both cases, however, a textual conundrum is rerouted into a humanistic solution--adequacy of character or fidelity to "life"--which not coincidentally provides a critical metalepsis to match Birkin's own and therefore misjudges any linguistic occurrence that cannot be distilled into the appropriate number of organic correlatives. Barthes's reminder (and it is reminder more than discovery) that even realism is a textual function, a literary technique, is washed over by the presumption of mimetic fidelity, an authorially controlled organization of scene and character that cannot read semantic incongruity, if admitted in the first place, as anything but a depiction of "the vagaries of life," or some similarly transferable commodity.²² A narrative economy which is not dialectical (i.e. one which does not solve its inconsistencies within the text) is unthinkable in this view, forcing each textual anomaly to be incorporated into a dialectic irrespective of its function and effect.

In Women in Love, a deviation from mimetic norms is unmistakable on both compositional and syntagmatic lines, and the readings given by the realist/contextualist camp are predictably selective and imprecise. A dialectics of plot would require that Ursula's contradictory portrayal as philosopher and fool in some way be made manifest. If such

contradiction is a sign of her exploratory nature, then a synthesis of these opposing forces must be implied in her development as a character, or be given by the author himself as a comment on her actions. We either find a figure who has triumphed over life's vagaries (the usual route of the "strong" heroine in Jane Austen or George Eliot), or one who is singled out because she hasn't (James's Daisy Miller, for example); no other explanations are possible, as meaning is supplied entirely within and through the vector author--> narrative persona. In Women in Love, however, something completely different occurs. Not only does Ursula, without any apparent change in feeling, and without any suggestion that her confusion is in any way important, argue Birkin's own philosophy of "hopping off" in "Continental", but an examination of the manuscript revisions shows that both her apparent ignorance and her insightful proddings are late revisions, superimposed upon an earlier Ursula who was far more consistent in her nature and beliefs. This suggests that text's alterations do not facilitate a refinement of Ursula's "realistic" status, but appear for some other end, an end important enough to override any incoherence on a plot level. At certain key points, in other words, Ursula functions primarily as a sign, a textual marker which can be moved about as the structural requirements of the narrative demand, but not necessarily under the sanction of mimetic fidelity, or even under the controlling eye of a master "author." Only in this way can we explain what appears not just as ignorance but as the crime of ignorance: "It was an instinct in her, to deceive herself [!!!]" (WiL, 117); "Ursula was still at the emotional personal level--always so abominably personal" (296); "[S]he could not be herself, she dared not come forth quite nakedly to his nakedness . . ." (426). All of these passages are added in the 1917 revisions.

The remark about self-deception is of particular interest, moreover, insofar as it occurs immediately before the first "dialogue" that Birkin and Ursula have in "An Island," suggesting that her denigration (especially with respect to the lie) is necessary to somehow counterbalance the insight she shows both here and in "Water Party." Far from being marks of a virtuoso realism, the contradictions in

Ursula's portrayal enter a sort of internal semiotics, where a sign system in narrative discourse converses with itself as well as with the imagistic and referential language that keeps the plot moving. In the scene from "Water Party," such a dialogue reappears between Gerald and Birkin, the former seconding Ursula's ethical unmasking ("You only want us to know death") with an equally late, and equally striking, revision: "You're quite right" (WIL, 165). This is a conceivable insight for the Gerald of the earlier drafts of the novel, who is allowed philosophical credibility and a certain robust intelligence commensurate with his position as, in Colin Clarke's terms, the "clean-limbed, athletic Englishman"; but the major alterations that were made in both 1916 and 1917 transmogrify Gerald's somewhat endearing innocence (traces of this remain, most notably in the little-changed "In the Train" and in "Gladiatorial") into a dangerous, if not self-deceptive, retardation.²³

Like Ursula, and like Gudrun especially, who is made to vibrate in an electrical field of spasmodic consciousness (grammatical variants of "electric" are inserted some eleven times in the final revision to "Death and Love" alone), Gerald is, at the very least, an improbable authority for the insight Lawrence attributes to him here, and at the most extreme, its cynical opponent. It is not a matter of Gerald opening into a new awareness, but of a revision process by which he is stripped of his earlier understanding and then made to resist any such improvement. To then award him the crucial remark which silences Birkin's jeremiad (a repetition, in fact, of an earlier scene in which Gerald points out, incongruously, that "you [Birkin] like things against yourself"), is inexplicable from the standpoint of character development: no organically conceived fictional actor can possibly appear as alternately fool and savant without either explicit (commentary) or implicit (irony) qualification. In order to understand Gerald's position in Women in Love, therefore, we are again pushed in the direction of reading his remark as a structural counter which responds to Birkin's rhetoric and not to any external standard of truth or aesthetic congruence. When we consider, moreover, the awkward caesura that follows Gerald's agreement, and the mood in which it is introduced (with "soft

voice . . . out of the dusk behind" [165]), the feeling of the passage's "strangeness" is undeniable, and suggests a highly artificial "allegory" between voice and countervoice, between the rhetoric that is Birkin's message (illegitimately argued) and the rhetoric that responds to its blindness.

In labelling this non-referential textual diagramming a structural allegory, I am aware that the usage is very idiosyncratic. It borrows neither from classical definitions of allegory as allegoresis (Quintilian), nor from the Christian emphasis of a story that matches secular events with sacred narrative (i.e. Pilgrim's Progress), nor again from the more general application of story to humanistic institutions (as Una and Duessa represent, respectively, Protestant and Catholic churches in The Faerie Queene, or as Dryden, now with the effect of parody and instruction, matches his political figures with Biblical narratives). Closer to the mark are Benjamin's and Paul de Man's contemporary theories of allegory, which define allegory as a temporal relationship, and in de Man at least, as a temporality of narrative.²⁴ Both move away from the dependence on theme as a conveyer of allegorical meaning, Benjamin in his conception of the ruin as "script" in the Trauerspiel book, and de Man in his notion of the aporia between metaphor and metonymy, between language as reference and language as performance. De Man's insights are quite useful here, and while his major book on allegory, Allegories of Reading, focuses on Continental developments of Romanticism, he is, with Maureen Quilligan, one of the first to emphasize allegory as an intratextual phenomenon, as a sign-sign relationship that effects semantic meaning but also encodes its narratives with linguistic elements that cannot, by definition, operate outside of the "as if" fiction they create.²⁵ As with Proust and Rousseau, so with Lawrence here: there is an internal conversation between levels of textual meaning (the allegory) that in no way relates to either a pre-established narrative subject or to a series of episodes, drawn from external circumstance, which make up a realistic story. If there is a "story" to be told from the key dialogues between Birkin and Ursula in Women in Love, it is the story of the supplementation of description and affect-

value with rhetoric--the need to counter, but not completely, Birkin's desires with his own blindness.

Given that such an allegory operates in Lawrence's work (and, as I aim to establish in this study, becomes the dominant structural device in his narratives), we may wish to ask why it appears at all--why, in other words, Ursula's countervoice remains for the most part excluded from the dialectical movement of the plot sequence. An immediate answer comes from biographical sources of the kind mentioned above: in reaction to a world which treated Lawrence so shabbily, it is surely small wonder that his fictional ideal acquires a sectarian ethic that he must insist upon "against himself," against a saner judgment that would recognize that extremes meet and perpetuate a tyranny in double strength. This induction, abstracted from the information gathered about Lawrence's life in Moore, Delavenay, Nehls, and so forth, provides a reliable adumbration of the tensions and narrative oddities we might expect in reading Lawrence's novels. If Birkin's ideology dominates Women in Love, this can be explained in part by Lawrence's own lack of social context, which would perhaps alleviate the strident tones of "us/them" in the art itself; the alienated artist produces the alienated hero whose program then comes into an impossible conflict with the audience both have rejected but are still ostensibly writing for. Ursula's objections, in turn, are forced outside of the plot sequence because everything on the manifest, thematic, level of the narrative is saturated with Birkin and Birkinese, so consuming and urgent because it has such an overwhelming social Leviathan to confront.

Yet however useful such background information proves to be, one can easily be misled into a kind of biographical positivism, obviating the importance of what is written through the tireless exhumation of historical source material. This is inadequate in any serious study of Lawrence for a number of reasons, but with respect to Ursula's intractable casting in particular, a linear transcription of influence inevitably assumes an author who somehow regurgitates a previous experience for aesthetic affect. An interpretive hierarchy is offered which places the empirical fact as indisputable ground, empirical research as the vehicle for

locating these "facts," and the art work as the veiled product of the artist's catalytic manipulation of the past. Such a segmented hermeneutics, however scientific or naturalized it pretends to be, has no room for a non-dialectical textuality which rejects the linear transportation of "life into art", to borrow Sagar's phrase, for the more intricate model of life as art. What happens in a novel, therefore, is irreducible to historical derivation, not because we have failed to gather all the facts, or even because Lawrence's motives can never be recaptured, but because such motives could never isolate themselves structurally from the artistic expression they assume. Precisely because art and life are ontologically inseparable, biographical explanation proves to be ironically ineffective: Lawrence finds himself in his work, not through the specious aesthetics of an "exploratory consciousness" (which never foregoes its linear propaedeutics, and so fails to be "exploratory" in any significant sense), but through the extension of a "life" which can never completely objectify itself and thereby chart the field of its applications and motives.

But writing, particularly fictional writing, has another, qualitatively significant function for Lawrence. As a medium for the creation of non-dialectical, non-aesthetic codes (understanding "aesthetic" as the conception of a distanced and integrated art work rooted in the image), language allows a deviation from straightforward referential meaning through rhetorical figure and word-play (puns, rhymes, double-meanings, etc.). Such ostranenie, or "making strange," applies not only to poetry, as the Russian formalists demonstrated, but to narrative as well, which allows the sentence to carry one meaning on a plot level and another within a semiotic network remaining outwith thematic presentation. Successive revisions to a novel like Women in Love, in turn, provide especially clear X-rays of these fractures, alterations that seem unrelated to plot concern but signal the presence of a recessed network of uncertainty. Although related patterns (as we will see) appear in the essay form, it is the novel which provides Lawrence with the best facility for the redirection of ideology and doubt, combining the advantage of writing over speech (where one cannot "re-

read") with the temporality of narrative and the expectations of realistic portrayal (one finds a traditional "plot" and a recognizable cast of characters within it). As his most ambitious project, the novel witnesses the most extreme confrontation between message and counter-message, manipulating the conventions of fiction writing and the referential significance of language itself against a "hidden" narrative constructed through rhetorical diversion. As a general strategy of the narrative text, therefore, the "cause" as well as the medium of the structural allegory in Lawrence is a biplanar grid of both prescribed and proscribed meanings, telling us what to believe on one hand and encoding a chain of doubts and contradictions on the other.

Even so, it might be objected, something--or somebody-- must make sense of the allegorical strands in such a work. A radical discontinuity may exist within the text, allowing Ursula and Birkin to shift levels of discourse without synthetic mediation, yet the critical reading itself cannot repeat the same patterns of rhetorical doubling and still qualify as literary analysis. Although there exists an unavoidable--in truth instructive--expository imprecision (one can never isolate the "Lawrence" one means), and while it is possible for the critical discourse to repeat the same logic as its target (e.g. Lawrence on Dostoyevski and Poe), the ratios of disjunction must be repropportioned if we are to go beyond the simplest forms of paraphrase. In this respect, a certain dialectics, with varying degrees of explicitness, is unavoidable in the assimilation of a text by its reader. The question, therefore, becomes not whether there is a dialectical pattern (for without dialectics there can be no understanding), but where such integration is located. What must be kept in mind is that the art work itself need not contain a dialectical skeleton prior to its being read, or alternately, an aesthetic wholeness to be released on the chance passer-by like a perfume. The role of the reader, in turn, is not merely one of edification, but also one of creation, an active filling-in of what remains radically unfinished in the text.²⁶

As such, the inseparability of author and work extends to that between work and reader, with the latter becoming a

part of the art work and thereby precipitating the same kind of ambivalence that we noted in the Preface with respect to authorial distancing and control. To locate a "place" for dialectics, therefore, is itself necessarily a heuristic allowance, complicated by the attempt to explain in aesthetic terms what is a non-aesthetic compilation of author/work/reader. Insofar as the "work itself" shifts its axis slightly when it is being read, one must say that reading occurs at the time of this shift, and is in fact productive of it without retreating to the objective ground of an unaffected catalyst. This is not a matter of saying that critics are parasitic on literature, as this relationship is conventionally understood, but of identifying a certain location, a certain limit, beyond which cause and effect, and its universe of independent monads and proper names, is inadequate as an interpretive model. In this "beyond" stands the literary work, and a reader whose dialectical powers are irreconcilable with any Leavisian notion of a passive acolyte and receiver of the golden message--a reader whose presence, it will be understood, is even at the best of times dispensable to the meaning that precedes him. If there must be dialectics, therefore, it is not to be found in the synthesis of the literary work and its audience, with the critic a kind of prophet manqué channeling the good word outward, but in a new kind of textual performance that does not make the mistake of allowing a heuristic aid to stand for an ontological truth. Furthermore, by answering the charge of a facile transmission of cultural value (sanctioned by the implications of a controlling author, and instrumental artefact, and a receptive spectator--all metaphors of so-called "literary" close-reading), the criticism proposed here aligns itself with Benjamin's notion of translation, to say nothing of his own understanding of allegory and his historico-Marxist politics, after all. Such a criticism enables us to see, at the very least, how inadequate our attempts at the interpretation of Lawrence's work have been.

At this point, it might be useful to compare the treatment of allegory in Women in Love with Lawrence's later writings, and to reemphasize, in greater detail, the critical direction of my analysis in the following chapters. On the first score, one finds that in the so-called "leadership novels," the desire to exclude the reader is, if anything, even more rigorously pursued. Although this stepped-up campaign of exclusion ultimately intensifies the reader's dialectical function, in the short run it displays a seemingly impenetrable layering of oblique references and misdirections. Women in Love, with its allegory of ideology and counterideology, still admits a certain dialectics of plot arrangement--Birkin confronts himself in "Moony" with many of Ursula's previous accusations (their source, however, is never manifestly considered, and Ursula's secret witness in this chapter is structurally appropriate), while their subsequent marriage is emblematic of at least a partial reconciliation of perspectives. By the time we get to Aaron's Rod, however, no hint of such progression remains, as the bewildering series of events and places becomes a screen to avoid the awkwardness of any real occurrence: if Birkin's philosophical slippage requires an "other"--Ursula--to even the score, Aaron's Rod seems to work toward the delay of such unguarded revelations. Without doubt, Lilly has Aaron for a respondent, but these two are, as Leavis and Schneider have noted, alter egos for each other, and traceable to Lawrence himself as both (projected) common-man and prophet. Whereas Ursula must be forced into the role of Birkin's "other side" against whatever autonomy she demands as a descriptive character, the dialogue, and the allegory that shapes it, are effectively internalized in Aaron's Rod through the partial interchangeability of the two men as "Lawrence figures."

The salebrous, often polar, friendship that develops between Aaron and Lilly, however--an extension of the Birkin-Gerald Blutbrüderschaft--frustrates dialectic in quite another way: in its capacity for non-coincidence, it projects a structural blank which prohibits its strangeness, its "star-equilibrium" to use Birkin's phrase, from ever becoming "final," and so entering the contemporary culture of exchange. To insure against "merging," the sticky, aqueous

relinquishment of self in what Kangaroo collects as "The ideal of Love, Self-sacrifice, and Humanity," an alternative of male bonding emerges as a solution without explicit referential objectivity. As an "empty" signifier, one whose function is the perpetual frustration of signification, of the referential object that would complete the transition from idea to thing, such an alternative charts the limits of verifiable truth. Like a false door or three-dimensional landscape that ultimately proves to be artifice and not reality, the male bond provides the illusion of verifiability (it appears to be realizable, and indeed, attempts to realize itself), yet opens into emptiness behind. Divisible into both political and apolitical alternatives and sub-forms, moreover, it has the hydra-headed ability to regenerate its etiolated members, eroding its own creation and creating a mechanism of constant erosion. One can always substitute new blanks for old, discarding every too-successful appropriation of reality in a perpetual process of semantic deferral that perhaps identifies the function of writing itself.²⁷

In Lawrence, this blank, or zero-degree of description (Jakobson's "zero phoneme" identifies the same process, the same function, as the structural negative) takes on importance beginning with The Rainbow, where it emerges as a phenomenological vanishing point always one step ahead of the crystallization of Ursula's experience.²⁸ In the progressive foil between mediation and immediation that defines this work, the accomplished fact, whatever it might be, inevitably falls away in favor of a future possibility that now appears on the horizon. Taken to its extreme, this "futuraity" becomes the only fact that The Rainbow allows, generating a difficult confrontation with a necessary "last word," and with the astoundingly inclusive yet perfunctory finish that we do find. In the early drafts of Women in Love, in turn, the structural blank realigns itself as the heterosexual union, which stands out, like Ursula's earlier explorations, as a Paterian moment of pure experience in contrast to the hardened cysts of social intercourse. The "what" of this experience proves less important than the "how," and takes its functional significance not from a pre-established metaphysics or empiricism, but from its ability to complicate any reduction

into the concrete object or spatial image. Although this radical potentiality eventually seems to consume its own energy (how does one end a novel?), and risks the impossible correspondence of life and work (where the last word in the text is also the death, literally and figuratively, of the author), it accords with Lawrence's own views of breaking "with the old, stable ego," and gives us a plan for all of his mature work, which increasingly relies on the fabular and fantastic as the long arm of reality clutches at every other attempt to retain the openness of "man alive."²⁹

Along the chain of exchangeable signifiers, the marriage ideal, in the protracted composition of Women in Love, eventually expends itself (i.e. attempts an impossible phenomenalization once too often), and is replaced by the male bond, expressed initially as a "star-equilibrium" between Gerald and Birkin. As we will see, however, this clearing of the screen is not without its problems, for the maintenance of an anaesthetic tension conflicts with the requirement of description inherent in the novel form: something must happen, the blank or zero must be tried out, developed, interchanged in the course of the story's telling. This difficulty is exacerbated, moreover, to the degree that Lawrence remains formally committed to realistic presentation, and to an implicit hermeneutics of affective value. We are never asked to believe that what Lawrence variously offers as the revised social panacea is merely an experimental fictivity without relevance to personal improvement and instruction, and not until The Plumed Serpent does the often pontificating tone invoke a reality that is clearly incompatible with any sort of social realism. This chiasmus between representation and what might adequately be called a Derridean différance creates an extremely complicated logic within the leadership novels in particular, channeling each social ideal (leadership, male bonding, etc.) toward its realization on a plot level (and we remember here that such ideals are inevitably intended as far more "real" than Breadalby or expat accompaniments or socialist meetings), at the same time that its textual existence depends on it not being realized.³⁰ To make matters worse, this insistent phenomenalization is then incorporated into a semiotic network of its own, paired against Lawrence's

partly acknowledged, partly repressed, awareness of his own irony. The collision between homiletics and self-doubt, in turn, engenders a dramatizing sub-narrative, running alongside the plot as such and reflecting upon its methods of non-coincidence in an equally contiguous or "accidental" fashion.

Yet however suicidal it necessarily proves to be, the male-male bond has distinct advantages over the heterosexual marriage. As a taboo, it shares with other forbidden acts, like incest and suicide, the task of negative culture formation in the West: moral behavior, and the discourse which both describes and enacts it, is defined as the upholding of the prohibition--the prohibition as limit. To the degree that such limits retain their effectiveness, any description of the taboo must inevitably make use of the indirection of trope and figure. Fidelity to fact is replaced by a code mediating the moral standard and what the transgression might be, a subjunction ambiguous and "mystical" in proportion to the sin of this transgression. Like a puppeteer blindly controlling his figures from behind a stage, the discourse of the taboo cannot "see" its object, allowing it to repose in a kind of quasi-reality undisturbed by the demands of precise pictorial definition and patronage. As a taboo, moreover, male-bonding also carries with it a certain resistance to physical consummation. There is no danger of being swallowed into what Lawrence calls the womb of "the Magna Mater," nor can one produce the dialectical "next generation," which only devolves into the short leash of myopic domesticity, as Aaron Sisson discovers in Aaron's Rod. It is safe sex of the most conclusive sort, an abstinence whose potential, though unthinkable, advancement into physical consummation offers no thread or threat of reproduction.

Both moral and physiological influences are then combined to create a kind of structural vacuum which allows an intensive familiarity between Aaron and Lilly, Somers and Kangaroo, and Don Ramon and Cipriano, without the offer of synthetic resolution--a resolution that would not only destroy the individual characters who precipitate it, but eliminate the importance of the leadership investigation as a whole. By passing itself off as taboo, as a kind of discourse of the "other," the male bond protects its own function more

adequately than a reformation of the heterosexual tie would do, frustrating the narrative urge to describe because no adequate description can be given nor, to a certain extent, expected. As a blank within a narrative logic that seeks both revelation and concealment, the male bond always attempts to stay one frame ahead of the visual focus and one degree removed from the unacceptable compliance with an unredeemed, quotidian existence. The procedure is at all times one of structural difference, the projection of an end or goal whose purpose is not representation but its deferral, or rather, both representation and/or deferral to the extent that movement itself becomes the only certainty. As a result, any attempt to explain Lawrence's concern with homosexuality in terms of psychological repression (Meyers, Rieff, Weiss) or his anti-feminism as a distortion of a hidden sexual complex (Cornelia Nixon), is a misleading appeal to a secondary and derivative sanction for what remains, on the contrary, primarily a discursive process.³¹

Caught between the demand for phenomenalization and the need for progressively adjustable margins, however, the "thought adventure" of male bonding eventually brings itself to a crisis in Kangaroo. Without the ironic posturing of a postmodern masquerade of oblique and self-cancelling language games, or an index of deftly placed filters of narration, the optative tenor of Aaron's Rod, where much is talked over, codified, and projected without actualization, drifts into the explicitly political matrix of the Australian novel. The masonic, hierarchical Digger nationalism is at once all that is hoped for and all that is dreaded, with the subsequent decision to reject Kangaroo (before their first meeting!) a suspiciously preemptive evasion of the newly unrolled political screen. Kangaroo, we suspect, not so much fails Somers's rigorous standards of social engagement (which almost every defense of the novel postulates) as he threatens to achieve them. This Dostoyevskian irony, moreover (and again, Lawrence's dislike of Dostoyevski seems a curious form of self-analysis), lingers as an unassimilated challenge in the text, creating an allegory of doubt and belief that awards Kangaroo a certain rhetorical restitution to balance his premature dismissal. As Ursula and Gerald become in Women in

Love, Kangaroo is the author of some of the most seminal insights in the novel, conveyed in an unmistakably Lawrencian tongue that otherwise belies his stated inadequacy for Somers's mission. For the reader, however, this zig-zag of authority only makes the initial rejection all the more puzzling, and raises the possibility that Kangaroo, like its more famous predecessor, is an interweave of two different "narratives"--one that tells the story of Somers's exercise of freedom, justifying his tetchy recalcitrance, and the other, relayed through a complex network of rhetorical vectors, offering this freedom as yet another form of closure. Who is to say, this allegory suggests, that Somers's "isolated self" will be any more satisfactory than the relinquished ideal of Digger leadership, and prove any more immune to the ironic dangers of phenomenalization? To deny Kangaroo's vision of the appropriate male bond is already to recognize the danger of its political success; to reinstate its rhetorical power is then to acknowledge that the fault lies elsewhere--in the self-defeating operation of the "blank" itself, in fact, which always belies its structural importance as an empty signifier by attempting the "real."

The function of allegory in the later novels, therefore, builds directly upon the kind of textual allegory found in our example from Women in Love, and serves the same purpose of circulating a message that the plot dialectics cannot accommodate. In each case, a polemical "solution" is countered by an indirect and unassimilated doubt, creating a textual dialogue that expresses the aporia, or logical impasse, in each structural blank. Because the achievement of any ideal threatens not only to invalidate it as an ambition outwith social conventions, but to suggest that the difficulty lies in the idealizing rather than its replaceable object, allegory becomes the strategy which plots both sides of this equation (i.e. doubt and belief) without confessing their structural incompatibility. In the post-war novels, however, an allegory on the level of communication, dependent on the narrative arrangement of character and point of view, is supplemented by one on the level of the word, offering a range of double meanings much more resistant to dialectical assimilation. Whereas Ursula's presence as a fictional character in Women in

Love will force Birkin to confront at least some of her objections, the split of a seemingly random signifier into its literal and figural meanings (as in a pun or joke) is well-distanced from any syntagmatic importance. This allows the allegory both the oracular precision of the gnomic utterance (a cryptic "clue") and the concealment of its motives within a realm of textual discourse irreducible to plot or character. In line with the introduction of picaresque adventure and the use of rhetorical misdirection in general (plays on words, authorial parabases, nominal repetitions, manipulations of narrative convention, and so forth), such a verbal strategy attempts to insure that we will never reach Birkin's position in "Moony" again, forcing a resolution of the "third way" where hope of this kind is no longer possible.

It should be noted at this point that the allegorization of the word in Lawrence often serves as a narrative delay as well as an instrument of self-doubt. Although the repeated image or name (e.g. the octopi in Kangaroo or the Cyprian/Cipriano doubling in The Plumed Serpent) does not interrupt the plot as such, other rhetorical devices, from the aposiopesis of Lady Chatterley's Lover to the narrative intrusions of Kangaroo to the endlessly regurgitated dialogue of Aaron's Rod, countermand the high seriousness of the vatic invocation and assure that one can, in Birkin's terms, "wander off in a series of accidents" with the comic spirit of the Lawrence of "Red Trousers."³² As a result, the structural blank is projected onto the horizon, never completely out of sight but without the immediate need to test itself too carefully. In this temporary reprieve, the tone of contrareity, or irreverence, or even farce, facilitates allegory as the relay of a message smuggled into the work where we least expect it: the "many a true word spoken in jest," in fact, that gives John Thomas and Lady Jane its title.³³ Although not every instance of narrative delay is allegorical, nor is allegory always to be found in the economy of diversion, the connection is manipulated as an additional construction of two distinct but related planes of meaning, the seemingly accidental remark in the seemingly accidental context providing the telling insight that the very deliberate discourse excludes. The appearance of the delay in the later

novels, therefore, produces both necessary narrative filler and a system of semiotic counterpointing that insures that the story "goes" somewhere but never arrives, that the given structural blank is invoked but not provoked, and that whatever "message" we are to take with us is immediately complicated by its opposite. The texture of the leadership novels is, to change the comparison, like the fleshy layers of an onion; or again, to use another Barthesian simile, of a run in the thread of a stocking, "everything to be disentangled, nothing deciphered."³⁴

Not surprisingly, a good deal can be learned about Lawrence's work by attending to the specifics of such a disentanglement. To this end, a relatively isolated enclave of criticism has directed itself to Lawrence's linguistic complexities: Garrett Stewart has applied Lawrence's own idea of "allotropes" to an analysis of Women in Love, while Avrom Fleishman has defended his "late style" in terms of a Bakhtinian polyvocality, and Diane Bonds and Daniel Albright have both touched on Lawrence's "linguicity."³⁵ Yet even here, the assumption is often made that rhetoric is little more than the handmaiden of the dominant ideological voice, which may be successively fractured (as in Bakhtinian approaches to narrative in particular), but inevitably collects itself under the same umbrella of authorial genius: the experimental writer producing an experimental fiction that merely substitutes language for aesthetics in the same apology for an undivided self. On the other hand, the opposite approach (Diane Bonds often takes this line), moves toward the autonomy of language outside of its specific context, a linguistic scientism that flattens all texts into one text, and then reads this paradigm work as a necessary and automatic bifurcation of motives.³⁶ To avoid a mystification of either the author or a critical langue, one must constantly keep in mind the importance of both the literal and figural properties of language in the creation of textual meaning. The exploitation of stylized conventions in the later writing--not only puns and plays on words, but a smorgasbord of contextualized metaphors, aposiopeses, sardonic hyperboles, parabases, and personifications, in addition to a local manipulation of foreign phrases and titles, fabular

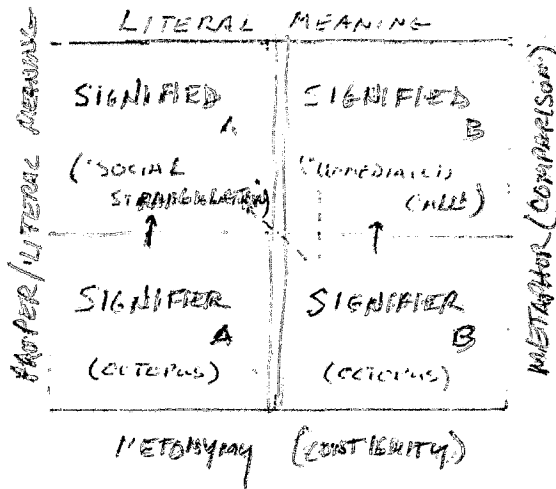
comparisons, poetry citations, hymns and religious chants, letters, newspaper "bits," and the excess of dialogue itself--cannot be divorced from the plot they supplement. Narrative allegory, in fact, depends upon just such a "dialogue" between different levels of textual meaning, one of which ultimately represents a thematic or paraphrasable core of events and characters. When Garrett Stewart speaks of Lawrence's fiction as a "style contesting its own rules," then, we must place the emphasis on the "contest" and not on a style which magically recuperates its own uncertainties, or on a set of rules whose adjustment or interdict does not necessarily demand critical attention.

The importance of a proper understanding of this contest cannot be underemphasized. One is arguing neither for incoherence, nor--strictly speaking--for any principle of randomness or arbitrariness; the delay, like the blank and its allegorical networking, is a kind of "random order" or "arbitrary deliberation" (or vice versa), both accessible and inaccessible to the conscious designs of the proper name "D.H. Lawrence." One cannot attribute the work to another writer (it is not a case of mistaken authorship, or of hidden collaboration), yet one cannot say that what the post-war novels express within their aesthetic boundaries exhausts their meaning. The work oscillates in an indefinite middle state for which perpetual movement between two constitutive possibilities generates the only form of progress. Only by an ingenious but apparently "accidental" sequence of rhetorical double-meanings, not unlike the workings of a Freudian dream-distortion, is one able to believe and doubt simultaneously, the two "codes" kept on separate planes of narrative discourse by the fragmentary devices of trope and figure.³⁷ When Kangaroo, therefore, makes use of the "octopus" as both an indicator of the social herd-instinct ("The white octopus of love") and an emblem of what is termed "the unmediated call" of nature, it pairs metaphorical reference with physical description in perpendicular arrangement along the axes of proper and literal signification. Nature opposes nurture in precisely the system of alternatives that will determine Somers's (ambiguous) turn towards feric isolation in Kangaroo: by connecting the two meanings, the suggestion is made, as it

is throughout the novel in a number of different ways, that this new solution is contaminated by the same imperfections that attend the social sphere. Insofar as this reevaluation touches on the problem with the leadership ideal as a whole, and plots the secret "strangulation" that the Lawrencian hero seems to offer in the name of a unique freedom, the example is hardly trivial; nor is it unique, belonging to a collection of references to octopus behavior of one sort or another, and to a larger scheme of similarly motivated bifurcations. Each doubling provides information through the unexpected repetition of names or images, providing a narrative context for what is otherwise a metaphorical emblem.

One can reframe this opposition of literal and figural meanings, in fact, as a fundamental distinction between metaphor and metonymy, which spread both syntagmatically and paradigmatically along the two linguistic axes of comparison and context. Metaphor, the "proper" figuration (it is the simulation we are asked to accept), sets itself off against metonymy, the literal or contextual association significantly repeats an apparently "random" image. In this way, the signifier, understood as the octopus reference in both of its senses (i.e. as social constriction and natural liberation), splits time between two signifieds: like the proper name, it becomes impossible to isolate one reference from the other as the signifier always slips "underneath" one its signifying chains.³⁸ Context, or the logic of association (e.g. the contiguity of events as we find it in the picaresque, or the "connections" made by puns, paronomasias, nominal repetitions, and the like), always entraps the comparison offered by metaphor and vice versa: the message, given to us metaphorically, is delayed by the contiguous associations that have no relation to its proper meaning, at the same time that these associations are never able to assert themselves apart from the metaphors that identify them as more than incidental bits of narrative. Diagrammatically:

Through the association of signifiers (A) and (B), (B)



carries itself, and its nominal signified, across the double line to refer to signified (A). This procedure, whose indirection is identified by the dotted lines, is the textual allegory.

This analysis of the dichotomy between metaphor and metonymy as a measure of narrative, of course, is by no means new, extending a thread of criticism that runs from the Russian formalism of Shklovsky, Tynianov, and Eikhenbaum through Jakobson (whose essay on the subject, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles," is the most widely known), Genette's work on Proust, Lacan's sliding signifiers and rhetoric of the dream, to Paul de Man's book The Allegories of Reading and David Lodge's investigation of metaphor/metonymy coding as a structural principle in modern fiction.³⁹ Yet Shklovsky's attempt to extend his theory of poetics to an analysis of prose narrative ironically turns away from language toward plot convention, and thus overlooks the possibility that his early term for "prosaic" contiguity (metonymy) can function as a rhetorical defamiliarization itself. This overly schematic division between prose and poetry has been anatomized, in turn, by Hayden White, and redefined as part of a structural psychology in Lacan (as a linguistic unconscious) and Jakobson (different forms of aphasia).⁴⁰ Lacan is of particular interest here insofar as his picture of the unconscious, "structured like a language," provides the correct model for the present reading of Lawrence, which emphasizes a fictional production of meaning tangentially, and at times discontinuously, derivative from an external, aesthetic imprimatur.⁴¹ Only in de Man and Lodge, however, are metonymy and allegory conjoined as a means of organizing narrative, and of organizing it in such a way that referential significance is simultaneously asserted and denied. Although de Man in particular has come under sustained attack for his formulation of the metaphor/metonymy problematic (Brian Vickers's In Defence of Rhetoric is an instructively violent example), and

while de Man's readings are sometimes questionable on other grounds, my own examination of Lawrence's narrative design can be seen in part as a parallel development of similar problems in verbal expression.⁴²

Rather than extend this line of inquiry, however, it will be more useful for our present argument to provide a further example of how the metaphor/metonymy logic works in Lawrence's writing, and how some of the other rhetorical strategies mentioned above combine with a suggestive self-consciousness to produce the kind of structural allegory we find in Lawrence after Women in Love. The text I have in mind, though not a "narrative" as such, condenses much of the verbal and imagistic networking that appears in the novels, and does so by making extensive use of trope and figure: "Him With His Tail In His Mouth." Sagar dates this "fictional" essay (a mode Lawrence substantially, if unintentionally, reinvents) from 1925, and while it repeats an important image in Aaron's Rod and makes explicit mention of Lawrence's life in New Mexico, we also find an acutely Lawrencian variation of this metaphor/metonymy split in what might be called the "contextualized adage." This deliberate literalization of a figure occurs as early as Sons and Lovers as a kind of diversionary quibble, but by "Him With His Tail in His Mouth," it has become an important vehicle for the transmission and refraction of meaning.⁴³ What strikes us almost immediately in the essay is the engaging transference of the idiom: "You can't lay salt on the old scoundrel's tail ["the old dragon"], because, of course, he's got it in his mouth, according to postulate."⁴⁴

Two things are worth mentioning here. First, the kernel of the adage ("You can't lay . . . tail") is provided with a causal explanation, quite against the function of an idiom in the first place, which exists as a telescopic reduction of a series of observations and experiences. An adage, in fact, may be defined as a kind of "Ur-metaphor," applicable to all functional comparisons which extend its aphoristic core. It becomes, therefore, one of the most abstract of figurations, a Scholastic genus identifiable by its contextual plasticity and resistance to location and visual description. To give it an origin, in turn, is to place it in a narrative--a temporal

arrangement of events which explains an image (laying salt on the tail) by referring to a previous action or state (the tail in the mouth): location returns by means of a prosaic, or metonymic, expansion of the contextual field. A story is told about the artificial "old scoundrel" which directs attention away from the proper meaning of the adage toward a unique, otherwise unrelated circumstance. In this way, the inflationary pressures inevitably attached to the figural analogy are countered by the deflationary impact of the particularization, the register of comparison matched by the corresponding attention to context. Metaphor gives way to metonymy as a means of recirculating any extradition of meaning back into the narrative context itself.

It should not be concluded from this use of metonymy, however, that a signal is given for the return to "realism." Shklovsky's use of defamiliarization has clearly been stripped of its formalist assumptions here, and the creation of narrative from idiom is a frustration of expectations rather than their satisfaction: where we expect similarity, we are confronted with contiguity, and where there should be an alignment of morphologically parallel worlds, there is only this world in its variegated emanations. The image through which the casual relationship is established, moreover, is yet another expression of universal application--the archetypal figuration of the ouroboros--which has now been transformed into the reason for the inability to apply salt to the dragon's tail. A mini-narrative is constructed, in fact, using no originally "realistic" material at all, merely the coincidence of two "figures" which are causally linked, against the grain of common usage: the shape of the argument takes the form of what it depicts, circumscribing any possible leakage from its tautological self-reference. This verbal maneuvering is further complicated, in turn, by a cross-over between metaphor and emblem in the conflation of the ouroboros and the bastardized adage. The clinching circularity attributed to the refusal to bury the dead with the dead and treat life as "a capricious mistress" is represented by the serpent swallowing his tail; yet the commonplace that is contextualized in order to "explain" the image rearranges the original "salt on a bird's tail" to that of the untrackable

serpent, introducing a covert connection between snake and bird:

Unable to find the dragon wholesale, modern philosophy sets up a retail shop. You can't lay salt on the old scoundrel's tail, because, of course, he's got it in his mouth, according to postulate. He doesn't seem to be sprawling in his old lair, across the heavens. In fact, he appears to have vamoosed. Perhaps, instead of one big old boy, he is really an infinite number of little tiny boys: atoms, electrons, units of force or energy, tiny little birds all spinning with their tails in their beaks. Just the same in detail as in gross. Nothing will come out of the egg that isn't in it. Evolution sings away at the same old song (427-8).

At this point, the dating of this essay from 1925 takes on unique significance: contemporaneous with the completion of The Plumed Serpent, it repeats the mystical conjunction of snake and bird in Quetzalcoatl, yet with a contrary meaning. What the novel identifies as the new religious ideal, the blank of the "Two Ways" specifically recognized as the serpent who "coil[s] his circle of rest in your belly," is now seen to be a prohibiting constriction.⁴⁵ Insofar as no retraction of The Plumed Serpent's philosophy is forthcoming until Lawrence's 1927 letter to Witter Bynner, while proof revisions to the Mexico novel were in fact made after "Him" was written, a sudden change of heart cannot account for such a volte face.⁴⁶ Instead, we need to look elsewhere: at the possibility that the essay "answers back" to the novel in the same way that Birkin and Ursula argue in Women in Love, point and counterpoint now conveyed across a specifically rhetorical division within language. Although the Mexican work, as we will see, does not seem to ~~accommodate~~ accommodate allegory in the same way as its predecessor, there nevertheless appears to be an encoded doubt that the essay is commissioned to express. An examination of the essay's logic will make this clearer.

If, as the tail-in-the-mouth maxim proposes, "Every goal ia a grave" (429), while "Life is real, life is earnest, and the Grave is not its Goal" (429), then "Life" itself, properly

lived, should seek to avoid the postulation of goals. The evolutionary "song," therefore, is replaced by life as a "river flow[ing] into us from behind and below," an unconscious determinism that outflanks the restrictive implications of reason and will. At this point, however, we return to Birkin's problem of the death urge in Women in Love: an absolute process requires no apologist, and indeed, in a strict sense, cannot admit one. The encomium for a deterministic world, in turn, raises the suspicion that the invocation of fate is a moral decision rather than a metaphysical observation--a matter of choosing a fated existence rather than its ontological necessity. This is precisely the objection Ursula disinters in Women in Love, the continued slippage between "is" and "ought" giving rise to the internalized allegory of the leadership works as well. In the 1925 essay, the move from fate to free will is achieved through the logically incompatible assertions that even though "we can't have life for the asking, nor find it by seeking, nor get it by striving" (429), "we only know that, continuing on the way we are going, the river of life grows feebler and feebler in us" (429). "Life" is granted from without, yet we find ourselves, through our own misdeeds, on the wrong track, introducing the possibility that the question is not one of goals or no goals, but rather of better or worse goals. Yet this is precisely the aporia ("the philosophic problem") that the essay cannot directly confront. Instead, a qualifier is forwarded: "Let us sidestep . . . Every goal is a grave, when you get there (429, my emphasis). Goals, therefore, are acceptable while one is achieving them, and only in their achievement do they become graves. Yet this merely displaces the goalless state from its position outside the goal to one within it, a contemporaneous and non-abstractable living which hardens into objective fact kind only when it reaches its end and purpose. To realign one of the key formulas of phenomenology, however, going is always a going somewhere, and therefore cannot exist in a pure state (i.e. exempt from direction) at any one time: the telos proves unable to conveniently exempt itself from any part of its development. Lawrence himself, in fact, seems to recognize the inadequacy of his deferral: "Life is a river, darkly sparkling, that

enters into us from behind, when we set our faces toward the unknown. Towards some goal!!!!" (430); as the exclamations alone indicate, we return, with added irony, to the initial conflict.

In response, another qualifier is inserted: that of the "eternal goal," which names the ouroboric reduction as opposed to what is now implicitly just "the goal." Again, however, the problem is not resolved but reflected, the "eternal goal" acting as an artificial subdivision of the goaling process that will not stand the weight of an ontological identity. The two contradictory assertions are set beside each other without resolution ("So we've got to get somewhere/ There is no goal") and the essay, predictably, now takes on a different form of exposition, jettisoning "philosophic" argument for a fictional dialogue between a man, the Sphinx, and a cock.⁴⁷ The rhetorical shift within this interchange will be examined shortly, but for the moment it is enough to note its appearance as an interruption in the stalled dialectics of the argument, a generic delay which removes pressure from the division between is and ought without abandoning the essay altogether. Remnants of this release adhere to the subsequent introduction of the "fourth dimension," which also attempts, without much hope for success, to recast an acceptably directionless goal. Because the fourth dimension plots a negative ground that supersedes language, and indeed all forms of description or accountability, the effect is at once farcical and self-parodying. Pivoting between what Birkin terms the "final" world of causality and a supernumerary realm of experience, the semi-material goal is both unquestionably correct on its own terms and unquestionably unaccountable to any others: the cuckoo, we are told, went "cuckoo-wards" in its evolutionary self-definition (how can description enter a pre-linguistic, tautological monad?), while the coffee-plant starts "coffing" (pun appropriate but presumably unintended), and the cow develops "cow-wise." If this new language of the inexpressible leads to absurdity (elsewhere, an iron stove is said to be "quick," a glass lamp "dead"), it also resists referential grounding far better than any political program.⁴⁸ A novel written "novel-wise," one presumes, would be as meaningless as the transcribed sounds of the Seal Woman's Song

found in Richard Lovat's pockets in Kangaroo, but would never require the allegory of doubt and belief that the late novels repetitively engineer. An ouroboros of partial, and ultimately relative, entities, the fourth-dimension charts the most extreme form of linguistic futility.

At this point, it is not surprising to find a certain contamination of message and method along the same rhetorical lines plotted earlier. On one hand, the fourth dimension appears to be merely another "blank" designed to retain a fluidity of experience outside of reason and causality. On the other, however, it is the last in a series of delays desperately attempting to keep moral and ontological claims segregated, no more likely to succeed in exorcising the goal than its predecessors. The goal, we suspect, will find its way back into the argument that so persistently tries to exclude it, working along the facilities of image and reference when it is denied a direct expository confrontation. This is already implied in the connection between serpent and bird in the controlling adage of salting one's tail, to say nothing of the seemingly offhand though otherwise puzzling reference to birds spinning with their tails in their beaks; an image used elsewhere, and almost contemporaneously, as a "goalless" ideal is now reapplied as an example of goaling itself: the serpent which is also the bird is not the Plumed Serpent of the Quetzalcoatl work, but the scientistically evolved ouroboros. The proximity of essay and novel in Lawrence's oeuvre effects a remarkable parody of what The Plumed Serpent holds as its central symbol and representation of a new religious consciousness, relativizing this blank as the novel apparently cannot. The joke, in other words, is on Lawrence himself: he who exorcises the goal finds that he is in truth the the ultimate goal-setter despite himself, passing off as an ontological claim what remains securely in the grasp of socially organized choice. Like the master image of consumption, the ineradicable goal circles back and catches itself up from behind, while Lawrence too, in a different sense, finds himself with his "tale" (foot?) in his mouth, the polemical stream choked by its own extremities.

The snake/bird association, therefore, operates in the same way as the "octopus" doubling in Kangaroo: figuratively,

the ouroboros represents what is termed "the padlock of one final clinching idea," yet its literal connection with the bird provides a composite image of Quetzalcoatl that reverses the liberating effect of the snake/bird as we find it in The Plumed Serpent. Nor should we take this as an isolated or incidental occurrence: snakes and birds in various combinations enter Lawrence's fiction in Aaron's Rod and The Lost Girl, and recur in a number of other places in the present essay. For example, the bird that is the dragon that is the bird again (beaks, song, and all) reappears as the "I" who is the "chick that absolutely refuses to chirp inside the monistic egg (430)." Taken on its own, the meaning of this metaphor is clear: "I" resists implication in the world of "clinching ideas," and breaks through the shell of a jejune consciousness: "See me walk forth, with a bit of egg-shell sticking to my tail!" (430). Yet not only is the breakthrough associated with the scientific tenor a few paragraphs later ("For you'll never measure the whale, since you're inside him"), but it equates the "I," along a literal, associative axis now, with the birds previously catalogued. Although the individualistic "chick" and the self-consuming birds refer to different states of mind, the metaphorical procedure of a1-b1 :: a2-b2, opposing freedom and incarceration with two different animals, is not followed. Rather, the one image, the one signifier, is used on two different occasions in different semiotic systems to derive opposite meanings from the same object: a1-b1 :: a2-b1. This creates a certain rhetorical crosspollination that provides, as in the "octopus" example, an overloaded referent: which is correct, the bird as mechanism, or the bird as thought-adventurer?

The answer, in fact, seems to be both, and while this does nothing for argumentative clarity (indeed, inhibits it-- this is no poetic "ambiguity," but a kind of controlled semantic dystaxia), it allows a non-dialectical code to be channeled through the mechanisms of association and displacement. The unstated message, in contesting metaphorical usage and the "goals are graves" argument, relates the "I" to the figure who spins with his tail in his mouth: the bird that is the dragon becomes the author as well, the "queer bird" whose variations on the fourth dimension are

themselves, one fears, also patterns of the "one final clinching idea." The man/bird conjunction is fleshed out, in fact, through the specific terms employed in the interruptive dialogue discussed earlier. Here, the narrative "I," which refers to "the man," makes mention of "Susan," and "passes without a scratch." The appearance of Susan identifies the man as Lawrence himself, whose cow becomes the co-star of W.Y. Tindall's somewhat satirical D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow; the "scratch," in addition to its intended meaning of "wound" here, identifies a chicken scratch as well as the more general "mark," or "noise," a somewhat idiomatic usage that suggests a connection between the bird's act and that other kind of "scratching," namely writing.⁴⁹

Unsurprisingly, both of these displaced meanings are developed in the remark subsequently attributed to a "cock": "When the cock crows, he says, 'How-do-you-do?/ How-do-you-do Peter? How-do-you-do? Old liar!'" (430). The chicken speaks as a person, and uses language in the particular context of accusation and betrayal--the very themes that dominate the leadership works, and give rise to the kind of allegory we have been investigating. Within the frame of the gospel narrative, moreover, it is Christ who announces Peter's act of treachery when the cock will crow three times, drawing yet another metonymic connection, this time between Christ and the cock, that contaminates one set of hermeneutic codes with another. The "cock" offers no goal, merely "a challenge and a greeting," yet this challenge, going beyond its onomatopoeic freedom, also introduces the stigmatic perfidy of the Jesus/Judas dualism. What appears, in other words, as an act without teleological strings, turns out to be a goal-directed manipulation on another level: the cock who scratches is the author who "scratches" is the Christ who accuses, aware that any prophecy calls up its betrayal in the relativization of its aims. The goal cannot be exorcised no more than Christ (Lawrence) avoid crucifixion, each partaking of a structural mechanism which simultaneously reveals and conceals its self-knowledge. Peter, Jesus, cock, bird, serpent, author, and man all come together in an associative network, countering the discursive argument and the intended significance of its figural supports.

At this point, attention is drawn to the ultimate question of who the "Him" in the title refers to. On a figural level, the answer is clear: the "him" is the serpent, which the essay repeatedly uses as an emblem of a constrictive life-mode, however delineated. Yet the metonymic logic suggests otherwise, leading from the serpent to the explicit reference to D.H. Lawrence as the constrictive, and constricted, agent in his own apology for the blank of the fourth dimension. This reflexive substitution is reemphasized in the use of the archaic accusative, not only in the title but in one of the references to the snake ("the old serpent lays him down and . . ."), calling attention to the grammatical variation that produces "Him with his tail in his mouth," as P.N. Furbank has pointed out in his somewhat simplified account of the essay.⁵⁰ Instead of "He . . ." or "Himself . . .", a middle ground between subjectivity and objectivity is chosen, allowing an implied self-agency and suggesting an absent predicate of the same form as "See me walk forth. . . ." The full title, supplied by the reader, then becomes "See Him--the Man, D.H. Lawrence--With His Tail (Tale?) in His Mouth."

The allegory of overt and covert, metaphor and metonym, is now complete: the logic of the essay becomes, with predictable irony, precisely the patterning that its title describes--an ouroboros with mutually contaminated beginnings and ends. Through a kind of double cancellation in which the serpent-like "padlock of the final clinching idea" is set against the noumenal "life-flow" but then asserts itself as the shadow of this same liberation, the essay recirculates what it otherwise excludes. Whatever we are asked to believe about the strict opposition between the "fourth dimension" and an anthropological scientism is perpetually reorganized by the language of its conveyance: like Penelope's weaving, the essay never finishes its project, and as with the example drawn from Women in Love earlier, the reader is called upon to actively synthesize the bifurcated planes of textual meaning. Without question, a mechanical measuring-up of reality "Answer[s] a fool according to his folly" (427), but, the text suggests, that fool is also D.H. Lawrence, whose tautological fourth dimension is the ultimate expression of the aphenomenal

melding of beginnings and ends. The metaphor which engenders metonymical links to create an opposing semiotic code is now drawn together with the reader's understanding of the textual logic. Answering back, as all the leadership novels will do, to the choric accusation that any social panacea cannot reify itself as a historical or metaphysical absolute, the encoded doubt ensures that the essay goes nowhere (or goes everywhere) and says nothing (or too much), always arriving short or long of the mark that would allow it to represent its ideas without remainder. Its title, therefore--perhaps the greatest indicator of authorial control--not only catches the author up in the irony of its reference, repeated on all levels, but anticipates, in its incomplete and idiosyncratic form, the ellipses that will be repeated by the "exposition" itself. In this respect, "Him" precipitates one final addition: the "I" or "We" who sees an accusative Lawrence commit the misdirections we have examined. Without this observation, the essay remains incomplete; beyond this, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, one cannot speak.

iii

The absence of Lady Chatterley's Lover in the foregoing discussion is not accidental. This work stands out against the leadership series as a novel without explicit socio-political goals. Such a shift is in fact already anticipated in The Plumed Serpent, which substitutes a separatist Quetzalcoatl revivalism for Somers's ideal of "moving with men." As in "Him With His Tail in His Mouth," the structural blank in these late novels moves progressively (or regressively) toward an extreme non-referentiality, a process that is asymptotic (i.e. one can never avoid writing the absolute), but one which locally shifts narrative analysis from delay to description. So many of the passages in The Plumed Serpent which have been judged incoherent and irregular are the effect of this decisive split between reality and vision, while Lady Chatterley's linguistic outrage, it could be argued, is the result of a similar discard of "common language" and what Lawrence, in his A Propos to the novel, calls "the jargon of self-conceit." In both works, the

linguistic counterpointing that appears in Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo is ameliorated to the degree that the emergent structural blank dissociates itself from any merely human engagement. Ramon's Supreme Selfhood, though still within a political movement, exists without tangible context, as the increasingly fabular and incantatory nature of his "revivalism" indicates. Mellors's "tenderness," in the same vein, is subordinated to a pervasive and occupying Fate, which broods over the novel so completely that the sexual holdout against a mechanical world can never acquire the importance of a universal panacea. A self-perpetuating delay structure is less evident because a certain allegory of self and world gradually develops within the ideological directive itself. Because the social message, either as the ethic of tenderness or as the Dark God of the solar plexus, has secured itself within the shell of a self-referential "I am" (to borrow from one of the "anonymous" hymns of The Plumed Serpent), its vehicles are no longer expected to be anything but imperfect emanations of an unspeakable Being. This Platonic or even Manichean dualism, which sanctions the hierarchical classification of society according to instinct and "blood knowledge," but which paradoxically relinquishes any method or need for comparison, also permits a carelessness of description: in a world which, all appearance to the contrary, is not the "real" world, fidelity to scene and setting no longer remains a consuming worry. A bi-planar universe also allows a newfound freedom of expression, leaving the appearance of an authorial pontification intact.⁵¹ The pressure for a naturalization of "talk," however, is toned down considerably, so that the achievement or non-achievement of the stated ideal, regardless of its local viability, fails to be decisive.

From this perspective, it is easy to see why Lady Chatterley's Lover has enrolled more supporters than any of the three leadership works. The return to a provincial setting (and with it the apparent though misleading celebration of descriptive precision) signals the end to what Lawrence calls the "leader-cum-follower" relationship, and with that end, the resurrection of a more transparent, referential narrative held in such fondness by both Marxist

and moralist interpretations of Lawrence's work.⁵² Lady Chatterley's Lover exhibits none of the rhetorical gymnastics that remain even in The Plumed Serpent, and so its "story" is able to progress without a parallel sequence of fractured and fracturing counterarguments. One may or may not care for this story, but for the most part, Lady Chatterley offers few formal challenges that cannot be met by a realist poetics.⁵³ In the ensuing theoretical calm, any number of explanatory narratives can be made to fit the bill of relief. In the organicist/Marxist view, Lady Chatterley's Lover is the realization of an expectant homecoming, where suddenly the landscape is well-trodden, the people familiar, the motives smooth and uncomplicated. After a serious flirt with the nonsensical, Lawrence has somehow come back to his right mind again. On a moral plane, Daleski can say that after "writing against his own deepest values" in the leadership works, Lady Chatterley has "succeeded in giving full and vivid expression to those values and in producing a novel that is only a little inferior to The Rainbow and Women in Love," while Daniel Schneider, sounding a distinctly realist note, concludes that "Grounded in particulars that are presented with a fine mimetic fidelity, Lady Chatterley's Lover is incomparable in dynamic power. . . ." ⁵⁴ Examples can be multiplied, and although there are obvious objectors to the sexual ideology and to the at times fantastical shading of character and motive, this portrayal of relief is no exaggeration.

Yet these remarks draw agreement, it might be said, precisely because the paradigm which generates them has ceased to work. Lady Chatterley's Lover can afford to be "realistic" (as even The First Lady Chatterley cannot) precisely because realism is at this point only a secondary concern. For the same reason, sexual language can be made explicit because the performative power of linguistics is no longer (on one side of the argument anyway) of any effect--the real and unreal don't need language to separate and contaminate them because the division is already an a priori acceptance of "fact." Because no solution is being offered, a theme/structure divagation remains inactive, an assumption within which the text moves rather than a polarity it enacts. For this reason, attempts to credit or discredit Lawrence's ideology in Lady

Chatterley's Lover have largely been pyrrhic battles on a smilingly comfortable level of textual sorting. Though Mellors is no ironist, and provides a "solution" of sorts for modern-day living, in the end it is resignation to a more inclusive power that permits this tenderness to mature, a development that could never have occurred in the leadership series with such confident, perhaps even cavalier, matter-of-factness. The absence of rhetorical delays in Lady Chatterley's Lover indicates not a return to Lawrence's true "priesthood of love," but a realization that the love-ethic as it is presented in this novel is no longer synonymous with the "blank" that controls the text. Love, in other words, is not a renascent experience but a forgotten one, and all quibbling about the adequacy of such love entirely misses the point. Like the more "successful" short stories, the love theme "works" here because it is at least one degree removed from the ideological crisis point that Lawrence's late novels otherwise expose. Critical approaches which ignore this consideration, and which focus on a narrowed examination of theme, inevitably inflate the incidental to the significant, overlooking more fundamental conflicts in the Chatterley series.

Lady Chatterley's distinction from its predecessors, however, emphasizes another point worth making here: if commentators like Raymond Williams are misguided in their hammer-and-cudgel rejection of "some recent theory," structural and deconstructive method, in countering a facile apologetics, is likewise only productive insofar as it opens up Lawrence's narratives.⁵⁵ No advantage is gained in imposing a propaedeutic theory upon every work of literature unfortunate enough to cross its path, thereby dissolving all distinctive features in the acid-test of a Procrustean science. The argument here is similar to that proposed earlier with respect to a linguistic universalism: to reduce a text to an assembly of pre-packaged variables is not reading but autopsy. This does not mean that theoretical analysis, in whatever form, necessarily silences the particular work in favor of a scientific paradigm, merely that it will most often err, for intrinsic as well as historical reasons, on the side of schematic formulae. The heuristic value of Heidegger's

insight that it is language which speaks and not man is unquestionable, yet as a critical apparatus, this either/or model seems as crude as the humanistic contention that it is man who speaks and not language. The blindness engendered by the attraction of the automatic and the arational is the same blindness perpetuated by Birkin's death wish and Ramon's tautological "I am"; though radically different conclusions about the self and language would emerge, the structural congruence would only repeat Lawrence's omissions under the control of different premises.

This entreaty for the local viability of schematic models warns us to resist an understanding of Lawrence's narratives as merely variations on a theme. Without doubt, any investigation invoking structural methodology begins with an arrangement of opposites and not with the empirical observation; it should be clear enough already that the Copernican inversion I am attempting is the substitution of discrete facts with kinetic systems: difference controls its thematic expressions and not the other way around. Yet it must be kept in mind that such difference is not a self-regulating machine, allowing us to read The Rainbow as we would Kangaroo, for example, thereby forcing all textual anomalies into the metaphor/metonymy model sketched above. Reading is still an empirical enterprise, though such an empirics must be understood as a methodology and not only as a philosophical habit. In this respect, The Rainbow is best approached phenomenologically, as a narrative existing between pure experience and the requirement that all acts (and hence all acts of narrative) be intentional; the associative logic that, following Freud and Lacan, operates as metonymy in Lawrence's later novels, simply does not appear in the pre-war Midlands book. Nor does it appear in Women in Love, which supplements phenomenological concerns with an allegory of dialogue, splitting the narrative frame as its predecessor does not, but as the leadership works will with compounded rhetorical intensity.

For related reasons, one cannot automatically compare some of the more problematic passages in Sons and Lovers (those dealing with Clara Dawes in particular) with Ursula's uneven treatment in Women in Love; missing is that crucial

thrust outward provided by The Rainbow's hieratic energy, redefining any "deconstructive" schism as a response to a repression within polemics, and not to its preemptive lack. My focus on the successive revisions to the Women in Love drafts, culled from the unpublished manuscripts at the University of Texas--Austin, is designed to bring this difference home, plotting a movement away from The Rainbow's optimism but not a return to the kind of writing Sons and Lovers represents. Likewise, the assessment of Lady Chatterley's Lover as a return to the "innocent," pre-war Lawrence, overlooks the fact that this is an effect rather a cause of the narrative patterns we have introduced, deeply influenced by Lawrence's later work rather than being a timely escape from its "embarrassments."

Within the leadership novels, themselves, moreover, one must keep in mind that Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo, and The Plumed Serpent each arrange their textual economies differently within the same controlling markers of the social blank, its supporting delays, and the allegory which attempts to read it. Aaron's Rod, therefore, takes up the problems of leadership and power within the ambit of the picaresque; Kangaroo attempts a specifically political grounding for its "new relationship"; and The Plumed Serpent substitutes a religious selfhood and messianism for civic action. In Aaron's Rod, the exploitation of Birkin's earlier desire to "wander off" creates a panoply of diversions and the first exercise in rhetorical delay as such. Kangaroo continues the investigation into male bonding, but passes too close to political achievement where Aaron's Rod remains too aloof. The Plumed Serpent, in turn, insures that neither mistake will be repeated by weaving a tautological ideal that moves nearer and nearer to Lawrence's ethics of the "fourth dimension." The Chatterley novels, finally, will extend this problematic of the absolute to the realm of social and individual fate, each in opposition to the other in a complete reversal of the (prospectively) egalitarian mood of The Rainbow and the epic ambition of Birkin's philosophizing in Women in Love. From start to finish, the following chapters attempt an evaluation of Lawrence's development as a novel writer, treating each work individually and as part of a larger text/history that

begins with an author writing for his world, develops into an author writing against his world, then increasingly against any world, and ends, in Lady Chatterley's Lover, with essentially a solipsistic holding-forth against impending doom.

A word should be said about the use of so-called "technical" vocabulary, especially with respect to phenomenology and the distinction between a "dialogical" and a dialectical text. On the first issue, as the preface indicates, an extensive introduction to phenomenology as a philosophical discipline would no doubt be critically useful for a reading of Ursula's problematic "pure experience." As this is presently impractical, however, I have concentrated, in my chapter on The Rainbow, on the problem of time and Husserl's understanding of time in particular--one of the more lucid accounts of the importance of temporality to the larger issue of phenomenological reflection. As a formal philosophy, phenomenology is dogeared with neologisms and adapted locutions, and while Heidegger is arguably the champion of such invention, Husserlian terms like the Transcendental Ego, the Transcendental Reduction, noetic vs. noematic partitions of thought, and the "bracketing" of the "scientific attitude" are obstacles well enough avoided here. "Intentionality," elevated from its Kantian significance as an instrument of moral behavior to a structural principle for all acts of cognition, is retained in its universal form. When speaking of Lawrence's "intentions," I do not mean, unless otherwise noted or in an obviously unambiguous context, his conscious intentions in this or that circumstance, but the impossibility of a reified ideal cut off from an agent of thought and without an implied (though not necessarily real) audience. Intentionality as a measure of conscious deliberation in the choice of aesthetic materials and the wielding of aesthetic control, therefore, is a distinct issue of methodological concern, and involves the use of intentions in their non-phenomenological definition.

On the second point, the movement from an internally dialectical narrative like The Rainbow to what might be called the dialogical (because non-synthetic) patterning of Women in Love and its successors brings up the obvious comparison with

Bakhtin. Avrom Fleishman, as noted above, has already examined Lawrence's dialogue and the various incorporations of skaz, indirect discourse, and the like in "He Do the Polis in Different Voices: Lawrence's Later Style"; the polyvocalic texture of much of Lawrence's post-war work lends itself readily to such analysis, and the connection will doubtlessly be explored in greater detail in the future. Yet Bakhtin's model, as I explain in separate notes to the Women in Love and Kangaroo chapters, is a veiled aesthetic circuit not unlike the logic employed by Barbara Hardy or Colin Clarke in support of Lawrence's "formal" credibility: the narrator is not necessarily the author, as Bakhtin argued pace contemporary critical assumptions in his book on Dostoyevski's fiction, yet the contest of ideologies he proposes in its place merely raises the author to the role of divine referee, allotting each textual voice (including his own) its proper position within a coherent aesthetic plan. Rhetoric is never allowed to work against or outside the prearranged schema of discordance, and no hesitation about Dostoyevski's (or Rabelais's, or Sterne's) artistic control is ever ventured. Such dialogism, as de Man suggests in his published essay on Bakhtin's work, is not radical enough by half, and indicates, in our own argument, a linear design which identifies the text as the effect of dialogism rather its apposite or synonym.⁵⁶ Dialogue, and dialogism, can be differentiated to a further power, and their use in the following chapters, unless otherwise noted (for Bakhtin is still helpful without his aesthetic premises) follows the definition of allegory given herein and not the theory of ideologies traceable to the attack on Russian symbolism. The specific "dialogues" between Ursula and Birkin in Women in Love, in turn, should be read with this distinction in mind, insofar as they are both literally dialogical and examples of polyvocalic construction.

Finally, the orientation of my work between the poles of empirical "common sense" analysis and linguistic science, adjusting reference and emphasis as the novels require, does not mean that it stands as the solitary evaluation of its kind. While the nature of the present argument, and non-theoretical tenor of Lawrence criticism in general make it more helpful to focus on the logic of Lawrence's narrative

design rather than the foundations of Lawrence criticism, a number of books and essays are worth noting here as providing roughly parallel accounts of the language of doubt and belief. Daniel Albright's chapter on Lawrence in Personality and Impersonality: Lawrence, Woolf, and Mann, for example, attempts to catalogue the central irony of using a highly stylized language to identify an increasingly monolithic and prelinguistic truth. Diane Bonds's book, Language and the Self in D.H. Lawrence, moreover, stands as a pioneering book-length study of the way in which language disrupts the apparently incontrovertible call to action in The Rainbow and Women in Love. Garrett Stewart, Margot Norris, and Avrom Fleishman have attempted local stylistic analyses along similar lines, while Leo Bersani's discussion of Lawrencian "desire" in A Future For Astyanax parallels much of what goes under the heading of "pure experience" and the structural blank in my own study.⁵⁷ Stephen Miko's Toward an Aesthetic of Women in Love, finally, is the only book (if one does not count Vivas's scratchings in this direction) to explicitly detail Lawrence's phenomenological concerns, and while his work, predictably enough, refuses to venture into the textual oddities of the post-war narratives, its delineation of "potential" as it prohibits a thematic coalescence into fact in The Rainbow, the Hardy study, and "The Crown," in addition to the title novel, focuses as much on the textual problems this creates as on the imagistic material it makes use of.⁵⁸ Seeing my own work within this frame is at least the beginning of a useful, if not always accurate, critical orientation.

On the widest scale, of course, one cannot help but take sides on a theoretical debate that is otherwise deemphasized. Lawrence criticism as it stands is generally incapacitated by Lawrence's own rhetoric, which coerces agreement or else condemnation but very little attention to the work at hand, a work to be judged on its own terms rather than as an occasion for the self-congratulation of a well-turned phrase, or a dyspeptic peroration against the violation of irrelevant aesthetic norms. The sanction is ultimately the art-work itself (broadly conceived), which in this case requires a more sophisticated theoretical method, and which makes Walter Benjamin or Diane Bonds or Daniel Albright a more reliable

voice than F.R. Leavis or Colin Clarke or Philip Rieff or Cornelia Nixon. In reading Lawrence, whose repeated lesson is the rescue of tale from teller, the task is doubly challenging: to plot the multiple reflections of his method upon its source, and by implication, to resurrect an ineffective, reiterative criticism from its ideological miasma.

NOTES

¹ Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," in Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 69.

² Letter to Arthur Macleod, 23 April, 1913, in the Cambridge Edition Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. James Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), i, 544. All subsequent reference to Lawrence's correspondence follows this text unless otherwise noted.

³ Letter to Gordon Campbell, 3 March, 1915, in Letters, ii, 313.

⁴ Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 1 March, 1915, ii, 297.

⁵ One thinks of Joyce's Stephen Daedalus here, the formal, rather than political experimentation of Virginia Woolf, and Eliot's condemnation of Murry's "Inner Voice" (productive of "a Sunday park of contending and contentious orators, who have not even arrived at the articulation of their differences") in "The Function of Criticism." Each acts as a cornerstone for the kind of poetry/criticism which seeks its creative ideal in the skillful organization of "objective correlatives" (no room for "News From Nowhere" here!) and its analytic anchor in what Eliot also calls "quiet cooperative labour." See Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot, ed. Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), 69. The issue is intrinsically complicated (one speaks of relative emphases here, and not absolute distinctions), and should not encourage the supposition that the whole of British modernism is univocally "detached." Examples of overtly political (Shaw, the "low" modernism of Auden and Spender) are not hard to locate, and one must also note that the output of a single writer (Pound for example) is not easily classifiable within the categories of either "Redskin" or "Paleface."

⁶ Letter to Edward Marsh, 6 November, 1915, ii, 429; letter to Catherine Carswell, 20 December, 1916, iii, 58; Kangaroo (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1968), 286, 287, 284; Letter to S.S. Koteliansky, 4 September, 1916, ii, 650.

⁷ Letter to David Garnett, 19 April, 1915, ii, 321; Kangaroo, 273-4.

⁸ Talk of foregathering and the "deeper social necessities" that men demand appears in "Matriarchy," Phoenix II, ed. Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1968), 552. The remark about "collapsing life" ("this slow flux of destruction and nihilism") occurs in a letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith, 11 November, 1915.

⁹ "Art and the Individual," in Phoenix II, 225.

¹⁰ "Why The Novel Matters," in Phoenix, ed. Edward McDonald (New York: Penguin Books, 1980), 533-38; "John Galsworthy," Phoenix, 539.

¹¹ Women in Love (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), 242. Compare Ruskin in his famous essay, "The Nature of Gothic": in defense of the "love of fact" in Gothic architecture, Ruskin approvingly remarks, "the Gothic inventor did not leave the sign in need of interpretation. He makes the fire as real as he can. . . ." "The Nature of Gothic," in Unto This Last and Other Writings, ed. Clive Wilmer (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 101.

¹² F.R. Leavis, Thought, Words, Creativity in D.H. Lawrence (London: Chatto and Windus, 1976), 16, 13, 12.

¹³ Leavis, D.H. Lawrence: Novelist (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1956), 32.

¹⁴ Daniel Schneider, D.H. Lawrence: The Artist as Psychologist (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1984), 194-210.

¹⁵ Schneider, 194.

¹⁶ Compare Lawrence himself on this: "One writes, even at the moment, to some mysterious presence in the air. If that presence were not there, and one thought of a single, solitary actual reader, the paper would remain forever white." "A Bibliography of D.H. Lawrence, by Edward McDonald," Phoenix, 233.

¹⁷ The quoted dialogue is my own. Hillis Miller's use of "uncanny" occurs in his "The Critic as Host," in Critical Inquiry, III, 439-447.

¹⁸ Following the Cambridge Women in Love, ed. David Farmer, et al. (1987), the two extant typescript drafts, with interlinear corrections, are labelled TSI and TSII here. The

proof sheets for both A1 and E1 (American and British editions respectively) were drawn from the revised TSII, with further corrections for Secker's British copy in 1921.

¹⁹ Women in Love, 164. Hereafter given as WiL in text with page number(s).

²⁰ "The Reality of Peace," in Phoenix, 681, 686.

²¹ See Peter Balbert, D.H. Lawrence and the Phallic Imagination: Essays in Sexual Identity and Feminist Misreading (London: Macmillan, 1989); Barbara Hardy, The Appropriate Form: An Essay on The Novel (London: Athlone Press, 1964), 161. Some corollary remarks: Lawrence opens "up familiar forms, exposes them to uncertainty, removes their 'finish,' and thereby brings them closer to reality as he conceives of it. For Lawrence, reality was not chaotic, but neither was it in any of its aspects completely knowable. Thus, the most honest artist had to allow room for the 'unplanned' in his plan" (Robert Kiely, "Accident and Purpose: 'Bad Form' in Lawrence's Fiction," in D.H. Lawrence: A Centenary Consideration, 104); "Women in Love is not, surely, a novel with a message . . . we can't even say that perhaps it reaches conclusions . . . It is a novel, rather, that dramatizes that process of living disintegration to which all of us in varying degrees are committed, and committed most ambiguously. There is not a novel in the language more truly exploratory, no novel less limited to the saying of something previously definite" (Colin Clarke, The River of Dissolution, 148); "Lawrence is concerned to show that experience is equivocal, ambivalent, that there are no clear answers or wholly adequate resolutions" (Keith Sagar, Life Into Art, 192); "Women in Love makes no sort of compromise with the problems it creates for its readers, it transmutes social reality into the play of heightened consciousness, and says that that is our true world" (John Worthen, The Idea of the Novel, 104); "The inconclusiveness of the "open ending" [in Aaron's Rod] is entirely characteristic of a good deal of Lawrence's fiction. The admirable refusal to impose an artistic tyranny upon Aaron in order to bring about his surrender and thus a resolution to the novel reminds us that Lawrence considered the novel to be a living form, not a rigidly contrived set of formulae" (Paul G. Baker, A Reassessment of D.H. Lawrence's Aaron's Rod, 181).

Other examples, directed toward individual works or the fiction as a whole, are easily found, and one might say that the real task is to locate a contemporary apologist for Lawrence who does not somehow defend him on these lines.

²² See especially Writing Degree Zero, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984), and "An Introduction to The Structural Analysis of Narratives," in Music, Image, Text (London: Fontana, 1984), 79-124.

²³ Colin Clarke, The River of Dissolution: D.H. Lawrence and English Romanticism (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969), 83.

²⁴ See Walter Benjamin, "Allegorie und Trauerspiel," in Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels, Gesammelte Schriften, I, 1 (Berlin: Schocken Verlag), 335-365.

²⁵ "The relationship between the allegorical sign and its meaning (signifié) is . . . a relationship between signs in which the reference to their respective meanings has become of secondary importance. . . . [I]t remains necessary, if there is to be allegory, that the allegorical sign refer to another sign that precedes it." Paul de Man, "The Rhetoric of Temporality," collected in Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism (Minneapolis: U.M.P., 1983), 190. Compare Quilligan: "All allegories . . . are texts first and last. . . . The "other" named by the term allos in the word "allegory" is not some other hovering above the words of the text, but the possibility of an otherness, a polysemy, inherent in the very words on the page." Maureen Quilligan, The Language of Allegory (Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1979), 25, 26.

²⁶ This does not mean, of course, that the critical work is not itself open to the same kind of reading that it supplies for the creative work. It is perhaps more accurate to classify "critical" and "creative" as heuristic opposites in a progressive hermeneutics, structural markers without well-defined ontological distinctions. This a complex theoretical issue, however, that takes us beyond our immediate concerns; it is sufficient here to note that the blindnesses of the critical text can influence but not directly interfere with its dialectical purpose.

27 Blanks may appear in any number of guises--as density of narration, topical inadequacy (the impossibility, as Hardy knew, of fully describing the sexual act in a novel), verbal wit (the extensive punning on sex, death, and writing in Elizabethan poetry, for example), or even as signs consciously relayed to the reader, for which Henry James is an acknowledged master. To catalogue the different functions of blanks is beyond our scope here, but one may read Wolfgang Iser's discussion of blanks as narrative signs in his Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1978), 182-227.

28 See R. Jakobson and J. Lotz, "Notes on the French Phonemic Pattern," in Word, V, ii, 151-158.

29 Letter to Edward Garnett, 5 June, 1914, ii, 183.

30 Differance is as much method as argument in Derrida, yielding a list of references as extensive as the bibliography of his work. For an introduction into its operations, however, one might usefully consider the well-known "Structure, Sign, and Play in The Discourse of The Human Sciences," in Writing and Difference, trans. Alan Bass (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 278-293; the Rousseau chapters in Of Grammatology, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1976); and "Living On: Border-Lines," in Deconstruction and Criticism, ed. Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), 75-176.

31 See Jeffrey Meyers, "D.H. Lawrence and Homosexuality," in D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, Poet, Prophet, ed. Stephen Spender (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 135-146; Philip Rieff, "The Therapeutic as Mythmaker," in the Modern Critical Views D.H. Lawrence, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1986), 106-127; Daniel Weiss, Oedipus in Nottingham (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962); Cornelia Nixon, D.H. Lawrence and the Turn Against Women (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

32 cf. "Red Trousers," in Phoenix II, 562-564.

33 As Lawrence recounts in a letter to Aldous and Maria Huxley, "Juliette [Huxley], who read the manuscript, and was very cross, morally so, suggested rather savagely I should call it: John Thomas and Lady Jane. Many a true word spoken in spite, so I promptly called it that." Letter of 9 March,

1928, in The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Aldous Huxley (London: Heinemann, 1956), 707.

³⁴ Cf. Barthes, "The Death of The Author," in Image, Music, Text, 147.

³⁵ Garrett Stewart, "Lawrence, Being, and the Allotropic Style," rpt. in Modern Critical Views D.H. Lawrence, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1986), 163-177; Diane Bonds, Language and The Self in D.H. Lawrence (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987), especially her well-argued chapter, "Lawrence and the Paradox of Meaning," 7-28; Avrom Fleishman, "He Do The Polis in Different Voices: Lawrence's Later Style," in D.H. Lawrence: A Centenary Consideration, ed. Peter Balbert and Phillip L. Marcus (Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1985), 162-179; Daniel Albright, "D.H. Lawrence," in Personality and Impersonality: Lawrence, Woolf, Mann (University of Chicago Press, 1978). Albright's fine section on "language" in his Lawrence chapter does, however, hit upon the excessive "cuffing" and "pawing" of a figure of speech: "In Lawrence's subsequent novels he uses quite frequently a device which never appears in the novels published before 1920: he will take a word or a metaphor and play with it for a paragraph or even longer, twist it, overliteralize it, make a succession of puns, rhymes, jokes. This occurs most notoriously in Kangaroo. . . ." In truth, "never" is incorrect (see note 40 infra), but the point is of crucial importance to an intelligent assessment of Lawrence's later writing.

³⁶ Paul de Man's claim that "The whole of literature" responds to the "rhetorization of grammar" he finds in Proust is quickly becoming a locus classicus for this sort of approach, with its vision of a "totalizing" (another de Manian word) rhetoric. See "Semiology and Rhetoric," in Allegories of Reading (New Haven: Yale U.P.), 3-19.

³⁷ A relevant and interesting reappraisal of Freud and Lawrence can be made from this angle. I avoid excessive references to Freud, however, because it is still not clear, in criticism in general to say nothing of Lawrence studies in particular, whether one means a thematic or structural Freud. The former, of course, has been the traditional approach investigated by Daniel Weiss (Oedipus in Nottingham), Philip Rieff (The Therapeutic as Mythmaker), Frederick Hoffman

(Freudianism and the Literary Mind), and others, and leads to a deemphasis of the fiction in favor of an extra-textual, biographical crisis. A more reliable line of analysis travels through the structural Freudianism proposed by Lacan, who, in his idiosyncratic synthesis of Jakobson and Freud, proposes that language is the proper home for such distortions.

³⁸ Such slippage, of course, is a component of Lacan's ratio of signification. See, in particular, "The Insistence of The Letter in The Unconscious," in Yale French Studies, 1966, 112-147.

³⁹ See Victor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique," rpt. in Modern Criticism and Theory, ed. David Lodge, 16-29; Roman Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles," in Fundamentals of Language (with Morris Halle) ('S-Gravenberg: Mouton and Co., 1956), 76-82; Jacques Lacan, "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious Or Reason Since Freud," in Ecrits, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton and Co., 1977) 146-178, and also his remark about metaphor as synchronic substitution and diachronic combination in "Subversion of the Subject and Dialectic of Desire," in Ecrits, 298; David Lodge, The Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy, and the Typology of Modern Fiction (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), and Working With Structuralism (London: Routledge, 1981); and Paul de Man, Allegories of Reading, 3-19. See also Boris Eikhenbaum's tracing of poetic and prosaic functions in his lucid account of Russian formalism, "The Theory of the Formal Method," rpt. in The Art of the Critic, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), IX, 319-347.

⁴⁰ See Hayden White's Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U.P., 1978). White borrows from Vico's rhetorical tetralogy of metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony as a kind of blueprint for modes of discourse, cognitive development, political outlook, and historical discipline.

⁴¹ "The unconscious is neither primordial nor instinctual; what it knows about the elementary is no more than the elements of the signifier." ("The Agency of The Letter," 157). And even more to the point: "Can one really see these as merely figures of speech [Quintilian's figurae sententiarum] when it is the figures themselves which are the

active principle of the rhetoric of the discourse which the patient in fact utters?" (169). What is primordial and originary is not the antecedent fact or experience, but the constitution of such "facts" as a language, outside of which they can acquire no meaning.

⁴² See Brian Vickers, In Defence of Rhetoric (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988). Jeffrey Barnouw also argues on similar grounds in his review of Paul de Man's Allegories of Reading in Comparative Literature Studies, 19, 1982.

⁴³ See the "walking the dog" figure in "The Young Paul Morel" of Sons and Lovers (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), 56.

⁴⁴ "Him With His Tail in His Mouth," in Phoenix II, 427. All subsequent page numbers refer to this text.

⁴⁵ The full quote, "And I am not with you till my serpent has coiled his circle of rest in your belly," appears both in The Plumed Serpent (Quetzalcoatl) (New York: Vintage, 1959), and in "The Living Quetzalcoatl," in The Complete Poems of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (London: Heinemann, 1972), 801.

⁴⁶ "I smelled the red herring in your last letter a long time: then at last decide [sic] its [sic] a live sprat. I mean about The Plumed Serpent and "the hero": on the whole, I think you're right. The hero is obsolete, and the leader of men is a back number." Letter to Witter Bynner of 13 March, 1928, in The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Huxley, 711.

⁴⁷ The placement of the two contradictory assertions follows Michael Herbert's Cambridge edition of Reflections on the Death of A Porcupine, which uses the University of Texas manuscript plus Lawrence's revisions to the ribbon copy as a base-text. Corrections made to the carbon of the manuscript, on the other hand, produce "Is there no goal?" That ribbon and carbon corrections would differ so drastically reinforces the contention that Lawrence held a continuing uncertainty over the unresolved (and seemingly unresolvable) function of the telos.

⁴⁸ These and other Solomonic divisions may be found in "The Novel," Phoenix II, 419.

⁴⁹ See D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow (New York: Columbia, 1939).

⁵⁰ P.N. Furbank, "The Philosophy of D.H. Lawrence," in The Spirit of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Gamini Salgado and G.K. Das (London: Macmillan, 1988), 144-53.

⁵¹ Assertiveness, of course, should not be taken in the ethical sense as Mellors' or Parkin's or Clifford's assertiveness, but as the tension in the novel's pedagogical mood. The point is structural, not anthropomorphic.

⁵² For a representative sample of Marxist approaches to Lawrence, see Christopher Caudwell, "D.H. Lawrence: A Study of The Bourgeois Artist," in Studies in A Dying Culture (London: Bodley Head, 1957), 44-72; Scott Sanders, D.H. Lawrence: The World of The Five Major Novels (New York: Viking, 1974); Graham Holderness, D.H. Lawrence History, Ideology, Fiction (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1982); Raymond Williams, The English Novel From Dickens To Lawrence (New York: Oxford U.P., 1970), 165-184. For Caudwell, in a study that closely reflects Georgy Lukacs' own rejection of Lawrence's "interiority," the failure in Lawrence is his ultimate fetishism of self. Having spurned a bourgeois consciousness, he also spurns the economic base which gives rise to it, mystifying the individual when it should be reconstituted. This mystification is then matched with Lawrence's departure, both imaginatively and physically, from the Midlands locale. Holderness and Sanders are generally more explanatory and less polemical in their Marxism, but the same dogmatic narrative model hold sway, to the point where Holderness, presumably at the stage of risking his objectivity (or exposing the situational uselessness of his paradigm), ignores the leadership novels entirely. Williams, however, best captures the mood of all these commentators in another work of his, Culture and Society 1780-1950 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1960), where he concludes, despite Lady Chatterley's Lover, that "the tragedy of Lawrence, the working-class boy, is that he did not live to come home."

⁵³ The crucial exception is the issue of Fate itself, which still must be written as narrative, and to that degree given over to Mellors's ideology of fate. Insofar as this transference is accomplished, the vacillating mood of doom and cheerful resignation is alternately shrill and stagey. If Fate pulls away from its temporal appropriation, however, and

conscripts Mellors into its absolute position, the problem becomes an especially acute one of narrative description--how to write the a priori unwriteable. Unsurprisingly, the novel manipulates both possibilities, ending on the "absent presence" of a letter as a compromise between exclusive forces.

⁵⁴ H.M. Daleski, The Forked Flame: A Study of D.H. Lawrence (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), 311; Daniel Schneider, D.H. Lawrence: The Artist as Psychologist, 243.

⁵⁵ Raymond Williams, Foreword to D.H. Lawrence: A Centenary Consideration, viii.

⁵⁶ Cf. "Dialogue and Dialogism," in The Resistance to Theory (Manchester: Manchester U.P., 1986), 106-114.

⁵⁷ See Margot Norris, "The Ontology of D.H. Lawrence's St. Mawr," in the Modern Critical Views D.H. Lawrence, 297-312; Leo Bersani, A Future For Astyanax (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1976). Both Norris and Stewart, however, for all their attempts to isolate rhetoric as a structural rather than an affective function, ultimately recede into apologies for the appropriateness of language as a reflection of thematic concerns. The difference between Alan Friedman's Women in Love and Garrett Stewart's is not so much one of design as one of emphasis and ideological slant: Friedman drains very efficiently into external pressures of "modernism" whereas Stewart lingers with the internal match-up between style and message, implying a genius of control in this subtle parallelism. Norris is likewise attracted by Lawrence's skill in manipulating a language that defies language for the greater coherence of a narrative whole. The real problem in Lawrence's narrative design, however, is more radical than this, and does not presume that language is necessarily a handmaiden to aesthetics; what is at stake is not a semantic ambiguity, but a "semioclasty" (the term is Barthes's) that evades, and indeed prohibits, thematic or dialectic cooptation.

⁵⁸ Stephen Miko, Toward Women in Love: The Emergence of a Lawrentian Aesthetic (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1977).

THE RAINBOW

"For all this, names are lacking."

--Husserl, The Phenomenology
of Internal Time-Consciousness

It is difficult, some 75 years after first publication, to appreciate the violent reception that initially greeted Lawrence's The Rainbow. In retrospect, Edward Garnett's early criticisms about the lack of "incorporated" scenes seem tame when compared to the reviews by Robert Lynd in the Daily News ("If men and women are just this and nothing more, then the imaginative literature of the world is false from Homer down") or James Douglas in the Star ("There is no doubt that a book of this kind has no right to exist"), or even to Galsworthy's famous letter to J.B. Pinker denouncing the book as "aesthetically detestable," or Alfred Kuttner's princely condescending reader's report for the earlier draft, "The Wedding Ring," wherein he concludes that "A rigorous Freudian analysis would make Mr. Lawrence both a happier man and a greater artist."¹ Talk of this kind has long been replaced by a spirited celebration of Lawrence's "radical commitment to spontaneous life," as Mark Spilka identifies it in his The Love Ethic of D.H. Lawrence, of the "rightness of scene . . . [and] rightness of phrase and cadence" that Sagar attributes to The Rainbow in his own supportive study of the novels.² "A great realistic novel," Mudrick declaims in his lengthy article on "The Originality of the The Rainbow"; "a prodigious work of epic," concludes Keith Aldritt in The Visual Imagination of D.H. Lawrence; "There it is," writes Leavis, "the wonderful original work of a great genius."³ Even those who, like Eliseo Vivas, seem to have difficulty swallowing much of anything that Lawrence says, grudgingly admit that The Rainbow, as a novel, is "well achieved."⁴

This litany of The Rainbow's merits is in fact an increasingly long one, and although it is not always preferred to its "sequel," Women in Love (Leavis, for one, voices this opinion), it is somehow seen as the most successful work, the most "realized" piece, the one in which, to quote Daniel Schneider, "Lawrence was in full control."⁵ Undoubtedly,

there is much to justify such a conclusion, not only on the grounds that it provides an internal narrative ordering--a filiation of monadic generations--absent from any of his other novels, but on the more speculative evidence that the novel's irregularities, the somewhat arbitrary evolution and devolution of characters and experiences in Ursula's world especially, are attributable to the vagaries of life proper to a modern consciousness. This latter argument, with which we are already familiar, characteristically assumes two different masks: either The Rainbow is supported for what it is about (e.g. the final vision defended because it is an emblem of Ursula's "personal achievement" [Daleski]; the "promise" open to her [Mudrick]; the "exploration" she is undertaking [Leavis]); or for the form it takes (the testing out of Lawrencian values and beliefs [Daniel Schwarz]; an "affront" to bourgeois expectations in favor of a "vision of revolution" [Michael Wilding]; the balance of the psychological "angel" with the scientific and religious ones [Schneider]).⁶ In both cases, compromise is possible--one may think, as Sagar does, that the crowning symbol of the rainbow fitted "to the over-arching heaven," works as a personal credo but fails dramatically, or one may argue, as Leavis increasingly did, that the personal failure is subsumed by a sense of dramatic achievement on a social level rather than as a textual incongruity.

Despite the local effectiveness of such a criticism, however, it tells us, in either variant, very little about The Rainbow as a novel, and facilitates an interpretive habit that can then be mistakenly shifted onto Women in Love and the later narratives, where its methodological inadequacy is immediately unveiled by the logic of allegory that begins to operate therein. Although it achieves a certain success in locating the inconclusive, somewhat arbitrary, style that The Rainbow delivers, the thematic adjudication of method does so accidentally, securing an interpretation that can only be properly expressed through a more sophisticated analysis of narrative structure. While this fortunate accident undoubtedly accounts for the fairly credible readings of the novel that we have, it wears badly as a style seemingly locked in an advanced state of paraphrase, represented not only by a

copia of quotations weakly strung together with appropriate predicates and conjunctives (this is true for Sagar and Daleski in particular), but by the sort of rhythmic negation and restatement (even Stephen Miko's above-average assessment of the novel pressures a vacillating "but") that mimics Lawrence's own style more than it offers any reading of it.⁷ When confronted with conclusions like Daleski's ("Ursula's miscarriage is the final evidence of her rejection of Skrebensky . . . Birkin is the man she hails in Women in Love"), or, in a different vein, the chatty commentary that we find in Hough ("Lawrence's picture of twentieth-century England . . . is continually vitiated by presenting it as a place of vile tempers and no manners at all"), we feel that we are both too near and too far from Lawrence's work. On one hand, there is an unerring plot-summary for the hurried or enfeebled, and on the other, the lazy badinage of after-dinner port and the cheese board. One reads the same chapters over again: surely something has been missed. But nothing has been missed. What one gets is thematic extraction, as "close reading" or moral edification, in academic prose: a restatement of what we all have been conditioned to affirm as Lawrence's message and style, but without serious attention to the writing at hand. Lawrence has said it all already, and despite his insistence on trusting tale rather than teller (never more useful than in application to his own works!), the critic here becomes little more than a trained dispenser of commentary, an elected member of the relatively exclusive sodality of animate gramophones privileged to spread the holy word.

It would be possible to continue such disagreement at length, and a study delineating the odd equation of paraphrase with analysis in Lawrence criticism would no doubt be instructive. (Is Lawrence the kind of writer, for example, who invites plot summation by providing seemingly "complete" solutions? Are those who remain interested enough in Lawrence to write about him usually "Lawrencians" in their social outlook? Or are they anti-Lawrencians, protectors of agreeable social converse, who need to simplify Lawrence's beliefs for their own counterarguments?) But The Rainbow is perhaps best approached by locating where extant Lawrence

criticism seems to catch the flow of the novel correctly, and how it emerges from phenomenological and historical patterns that have yet to be identified. Whereas paraphrase--and by implication, an attack on paraphrase--ironically offers no immanent measure of Lawrence's development as a novelist ("ironically," because so many of those who propose an analysis-by-reiteration wish to argue for Lawrence's "organic coherence"), an approach more sensitive to the narrative structure of The Rainbow gives us a means of linking it with the allegorical carnivalesque of the post-war writing, as well as to Women and Love and Lady Chatterley's Lover, the latter acting as the complementary bookend to Lawrence's adventure with the silent language of the immediate.

From the very first, The Rainbow justifies Lawrence's assessment of its odd, rhythmic motion: "It is very different from Sons and Lovers: written in another language almost."⁹ Despite Keith Aldritt's appropriation of it as the apogee of Lawrence's "visual imagination," The Rainbow is more adequately, in Lawrence's own words about the contemporaneous draft, The Insurrection of Miss Houghton, "not a bit visualized."¹⁰ As he writes in another letter to Garnett, "I have no longer the joy in creating vivid scenes, that I had in Sons and Lovers. I don't care much more about accumulating objects in the powerful light of emotion, and making a scene of them."¹¹ "The Brangwens," we read, "had lived for generations on the Marsh Farm, in the meadows where the Erewash twisted sluggishly through alder trees . . . There was a look in the eyes of the Brangwens as if they were expecting something unknown, about which they were eager. They had an air of readiness for what would come to them, a kind of surety, of expectancy, the look of an inheritor. . . . They were fresh, blond, slow speaking people, revealing themselves plainly, but slowly . . . through all the irresolute stages of the sky when the weather is changing."¹²

One need only set such passages next to the opening paragraph of a novel like Galsworthy's The Country House, which, especially as its original fragment, The Danãe, echoes many of the concerns found in The Rainbow: the opposition between nature and culture, the apocryphal woman of instinct and feeling, and the inadequacy of precedent and method,

especially as its awareness is forced upon male habit. The difference in presentation, however, even with Galsworthy's satirical edge taken into account, is astounding:

The year was 1891, the month October, the day Monday. In the dark outside the railway-station at Worsted Skyness, Mr. Horace Pendyce's omnibus, his brougham, his luggage-cart, monopolized space. The face of Mr. Horace Pendyce's coachman monopolized the light of the solitary station lantern. Rosy-grilled, with fat close-clipped grey whiskers and inscrutably pursed lips, it presided high up in the easterly air like an emblem of the feudal system. On the platform within, Mr. Horace Pendyce's first footman and second groom in long livery coats with silver buttons, their appearance slightly relieved by the raking cock of their top-hats, awaited the arrival of the 6:15.¹³

Though Galsworthy pokes fun at Pendyce and "Pendycitis," in part for its stuffy crowding of property, his decision to frame the novel as social criticism forces both satire and suggestion (female empathy and "Natural" feeling) to be identified by detail and setting. As Galsworthy seems to have realized, however, (it is a problem Hardy also has with Eustacia Vye in The Return of the Native), this leaves an exceptionally powerful character like Helen Bellew (nee "Danaë") outside the pale of description. The novel which chooses social behavior as the limit of omniscient narration cannot accommodate a character who exists, as it were, on the other side of that limit, and so threatens (if developed) to unravel the implied perspective, remaking it in her own image. In order to subdue this internal challenge to authorial control, the character must somehow be redefined for the book to appear at all, and in both Hardy and Galsworthy, this takes the form of a gradual amelioration of personality--a "sacrifice" which forcibly reintegrates character into setting and so allows the inductive method of explanation and description to account for the range of effective fictional experience.

In The Rainbow, however, the situation is almost completely reversed. The inductive standpoint, identified in

Galsworthy by the attention to personal detail, comes to nought in a novel which opens by placing fate before free will and a certain epic or cosmic time ahead of the evening shuttle. It is not necessary to locate Lawrence's particular antipathy to Galsworthy (his essay "John Galsworthy" is Lawrence at his most acerbic), or his regret over Hardy's focus on domestic tragedy (in the book-length study of Hardy written between drafts of The Rainbow), to bring the point home. Where Galsworthy performs a surgery on his narrative (or a bomb?) for the sake of formal adequacy ("a great advance artistically," wrote Lawrence's one-time agent Edward Garnett), Lawrence attempts a genealogical inclusiveness and an excision of "the old, stable ego" in favor of the perfect, almost unconscious, congruence between sense and existence.¹⁴ The Brangwen men "knew the intercourse between heaven and earth, sunshine drawn into the breast and bowels" (R, 8), and while the women carry forward the desire of "fighting outwards to knowledge," they nevertheless remain "women" and not, say, "Dorothea Brooke" or "Elizabeth Bennet," proper names with individual moral judgment. Such "knowledge," moreover, becomes itself the measure of a pure desire when we reach Ursula's own position in the second half of the novel, and her interchange with the lapidary physics instructor, Dr. Frankstone, acts as a pivot for the sharp divagation between Ursula's Spinozan metaphysics and the scientific naturalism of the university classroom. Contra Dr. Frankstone's prodding rhetoric--"May it not be that life consists in a complexity of physical and chemical activities, of the same order as the activities we already know in science?" (R, 440)--Ursula concludes that "self was a oneness with the infinite. To be oneself was a supreme, gleaming triumph of infinity" (R, 441).¹⁵

Insofar as both knowledge and blood-intimacy substitute the immediacy of experience for empirical analysis or social convention, Ursula's individuality remains within the ambit of the mystical drowse of her ancestors. Her intelligence and range of impressions take her much further into the world of commerce than the indefinite, primordial Brangwens of Marsh Farm, but as Stephen Miko has pointed out, Ursula's existence seems to string itself along as a conceivably unending series

of possibilities.¹⁶ She explores a mysterious intimacy with her father, the wonder of Medieval paintings, Anton Skrebensky, the Brinsley Street school, a homosexual partnering with Winifred Inger, a University B.A., a friendship with Maggie Schofield and a brief affair with her brother, the return of Anton, a mystical encounter with the white horses, and finally a miscarriage and the ultimate vision of "naked bodies" issuing to a "new germination" (R, 496). One episode after another is relayed with a Paterian rhythm of ascending and descending intensity, as the specter of the present intuition passes before her consciousness and disappears. As we are told after her rejection of Dr. Frankstone, "she did not know what she was to meet. But it was to be a new beginning. She must hurry" (442); this could well serve as the epigraph for the whole of Ursula's adventure in the novel, framing a possible world at every turn, but always refusing to wait for its focusing.

As a narrative, this succession of possibilities allows for very interesting structural bends and pressures. If The Country House circulates a retrospective doubt about the adequacy of Helen Bellew within the reduced range of Galsworthy's vision, The Rainbow risks the obverse problem of inclusivity when such amelioration is not attempted. Though Ursula does not threaten to unravel Lawrence's narrative, her untiring appropriation of the immediate (accurately termed "phenomenological" for its fundamental concern with "experiencing" rather than with the empirical isolation of what is experienced, the analytical division of "true" and "false" intuitions) projects a novel not only without a stable ego but potentially, if such were possible, without end.¹⁷ As long as there exists a figure to intuit as Ursula does, the novel which sets out to faithfully chart such intuition must progressively open itself to an illimitable horizon of experiences, each successive epiphany, in fact, through the phenomenological directive of primordial apperception, having always already occurred before it can be recorded in the narrative. One cannot even arbitrarily put a stop to the stream of impressions, for every act is itself a new impression which cannot be completely reduced, or exorcised, by its intended function. As a part of the envelope of

experience itself, in other words, the potential intuition is always one step ahead of its retelling as a fiction, guaranteeing that message and method, what is said and how it is said, will never coincide.

As such concentration on the immediate is by no means unique to Lawrence, however (it undoubtedly inhabits, in however veiled a form, any work of art, and particularly those which can readily be classified as "romantic"), comparative questions of narrative technique also need to be addressed here. Insofar as The Rainbow, at least from "First Love" onward, combines its omniscient perspective with that of Ursula's desultory adventures, no narrative frame exists within which she might be situated, nor is there, ultimately to the same effect, a set of distinct and equally important narrators to provide an alloyed, if not contradictory, picture of the world in question. The Rainbow reveals neither James's careful delineation of "implied authorship" nor Conrad or Faulkner's concern with refractory story-telling. On the other hand, The Rainbow is also quite different from the exploratory dialogism that Bakhtin senses in Dostoyevski, or from the "stream of consciousness" of Joyce and Woolf (with which it bears superficial similarities), or again from the rambling and discontinuous adventures of the picaresque. Lily Briscoe also has her "vision" at the end of To The Lighthouse, but her experience is enclosed by the canvas she paints, and occurs within a larger social world that does not depend solely upon her existence for its narrative relay. In a somewhat different sense, Smollett uses comedy and class distinction as a suitable frame for an open-ended subject, as we find, for example, with the picaresque heterodoxy of a Moll Flanders. Fielding relies on recognition and education to bring Tom Jones to a satisfactory end; Thackeray uses an artificial, and artificially directed, authorial intrusion; Hemingway manipulates this open-endedness itself as irony; and so forth. Lawrence, by contrast, justifies his "very different" novel by disregarding such techniques of closure in favor of a variation of Hegelian dialectic that resists any delimitation of its infinite progress. Lawrence, we feel, is resolutely with Ursula step by step, to the point where every new experience for her appears to be one for him as well.

This, as we shall see, is only partly true (and cannot, inasmuch as we have a novel called The Rainbow, be entirely true in any case); yet the problem created through a phenomenological confluence of character and narrator precludes any smooth denouement for Ursula's desires. The fear that the narrative, in order to become a narrative, cannot help but compromise its designs is a danger that remains undiluted by its subsequent complications.

It is not difficult to understand, with this in mind, why the rainbow vision that does close the novel has collected such attention from those interested in justifying or vilifying Lawrence for this unification of self and world. The erection of "a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the over-arching heaven" (496) orders the series of Ursula's desultory experiences with its teleological inclusiveness; at the same time, however, the integrity of such experience lies in its resistance to any such closure. A spatial solution (and one should note the metaphors used here) is supplied for what is all along a temporal phenomenology, an "internal time-consciousness" which stands against the telos of an achieved world. Husserl, in explaining such a notion of phenomenological time, puts the distinction in perspective: "We do not classify lived experiences according to any particular form of reality. We are concerned with reality only insofar as it is intended, represented, intuited, or conceptually thought. With reference to the problem of time, this implies that we are interested in lived experiences of time."¹⁸ Such experiences, in turn, create the difficulty of determining a "now" which not only defines itself, as in music, between a sensory "before" and "after," but corresponds to a certain "here" (if only the "here" of the receiver) through which duration passes. Speaking in a language that Lawrence would recognize, Husserl continues elsewhere: "We can only say that this flux [of immanent time] is something to be denoted metaphorically as "flux," as a point of actuality, primal sourcepoint, that from which springs the "now," and so on. In the lived experience of actuality, we have the primal source-point and a continuity of moments of reverberation [*Nachhallmomenten*]. For all this, names are lacking."¹⁹

In this context, which recognizes the "transcendental imminence" of a lived world as a thematic criticism cannot, the rainbow becomes the impossibly named symbol, its awkwardness the imposition of "Objectivity" ("the earth's new architecture") upon a narrative that forever skirts the limits of pure temporality. Though one may argue on either side of the equation thematically (i.e. the arch between heaven and earth is consistently prepared for by scene and character in the previous text, or else fails to be adequately anticipated), from a structural perspective what might be called a quantum geometry is both a necessary incongruity and necessarily incongruous. Ursula's subjectivity prohibits the appearance of the adequate image, the proper name ("But what did it mean, Ursula Brangwen? She did not know what she was" [R 437]), because in Lawrence's novel of "carbon," no standard, no Archimedian point, exists by which Ursula's world--and also the novel's world--might be completely measured, leaving the fundamental open-endedness and discontinuity of her Erlebnis pressing ever onward into a future that strictly speaking, cannot even be labelled as such.²⁰ "For all this, names are lacking"; but insofar as any novel, by definition as a work of art, must provide some name, and insofar as the normal naming procedures (through distanced narrators and the like) are short-circuited here, a close is only secured by fast-forwarding to an impossible, and an impossibly premature, end. In this sense, Leavis is justified in his conclusion that the "confident note of prophetic hope" is "wholly unprepared [for] and unsupported, defying the preceding pages"; Lawrence himself, it appears, had similar ideas, penning a revised conclusion to a copy of the novel given to sister in the fall of 1915.²¹ As this tergiverisation indicates, however, there is little question of providing a "prepared" ending: given the phenomenological structure of the work, a symbolically consistent and aesthetically "supported" close is no more achievable than the attempt to plot all the points on a line, or to reach one's goal by successive half-distances. What eventually is called for is a differential leap, a teleological calculus which allows Lawrence to escape his creation regardless of the consistency or inconsistency of characterization.

As we might expect, however, Ursula's rainbow vision is only the most obvious buckle in the novel's difficult resistance to the achieved image. Like Hegel's synthesis of Geist with the Prussian state, or like Heidegger's later and more controversial association of Being with the historical moment of National Socialism, the ultimate confrontation between method and object only marks the point where belief shows itself thinnest in conviction. But this is anticipated in the characterization of Ursula long before we reach her "finish." Although one might examine any number of episodes in Ursula's development from childhood through her aborted pregnancy, the gradual, uneven rejection of Anton Skrebensky in the second half of The Rainbow perhaps relays the argument most clearly. When Skrebensky first enters the work, he is set off from Will and Uncle Tom by an acquiescence "in the fact of his own being, as if he were beyond any change or question. He was himself. There was a sense of fatality about him that fascinated her" (R 291). The point is given unmistakable emphasis: "he made no effort to prove himself to other people. Let it be accepted for what it was, his own being. . . . he seemed perfectly, even fatally established, he did not ask to be rendered before he could exist" (R 291). There is even the suggestion that any potential miscarriage of feeling will be overcome by this fundamental integrity: "let Skrebensky do what he would, betray himself entirely, he betrayed himself always upon his own responsibility. He permitted no question about himself. He was irrevocable in his isolation" (R 292). For Ursula, in an image that cannot be interpreted as her illusion within a broader narrative omniscience, Skrebensky even becomes "one such as those Sons of God who saw the daughters of men . . . His soul stood alone" (R 292). The language is unmistakably Lawrencian, and establishes a bond between narrator and character at this point that leads us to anticipate Anton as "All Men" to complement Ursula's "All Women."

But such a subliminal relationship, of course, does not come about, and Skrebensky soon undergoes a radical downsizing of his detachable integrity that, from the perspective of character development, seems arbitrary and even self-contradictory. After Tom Brangwen's wedding reception, Ursula

and Skrebensky have a disagreement over the patriotic duty of war that not only compromises Anton's "aloneness" but ends with Ursula's conviction that "You seem like nothing to me" (311). Although this passage is the product of Lawrence's 1915 revisions, transmitting much of the "sheer rage" he felt against the war into Anton's banal subservience, the subsequent Wedding Dance and love-making remain from the early drafts, where Skrebensky already belies the magnetic aloofness he initially projects.²² The transition is in no way filtered through a controlled alteration in Anton's personality: we are now given one picture of his "fineness" and at the next moment, without warning or intercession, a contrary one which dismisses him as a "blind persistent, inert burden" (319) with an esurient, fear-driven mania to "set a bond around her and compel her" (320). What at first is a respected isolation is upon next meeting a parasitical inability to retain one's own integrity ("he was dead"); no "voice" informs us that Anton has undergone a crisis of belief or even failed to undergo such a crisis. The only voice capable of judgment, in fact, is Ursula's own, and because the exposition of her subjective impressions makes use of Skrebensky as a variable in her own drama and not the other way around (she is the consistently "focalized" narrator, to use Genette's term), Anton is shuffled about for reasons that agree with her phenomenological advancement rather than his realistic plausibility. Lawrence's revisions complicate the source of Skrebensky's sudden demise (phenomenological movement is not the sole factor in the novel's parturition), but they reinforce, in practice, the via negativa that keeps the future perpetually open-ended. The reasons for Skrebensky's collapse are ultimately less important than the fact that he does collapse, without which the narrative would be cauterized at "first love," as no one would exist to tell us what happens after Ursula achieves what she terms "her own maximum self" (303).

We can gauge the effect of such a maximum self, in fact, by tracing The Rainbow back to the marriage between Tom and Lydia. The geneological narrative of family history, a structuring device only vaguely present in Sons and Lovers and entirely incompatible with the Utopian measure of Lawrence's

late fiction, allows a certain retrogressive ordering of experience unavailable to Ursula's phenomenological world. If Ursula's existence is a filtering of impressions and experience through the ever-renewed "now," the evolution of Brangwen consciousness is sketched within the frame of memory. The only reliable distantiation between Ursula as character and Ursula as narrator appears within the conventional use of the discursive preterit ("she was . . ."); the prelapsarian Marsh Farm Brangwens, on the other hand, as well as Will and Anna, and Tom and Lydia, also fit within an internal, thematic, past, the measurement of that experience then before Ursula's appearance now. In Husserlian terms, the ancestral Brangwens in this sense belong to "Objective time" rather than phenomenological time--a temporality constituted within a frame of reference (i.e. the genealogical progression) rather than as the frame itself.²³

Such an objective placement, in turn, has the effect of retrospective narration: their stories are told from a point of view no longer contemporaneous with the narrator's own, allowing an expression of "finality" to appear without collapsing the narrative itself. For Tom and Lydia, "a complete liberty" (106) is reached at the end of "The Childhood of Anna Lensky," transferring the responsibility for carrying what Lawrence terms in one of his letters "the stillness under change" onto the next generation.²⁴ "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. . . . They had passed through the doorway into the further space . . . when at last they had joined hands, the house was finished, and the Lord took up his abode" (105, 6). Although the struggle leading up to such a consummation bears resemblance to the later rhythmic swings between Ursula and Skrebensky, the achievement of the completed arch, "met to the span of the heavens" (107), is allowed to take place because Anna, who is "free to play in the space beneath, between," will reconstitute the uncertain threads of attraction and repulsion on a more sophisticated level. Tom and Lydia's finality is not synonymous with the finality of the dialectic that moves

them, a difference represented in no small part by the very appearance of this succeeding generation (Ursula, we remember, names a child but does not bear one). As a result, the parents' "complete confirmation" (no more "supported," however, than the rainbow vision it prefigures) leads to fewer narrative difficulties, and occupies, as the commentary bears out, a lesser role in the adjudication of the novel's faults and virtues. Something is clearly problematic, even controversial, about The Rainbow's ending, and also about the sudden transmogrification of Skrebensky's character; in the marriage between Tom and Lydia, on the other hand, the dialectic still operates smoothly enough to integrate an uncertain visualization of scene and character.

Ironically, the scaffolding provided by this genealogical dialectic contributes in its own right to the structural pressure evident in the Ursula chapters. As Alfred Kuttner's reader's report on the third version of the novel ("The Wedding Ring") testifies, the three-dimensional design was already intact by the end of April, 1914.²⁵ However, in the rewriting of the manuscript as The Rainbow between November, 1914 and early March, 1915, the first twelve chapters are almost doubled in length, indicating a considerable reconstruction of the preparatory Brangwen saga.²⁶ Such attention to the epic and historical dimensions of the work also accords well with the tenor of the Study of Thomas Hardy, written following the outbreak of war in August of 1914 and between the "Wedding Ring" and Rainbow drafts. Ostensibly an overview of Hardy's novels, the book swells into a Hegelian dissertation on the "epochs" of Law and Love and their synthesis in the yet-to-be-achieved "supreme art."²⁷ Though Lawrence nowhere mentions Hegel, and most likely had not read either the History of Philosophy or Phenomenology of Mind, his picture of the "Holy Spirit" as that which "drives the twin principles of Law and of Love across the ages" (H, 574), is very close to Hegel's Geist, which in its own right acts as the hidden force in all historical change. Further parallels appear between Lawrence's implicit substitution of his "Reconciler" for martial victory and Hegel's more political affirmation of the Prussian state in contrast to Napoleonic conquest, and again between the individual meanings of the

dialectical axes: Lawrence's collective, patriarchal "Law" bears a similarity to Hegel's conception of classical ethics or feudal economy, whereas "Love" mirrors the self-determination of the merchantile or Reformation spirit. As Mark Kinkead-Weekes has pointed out, moreover, The Rainbow itself seems to follow the triadic pattern of self, world, and mediation (arch, door, and rainbow)--a dialectic he chooses to understand in theological or Biblical terms, but one which can more immediately be seen as systematic history.²⁸ If Tom and Lydia achieve the "one body, one flesh" (H, 465) of the Law in their transfigured embrace, and Will and Anna explore the differentiation and non-consummation of will and desire, Ursula is indeed the Reconciler, the Holy Spirit, so to speak, whose synthesis is also the dialectical process itself.

At this point, we begin to grasp the impossibility of her position. On one hand, Ursula can no more "appear" than the method crystalize itself as fact. On the other, she must objectify herself somehow to culminate the search, the projected desire, of her antecedents. Following the irony of all teleological histories, Ursula is not merely another link in the chain of opposites, but the very thing that "remains to be fully done" (H 516). Yet, as Lawrence himself puts it in the Hardy study, "Of anything that is complete, there is no more to tell" (H 410). Teleological fulfillment suspends not only phenomenological intuition but the possibility of narrative itself. Added to the structural aporia of characterization and immediate experience, therefore, is the genealogical non-coincidence of object and method. Insofar as the manuscript revisions significantly expand the role of the novel's first two generations, their necessary incompleteness within the larger dialectic of The Rainbow transfers added pressure upon Ursula to realize what has remained latent and unfulfilled. This pressure also, however, accelerates the importance of prohibiting such a realization: its success would ironically reduce her into merely an object in the temporal process, a social breeder like her mother and grandmother. Clearly, the novel, with its dependence on the Ursula-narrator in the final six or seven chapters, does not and cannot accommodate such a transition. One would need to know what comes "after" Ursula, and insofar as Ursula's All

Womenhood seems to rule out successors, one would also need to know, at a point that would always obviate critical retrospection, what comes after Lawrence--a speculation as impenetrable as it is absurd.

The culminating rainbow vision, then, absorbs the double load of historical and phenomenological ironies, and its necessary inadequacy, as was noted above, is a mark of an expectation oddly and impossibly too well fulfilled. The teleological projection, however, takes another turn that is worth noting here. Although Ursula's dismissal of Skrebensky, despite its attenuated unevenness, is never really in doubt, it assumes the form of a corrosive victory in the 1915 revisions to the typescript. Unlike the critical pivots of sexual release and destruction in the first generation, and unlike the "bitter-corrosive love" (181) between Will and Anna in the second, Ursula's release is bought not only through an "electrification" of Skrebensky, but through a mutual dissolution of their superficial selves within "the high blast of moonlight . . . a dazzling, terrifying glare of white light" (479). Skrebensky's reduction, "fusing down to nothingness, like a bead that rapidly disappears in an incandescent flame" (479), prescribes his imminent and irrevocable collapse: "he was white and obliterated" (481). It is impossible to read this final rejection ironically: "You couldn't . . ." she trails away in the last words spoken between them, delivering through the phrase's uncompleted generality the total failure of her lover on all counts. Like some inopportunistly jilted character in Meredith, in turn, Skrebensky is hastened off to a face-saving second choice, disembarking for India with his substitute wife.

Yet the measure of Skrebensky's destruction is also a measure of Ursula's experience of transcendence, and the distinction between failure and release is sporadic and uncertain. Following their final consummation under the moonlight, Ursula too lifts "her dead body from the sands" (481), a culmination of the act that "fuses" both partners: "She too seemed to meld into the glare, towards the moon" (479). Earlier in the chapter, moreover, there is talk of Ursula entering "the dark fields of immortality" (457), and of both becoming, through the passage "into the pristine darkness

of paradise" (451), rather incredibly "absolute and happy and calm" (452). This unity, not only in darkness but in a certain death-by-corrosion, is puzzling, and cannot entirely be explained by the vacillating rhythms of phenomenal exploration. Skrebensky is duly and suitably dismissed, but the logic of the moon-passion alone suggests that Ursula cannot escape similar, or at least proportional, condemnation. When the novel jerks back into the expression of Ursula's integrity and selfhood, however, no such adjustment is permitted, the failed expectation accountable only through a change of philosophical direction in the TS revisions.

That such an ideological shift should take place at this point in Lawrence's life is hardly surprising. Following Kinkead-Weekes, the emphasis on the creative potential of destruction is perfectly in keeping with other changes Lawrence made to the manuscript after the Hardy study and the commencement of the war.²⁹ In addition, one should not underestimate the bitterly explosive recoil from the intellectual aristocracy that Lawrence suffered in response to his Cambridge visit between the 6th and 8th of March, 1915. When the revisions to the typescript were begun in mid-March, the hope of a vibrant political and philosophical leadership, as can readily be determined from Lawrence's correspondence, was almost completely destroyed. Given this collapse of the "light world," the world of reason and morality, a turn toward a dialectics of darkness and obliteration becomes understandable. That the TS alterations bear the fruit of such a philosophical shift is to be expected, yielding a narrative that jerks and cracks a bit when an earlier optimism comes up against the ascending pitch of the dies irae.³⁰

Presented as either the evolution through life or the evolution through death, however, The Rainbow's teleological pressure remains fundamentally consistent and intact. In both cases, Skrebensky becomes the emblem of a cutaneous social world to be peeled away in favor of the strange secret of lived experience. Whether this experience rejects darkness (as Ursula does with her Uncle Tom and Winifred Inger) or enthusiastically welcomes it (as in her corrosive reduction with Skrebensky) proves less important here than the retention of the aim of transcendence--of the "All Woman"--that both

attempt to facilitate. In either situation, Anton must go, and while the relatively late insertions that emphasize darkness and corrosion introduce added structural complications, the novel as a whole never loses faith in the power of its dialectical stance. Ursula is never compromised in her beliefs nor in the fundamental integrity of her character, and as a result, the pressures of pure experience and historical summation converge within her perspective rather than in reaction to it.³¹ The ending may not follow from the system that gives birth to it, but its inadequacy is nonetheless one-dimensional, wound tightly within a dialectics and phenomenology that at their most literal cannot be depicted within a narrative except as ironic and discontinuous.

Put somewhat differently, The Rainbow shows none of the symptoms of allegory as we find it in Women in Love and subsequent novels. The revisions to manuscript and typescript are indicative of an urgent philosophical redirection, and are not primarily concerned (this is true for Lawrence in general) with Lawrence, in fact) with the realistic demands of character development or the careful erection of a suitable aesthetic framework. No significant ideological splitting, however, occurs in the reworking of the Brangwen story: Ursula knows no allegorical "responent" in Skrebensky, or Winifred, or Mr. Harby, as she herself will become for Birkin in the second volume of the originally planned "Sisters." As a result, the diachronic fluidity of the earlier narrative is not as severely disrupted by its compositional alternatives, and one does not sense that different levels of the text "converse" with each other as they seem to do in Women in Love and the long narratives that follow. The fundamental incompleteness that structures The Rainbow, in turn, is very different from the refraction, say, of Somers's political commitment in Kangaroo. Here, the buffer of the non-realized is solely a historical and phenomenological function; in the later work, it is also--and indeed primarily--a delicate evasion of any proffered solution, an increasingly deracinated dependence on self-identity, the political ideal, or "blood consciousness" and a simultaneous resistance to its achievement. In these later novels, two systems operate

instead of one, countermanding the extant narrative voice with its omitted alternative. To this extent, Kangaroo (and Aaron's Rod and The Plumed Serpent as well) enters a kind of internal labyrinth which always already disallows any phenomenological experience to emerge without its corresponding retraction. The narrative's resistance to an unambiguous extraction and division of statement and counterstatement, in turn, identifies the peculiar form of "openness" that appears here--a structural untimeliness that can only, in its athenatic texture, be expressed as allegory.

But if The Rainbow's narrative design should not be equated with that of the leadership works, it nonetheless anticipates the form and direction of Lawrence's subsequent novel writing. The attention presently given to a certain phenomenological apprehension of the world--the emphasis on "lived time" and intuitive experience prior to any analytically determined subject or object--remains with Lawrence to the end. The allegory which complicates the later narratives depends, in fact, upon the irreducibility of the phenomenological moment: Lawrence, and the Lawrencian narrator-characters, inevitably seek what The Plumed Serpent calls "pure passional experience," whether individually, politically, or sexually. The shift in emphasis toward a dark and corrosive sensuality, moreover, leads quickly to Women in Love, where teleological history is sounded in its dissonant chords, forced to confront an increasingly severe moral culpability, and finally abandoned in favor of the (supposedly) private solution of marriage and its supplemental Blutbrüderschaft. Although the narrative and philosophical complications of Women in Love will preclude a return to the confident explorations of an Ursula Brangwen (one need only compare her to Lawrence's other female magnets--Kate Leslie or even Connie Chatterley--to appreciate the impossibility of "trying it all again"), they nevertheless build upon the breakage of "the old stable ego" initiated by The Rainbow, as they cannot and do not upon the social realism of Sons and Lovers. The distance between Sons and the first Ursula novel is as great as that between the latter and The Plumed Serpent, and thus one looks initially to The Rainbow for the unique and

difficult insemination of "pure" experience and its textual ironies in Lawrence's narrative design.

NOTES

¹ For Galsworthy, Lynd, and Douglas, see R.P. Draper, ed., D.H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970); Alfred Kuttner's letter and Garnett's objections are reprinted in the Cambridge Edition The Rainbow, ed. Mark Kinkead-Weekes (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1989).

² See Mark Spilka, The Love Ethic of D.H. Lawrence, (Bloomington: Indiana U.P., 1955); Keith Sagar, The Art of D.H. Lawrence (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1966), 71.

³ Marvin Mudrick, "The Originality of The Rainbow," rpt. in A D.H. Lawrence Miscellany, ed. Harry T. Moore (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1961), 71; Keith Aldritt, The Visual Imagination of D.H. Lawrence (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), 136; F.R. Leavis, D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, 143.

⁴ Eliseo Vivas, D.H. Lawrence: The Failure and the Triumph of Art (Evanston: Northwestern U.P., 1960), 197. Vivas is careful to qualify such praise, however, with the reassuring censure that "several instances of excess of immediacy" nevertheless spoil the otherwise carefully constructed narrative. For a book that will introduce "the phenomenology of pure experience" (203) as Lawrence's modus vivendi in The Rainbow, the condemnation of this work, and of Lawrence's writing as a whole, for arousing "unpleasant" passions, and therefore being "obscene" (197), is an incredible lapse in critical honesty. Vivas's aesthetic, with its pious and dogmatic Grecophilia, allows him to pick and choose episodes which he finds "convincing" (i.e. "realistic") and then pass them off as an aesthetically sanctioned product of what he calls the "constitutive symbol." Conversely, those scenes which he finds inflammatory are "excessive," and are summarily excluded from the exploratory protection of his phenomenology. Vivas's book is constantly one of the worst offenders at smuggling a querulous and shallowly opinionated standard of taste into a scientific, specifically aesthetic, methodology. Anything and everything can be fed into the gladhanded automaton of significant form and be returned (pace Aristotle, who is of course invoked as the authority here) as immediate justification for whatever opinion is being locally petitioned: in the name of theory (and even phenomenological

theory at that!), one collects little else but the fag-ends of loose talk.

⁵ Daniel Schneider, D.H. Lawrence: The Artist as Psychologist, 165.

⁶ See H.M. Daleski, The Forked Flame: A Study of D.H. Lawrence, 125; Mudrick, "The Originality of The Rainbow"; Leavis, D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, 96-145; Daniel Schwarz, The Transformation of the English Novel, 1890-1930 (London: Macmillan, 1980), 94-115; Michael Wilding, Political Fictions (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), 149; Schneider, The Artist as Psychologist, 145-169.

⁷ Three of the last four paragraphs in Miko's chapter, in fact, begin with "but": "But this is Ursula's vision too . . ."; "But this does not entirely excuse Lawrence for the uncertainties which accrue . . ."; and finally, "But Lawrence's real achievements must not be slighted. . . ." Cf. Stephen J. Miko, Toward Women in Love: The Emergence of a Laurentian Aesthetic, 183, 4.

⁸ See Daleski, 125; Hough, The Dark Sun, A Study of D.H. Lawrence (London: Duckworth, 1983), 72.

⁹ The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. James T. Boulton, ii, 132.

¹⁰ Letters, i, 526.

¹¹ Letters, i, 142-3.

¹² D.H. Lawrence, The Rainbow (Hammondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1983), 7. Future referencing, where unclear, is given as the relevant page number preceded by "R."

¹³ John Galsworthy, The Country House (London: Heinemann, 1907), 3.

¹⁴ See Edward Garnett: Letters From John Galsworthy, 1900-1932, ed. Edward Garnett (New York: Scribners, 1934), 127.

¹⁵ For a discussion of Lawrence's scientific reading and the monism/materialism problem, see Roger Ebbatson, "A Spark Beneath the Wheel: Lawrence and Evolutionary Thought," in D.H. Lawrence: New Studies, ed. Christopher Heywood (London: Macmillan, 1987), 90-103.

¹⁶ See Miko's chapter on The Rainbow in Toward Women in Love, 108-185.

¹⁷ The development of phenomenology as a return, in Husserl's famous dictum, "To the things themselves," is of course not exhausted by this concern with phenomenal perception. Husserl himself, in reaction to Frege's criticism of his early book Philosophy of Arithmetic, structured an increasingly ideal notion of the "transcendental ego" and its resistance to empirical determination, whereas Heidegger's investigation of Being is, beginning with What is Metaphysics, an arguably metaphysical rumination on the truth-value of certain existential constants, to say nothing of their political or artistic expression. This directs one to the central irony in the phenomenological movement as a whole (i.e. within both its idealist and existentialist factions): immediate experience can never be purely immediate experience, but must always be the understanding of such experience. "To the things themselves," therefore, is somewhat of an empty exhortation, withholding the importance of philosophical method through a deceptive concentration on "pure" phenomena. This objection, however, does nothing to diminish the fact that The Rainbow follows the same task that phenomenology, in spirit at least, repeatedly set for itself--an attempt to "reduce," or clear away, the accumulation of habit (in Lawrence's case, the habit of socially defined character) in favor of the immediate, and somewhat ambiguous and unnamable, experiencing self. Phenomenology's ironic failure in this attempt, moreover, parallels to a great extent Lawrence's difficulty in structuring his novel: just as one must jump out of one's phenomenological world in order to bracket it, so Lawrence must forceably remove himself from the stream of Ursula's intuitions to be able to plot them as a book.

¹⁸ Edmund Husserl, The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness, ed. Martin Heidegger, trans. James S. Churchill (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, N.D.) §2.

¹⁹ Husserl, §36.

²⁰ Lawrence discusses the different depths of narrative in his famous letter to Edward Garnett of 5 June, 1914: "The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond--but I say "diamond what! This is carbon." And my diamond might be coal or soot; and my theme is carbon." Letters, ii, 182.

²¹ Leavis, D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, 142. The private emendation, written, as Delavenay notes, in Lawrence's own hand, strikes out the passages prescribing a resurrection for "the sordid people who crept hard-scaled and separate on the face of the world's corruption," and replaces them with a much chastened self-development for Ursula alone: "she knew that the fight was to the good. It was not to annihilation but at last to newness. She knew in the rainbow that the fight was to the good." The repetition of the alteration's initial sentence in its final statement seems to indicate, in fact, a certain frustration in extending a personal vision outwards into society: one always comes back, somewhat sobered, to a deracinated self-reliance. This change in mood, of course, in light of the traumatic experiences Lawrence underwent in 1915 (at Cambridge and otherwise) is not hard to predict. See Emile Delavenay, D.H. Lawrence: The Man and His Work: The Formative Years, 1885-1919, trans. Katharine M. Delavenay (London: Heinemann, 1972), i., 381. John Worthen also speaks of this revision in his D.H. Lawrence: The Idea of the Novel (London: Macmillan, 1978), 82.

²² See Mark Kinkead-Weekes' Cambridge Edition of The Rainbow, xli. The alterations here seem to be primarily ones of metaphysical stress: the final typescript focuses on Skrebensky's corrosive destruction (much like the "electrical" passion that is emphasized between Gerald and Gudrun in the revisions to Women in Love), allowing his failure to be identified that much more easily.

²³ This is not to say that the "blood intimacy" of these antecedent Brangwens is not itself "phenomenological," only that in retrospect, it can be past in an objective past and narrated accordingly.

²⁴ Letters, ii, 137.

²⁵ See Kuttner, "Report and Letter on the 'Wedding Ring,'" in Kinkead-Weekes, ed., The Rainbow, 483-85.

²⁶ Cf. Kinkead-Weekes' "Introduction" to the Cambridge text, xxviii.

²⁷ "Now it remains for us to know the Law and to know the Love, and further to seek out the Reconciliation." Study of Thomas Hardy, in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D.H.

Lawrence, ed. Edward D. McDonald (New York: Penguin, 1980), 398-516.

²⁸ As he puts it in his "Introduction," "So The Rainbow too has a threefold utterance: a beautiful but partial 'Old Testament' dominated by the Law, a world of transition in which fulfillment is faced . . . "; xxviv.

²⁹ See Kinkead-Weekes, xli.

³⁰ There is also evidence that Ursula develops an internal split between her will and her inner self, a kind of social crust which facilitates superficial exchange, but which also sets her at odds with her own sensual experience: "Her will never relaxed, though her heart and soul must be imprisoned and silenced . . . Her heart and soul were shut away fast down below, hidden. She was free of them. She was to have her satisfaction" (R, 444). One also remembers the striking description of one of hers and Anton's embraces: "She liked it, the electric fire of the silk under his hands upon her limbs, the fire flew over her, as he drew nearer and nearer to discovery. She vibrated like a jet of electric, firm fluid in response" (477). Though this is immediately qualified ("Yet she did not feel beautiful"), the images look forward here to Gudrun's "thrilling" to Gerald's masculinity, with the demonic tone, well-established in Women in Love, of an incriminating negativity. Such incrimination is only a vague and misplaced hint in The Rainbow, yet it signals the beginning of a further division with "darkness" itself: the transcendent virtue of darkness, often in the guise of historical necessity, and its position as a culpable act of degradation. Without having seen the manuscripts, one would guess that these passages are also late revisions, perhaps even in the extensive proof corrections from the summer of 1915.

³¹ But see note 30 above for The Rainbow's passing suggestion of Ursula's internal division, and for the language of ecstasy that will shortly, in Women in Love, become representative of a certain psychological lassitude and reactivity.

WOMEN IN LOVE

". . . but what is it all about and why?"

--Lady Cynthia Asquith,
Diaries 1915-1918

As we know from the manuscripts, and from the exhaustive reconstructions of the novel's composition in Ross, Worthen, and Farmer, Women in Love contains much of what was originally intended, with The Rainbow, as a composite volume.¹ Birkin's relationship with Ursula, his occupation as school inspector, and the parallel bonding between Gerald and Gudrun are all present in an earlier draft of The Rainbow set aside after the focus on the antecedent Brangwen generations made a single, inclusive novel unwieldy. The vacuum created in Ursula's contemporary love-interest is in turn filled by Skrebensky, whose reworked importance leads to a difficult, seemingly inconsistent, characterization in the final chapters of the redefined narrative. It is not surprising, therefore, to locate a similar attention to historical and phenomenological concerns in the material transferred to Women in Love, and to find also, even more so than with The Rainbow, an extensive narrative overlapping indicative of a substantial change in philosophical direction. It might be most helpful to approach Women in Love, then, by plotting its affinities with its precursor as well as its gradual development into a dies irae incompatible with the cosmic triumph of Ursula's rainbow vision.

When we first meet Birkin in "Shortlands," he is already an unpredictable amalgam of philosopher king and social outcast, a formidable if frustrated twelve-gauge intellect in a roomful of glib, and not so glib, English socialites. His answer to Gerald's challenge of "standards" is one Ursula herself would have given in The Rainbow: "Standard--no. I hate standards . . . Anybody who is anything can just be himself and do as he likes."² "It's the hardest thing in the

world," he continues, "to act spontaneously on one's impulses--and it's the only really gentlemanly thing to do--provided you're fit to do it" (WIL, 27). But this is also the Birkin who appears at the wedding ceremony as "pale and ill-looking . . . with a slight trail of one foot, which came only from self-consciousness" (14). Whatever can be made of this odd detail as a psycho-analytic reference (we remember that Oedipus, for example, was wounded in the foot), it presents Birkin as suffering, at least subliminally, from what Joyce's Stephen would call "agenbite of inwit," a certain deracination of body and mind alien to the robust explorations of the earlier Ursula Brangwen.³ Birkin, in fact, is significantly ill or indisposed for a good portion of the opening chapters of Women in Love, and while the opportunity of a separate life with Ursula seems to nurse him back to health, he never loses the disruptive inability to "fit in" that occasions a sclerotic but apparently necessary social mask: "His nature was clever and separate, he did not fit at all in the conventional occasion. Yet he subordinated himself to the common idea, travestied himself" (14).

There are a number of salient remarks to be made about this suggestive self-revelation. To begin with, the last--and most incriminating--sentence emerges only in the final set of revisions to the novel (July 1917 --> September 1919), and appears to represent, as Somers's self-doubts and self-incriminations do in Kangaroo, an internal check on the often harsh and polemical condemnations of the extant social world. "I am perhaps too much that way myself," Lawrence writes to Lady "Ott" regarding the diseased consciousness that afflicts war-time England in his view; here, as a partial retraction, a partial concession to what the Study of Thomas Hardy identifies as "the art work's essential criticism on the morality to which it adheres," Birkin draws the black mark across himself, becoming not only pariah but dissimulator.⁴ In the first of a number of textual reversals, Lawrence attributes to Birkin what Birkin (and Lawrence) will increasingly attribute to Gerald: a dangerous severance of outer form and inner self that leads to empty words (a potent leitmotif) and psychological chaos.

But Birkin's conflict with his environment also locates him within a diverse and resistant social milieu--a placement that immediately distinguishes Women in Love from the diachronic Bildung of The Rainbow. When we remember the marriage ceremony between Tom and Winifred in the earlier work, the contrast in structural arrangement becomes clear: the Ilkeston bonding is more a ratification of Winifred's diminished importance to the novel, and an occasion for one of Ursula's seminal (in both senses of the word) encounters with Skrebensky, than it is a dialogue of incompatible but irrepressible points of view. In the Beldover banns, however, neither Birkin nor Ursula holds center stage, and the subsequent Shortlands reception (to which the Brangwens are not even invited) finds Birkin ensnared in a familial network which refuses to vanish at command. Rupert, like the Ursula of The Rainbow, is not a polished contributor to the "conventional occasion," but unlike her, he is denied the power of ridding himself of its corsetting rituals in favor of a new personal experience. The result is a self-consciousness and self-travesty on one hand and a nascent philosophy-of-the-crowd on the other. Whereas this earlier Ursula remains, for the most part, an irreflective character, progressing as the need for experience itself progresses, Birkin is already an accomplished polemicist when we encounter him in Women in Love. Here, the importance of discourse has penetrated a neatly tied phenomenology of action, as the interior space of church and dinner table substitutes for the expanse and immediacy of moonlight intercourse.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find within Birkin's entreaty for the spontaneous a slight but significant dig at the unredeemed: filling the ellipses in the remark about "standards" quoted above, Birkin avers that "they're necessary for the common ruck" (27). This is an extremely important supplement here, for it not only points to Birkin's minority status (he is "uncommon"), but establishes a dichotomy between saved and damned that seems to offer an elitist justification for his own phenomenological ideal. This is in truth not very far from the kind of pragmatism Lawrence will espouse in very late works like The Man Who Died and Apocalypse, where the romantic potential of Ursula's reborn miners has

transmogrified into a subdued ethos of simple minds, simple needs.⁵ In the war-time novel, however, this mood of resignation is not maintained, as the neat distinction between common and uncommon is countermanded by Birkin's self-appointed role as "preacher" to mankind, and also by the ambiguous position that Gerald Crich comes to assume within Birkin's system. The question that is debated throughout the work, and eventually transmuted into the structural problem of male bonding, is one of Gerald's guilt in choosing his lot, psychologically at least, with the "common ruck." A corollary problem, already announced by his rhetorical query "Am I my brother's keeper" (20) with respect to Gerald's "mark of Cain," draws Birkin himself into the battle, leaving the value of his polemics in doubt if indeed, as he tentatively concludes in "Shortlands," there isn't "any such thing as accident. It all hung together, in the deepest sense" (20). To what degree, if events and behaviors are fated, can anyone be responsible for improving or destroying his life? And in a world without accident, what purpose instruction or the division of classes?

That Birkin lacks suitable answers for these hanging, atmospheric questions is awkwardly evident here. His dialogue with Gerald vacillates between moral approbation and a sort of transcendental history of motives. After Birkin's appeal for the "fitness" of acting spontaneously (itself double-edged), the interchange runs as follows:

"You don't expect me to take you seriously, do you?" asked Gerald.

"Yes, Gerald, you're one of the very few people I do expect that of."

"Then I'm afraid I can't come up to your expectations here, at any rate. You think people should just do as they like."

"I think they always do. But I should like them to like the purely individual thing in themselves, which makes them act in singleness. And they only like to do the collective thing" (27).

Gerald is already singled out as one who should follow Birkin's reasoning, and his rejection of the latter's doctrine of spontaneity as disorderly relativism sets Birkin at cross-purposes. He counters by disabling Gerald's claim within a

more fundamental system of necessary behavior--if "will" is defined not as conscious desire or self-direction but as, with Schopenhauer or Nietzsche, a kind of transcendental volition, then there exists an immediate, pragmatic quality of the act (structurally akin to phenomenological experience) antecedent to moral and social questions of value. This otherwise enigmatic retort can be clarified in no other way, and accords well with the historical temper of the Hardy study and the intervening essays collected as "The Crown," to say nothing of the primacy of intuition in The Rainbow and Birkin's epistemology pace Joshua Mattheson/Mallesen in "Breadalby."⁶ People do what they most want to do, because in its most reduced and primal form, volition is merely the enactment of an inscrutable but strangely oracular fate.

An analogy exists, in fact, between Lawrence's ambiguous attitude toward Hardy's artistic "weakness" (the castigation of Hardy's inverted metaphysics becoming his predestined position within the "Epoch of Love"), and Birkin's views of Gerald here: Gerald holds the individual responsibility for taking his friend's views "seriously," yet all such responsibilities are effaced by a transpersonal will. This narrative slippage between history and morality, however, resists the dialectical engagement offered in the earlier criticism. Birkin's reemphasis on "the collective thing" vs "the purely individual thing" underscores the portentous ubiquity of the social sphere at the expense of a liberating adjustment toward "what remains to be done." As a result, the teleological eye is refocused upon its constituent parts, and a model of history emerges which is less dialectical than "dialogical," a juxtaposition of two conflicting perspectives without synthetic mediation. Historical necessity, though an umbrella for all possible acts and beliefs, is also set against a normative calculus of better and worse, so that it not only contradicts its own rhetoric, but invests itself as an ethical choice. Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt: as Birkin will increasingly argue, often "against himself" as Gerald claims, one either chooses the way of fate or chooses, on the contrary, to be damned and dragged along in its wake. Insofar as fate here is both given and "taken," the individual can always be inflated into the universal, and point of view

erased in favor of necessity. This facile shifting of registers, built into Birkin's argument, will account not only for his querulous and presumptive tone as salvator mundi, but for the allegory that then emerges to even the score, a narrative phenomenon that goes beyond character portrayal and the ambiguity of image and argument to a much more fundamental, and unsettling, incongruity of structural design.

Without question, Lawrence's own circumstances at this time contribute significantly to this difficult interweave of individual and universal. The publication and suppression of The Rainbow presented Lawrence with a sharply distilled literary notoriety at the same time that it pitted him against the "fools and cowards" of the establishment, a body less and less "fit," to use Birkin's metaphor, to assume its position in Ursula's projected new world.⁷ More importantly, however, the Cambridge disaster of 1915 and the break with Russell a year later denied Lawrence political and intellectual outlets for his ideas. The small group that met in London on Thursday evenings to "do something" about what Lawrence elsewhere calls "this world of war and squalor," disbanded, if we are to believe his later account of it, without effect or regret.⁸ A similar fate befell Murry's organ of change, The Signature, which published in its abbreviated life the first three sections of "The Crown." A further break came with Lady Ottoline in May 1916 and then again, more venomously, after her threatened libel suit in February, 1917, removing Lawrence from the Garsington set that included Gertler, Strachey, and the only belletristic society Lawrence, however tenuously, ever belonged to. Throughout the drafting of Women in Love in 1916, moreover, Lawrence's tie with Murry became increasingly strained, a frustrated movement between men that would only meet further disappointment in the humiliating medical examinations Lawrence subsequently underwent in Cornwall, depicted fictionally as the "Nightmare" chapter in Kangaroo.

Lawrence's letters from this period also detail his discordant, often outraged, response to a growing estrangement. The target in December 1915 is the catatonic England of lock-step authority and "mental consciousness," set against a very Utopian, and increasingly obscure, vision of "Another dawn, another day, another night--another heaven and

earth--a resurrection--."9 There is much talk of a revised Rananim, a passage secured (and cancelled) to Florida, and a creation of "a life in common, a new spirit, a spirit of unanimity between a few of us who are desirous in Spirit."¹⁰ It is to be, for a chosen coterie, "the germ of a new era," while "here, the reduction goes on . . . One must leave all this to finish itself: the new unanimity, the new complete happiness beyond--one must be strong enough to create this--"¹¹

But in February of the following year, with Lawrence still resident in England and the new world unforthcoming, he writes to Russell that, despite compulsory inscription and poverty, "One can still write bombs"; by May, even greater resignation appears: "The outer world is there to be endured."¹² Four months later, in turn, the earlier bifurcation of the quick and the dead is significantly qualified by the belief in the prefatory disintegration of all; as he puts it to Kot (one of his few remaining correspondents after the break with Russell and Lady Ottoline, and the strained departure of Murry and Katherine Mansfield from Zennor), "I think truly the only righteousness is the destruction of mankind, as in Sodom. Fire and brimstone shall fall down."¹³ This sentiment is quite close to Birkin's own vision of Lawrence's Götterdämmerung in "An Island," and his affirmation that he "would die like a shot to know that the earth would really be cleaned of all the people" is anticipated in a lugubrious remark to Forster of the same period: "I think it would be good to die," he writes, "because death would be a clean land with no people in it: not even the people of myself."¹⁴

The correspondence from Lawrence's second year in Cornwall attests to an even grimmer mood. Rescinding its social anchor, the present world appears all the more poisonous, and the projected new world increasingly filmy and fantastical. Although there is still talk of a "revivifying spontaneity," it is significantly, as he tells Gordon Campbell, with nature and not with "the foulness of mankind."¹⁵ By the time he writes Murry in May, his passport application rejected and his current novel seemingly doomed to an even more ignominious defeat than its predecessor, "one can

only stand far off, and watch . . . Heaven knows what the end will be. At any rate, it is no use talking or saying anything at all."¹⁶ To Eunice Tietjens, he frames the Spenglerian philosophy that Birkin takes up in direct contrast to the synthetic progressivism of The Rainbow: "there is no evolving beyond, only a slipping back, or rather rotting back, through all the coloured phases of retrogression and corruption, back to nought. This is the real truth. . . ." ¹⁷ A few days later, in another letter to Miss Tietjens, the whole issue of moral wrong and phenomenological necessity is pieced together: "You see it is impious for us to assert so flatly what should be, in the face of what is. It is our responsibility to know how to accept and live through that which is . . . Therefore Desire is holy, belonging to the mystic unknown, no matter what that desire--." ¹⁸

When we turn back to Women in Love itself, it is not difficult to integrate many of these sentiments with Birkin's thinking as it already appears in "Shortlands." His juxtaposition of fate and free-will (mirrored in the distinction Lawrence makes between "Desire" and "desire" in the last-named letter) agrees with the dual nature of contemporary society in Lawrence's experience: the "foulness of mankind" is inextricably there (and all the more evident because of his internal exile), but proves resistant to the hope that Ursula once invested in her industrial Midlands. The rainbow disappears as a bridge between self and world because there is no more "world" to which it can usefully connect. Without such an objective correlative, the evolutionary dialectics that guides Lawrence's thinking in The Rainbow and the Study of Thomas Hardy is gradually replaced by a discontinuous history that pictures the imminent as static or regressive, and projects a revitalized existence, if there is to be one, into an after-life. The quotidian, therefore, increasingly comes to be seen as part of a necessary and prolonged "death agony," to be observed in silence and without the hope of effective personal intervention. At the same time, whatever or whoever emerges on the far side as a part of a "Paradise and Paradisal beings," carries the impossible responsibility to be everything that the present world is not. ¹⁹ The injunction to do the "purely individual thing," as

Birkin puts it, acquires an exponential intensification in the midst of a bitter resignation to the impending eschatology.

Between the contradictory demands of self and world, the morally desirous and the historically necessary, the "what" of Cynthia Asquith's exasperated jotting and its "why," the narrative of Women in Love takes shape. The transition from a rejected humanity to the doctrine of noli me tangere, with the repeated isolation of Lawrence's Utopian ideals as contentless expressions, increases in importance as the novel undergoes revision, and as it transfers its concerns to the books on psychology, the study of American literature, and the leadership works themselves. The characteristic texture and tone of Lawrence's later narratives, in fact, can be identified by a recondite insistence on writing for society from a position that must always remain radically outside of it. Put somewhat differently, the plan "to stand far off, and watch," never quite succeeds: the passage through the void into the new life can never occur as such without a complete annihilation that would spell the impossibility of novel writing itself. The border between moral and historical must always remain figural, so that any attempt to fashion such a projected rebirth will also comment, often overtly, upon the quotidian existence left behind as "Dead Sea fruit." The imminent nature of dialectics may disappear in Women in Love (to be replaced by dialogics and allegory), but the social message loses none of its importance--becoming all the more potent, in fact, through its requirement to speak for the world in structures that this world is never allowed to penetrate.

As narrative, this conflict takes the form of the inadequacy of description--a novel which must tell a story with identifiable characters (Lawrence never loses his aesthetic of the real, no matter how often he, and his work, contradict it), yet remain somehow non-visualized. One may recall Birkin's comment to Ursula in this regard ("it's not a question of visual appreciation in the least . . . I don't want to see you" [WiL, 139]) as indicating the turn from what Keith Aldritt calls the "visual imagination" toward a temporal and verbal consciousness, in the development of Lawrence's later narratives no less than in Birkin's own thinking.²⁰

This is the point of entry for what I have termed the "structural blank," and the point of departure for many critics who find a non-spatial, non-pictorial Lawrence a debased Lawrence, or are otherwise theoretically unequipped to delineate the transitions in his work. If, as Sagar holds, Women in Love is an "articulate extremity," it pulls both backwards and forwards, retaining the belief in "other worlds" and effective moral intervention while evolving (if that is the word) an increasingly morbid fascination with a dies irae to be played out by all and agreed to by those still desirous, it appears, of some kind of discontinuous after-life.²¹ "What is it all about and why?" this is the question, in its most literal form, that arises again and again in Women in Love, and which, through its different revisions and protracted publication gap, the novel answers in significantly different ways as a pivot between Lawrence's earlier and later work.

ii

Situated in a rhetorical chromatic between the promise of a better life and the imperative of historical movement, Birkin's thoughts intermittently tip and roll toward both ends, relaying one, now the other perspective without resolution or even the sense that such cohesion need be provided. In the argument about "hanging together," however, there is no direct indication that fate must "presently" follow a course of disintegration. Nor is Birkin's "purely individual thing" weighted to an apocalyptic anchor of rotting backwards into a gestational darkness. Spontaneity is evidently still the spontaneity productive of "another dawn," of "hopping off" as Birkin will subsequently put it, without the prerequisite of cosmic annihilation. This all changes, however, by the time we reach "In the Train," where he convinces himself, after a rather bitter discussion with Gerald, to "Let mankind pass away--time it did . . . humanity is a dead letter . . . Let humanity disappear as quick as possible" (WiL, 52). This proves to be a significant passage for a number of reasons, following as it does two chapters in which Birkin is either absent or intrusive, and prefacing a third which sketches the dead-end of London bohemia. In each

case, the deracinated Birkin is placed within an expanding social milieu that disgusts him, mocks him, or even ignores him altogether. Commuting between the topographical markers of Shortlands, the classroom, and the Pompadour, moreover, is a Birkin for whom travel promises no deliverance. "In the Train" is no journey outward, parallel to the dialectical Aufhebung of individual and cultural in an eirenic rainbow, but a vector which merely bisects preestablished realities. Like the "Imperial Road" which Birkin muses upon at the close of the novel, this early departure is not "a way out," but only "a way in again" (469), appropriate to an eschatology which refuses to build from humanity but only after it. Interestingly enough, the only form of imaginative travel open to such a reticulated filling-in of territory is the clever, ironic confusion of destinations that Loerke proposes to Gudrun in "Snowed Up"--a solution that Birkin will attempt to reject by "hopping off" with Ursula, but one which will return to haunt him, and to bring him intermittently near Loerke's perspective, when such wholesale rejection of mankind seems difficult to bring off.

But perhaps the most immediate significance of this quote lies in its compositional history. Apologists for the novel's experimental form (and as we have seen, these make up an imposing list) invariably ground their readings on a synchronic assessment of narrative events: action, location, and characterization as they appear in the published text. To the degree that these are not coherently organized according to the principles of dramatic presentation, the formal verities of the 19th century novel, or the aesthetic discipline of "canonical" writing, this incongruity is turned on its head in defense of a modern consciousness and a modern art-form. This reversal undoubtedly has a certain interpretive value, but in addition to being theoretically suspect, it is far too crude to be of much help in reading Lawrence, especially the Lawrence of Women in Love.²² For not only does the championing of Lawrence as the character of (in Barbara Hardy's words) "the untidiness and uncertainty of incomplete and fumbling experience" not provide any means of distinguishing the "untidiness" of Skrebensky's uneven characterization in The Rainbow from the "uncertainty" of

Birkin's contradictory perspectives in Women in Love, it ignores the fact that this later novel undergoes significant revisions in both 1916 and 1917, and contains at least three layers of narrative superimposed, often without concern for "consistency" in plot, upon the original story of Birkin and Ursula.²³ In addition to a synchronic reading of the novel as we have it, then, analyzing the success or failure of character and plot development within the time frame the novel provides, one must also pay attention to its compositional history, which, from the standpoint of the finished work, can be labelled a diachronic analysis, identifying the different layers of revision that compose the published draft of Women in Love.

When we consider the context within which Birkin's ruminations on the death of mankind appear, the importance of such analysis becomes evident. As we might expect, the Spenglerian message is a late insertion, representing the change in mood that comes out so forcefully in Lawrence's correspondence of the time. To give original and revised passages more fully:

"Let mankind pass away. The creative utterances will not cease, they will only be different. If it is not the great word of humanity uttered by the incomprehensible, it will be other words. What does humanity matter, to the undiminished, whole spirit?" (TSII, 84).

"Let mankind pass away--time it did. The creative utterances will not cease, they will only be there. Humanity doesn't embody the utterance of the incomprehensible any more. Humanity is a dead letter. There will be a new embodiment in a new way. Let humanity disappear as quick as possible" (WiL, 52).²⁴

While both excerpts detail similar apocalyptic concerns (the TSII passage is itself, in fact, a revision to the Women in Love draft--the "fifth version" in the Cambridge Edition count--of early 1916), the second is much more querulous in tone and focuses more securely on mankind's disintegration and impending disappearance. This can be seen in the addition of

"time it did," which emphasizes mankind as a "rotting chrysalides"; the substitution of "there" for "different"--a somewhat syntactically ambiguous transition which nevertheless makes it clear that disengagement now precedes difference; the initial stress on "the utterance of other words," which is recast merely as a "dead letter"; and the final mention of "whole spirit," which finds a very weakened correlative in the "thereness" of reality. Only talk of a "new embodiment" remains to suggest rebirth, and this, as we note, is superseded by the ultimate assertion of disappearance.

What we have here, it seems, is an "early" Birkin very willing to let mankind disappear, but also very hopeful for the regeneration of a corrected world where this one has gone wrong. In this sense, the "undiminished, whole spirit" corresponds to Birkin's sense of everything "hanging together" in "Shortlands" more than it does to the tenuous "new embodiment" that replaces it in the published draft. Although Birkin's philosophy of accident also antedates his eschatology in the novel's composition, it presents, however illogically, a triadic pattern that is retained in the TSII passage: doing what one must do splits into the "collective thing" and the preferred "individual thing" just as the "whole spirit" (another fate-surrogate) breaks up into humanity's word and "other words." In both cases, one ideally returns to the source to build from it anew, while in the published version of "In the Train," this "new way" merely appears, the synthetic ground, however uncertain to begin with, having dropped away entirely. Although a binary opposition between present and future, self and world, free-will and fate, exists in Birkin's argument from the beginning (and distinguishes "The Crown," which belongs as a companion piece to Women in Love, from the Study of Thomas Hardy), in this fifth chapter the dualism is overt and unmistakable. Working both synchronically and diachronically, the novel effects a transition from the possibility of doing the individual thing to a point of misanthropic observation as the dies irae descends upon us. Free will is thereby cast underground, resolving one part of the rhetorical disjunction plotted in "Shortlands," but emphasizing another when it becomes obvious

that the Götterdämmerung is not so much a fact as something Birkin increasingly insists upon.

This insistence and its effect on the narrative as allegory is developed more fully in "Totem," which charts Birkin's London destination and which also undergoes significant typescript alteration. Here, the key scene involves the "totem," or statuette, that allows Birkin to reemphasize his dogma of necessary reduction: as he tells Gerald, "There are centuries and hundreds of centuries of development in a straight line, behind that carving; it is an awful pitch of culture, of a definite sort" (72). Gerald, wavering between the ingenuous and the prudish, is "shocked, resentful," and asks weakly, "What culture?" Even as he will increasingly live out such disintegration in the novel, its attractions lie outwith his social code, leaving Birkin to explain its underlying significance. The words are ripe with the silent indictment of all present: "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" (72). This is the chic morning nudity, Gerald's "outrageousness," Halliday's bloody hand, Minette's eyes like "dead, bottomless pools": the acute sensation of "lapsing out" embodied in the totem of the African woman.²⁵

Following the logic of Birkin's argument, of course, the Pompadour crowd wins a certain impunity from his criticisms, implied or otherwise. As with the phenomenology of always doing what one wants to do, individual action is raised to the level of a transpersonal volition, so that the lack of accident also signals the lack of moral responsibility. Yet the condemnation of this Bohemian lifestyle, even in the comparatively mild tones of a chapter like "Totem," is everywhere in evidence. It is impossible to read Gerald's tingling with a "subtle, biting sensation" (72), or the Arab servant's "nauseating, bestial stupidity" (73), or Minette's desire for "further and further violation" as merely description--the language itself, perhaps unavoidably, resists a neutral reportage. Birkin's criticism, moreover, that Gerald "wanted to keep certain illusions, certain ideas like clothing" (72), indicates that Gerald not only doesn't know

the "truth" (i.e. the truth of death, of the Absolute), but doesn't want to know the truth, bringing the doom, the mark of Cain, down upon his own head. This returns us to both the ambiguity in Birkin's assessment of Gerald as well as the latter's uncertain role in the narrative: is he guilty of self-destruction ("Gerald! the denier!"), as Birkin suggests here and increasingly throughout the revision process, or is such disintegration truly a hamartia, dramatically controlled from above and integrated into the destiny of the age? Tipping the scales further in favor of guilt, and therefore implicitly in favor of a prospective individual redemption, is the specific reference to clothing. Not only does clothing figure as an instance of Gerald's dichotomy of the conventional and the "loose" (and so, by extension, as part of the set of such dichotomies--Jesus/Judas, attraction/repulsion, love/death--that Birkin decries and attempts to escape from), it aligns itself with color and visual display against the "nakedness" of uncivilized man, for which Birkin's unclothed roll in the primroses is most emblematic. In a novel given over, as it were, to black and white (free-will or fate, doom or salvation), the appearance of color becomes an intrusion, evidence of a spatial reality that, as Graham Bradshaw argues, marks off those characters who are to be seen from those who are to be felt or found, indefinite and "starrily."²⁶

But most importantly, these two remarks--one about illusions and other on clothing--represent two separate additions to typescripts TSI and TSII respectively, emphasizing beyond question the criticism that is being levelled at Gerald here. Read diachronically in the evolution of the novel, this passage acquires a significance that is easily missed when considering only the published draft. When taken with other alterations in Gerald's character made at about the same time--the elimination of his philosophical insights in "Breadalby" and "Man to Man" and the darkening of his self-deception and "electrical" thrilling in "Death and Love"--a compositional pattern emerges that calls the sovereignty of fate, equally insisted upon, into question.²⁷ What seems to emerge is a doom that is not so much there as it is placed upon characters like Gerald (and just about everyone

else in Women in Love, including Birkin himself) as a final and most convincing sublation of their decisions and actions: a synecdoche of whole for part which effects its extreme criticism by masquerading such criticism not as opinion or even as censure, but as the ultimate authority of fate.

One revision, however, calls for another. To the degree that Gerald is indicted within a system that makes such indictments irrelevant, the text tries to unmask this rhetorical smuggling by giving Gerald a tu quoque rejoinder. "You like the wrong things, Rupert," he remarks, "things against yourself" (72). This last comment, even on a hurried reading, seems out of place for a character who desires self-delusion: Gerald hits right at the heart of Birkin's self-deception even as he proves utterly incapable of commandeering his own life. When we consider the compositional history of his remark, moreover, the dichotomy of blindness and insight is intensified: "things against yourself" is added at the same time as "He wanted to keep certain illusions," creating an echo-effect that pits the two statements against each other as rhetorical voices. While TSI reads, "But Gerald resented it"/ "You like the wrong things, Rupert," the published novel adds the double-indictment of self-deception and self-defeat. Birkin, who condemns Gerald for inviting his doom within a logic that guarantees such doom in the first place, finds his accusation mirrored back to him by its object: the "thing against yourself," which Gerald could not possibly know as the (culpable) Dummkopf he appears to be, is precisely this slippage between part and whole, an individual, ethical claim repackaged as transcendental necessity. No "realistic" Gerald speaks here, but a Gerald who has become a Lawrencian mouthpiece, counteracting another Lawrencian mouthpiece-- Birkin himself--in the immediately preceding passage. Both fight a battle, as it were, above the realistic narrative, setting and covering a rhetorical misdemeanor offered by Birkin's lugubrious insistence on the way things must be.

Although such a reading might at first glance appear improbable, a careful analysis of the novel's evolution sets the text in relief, and establishes quite clearly the "dialogue" between revisions that remains partially disguised on a plot level. Because the Lawrencian "narrator," be it

Birkin, or Somers, or Ramon, or Lilly, enters what Wolfgang Iser terms a textual "counterbalance," where his perspective takes the first, and often only, position of value in the novel, this contradictory meaning must always appear outside the given narrative.²⁸ Gerald's insight in "Totem," for example, can never be integrated into his "character," and so remains as a kind of cryptic deviation, a slip of the tongue almost, that leads beyond the story as such to a rhetorical critique of the story's own premises.²⁹ To the degree that Lawrence associates himself with his spokesmen, moreover, the critique seems to catch him up as well, relaying a series of narratives to be decoded rather than recited, analyzed rather than paraphrased. While it is incorrect to conclude that Lawrence is out of control here, it cannot be asserted that he directs his work, the author behind the story, to provide a picture of reality. On the contrary, the text seems to detach itself from referential and biographical meaning, appearing as that "space," the space of language and the "as if," in which statement and counterstatement can allegorically appear without a final acceptance or denial of either.

The substitution of dialogics (as defined in the Introduction) and allegory for dialectics and the visual image returns in "An Island," where the isolated setting, as in the short story "The Man Who Loved Islands," identifies the geography of social and individual. Although Birkin's punt, significantly enough, "leaks a little," it floats Ursula and himself to a location apart from the domestic fineries of Breadalby or the mechanical engineering of the Beldover coal industry. This removal from the "mainland" also anticipates the search for what Gudrun will jeeringly call "Rupert's Blessed Isles," the Ranim Lawrence envisioned in his letters and the Utopian vision that appears in the present chapter as a "world empty of people, just uninterrupted grass, and a hare sitting up" (113). Just as we found in "Totem," the notion of free-will and self-determination is far from dead, implied if not overtly stated. All the metaphors suggest that Birkin and Ursula are choosing something for themselves and that it matters to do so: the uncivilized island (as opposed to the overly civilized nation), the deliverance over water (instead of the drowning of Diana Crich), and the cotillon of daisies

to "leave . . . alone" (instead of Winifred's anthropomorphized "Loozie" and Bismarck). Birkin's talk of doing "something, somewhere" (117), moreover, and the picture of a new planet erased of humanity, still speaks of alternatives. Yet the misanthropic tone is unmistakable, and gradually takes over as Birkin moves from wondering "whether one is really afraid of death or not" (117), to an increasingly strident condemnation of "the most ghastly, heavy crop of Dead Sea Fruit, the intolerable burden of myriad simulacra of people, and infinite weight of mortal lies" (119). Here again, mankind is both necessarily rotten and "intolerable," an "anti-creation" with "a long way to go yet, a long and hideous way" (120), yet something which leaves the "reality . . . untouched" (119). For her part, Ursula brings the conflict into the open:

Ursula watched him as he talked. There seemed a certain impatient fury in him, all the while, and at the same time a great amusement in everything, and a final tolerance. And it was this tolerance she mistrusted, not the fury. She saw that, all the while, in spite of himself, he would be trying to save the world . . . She hated the Salvator Mundi touch. It was something diffuse and generalized about him, which she could not stand (120-1).

Although this heavily revised passage bears a number of meaning shifts between her mistrust of Birkin's tolerance and her dislike of his "Salvator Mundi touch," it puts the rhetorical slippage between part and whole into perspective. This tolerance is suspicious because it is worn "in spite of himself," a cover for the impotence of "impatient fury" in the face of an intractable social condition--the acceptance, in bad faith, of this condition as the way it must be. At the same time, the fury itself is said to be self-defeating, a contradiction that Ursula does not solve (leaving the passage a difficult one to sort out), but which suggests, as the only reading which makes sense here, that Birkin's tolerance is also a form of Salvator Mundi prophecy. It is precisely in the guise of historical necessity (the "final tolerance") that the jeremiad against humanity is launched, an exposition of

the synecdoche of fate and free-will that has controlled Birkin's thinking since "Shortlands."

What Ursula cannot coherently organize, however (a significant fact in itself), the novel clarifies in another form. After a lengthy and concerted denial of the desideratum of love on Birkin's part, the revisions to TSII yield the following dialogue:

"Then why do you care about people at all?" she asked, "if you don't believe in love? Why do you bother about humanity?"

"Why do I? Because I can't get away from it."

"Because you love it," she persisted. It irritated him.

"If I do love it," he said, "it is my disease."

"But it is a disease you don't want to be cured of," she said, with some cold sneering.

He was silent now, feeling she wanted to insult him.

"And if you don't believe in love, what do you believe in?" she asked, mocking. "Simply in the end of the world, and grass?"

He was beginning to feel a fool.

"I believe in the unseen hosts," he said. (121)

Ursula, as respondent and second-conscience, progressively forces Birkin to untie the strands of his "contravened knot," as he calls it earlier, first by posing the question the reader has posed for a number of chapters already ("Why do you bother about humanity") and then by answering it with a precision and a certainty that Birkin evades. His polemical apotheosis of hate ("if we want hate, let us have it--death, murder, torture, violent destruction--let us have it" [119]) is nevertheless directed at a culture in an effort, as Ursula suggests, to improve it. This implied "love," whose thematic concerns seek the elimination of love as an objective state, turns Birkin's argument back on itself: phenomenologically, the concern which is inherent in his condemnation of the love relationship undermines the schism he advocates. Though he tries to make it seem as if his response is only reactive, a desperation controlled by greater forces, Ursula reinserts the constant of human agency into the

equation. No matter what Birkin says, he cannot help intending, in the same act of speech, an immediate and irreducible "love" for the mankind he wishes to see destroyed, else the violently argued doctrine of non-love would lack context and significance. Birkin attempts a final distraction ("it is my disease"), but Ursula duly re-emphasizes the importance of personal choice in whatever explanation he offers. His response at this point is silence, and an eventual projection of "unseen hosts" that, as an immediate precursor to the more systematically argued "blank" of star-equilibrium, appears to lie outside all questions of self and society.

This passage witnesses such a reversal in the narrative hierarchy of Women in Love, in fact, that we sense that we are in the presence of another allegorical opening. Ursula's incisive critique of Birkin's assumptions, juxtaposing his reification of the self as ontological ens with the ineradicability of ethical perspective, provides the kind of wisdom and rhetorical decoding that we would not expect from a character later described as "frightened of words" (429).³⁰ Like the Gerald who suddenly rises to the occasion in "Totem," Ursula seems to have a "double," a character with the same nominal identity but with a textual function unrelated to her "realistic" activities. Called upon, in the 1917 revisions, to confront Birkin with his own polemical blindness, she functions allegorically as a kind of anonymous voice dropping the cryptic clue, the hidden and refracted solution, to a narrative puzzle insoluble on the level of the story, where Birkin's centrality as a Lawrencian mouthpiece disallows a serialization of discordant points of view. As the novel's compositional history indicates, the question here is not one of experimentation in character, nor even, following Bakhtin, of a contest between conflicting ideologies, but a division of narrative codes, or planes, one of which organizes the novel as a sequence of ideas, events, and images, the other providing the critique for the first.³¹ The two Ursulas, like the two Geraldts, are never integrated on a plot level, and indeed, when Women in Love is analyzed diachronically, no pains are taken to do so.

When one considers another revision made to TSII, in fact, it appears as if Lawrence progressively refines this division for an even sharper focus and resolution. In one of the most striking remarks in the novel, given in the same chapter as Ursula's incisive critique and spoken as an authoritative statement of fact, we learn, rather improbably, that with Ursula, "It was an instinct in her, to deceive herself" (117). Although this characterization is consistent with a number of other changes Lawrence made to the TSII manuscript, darkening Ursula's portrayal with those of Gerald and Gudrun as somehow guilty of their beliefs, it proves to be inconsistent with the Ursula who reflects Birkin's opaque bullying, not only in "An Island", but in the dialogues that follow in "Mino," "Water Party," and "A Chair," all of which are relatively late revisions to the typescript. For a woman who is allowed to claim, re Birkin, that her dissatisfaction was ultimately "with him" (119--another 1917 alteration), this disabling attack on her judgment is an absurdity, suggesting a communication between the textual revisions themselves as well as one between allegorical and realistic narratives. What emerges is a second level response to Ursula's non-mimetic dialogue occasioned by the necessity to challenge Ursula's own challenge. Because she is not given control of the novel even as she makes Birkin "feel a fool," her usurpation must be countered by a further diminishment of her character. By casting Ursula as simultaneous fool and genius, the revisions create an internal allegory of riposte and counter-riposte, identifying a parabolic linguistic communication, or semiotics, that operates as far as possible on the level of the sign. Though its position within such a semiotics and outwith the synchronic narrative discounts allegory as an object of Lawrence's narrative design, the logic, appropriately enough, is not "accidental" either. It all hangs together "in the deepest sense," a sense that Lawrence fails to direct, but one which nevertheless orients the narrative; the text lacks a synthesis of rhetorical positions or points of view, yet drafts the map through which such a reading might be enacted.

The most sustained account of Birkin's philosophy of destruction appears in "Water Party," which duly rehearses the allegorical contrareity we find in "Totem" and "An Island," now collecting both Gerald and Ursula in the same scene as rhetorical countervoices. Although the significance of the long interchange between Birkin and Ursula in this chapter was discussed at some length in the introduction, a summary and contextualization might be of use here. Sandwiched between Gudrun's hypnotic Dalcroze in front of the Highland cattle and Gerald's impressionistic discovery of a subaqueous "universe" while attempting to save his drowned sister, Birkin's talk of fleurs du mal and "the black river of corruption" (164) provides the philosophical explanation for the strange, diaphanous penumbra that seems to hang over the "Water Party" episode. The passage through death, represented as an ablution or flood-cleansing, takes on a figural significance it lacked in earlier chapters: whereas a morbid Birkin will push the ethos of disintegration in "Totem" and "An Island," "Water Party" supplies the oneiric imagery to go with it: the "lilies and snakes," the "hellish" current, the cuttle-fish lantern, the ignis fatuus, the "marsh-flowers," and Gerald as "water rat." As Birkin puts it in one of his most succinct accountings of devolutionist history, "When the stream of synthetic creation lapses, we find ourselves part of the inverse process, the blood of destructive creation. Aphrodite is born in the first spasm of universal dissolution--then the snakes and swans and lotus--marsh-flowers--and Gudrun and Gerald--born in the process of destructive creation" (164).

From here, Ursula asks the logical question ("And you and me--"), forcing him to adjust his system to somehow accommodate an initiatory point of view. The following line-- "Probably . . . In part, certainly. Whether we are that in toto, I don't yet know"--remains from TSI, and relays the desire for, and concentration on, a better world that characterizes this earlier draft. As the revisions proceed, however, Ursula becomes more insistent in her disagreement, leaving Birkin, as she will at the close of the work, to cast his argument in extreme terms: "Oh yes, ultimately . . . It [the end of the world] means a new cycle of creation after--

but not for us. If it is the end, then we are of the end--
 fleurs du mal, if you like. If we are fleurs du mal, we are
 not roses of happiness, and there you are" (165). After
 further resistance, Birkin becomes adamant: "If we are the
 end, we are not the beginning," for the latter does not evolve
 from the former, but relates to it only as duration, "After
 it, not out of it. After us, not out of us" (165). As he
 will argue later in the chapter when discussing Diana's
 drowning, "better she were dead--she'll be much more real.
 She'll be positive in death" (178)--a wholesale rampage
 across self-direction toward a lordly pronouncement of
 thematic destiny that seemingly leaves no escape for Birkin
 himself. To be consistent, Birkin must also agree to
 extermination, something he flatly denies in earlier drafts,
 where a grim determinism was far less advanced ("No, I want
 something that isn't death . . . there is something else"
 [TSI, 226]), but can only delay in the published novel ("One
 is tired of the life that belongs to death--our kind of life.
 But whether it is finished, God knows" [178]), to be taken up
 again in another late revision of "Man to Man" when he assures
 Gerald that "There's a long way to go, after the point of
 intrinsic death, before we disappear" (156).

The force of Birkin's rhetoric is such, especially in
 reaction to Ursula's criticisms, that we should not be
 surprised to find both allegorical dialogue and a
 representative unevenness in her characterization. Ursula,
 who plays the ingénue to begin with ("Why alarming?"; "What
 does?"; "But what other?"; and so forth) suddenly comes to life
 again when Birkin flattens his thumb on the scale too crudely.
 The question she puts to him about "you and me" already
 approximates the unmasking voice of perspective that appeared
 in "An Island," and if anything, carries a more exacting
 burden here as a counterfoil for the intensified program of
 necessary destruction in Birkin's argument. The uncertain
 questioning, in turn, suddenly precipitates an incisive
 statement of fact: "You are a devil, you know, really . . .
 You want to destroy our hope. You want us to be deathly"
 (165). After Birkin reroutes the emphasis from volition to
 knowledge--"I only want us to know what we are"--she pulls him
 back again: "You only want us to know death." Gerald, coming

"out of the dusk behind" (165), then improbably seconds the motion, causing a shift in narrative attention as they all "began to smoke, in the moments of silence."

Again, this conversation is part of a substantial rewrite to the "Water Party" section in 1917, and clearly represents Lawrence's increasingly misanthropic outbursts as well as their antidote in Ursula's recusancy to what Birkin announces as a universal death. That Lawrence was not concerned with the problem of integrating the inserted dialogue into previous material is evident in the caesura after Gerald's pregnant remark, facilitated by the resumption of an unrelated activity remaining from earlier drafts. The revisions appear curiously self-contained, growing within their own boundaries like ivy upon a ladder, and manufacturing a story within a story that not only distills Birkin's "message," but allegorically retracts it. In this way, Birkin can still hold to his exhortation to "Let mankind pass away" at the same time that the text itself escapes the charge of being nothing more than polemics and commandment. By attempting to cover for its own blindness, Women in Love takes the diadem out of Birkin's (and Lawrence's) hand without removing the illusion of authority that he wields as a creator of a presumably "realistic" narrative. To avoid the collapse, and perhaps excessively painful redirection, of Birkin's beliefs, the narrative forces its message into different planes of textual meaning, never completely recoverable by a thematic or objective reading of the work.

Despite the prominence of this allegorical design, and its resistance to a recuperation within Birkin's character, Women in Love does exhibit a certain dialectical movement. Insofar as what we have called "allegory" exists only to the degree that the story as Lawrence wants to tell it can't supply its own dialectical synthesis, it becomes diffusive and even unnecessary when such integration is made available on the objective level of the plot. If Birkin's "knot" can be transferred from a textual aporia to a conflict contained within his indecision, an aesthetic synthesis is assured, either by means of a solution he himself will propose, or through the casting of an insoluble dilemma within a fictional frame. The manipulation of point of view never being

Lawrence's narrative focus, however--as it is Faulkner's or James's--the necessary advance must derive from Birkin himself, representing his author's attempt to "come right" on the problem of self and society. And so it does, to a certain extent, in "Moony":

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

He threw a dead flower-husk on to the water.

"An antiphony--they lie, and you sing back to them. There wouldn't have to be any truth, if there weren't any lies. Then one needn't assert anything--"

He stood still, looking at the water, and throwing upon it the husks of the flowers.

"Cybele--curse her! The accursed Syria Dea! Does one begrudge it her? What else is there-----?" (238)

The change immediately perceptible is Birkin's attempt to internalize the criticisms Ursula has launched against him. "Truth," whether it stands as Rananim, personal response, or the death-wish, not only opposes the lie of love and what he elsewhere calls "the mental-deliberate prof/ligacy our lot goes in for" (37), but exists within the chorus of action and reaction, of the sounded note and its "singing back." The logic, here fragmented in Birkin's self-incriminating recital, proves very similar to Ursula's in "An Island": his "what," the thematic divorce from contemporary England, is constrained by a more fundamental "how" (or "why") in the form of a structural paradigm of concern. Truth and lies, like Jesus and Judas, formal dress and nudity, love and hate, do not constitute ontological opposites, but belong to an inclusive system of moral activity. Negation proves to be another form of affirmation: one can neither "hop off" nor inflate the particular instance into a teleological necessity. The ineradicability of personal volition, repeatedly reified by Birkin into one or another of his absolutes, eventually makes its way back into his thinking, internalizing--at least for the moment--what Ursula was called upon to bring out in earlier chapters.

Birkin's self-analysis also helps explain the significance of what Anthony Burgess calls that "remarkable scene" of the moon-stoning. Ursula's shadowy presence, as was noted in the introduction, is appropriate to her structural redundancy here, while the unshatterable image of the moon on Willey Water indicates the immutable properties of the given world that Birkin has so insistently and vehemently rejected. "There is no going away"--not only from the way things "are" (emphasized here in the implied equation of social pattern with natural law), but from the unescapable mechanics of perspective, which draws its corresponding analogy between an imaged moon and Birkin's imagined picture of recalcitrant society. As the fragmented ripples repeatedly coalesce, the impossibility of escape is symbolically played out: any attempt to "stone" the present world (a precursor to the bomb) is a doomed enterprise, resulting not in destruction and a new existence of "unseen hosts," but in the gradual and inevitable recomposition of the "tormented" flakes of light. A fresh beginning, if there is to be one, must derive from the same ground as its antecedent and not stand, as Birkin has preached, in dualistic antithesis to another ontological reality. The cavity of "singing back," which ironically unites him with Gerald in a bifurcated consciousness (justifying, in turn, Gerald's counter-attack), can only be filled through an acceptance of the given and an evolution of social forms from its "source."

For his part, Birkin seems to come to a similar resolution by acknowledging defeat in his attack on the moon-image. Ursula asks him to stop, and in his newfound mood of acquiescence, he proposes what he chooses to call a "third way." To quote:

Was this all that remained? . . .
Does there remain to us only the strange,
awful afterwards of the knowledge in
dissolution, the African knowledge, but
different in us, who are blond and blue-
eyed from the north? . . . Birkin was
frightened . . . suddenly his strange,
strained attention gave way, he could not
attend to these mysteries any more. There
was another way, the way of freedom.
There was a paradisaical entry into pure,
single being, the individual soul taking

precedence over love and desire for union,
 stranger than any pangs of emotion, the
 lovely state of free proud singleness. . .
 .(246,7)

It is impossible to ignore the dialectical progression made here, framed by the opposition of African and Nordic "mysteries" (death vs. love), and exploded by the sudden faith in the middle course, the "remaining way." Birkin internalizes the textual conflict that Ursula announced in earlier chapters--where he chose death against love--and now projects an escape from its debilitating refrain in favor of a life seemingly beyond both life and death. Instead of the tick-tack of opposites that paralyzes "marsh-flowers" like Gudrun and Gerald, a new path appears which Birkin "must run to follow." And so he does, a form of synthetic release appropriate to the escalation in travel that permeates the second half of the novel: "Excuse" sees Birkin and Ursula's resignation from the economic system, and Birkin's desire to "wander a bit" ("There's nothing for it but to get out quick" [307]); "Flitting" is a goodbye to the atavistic Beldover home; "Gudrun in the Pompadour" is a return, by Gerald and Gudrun alone, however, to what Daleski has called one of the five central "loci" in the work; "Continental" is the release from England, and the break between the sisters ("One has no more connections here . . . You've got to hop off" [429]); and "Snowed Up" and "Exeunt," finally, contrast Gerald's inability to escape his crucifixion with Birkin and Ursula's "exeunt."³² Concerned with release in a psychological sense, but no less progressive and dialectical, "Gladatorial" depicts the projected alternative to the outmoded love-ethic through male bonding; "Woman to Woman" witnesses Ursula's break with Hermione's cosmopolitan irony ("she wanted to go away now. It all seemed no good. Hermione was established for ever, she herself was ephemeral and had not yet even arrived" [293]); "Death and Love" provides a look at the the dance of opposites that Birkin and Ursula wish to outflank (the African and Nordic solutions suggested by the title), and that Gudrun and Gerald cling to like the mud that cakes Gerald's shoes upon his night visit; "Marriage or Not" sets forth Gerald's rejection of Birkin's "new way" in favor of an "acceptance of

the established world" (345); and "A Chair pits the "unfinished rock" of Rodin against "the past perpetuated on top of you . . . possessions, possessions" (349).

This attention to movement, in turn, and the following of Birkin's third way, eases the allegorical intensity of the second half of the work. The disagreements that Birkin and Ursula have (and there are a number of them following "Moony") do not usually end with quite the same prophetic tone any ~~more -~~ -that clang of inaccessible insight that seems beyond the scale of either character or author, but infallibly provides the missing clue to the narrative arrangement as a whole. In "Excuse," Ursula will even preface her objection to Birkin's "wandering" ("You've got to take the world that's given-- because there isn't any other" [308]) with the words, "You see, my love . . ."; for a statement that raises the demanding question of illegitimate escape, her response, and the dialogue frames it, reveal curiously well-finished edges. Birkin himself will be able to claim, moreover, that Gerald's death is not the end because "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" (470). The energy of the impending exeunt seems to lead us back to the Hardy book, and to the early drafts of Women in Love itself: the recreation is to appear "out of us" after all.

Yet the bilateral unmasking of necessary truth as human will, with its attendant reestablishment of an inexorably "given" world, still seems fraught with many of the problems it attempts to cure. As Ursula's ameliorated objection in "Excuse" already indicates, the "antiphony" Birkin decries is rerouted rather than silenced, its chorus not the acceptance of dialectics but the positing of another dualism in the guise of a synthetic resolution. A check upon the prospective release is already offered, in fact, in "Moony" itself through Birkin's self-examinative "What else is there--", a remark that undergoes a significant change in emphasis from TSI. Initially, Birkin solves the problem outright: "There, you've got it" (TSI, 302). Subsequently, we find "something else one wants--the other half--what about that?"; then "something else as well . . ."; and finally, most tenuously, in opposition to

the Syria Dea, "What else is there--". Although on one level the revisions move toward the confrontation of world and self, an earlier confidence in "coming through" is eliminated, with Birkin's subsequent proposal of a "third way" carrying the memory of the impossibility of escape. As with the Imperial Road that only doubles back, and the train journey that plots known territory, "the way of freedom," as Birkin puts it, warns against the success of a transcendental leap, especially at the expense of a recognition of his desire to effect such a leap.

In Birkin's assessment of Gerald's death, this other memorial, this warning against the reification of future worlds, still adheres. Prefacing his ruminations about "the timeless creative mystery," a hold-over from the initial rewriting of this final chapter, is the otherwise surprising discount of what follows: "It was very comforting to Birkin to think this" (470). Read synchronically, along the plane of narrative events as they develop in the published novel, such a statement makes no sense.³³ Nowhere else is Birkin objectified in such a manner, and few scenes could suffer greater structural disruption from such an insertion: talk of "the fountain-head" as "incorruptible and unsearchable" (470) is clearly Lawrencian rhetoric, eliminating an ironic or parodic reading of its importance. Nor can this abrupt distancing and the rhetorical investment in "The mystery of creation" be read as a trial run of contradictory perspectives--the novel an experiment in the unreliability of narrators, canvassing different attitudes and structural postures without resolution. Women in Love is no post-modern text: the goal is not irresolution, no more than it is a modernist irony or a display of deracinated consciousnesses. These are effects, not causes, of Lawrence's narrative patterning, and in this case again take shape through the revision process. As an allegory of earlier beliefs and later reservations, the narrative distancing in "Exeunt" superimposes its discount over the philosophy of "miraculous unborn species" (470), answering this antecedent layer of hope as well as the dialectics of the third way announced and implemented by Birkin in the last half of the book. If "Exeunt" implies a movement outwards and away, the vision it

provides is checked by an internal suspicion of its effectiveness.

But Birkin is not the only character through which this textual rerouting operates. Ursula, with whom "the way of freedom" is to be explored, often appears oddly unfit for her task. In "Moony," she is said to want "unspeakable intimacies . . . to warm his foot-soles between her breasts, after the fashion of the nauseous Meredith poem" (257), a cynically loaded judgment that pulls Ursula back into the pole of love rather than allowing her to forge a new existence. In "Excuse," moreover, we are told that Ursula "was still at the emotional personal level--always so abominably personal. He had taken her as he had never been taken himself" (296). And in "Continental," in perhaps the most damaging remark of them all outside her "instinct" for self-delusion, "she could not be herself, she dared not come forth quite nakedly to his nakedness, abandoning all adjustment, lapsing in pure faith with him" (426).

The textual revisions bring the point home once again. In the TSI version of Ursula's "surrender" to love, her independence is clearly asserted: "She did not want to become an espoused wife" (TSI, 323). By the time we reach the published novel, however, self-direction has become self-sacrifice, a relinquishment to the ideal of love that counts Ursula as an apologist for the doctrine of "Fusion, fusion, this horrible fusion of two beings, which every woman and most men insisted on" (301, my emphasis). In "Continental," Ursula's failure to "come forth quite nakedly" not only revives the leitmotif of clothed vs. unclothed, but witnesses another about-face in Ursula's integrity. In TSI, Ursula is expectant if unready: "But she could not yield herself to love entirely, not yet" (TSI, 593). In TSII, love, now increasingly a totem for a diseased society, disappears altogether, even as the potential for an adequate and desired release remains. In the revisions to TSII, an ethical indictment is added ("she dared not"), again suggesting an internal conflict between what she apparently knows and what she can't do. "Coming forth" here is no longer a matter of potential, but one of fear. A concerted attempt is made in

the textual alterations to ensure that Ursula appears inadequate to her task.

Yet this is still the Ursula who contains Birkin's excesses so effectively at other key points in the novel, not only in the chapters preceding "Moony," but in the dialogues that are written into "Excuse," "A Chair," and the "Exeunt" itself. During their meal in the Southwell inn, after Birkin announces that the properly proscriptive action is to "drop our jobs, like a shot . . . there's nothing for it but to get out, quick" (307), Ursula raises the appropriate objection: "But where can one go? . . . After all, there is only the world, and none of it is very distant" (307). In "A Chair," in response to Birkin's overheated denunciation of "possessions, possessions, bullying you and turning you into a generalization," she resurrects the same demurral: "But there's only this world" (349). In "Exeunt," finally, it is Birkin's "other kind of love," one between men, that leads Ursula to insist that it is "an obstinacy, a theory, a perversity" (472), not only in the physical or psychological sense, but as another instance of Birkin's liking things against himself. The novel ends, in fact, with a climbing disagreement over the need for male friendship and intimacy, a new "third way" which Ursula detects as not the anticipated release at all, but merely a further bondage and falsity.

As with the revisions made to the early chapters, therefore, the second half of the novel simultaneously elevates and devalues Ursula's intelligence and understanding. While the doctrine of hopping off and the investment in a private "communion" diffuses the allegorical pressure after Birkin's dialectical resolution in "Moony," a certain internal, textual argument is clearly carried out through the pejoration of both Birkin and Ursula as intermittantly unfit for the task Birkin proposes. At the moment when the consummation is at hand--as in the "daughters of men coming back to the sons of God" in "Excuse"--an aside is inevitably inserted to prevent its fruition, in this case Birkin's curious thought that "something was tight and unfree in him. He did not like this crouching, this radiance--not altogether" (305). Examples of such last-moment retractions can be multiplied (perhaps the most significant occurs in

"Continental," where we learn, at an auspicious moment, that "they were never quite together, at the same moment, one was always a little left out" [427]), and no doubt owe their existence to the kind of anti-factualism that leads Birkin to insist, in the "possessions" speech of "A Chair," that "you must leave your surroundings sketchy, unfinished, so that you are never contained, never confined, never dominated from the outside" (349). The lobby against color and clothing also derives its expression from such a sentiment.

This aesthetics of incompleteness recalls the phenomenological concerns of The Rainbow, where experience precedes fact and resists its "finality," one of the states that Gerald and Gudrun also find themselves in, most forcefully in Gerald's rigid death-by-ice (anticipated perhaps in his starchy, white dinner dress). Birkin's "escape," in turn, can in part be seen as an extension of Ursula's Paterian search for the incomplete but self-fulfilling immersion in impression and possibility. Yet the narrative of Women in Love is a good deal more complicated than this, with Birkin's "sketchiness" becoming as much a reaction to his phenomenological desires as an expression of them. The marriage-tie that initially promises an open road seems in the end to prevent such a passage, leaving the narrative suspended between its different attitudes to bondage and release. For related reasons, the possibility of travel itself, of an escape from the present, is called into question, not only through Ursula's repeated demurrals, but through Birkin's own ruminations over the circularity of all "ways out." The crisis in Women in Love, therefore, also becomes a self-conscious one, with Birkin prohibiting the communion he seeks not only because it will destroy phenomenological immediacy, but because it will reveal, in its potential success, Birkin's own self-delusion. Whatever the third way becomes, its achievement will necessarily link it back, structurally if not thematically, to the contemporary culture that has been excommunicated by unilateral fiat. The only consistent interpretation of Rodin's unfinished rock, of leaving one's surroundings sketchy, is as a blank which can never assume phenomenal form--a kind of adjustable margin which must limit

its desire for reality at that point where description and narration threaten to coalesce into the image.

If this explains the conflicting positions that Birkin and Ursula are made to hold in Women in Love, it doesn't solve the ultimate problem of finishing the narrative. Insofar as hopping off is never rejected, only distracted and rerouted, the novel must somehow slide its objections over its polemical message without erasing either. This is accomplished, with predictable unevenness, in "Continental" and "Exeunt." Ursula's problematic position as acolyte and outcast is defused, as similar difficulties are defused in Women in Love, by a splitting of narrative codes. The important scene here is Birkin and Ursula's argument over the failure of love and "Rupert's Blessed Isles," which opens with Gudrun's gift of colored stockings ("for which she was notorious" [427]), and Ursula, as a result, "in raptures." The emphasis on sight and color takes us back again to the themes of nakedness and release, with the transference of the stockings representing Ursula's continued containment within Gudrun's world of the visually definite. The stockings are placed, significantly enough, under Ursula's pillow--that is, away from plain view but still "there," as one places a few coins under a pillow to indicate a magical presence.³⁴ They await Ursula, as it were, underneath the cover of her allegiance to Birkin's ideal.

This scene is made noteworthy, however, by Ursula's subsequent conversion to Birkin's way of thinking. Without warning or preparation, both her antagonism to his Utopian desires and her reemphasized inability to "give herself up" are reversed in the assertion that "Rupert is right--one wants a new space to be in, and one falls away from the old" (428). In a remark that recalls Birkin's own perplexity in "A Chair" ("But must one take no steps at all?" [355]), she continues with, "But there can be something else, can't there" (429); a few lines later, after Gudrun's protestations, she concludes that "You've got to hop off" (429); and, in the most Birkinese dialect of them all, we read that "Love is too human and little. I believe in something inhuman, of which love is only a little part" (429). In response, Gudrun assumes Ursula's vacated role of devil's advocate: "But I think that a new

world is a development from this world" (428); "In a way, one is of the world if one lives in it" (429); "And anyhow, you can't suddenly fly off on to a new planet"; and finally, with "false benignity," "After all, the happiest voyage is the quest of Rupert's Blessed Isles" (430). The positions are well-defined, and the split between the two women is increasingly bitter and more final. Gudrun will belong to the present world ("Well, I've got no further than love, yet" [430]), and Ursula, in searching beyond love, will take up Birkin's baton, against her previous inclinations and against, in a strange way, the narrative's requirement of open-endedness. Birkin's position is thereby secured--Ursula's acquiescence helps vindicate the argument he extends--but as a result, this unification ironically threatens to call his bluff of an adequately irreducible and "unfinished" relationship. For Ursula to agree completely would not only be out of character (not an especially important objection here), but would propel the marriage bond into the Utopian blank itself, where it could not avoid failure as a completely transcendental design.

In consequence, her latent inadequacy is reframed by the symbolic reappearance of the stockings, now uncovered to emphasize the increased threat of agreement: "Feeling her sister's resistance, Gudrun drew awkwardly away, turned over the pillow, and disclosed the stockings again" (430). An otherwise diversionary, insignificant gesture, this disclosure justifies Gudrun's awkwardness and returns Ursula's "resistance": just as Birkin was allegorically unmasked by the structural indirection of Ursula's objections, so Gudrun undertakes the same operation with respect to her sister's newfound conviction to be "free." The whole problem is outlined, in fact, in her closing remark: "'Ha-ha!'", she laughed, rather hollowly. 'How we do talk indeed--new worlds and old----!'" (430). "New worlds and old," "what" and "why," fate and freedom, relinquishment and guilt; Gudrun might fail to "come through," but Ursula also, as the text codifies, can expect no unproblematic escape. Although she supports Birkin's argument thematically, the narrative retracts a successful agreement by casting a countermesssage of emblematic bondage.

The related problem of narrative (non) closure is confronted through the placement of an indecisive dialogue between Birkin and Ursula at the end of the work. The subject, appropriately enough, is Birkin's "perversity" of male-bonding, a desideratum broached in "Man to Man" and explored in the wrestling match of "Gladiatorial" and at other points thereafter, when Gerald will first reject Birkin ("Only I can't feel it, you see" [345]) and then be condemned for his timidity and hypocrisy ("He was ready to be doomed"; "Gerald! The denier!" [471]).³⁵ As the marriage tie begins to crack, its dialectical release increasingly inseparable from the world it is designed to supersede, some form of male-male relationship takes its place as the guarantor of "sketchiness." Acting as a supplement to the heterosexual union, however, it opens itself, predictably, to similar criticisms. Ursula, as we already noted, brings some of these to the fore, and while she nowhere explains her objections in detail, her constricting influence suggests another point of rhetorical slippage between what Birkin reifies as a "solution" and its attachment to the present. What he calls a "mystic balance and integrity" (144), or alternatively a "star-equilibrium," initially favored the love-ethic, until love proved inadequate as a currency of social divorce and was duly replaced, or at least augmented, by male friendship. Such a transition indicates, however, that the male-male tie is not an ontological ens but a local expression of the need for incompleteness--a blank that, by resisting the plastic and the visual, image and character, distances Birkin from mankind as much as possible. Yet as Women in Love and the leadership novels bear out, these expressions are interchangeable, and while the Lawrence-figure(s) in the later narratives invariably (and perhaps unavoidably) assert the reality of whatever solution is being offered, the nature of the blank demands that it remain an empty form, a "degree zero" that denies finality to any of its individual structures even as it--rather perversely--links all of them to a common source.

At one point, Birkin seems to sense the conflict that this reification poses for him, insofar as he admits to Ursula in "A Chair" that "It's a problem I can't solve . . . Do I want a real, ultimate relationship with Gerald. Do I want a

final, almost extra-human relationship with him--a relationship in the ultimate of me and him--or don't I?" (355). Yet it is a question he is unable, or unwilling, to answer, and its lingering irresolution provides the context for his and Ursula's final disagreement. To quote the interchange that closes "Exeunt" at some length:

"Having you, I can live all my life without anybody else, any other sheer intimacy. But to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too: another kind of love," he said.

"I don't believe it," she said.

"It's an obstinacy, a theory, a perversity."

"Well--" he said.

"You can't have two kinds of love. Why should you!"

"It seems as if I can't," he said.

"Yet I wanted it."

"You can't have it, because it's false, impossible," she said.

"I don't believe that," he answered.

(472-3)

Birkin's wish, intensified to a pitch of conclusive resistance under Ursula's scrutiny, allows the novel to trail off without asserting a union that it is already self-consciously indecisive about. Birkin "answers" Ursula's charge of falsity, permitting the doubt over an adequate release, an adequate dialectics, to resurface, yet appear to be covered by his succinct rejoinder. Both objection and rejoinder, in turn, are framed by the crescendo of a stubbornly entrenched argument, effecting a gradual polarization of perspectives that would not necessarily exist otherwise. The whole dialogue proves to be a kind of anti-climax, a regression or deviation from the synthesis we would expect at this point if Birkin actually believed what he says he believes. But precisely because his alternative of male friendship is both the projected solution and the solution which cannot come about--intrinsically as a blank and a mirror for his dualist polemics--it is enclosed within another narrative plane of reference that allows both possibilities to exist without synthetic mediation. One can always claim that Birkin has the last word, vindicating his revised blueprint for a starry existence; but one can also always hold that

Birkin was forced into his uncertain position by Ursula's prodding counter-offensive. In this way, he backs into his solution and seems to cover all avenues of attack. Like a Chinese Box, in turn, or like Barthes's coreless onion, the novel folds inward instead of outward: a frame within a frame (within a frame . . .), Women in Love recycles its prophetic tone through the textual mechanics of a multi-layered narrative. As with Sidney's poet, perhaps, nothing is finally asserted and nothing finally denied, an interrogative that transforms the novel itself into a collective allegory between its opposing perspectives, to be filled by the reader where the text confronts a structural ellipses.

It is interesting, as a transition to Aaron's Rod and the subsequent leadership works, to draw the connection between Birkin and that other, thematically unlikely, subject for Blutbrüderschaft, Loerke. The structural design of the novel, through its double-sided dialogues and allegorization, shows much in common with Loerke's conception of the train-journey that always arrives elsewhere. When he muses in "Snowed Up" that "One might take a ticket, so as not to travel to the destination it indicated. One might break off and avoid the destination. A point located. That was an idea!" (462), we have the strange feeling that this is what the novel has been doing all along. By switching narrative planes, it derives its "point" without arriving at any such location. Instead of an open universe, in which action and cognition coincide in the new exploration, the new experience, all the destinations have already been plotted, the Imperial Road being just another well-travelled dream. "Sketchiness," therefore, becomes not a threshold into the unknown, but a scrambled code within the geographical frame of arrivals and departures. Birkin's "destiny" is not the correspondence of place and time in the ideal community or next world, but an intuition (one has one's ticket) always already confounded by the fact that its effectiveness, its "reality-value," depends on one being perpetually elsewhere.

A suggestive connection between Birkin and Loerke also appears in two late passages delineating, appropriately enough, a bifurcated planet. The first occurs in "Continental," where Birkin crosses the channel and finds

himself "falling through a gulf of infinite darkness, like a meteorite plunging across the chasm between the worlds. The world was torn in two, and he was plunging like an unlit star through the ineffable rift" (379). Compare this to Loerke and Gudrun's fantasy in "Snowed Up": "a man invented such a perfect explosive that it blew the earth in two, and the two halves set off in different directions through space . . . or else the people of the world divided into two halves, and each half decided it was perfect and right, the other half was wrong and must be destroyed" (444).³⁶ This last, an addition to TSII, seems like an echo of the first passage when put beside it. Birkin the explorer takes another form of travel here, metaphysically consistent with his star-equilibrium, yet placed between the split and not outside of it. The figural containment, analogous to Gerald's philosophical containment, is unmistakable, as it is in Loerke's dream, which no longer remits even the semblance of mediation through a plunge "across the chasm." In the first dream-alternative, it is tempting to identify the "man" as Birkin himself, his explosive the "bomb" that Lawrence tells Bertrand Russell can still be planted, and the two halves as not only the Jesus/Judas, love/hate dualism of the condemned world, but as the division between Birkin's ideal and what he leaves behind. This interpretation is not as far-fetched as it may sound: such anonymity is a perfect cover for an awkward, and not fully acknowledged, desire to insist upon death, as Ursula argues earlier, and finds, in its masking of ambition, an interesting precedent in the famous unnamed "third murderer" of Macbeth. Looking forward, such anonymous pyrotechnics anticipate the cafe bomb in Aaron's Rod and the suspicious riot explosion in Kangaroo, where Somers, through an equally devious logic without objective credibility, appears to be the guilty party.

In Loerke's second option, the effect of such an explosion is redirected upon a social environment, a polarity of right and wrong, which sounds very much like an enactment of Birkin's "singing back." That this volleyball of truth and lies enters the narrative at such an advanced stage indicates that a proper Aufhebung is in fact unforthcoming, no matter how vehemently Birkin and Lawrence might argue for it

otherwise. Encoded within Loerke's fantasy, it takes on the misdirection he represents, a further travelling that is only another "way in," structurally bound to the map, the geography, it attempts to circumscribe. Loerke's overt dualism acts as the structural refrain for Birkin's covert halving of the world, rerouting his intended synthesis back into the incomplete dialogue that Women in Love represents. Here we witness both the retrospection of a tormented soul and the potential of a further bifurcation within male bonding itself: the expression in miniature of Birkin's intricate self-deception and the difficulties, inside the parameters he sets for himself, of adequately aligning his topical concerns with "pure" difference. Brothers of a strange blood, Loerke, in this consummate work of allegory and double-speak, is the face of Birkin grown old.

NOTES

¹ See Charles Ross, The Composition of *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* (Charlottesville: U.P. of Virginia, 1979); John Worthen, "The Restoration of *Women in Love*," in D.H. Lawrence in the Modern World, ed. Peter Preston and Peter Hoare (London: Macmillan, 1989), 7-26; also the introduction to the Cambridge Edition *Women in Love*, ed. David Farmer, et al. (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1987). Ross's argument with the Cambridge editors (Worthen and Lindeth Vasey) is also of interest: cf. his review of the Cambridge *Women in Love* in Essays in Criticism, XXXVIII, iv, 342-351; Worthen and Vasey's response in XXXIX, ii, 176-184; and Ross's final(?) rejoinder in XXXX, i, 95-97. I give only the most authoritative accounts of (and debates over) the novel's textual history. Other speculations and reassemblies may be found in chapter eight of George Ford's Double Measure: A Study of the Novels and Stories of D.H. Lawrence (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1965); Eldon S. Branda, "Textual Changes in *Women in Love*," in Texas Studies in Literature and Language, VI, 306-21; and Mark Kinkead-Weekes, "The Marble and the Statue," in Imagined Worlds: Essays in Honour of John Butt, ed. Maynard Mack and Ian Gregor (London: Methuen, 1968), 371-418.

² D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1984), 27. Future references are taken from this text, with page numbers where appropriate.

³ The name "Oedipus," in fact, translates as "swollen foot," a result of a boyhood injury inflicted by his father, Laius, to evade the curse of patricide revealed to him by the Delphic Oracle. As Robert Graves tells the story, "Laius snatched him from the nurse's arms, pierced his feet with a nail and, binding them together, exposed him on Mt. Cithaeron." (Robert Graves, Greek Myths [London: Cassell, 1965], 371.) There is a suggestive connection here with Gerald's childhood fratricide, the "accident" that puts a hole, so to speak, in its victim. Much is made of this incident as part of a "curse" on the Crich family, and on

Gerald in particular, while the issue of "brotherhood" emerges as one of the most insistent themes in the novel. By a substitutive logic that becomes increasingly important in Lawrence's leadership works, Gerald's dead brother seems to be Birkin himself, anticipating the figural crucifixion that Gerald ("The Denier!") will carry out later. The trailing foot, therefore, appears as a deformity signalling a previous injury, the act of violence perpetrated by the father in the Oedipus legend and by the symbolic "brother" here. The feet bound together, in turn, suggest Christ on the Cross, playing into the Jesus/Judas motif that will shadow Women in Love as well as Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo. Although the extended and incomplete analogy may initially seem far-fetched, it proves to be merely the first in a series of such "semiotic" networks that relay messages incompatible with the "official" word: in this case, Birkin's assumption as modern-day prophet who already wills his own "throat cutting."

⁴ See Study of Thomas Hardy, in Phoenix, 476.

⁵ As Lawrence puts it in chapter twenty-three of Apocalypse: "Because, as a matter of fact, when you start to teach individual self-realization to the great masses of people, who when all is said and done are only fragmentary beings, incapable of whole individuality, you end by making them all envious, grudging, spiteful creatures"; "the mass of men have only the tiniest touch of individuality if any . . . It has always been so. And will always be so." (Apocalypse [Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1986], 122.) This two-class pragmatism is already prefigured in Mellors's resignation that "the masses of people oughtn't even try to think, because they can't . . . The few can go in for higher cults if they like. But let the mass be for ever pagan" (LCL, 326). Such a matter-of-fact rejection of moral and intellectual improvement comes full swing from his pre-war enthusiasm for writing as the best tool to make people "alter, and have more sense," and spells the doom of any normative social world that asserts itself in the leadership novels.

⁶ Malleeson is the name initially given to the "dry Baronet" in TSI and TSII (see note [24] for textual designations). "Mattheson" appears in the Penguin editions copied from "E2," though the Cambridge text adopts "Malleeson,"

as does Daniel Schneider in his chapter on Women in Love in The Artist as Psychologist, without, however, calling attention to the confusion in nomenclature. For publishing history and abbreviations, see the "Introduction" to the Cambridge Edition of Women in Love.

⁷ "As for The Rainbow, the suppression was caused by a certain league--the league for the promotion of moral purity, I believe it calls itself. It is very proud of its action. What fools and cowards this world is made up of!" Letter to William Hopkin, 7 December, 1915, in Letters, ii, 467.

⁸ In his appended "Note to 'The Crown'" (1925), Lawrence explains, in the cavalier, by turns sardonic, tone he often takes in his later reminiscences, that "we talked, but there was absolutely nothing in it. And the meetings didn't last two months" (Phoenix II, 364); also note the 18 January, 1915 letter to Hopkin: "I want to gather together about twenty souls and sail away from this world of war and squalor and found a little colony where there shall be no money but a sort of communism as far as necessities of life go, and some real decency" (Letters, ii, 259).

⁹ Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 1 December, 1915, Letters, ii, 461.

¹⁰ Letters, ii, 482.

¹¹ Ibid, 489, 90.

¹² Letter to Bertrand Russell, 29 February, 1916, Letters, ii, 547; letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, Letters, ii, 610.

¹³ Letters, ii, 650.

¹⁴ Letter to E.M. Forster, 6 November, 1916, in Letters, iii, 21.

¹⁵ Ibid, 96.

¹⁶ Ibid, 127.

¹⁷ Ibid, 139.

¹⁸ Ibid, 141.

¹⁹ As he tells Waldo Frank: "I believe in Paradise and Paradisal being: but humanity, mankind--crotte!" Letters, iii, 160.

²⁰ Aldritt's two chapters on Women in Love in The Visual Imagination of D.H. Lawrence--"A Dance of Opposites," and "Art, Epistemology, and Cezanne"--trace the novel's gradual

relinquishment of visual presentation and aesthetic concreteness in favor of language and what could be called a "rhetorical imagination." Aldritt cannot index this new anti-aesthetic, however, except through the well-worn labels of "narrative intrusion" and "authorial voice," both considered bete noires of proper narrative elegance. See Keith Aldritt, The Visual Imagination of D.H. Lawrence, 139-218.

²¹ Cf. Keith Sagar, The Art of D.H. Lawrence, 74-98.

²² Aside from the irritating suspicion that we are not dealing with form at all in such a defense of the modern "novel of experience," its recusancy, as Frank Kermode has established in A Sense of An Ending, can be viewed as the identifying characteristic of the novel form as a whole, its internal evolution a progressive revolt against narrative conventions. "The history of the novel is the history of forms rejected or modified, by parody, manifesto, neglect, as absurd . . . the history of the novel is a history of anti-novels." Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction (New York: Oxford U.P., 1967), 129-30, 131.

²³ See Barbara Hardy, The Appropriate Form: An Essay on The Novel, 161.

²⁴ I am following the C.U.P. Women in Love designations in labelling the "first" draft (the first complete extant manuscript, based in part on the revisions made to the surviving blue exercise books) as "TSI." Lawrence typed the first 2/3 of the manuscript himself from 12 July, 1916 through 13 October of that year, posting the remaining material to Pinker in London, who returned two typed copies of the three closing chapters by the middle of November. Lawrence, working very quickly (with Frieda's unreliable transcriptions), completed his revisions to TSI by the end of the month, resubmitting one of the corrected duplicates to Pinker and keeping the other for private circulation. Because of the somewhat haphazard copy process, in which Frieda occasionally altered wording, punctuation, and emphasis to satisfy her own literary premonitions, minor differences exist between TSI(a), the University of Texas copy used here, and TSI(b), deposited at the University of Toronto. Although TSI(b) was used as the base text for TSII, the differences between the two versions

are largely irrelevant for our present concerns, and were in many instances superseded by Lawrence's subsequent revision of TSII, completed in at least two stages, from May-December 1917 (I am following Ross) and in August/September 1919. It, like TSI(a), is located at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas. Textual quotes are indicated by (TSI) or (TSII) as necessary.

²⁵ "West Pacific" is an alteration from "West African," which appears in TSII and E1, the first English edition of Women in Love published by Secker in 1920. Lawrence subsequently agreed to certain changes in description and nomenclature in response to Philip Heseltine's 1921 libel threat, but "West African" remains in "Moony," while "Pussum"--the original for "Minette"--leaks through on two other occasions. The Cambridge edition, which takes TSII as its base text, uses "West African" consistently, as does Daniel Schneider, who refers to the gravid statue in "Totem" as the "African woman." Cf. Schneider, The Artist as Psychologist, 186-7.

²⁶ Graham Bradshaw, "Lapsing Out in Women in Love," in English, Spring 1983, 17-32. This division between touch and sight cannot be consistently applied in all cases, however, insofar as Ursula herself is often presented as being "colorful." It is possible, perhaps, to read this as a mark of her inadequate apprenticeship to Birkin's ethics of the tactile, yet the revisions do not bear a correspondent increase in visual associations.

²⁷ As Birkin originally remarks about him in "Breadalby," Gerald is "bound to follow his instinctive self"; in "Man to Man," he shows, unlike the later Gerald, that he has at least given thought to the problem of mortality: "I don't want to die, but death is there, of course, and one doesn't pretend to get away from it--I don't think I'm afraid" (TSI, 250). In the novel, he is markedly vacant and inattentive: "The question doesn't seem to be on the carpet for me at all. It doesn't interest me, you know" (196).

²⁸ Iser, in his chapter on aesthetic "strategies" in The Act of Reading, lists four different arrangements of narrative proportion: counterbalance, opposition, echelon, and serial. The first, which is "mainly to be found in devotional,

didactic, and propagandist literature," offers an intratextual hierarchy of value that ranks characters according to their adherence to or rejection of the given ideology, as well as an extra-textual response to a social deficiency. One might say, to develop Iser's model, that the narrative allegory we find in *Lawrence* is the effect of his deliberate and volatile obfuscation of this social referent. Women in Love must therefore include a textual "double," exerting ideological pressure from the inside, to supplant its disinherited link to contemporary English life. See Wolfgang Iser, The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response, 86-103.

²⁹ As was noted in the "Introduction," Gerald makes a similarly cryptic remark in another important scene in "Water Party," when he seconds Ursula's criticism of Birkin with a choric, "You're quite right."

³⁰ It should be understood here that "ethical perspective," like "personal choice" in the previous paragraph, is not synonymous with an individual ethical act. It must be kept in mind that intentionality is a structure of cognition opposing any reified ideal, but also distinct from the isolated empirical judgment which it grounds. This is consistent with the phenomenological understanding of the term, as outlined in the preface and "Rainbow" chapter, but can lead to confusion if Ursula's demystifying energy is pictured within an empirical ethics that allows for a human but non-moral act.

³¹ Although Bakhtin is careful to distinguish his concepts of heteroglossia and dialogism ("the plurality of equal consciousnesses and their worlds") from the "usual functions of character and plot development," and from the symbolist dogma of the expressive voice, his grid of polemical voices, as he remarks in "Epic and The Novel," itself generates a "higher form of realism." The point for Bakhtin, here and elsewhere, is resolutely a sociological one, controlled by an author who has not so much disappeared into the unresolved argument of his creation as broadened his horizon of textual mastery. Incarnations of a divine referee, the authors Bakhtin favors (Rabelais, Dostoyevski, Sterne, Pushkin), assume that their contestants, despite a repeated vilification on his part of "semantic positions," announce "a

much more far-reaching phenomenon than merely the relationships between speeches in a literary composition; they are an almost universal phenomenon which permeates all of human speech and all the relationships and manifestations of human life and, in general, everything that has meaning and significance" (34).

In Lawrence, on the other hand, the conflict of perspectives operates vertically as well as horizontally, and so cannot be reduced to a mimetic representation of variegated experience, in either Bakhtin's or Barbara Hardy's sense. The dialogism in Women in Love, in other words, is not so much ideological as rhetorical, a lattice work of quasi-independent meaning systems that do not directly depend upon a prior sociological formation or its thematic arrangement in a novel. See "Epic and the Novel," in The Dialogic Imagination, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 3-40. Also the introductory chapter to Problems of Dostoyevski's Poetics, trans. r.w. rotsel (Ardis, 1973).

³² H.M. Daleski, The Forked Flame, 128.

³³ At the very least, Birkin's resolution at the close of the work that male friendship is possible, a position Lawrence himself holds and will develop in future novels, negates the cynical conclusion that he is just "comforting" himself. One must, in an aesthetics of properly proportioned plot development, view Birkin either ironically or anironically, but not both at intermittent intervals without appropriate textual cues (e.g. a change in his self-awareness, or as part of an experimental exercise in narrative unreliability). That such blatant inconsistencies are present in the work without evident resolution indicates that we should look elsewhere for an adequate explanation (and not blanket condemnation) of its form.

³⁴ I am thinking of the custom of substituting coinage for teeth, which indicates a sleight-of-hand transformation not unlike the "magical" exchange of a symbolic stocking for a literal one in the balancing of Ursula's nascent commitment to Birkin.

³⁵ In fact, this male-bonding appears as early as the rejected "Prologue" (written 1915), but there it serves as an

alternative to Hermione's "mental proligacy," and without the textual significance of a blank in Birkin's adjustable margin of experience.

³⁶ TSII depicts this dream, in fact, as Gudrun's alone; that this was altered to "one or the other" in the final copy indicates, with the revised vision itself, the need to draw the subliminal connection between the two men closer together.

WORDS AND BIRDS

"Why bother! Why strive for a coherent, satisfied life? Why not drift on in a series of accidents--like a picaresque novel? Why not? Why bother about human relationships? Why take them seriously--male or female? Why form any serious connection at all? Why not be casual, drifting along, taking all for what it was worth?"

--Women in Love

"The ideal of love, the ideal that it is better to give than to receive, the ideal of liberty, the ideal of the brotherhood of man, the ideal of the sanctity of human life, the ideal of what we call goodness, charity, benevolence, public spiritness, the ideal of sacrifice for a cause, the ideal of unity and unanimity--all the lot--all the whole beehive of ideals--has all got the modern bee-disease, and gone putrid, stinking."

--Aaron's Rod

Begun in the last two months of 1917, Aaron's Rod picks up many of the themes that Women in Love organized in its own complicated attempt to form an adequate coalition between self and world, between necessary and optional, and between the act of speaking and the absoluteness of the referent it speaks about. As we saw in this earlier work, both phenomenological and deconstructive elements make themselves evident, the first by reemphasizing the immediacy of experience in the face of a social world of facts and responsibilities, and the second by folding this phenomenology over on itself, as the immediate becomes itself an ideal which seems to controvert Birkin's own programme. From this we plotted the structural complications of a dialogical narrative, and also the interplay of allegory and realism that seemed to bring out the suppressed "voice" in Birkin's polemics of death-knowledge and the limited Utopia. The dialectical hope that informed The Rainbow and the Study of Thomas Hardy still helps direct Women in Love's narrative, but it is at best an Ariadne's thread with several of Birkin's self-imposed Gordian conflicts knotted therein, leading us back into the labyrinth, the false promises of the Imperial Road, rather than outward into a projected freedom.

Aaron's Rod in its own right both clarifies and complicates this difficult textual interweave, achieving the

first only through an attendant intensification of the second. While Birkin's concluding interrogation about male-bonding does not find an answer in the novel, the "power" possibility that is to replace our "modern bee-disease" of ideals is driven along by Rawdon Lilly, whose ultimate deferral leaves an overbalance of questions and suspicions. We are not quite satisfied that, in true picaresque fashion, nothing really "happens" in Aaron's Rod, and neither, it appears, is the text itself, for it alternately makes runs at an operable solution to Birkin's hanging uncertainty about "otherness" and rhetorically cuts itself off from ever letting such a possibility see the light of day. Once again, it appears that any solution necessarily becomes anachronistic in contact with an external world, including Lilly's own well-guarded ethos of submission "to some greater soul" (347), which not only risks being confused with slavery or a Nietzschean will to power, but faces the threatening conclusion that it is a hypostasis of the equilibrium it desires to preserve.¹

So what exactly, as Aaron frequently wonders, is one to do? Or what is one to do and undo, for everything in the observable world seems to exhibit a spatial excess, from the cloying domesticity of the Sisson Christmas and Mrs. Houseley's (note the name) voluminous presence in "Royal Oak" to Lady Franks' worship of "chords, chords!" (166), the Saturday orchestration at the Del Torre's, and even the bombed-out Sunday evening Kaffeeklatch in "The Broken Rod." Aaron's "rod," at once phallus, flower, and flute, is the instrument of escape from Spengler's Faustian ontology, with its implications of depth, harmony, and abstraction; yet as Aaron himself complains to Lilly in "The War Again," "what's the use of going somewhere else . . . when you're only killing time like the rest of folks, before time kills you" (126, 7).² Any step outside of space and time (and this, we remember, was Ursula's argument for most of Women in Love) leads right back in, to the extent that even the picaresque, travelogue adventures through Italy come to an end with the anarchist bomb. Society, in its Victorian morality or its socialist fervor, resists a final evasion, leaving us both structurally and thematically in the middle ground between the impossibility of pure lyricism (the only thing worth

following) and the "life-rot" of an external world. Suspended from these two poles, the same two that orchestrated the transition in Women in Love from dialectics to dialogics, from phenomenology to textual allegory, Aaron's Rod will extend its own narrative of the social ideal that must ultimately retain its sketchy incompleteness.

This conflict of injunction and subjunction saturates Aaron's Rod in three different directions: on a plot level as the manipulation of motif and description, on a structural level as an intratextual rhetoric, and on a generic plane as the formal control for the other two. The bifurcation of theme and structure is a familiar holdover from Women in Love, while the third becomes conspicuous in the partial shift from realism to the picaresque as an implied mode of presentation. Women in Love is not "realistic," as we have shown, but there is nevertheless an attempt to render fact and consciousness through a seriously entertained social milieu, and the allegory that appears in that work is in fact dependent on the initial inadequacy of realism to cover Birkin's ideological range. In Aaron's Rod, however, the mood is very different, and while its picaresque form doesn't quite allow it to move in the lyrical frame of Aaron's Debussy or Moussorgsky, it absorbs more of the intransigent leak into description and representation. As a result, this "daft novel," as Lawrence once termed it in a letter to Mark Gertler, for the most part touches on the allegorical in a slightly different way than the earlier narrative did; whereas before, a realistic frame splits specific characters and their textual functions, now the allegory operates predominantly between textual cues (e.g. chapter titles, authorial interruptions), recurrent motifs, the interchangability of character (a whole lot of people speak bits and pieces of Lilly's philosophy), and even oblique parallels to the Biblical Moses/Aaron adventure.³

Without the same burden of a realistic anchor, Aaron's Rod can free-float its characters as substitutions in a narrative dialogue with greater ease, the incongruities of motive and setting dissolving into the jerky, periodic style the novel assumes. The logic of Lawrence's allegory, as we shall see, remains the same--the right hand simultaneously requiring and yet refusing a knowledge of what the left hand

is doing--but at only one point do we reencounter the bifurcation between realistic portrayal and intra-textual purpose, and this occurs, predictably enough, just where the picaresque form confronts its own limits. As a narrative, Aaron's Rod must ultimately attempt to order its material on a plot level, if only through the framing devices of disorder and irony. As with Women in Love, however, the "drifting along" of this first leadership novel is not an objectification of the peripatetic and incongruous, and as a result, such ordering must develop in opposition to what the narrative otherwise attempts to do. When forced to summarize Aaron's wanderings, to give the sequence of events and perspectives meaning as a narrative, the novel feels the pressure to unveil the reason for its existence. At this point, problems of intentionality and reference reemerge, and the cloak of the picaresque is stripped away to reveal the skeleton of the social message and the threat of its achievement within the "ego ontology" that Lilly sets up. This fresh danger to the structural blank, represented here by Lilly's tautological, but ultimately political, "I am I, and only I am I, and I am only I" (289), drives the ideal and its normative emphasis together, forcing a planar shift of the kind we discovered in Women in Love as a last-minute redirection through allegory. The climax of this maneuver, as it tries to hide what the novel expends great pains to reveal (and, indeed, to reveal what the novel wishes to hide) becomes the CRASH! of "The Broken Rod," the explosion, among other things, of textual pressures.

We should not conclude from such a manipulation of desires, however, that, as Eliseo Vivas would have it, Aaron's Rod betrays "its utter lack of form."⁴ Such a Procrustean cookie-cutting in the name of a slightly condescending aesthetic formalism is hardly more useful than the insistent apologias for "modernist form" that present inconclusiveness and the "experimental" novel as the solution to all questions of narrative design. If one's critical repertoire is limited to the thematic balancing of images, of course, the novel cannot help but be, for better or worse, the benchmark of convolution and incoherence. But as Paul G. Baker has remarked, this is not so much an analysis of the work as we

have it as it is a phantom condemnation of Lawrence's failure to "conform to their notions of the kind of novel they feel Lawrence ought to have written."⁵ The question of form must be advanced a degree from Vivas's poetics of the sufficient image to cover the rhetoric which mitigates social touchstones and the points of view that ideally radiate from them. The synthesis of scene and character which allows the image to direct interpretation is characteristically absent in Lawrence's novels from The Rainbow forward, with a kind of textual allegory that can be labelled deconstructive taking over in Women in Love and guaranteeing that the "what" of a narrative and its "why," to use Cynthia Asquith's terms, will never coalesce. This open-endedness, which is not organic or spatial, but rhetorical and temporal (the time of what Derrida would call the "trace"), forever threatens to make itself redundant, as its given object of discourse--the structural blank--repeatedly attempts to transform itself into concrete fact.⁶ As we will see, Lilly, no less than Birkin, has a message and wants us to listen; in addition, the allegory itself, by advancing along its rungs of statement and counterstatement, works toward some form of mediation and closure. Though such a maneuver would threaten the novel's existence, its elimination would have the same effect, forcing Aaron's Rod to stretch and snap between these two anchors without settling firmly over either. The result is not incoherence or an "utter lack of form," but a form unguessed at in a one-dimensional accounting of the aesthetic object.

It would perhaps be useful at this point to delineate the structural and thematic devices that are used to delay or distort the message that Aaron's Rod still intends, leading into its generic complication and the particular kind of allegory this manufactures. As we noted above, Aaron's Rod for the most part etiologues Lilly's polemics of the real with a series of misdirections neatly arranged under the umbrella of picaresque coincidence. We have also spoken of the opposition of melodic and harmonic music as one in which the former term rejects the aegis of space while the latter clogs the atmosphere of free-drift required for self-direction and discovery. In contrast to Aaron's "melody pure and simple" comes Lady Franks' protestation that "I just live in harmony--

chords, chords!", a testament to the sticky glut of form and volume. As an emblem of sketchiness, the incisive penetration of the fluted phallus, Aaron's melodic reveries bounce him along on the varied pitch of experience in England and abroad. The spatial reticulation and support of harmonic chords, more appropriate to the domestic volume of Lottie and Royal Oak, adhere to what Birkin would term the "finished rock," while the pure temporality of the drifting tone, snatched here and there as the "bright, quick sound of pure animation" (271), becomes a sign of movement without content, of immediate and "blank" experience unburdened by the finality of fact.

Like the love ethic and incipient male bond in Women in Love, of course, this melodic disengagement of Aaron's Rod must eventually strike up an accompaniment, and play scores set by others. Both "At the Opera" and "Florence" give ample evidence of this, and detail the tangent of engagement through which a "pure, lovely song-drift" (299) might be heard-- always, however, on the edge of what is elsewhere called "a ponderous, nerve-racking steam-roller of noise" (166). Even in the picaresque narrative, where space is disseminated into many spaces as the hero rejects the finality of the locative, one nevertheless winds up somewhere, and in Aaron's Rod, this "where" is in the thick of the socialist scrimmage, which seems to establish the impossibility of ever working outside of a socio-political infrastructure; one may drift on in a series of accidents, but sooner or later, society will arrange its own accident for the alienist wandering in his self-made desert.

This melody of experience also takes the turn against its own message already found in the rhetorical slippages of Women in Love. Transmuted into an extension of the male bond with its preservation of self-integrity through obedience to a "positive power-soul," the discourse of melody not only delineates the necessary attrition of the single note, but also insists upon its sketchiness against a harmonic world and its "wet walls of emotions and ponderous chains of feelings and a ghastly atmosphere of must-be" (271-2). Pure melody is not only phenomenologically endangered but a kind of summum bonum which, in Birkin's terms, sings back to the symphonic existence that the picaresque, and the structural blank, are

designed to subvert. In the later novel, finished in Baden-Baden in 1921, Lilly formulates an isolationism, most fully given in "Words," that directs itself toward an ill society caught in what he calls a "love whoosh" (341). Yet it aims to achieve, at the same time, a disengaged individuality modeled upon the absoluteness of plant and animal worlds, "from the egg into the chicken" (343) and, one degree further advanced in the naturalization of human behavior, as "a dandelion [which] unfolds itself into a dandelion and not into a stick of celery."

Such determinism recalls Birkin's insistence on the death-urge in Women in Love, and brings with it the same charge of reification. In Aaron's Rod, however, the ontology of the "Tree of Life" diffuses the immediate impact of a social criticism: one must now make the additional jump from a biomorphic world to an anthropomorphic one, sifting through another layer of meaning that requires an additional decoding and dialectical extraction. Aaron, for his part, attempts this very task ("But you talk . . . as if we were like trees, alive by ourselves in the world. We aren't." [345]), but Lilly overpowers him and eventually resurrects the duality of self vs. world: "We must either love, or rule" (347). In "Words," Lilly seems to have the final word, and while it is suggestive rather than indicative, no Ursula Brangwen appears to analyze his rhetoric and highlight the covert transition between the isolated, naturalistic act and its normative status in a world of choice and moral value. In "Words," at least (though not, as we will see, in "The Broken Rod"), Lilly's doctrine of "harmonic melody" pushes through without effective counterargument from his respondent.

Elsewhere in the narrative, however, and within the structure of the novel as a whole, this bond between Aaron and Lilly itself acts as a delay mechanism, an expression of the "blank" of male-bonding that Birkin initiated in Women in Love. As if to avoid the incisive remarks of an Ursula, Aaron's Rod reduces the importance of the wifely consort (Tanny in this case), and intensifies the interaction between men, and especially between Lilly and Aaron--alter egos, as Leavis claims, in Lawrence's play-off of the "natural" man and the intellectual.⁷ Like alternate waves which periodically

intersect, Aaron and Lilly encapsulate much of the narrative tension between them, replacing Birkin and Ursula's dialogical allegories with the more episodic and one-dimensional interchanges under the control of picaresque coincidence. Insofar as the picaresque form deflates much of the seriousness of Lilly's (and Aaron's) philosophy, the two figures can interact for the most part on the same plane of narrative meaning; the insistent attention to an aesthetics of realism is absorbed (while the picaresque remains effective, that is) by the "series of accidents" that Birkin rejected in the early chapters of Women in Love. Therefore, in "The War Again," Aaron and Lilly are set against each other, but within the episodic one man/one perspective frame not available in the earlier novel. The question here returns to the familiar one of place, and Aaron pins Lilly with "But what's the good of going to Malta? Shall you be any different in yourself in another place? You'll be the same there as you are here" (126). Lilly at this point must admit that "he had not expected this criticism," and the argument continues with Aaron claiming that "the middle of you doesn't change" (127) while Lilly retorts that something in him does change, that he isn't merely "a man running into a pub for a drink" (127) to liven himself up. The dialogue ends with a hostile, but vigorous, "almost uncanny understanding" between the two, who are affirmed to relate to each other "like brothers" (129).

A similar argument is taken up in "Nel Paradiso," where Lilly speaks an odd language indeed if we take into account his final diatribe in "Words." Speaking of Florence, he says, "I love it . . . I love this place. I love the cathedral and the tower. I love its pinkness and its paleness" (276): quite different in tone from Aaron's own discovery of Florence as the town of "the three great naked men" (253), where "men had been at their intensest, most naked pitch" (254). But in this ironically named chapter, which begins by immediately drawing attention to its separation from the "innumerable black figures" below (as language seems to elevate itself above the efficacy of action), Lilly is an oddly passive figure who seems to be a voice for moderation in contrast to the misogynist reflexes of Aaron, Argyle, and Del Torre. Throughout, Lilly forwards the possibility of mediation

between will and act, love and power, while Aaron supplies the tourniquet to his partner's hemorrhage of imperatives: speaking of Lilly's "reflowering" of the human race, Aaron comments, "if it's going to, it will . . . Our deciding about it won't alter it" (277). And with respect to the problem of bonding, Lilly answers Argyle's avowal that "One is alone . . . in all but love" (289) with the claim that "in love most intensely of all, alone." This rejoinder borders on the absurd for a character who will shout at Aaron shortly thereafter, "Ah-bah! The grinding of the old millstones of love" (338), and seems understandable only if we take the masculine confab as a sort of ideological point/counterpoint in which the emphasis is placed on the conflict in question and not on the individual who happens to voice one of its constituent perspectives. Again, attention to motive and characterization proves less important than an analysis of the philosophical conundrum of identity and merging, of speech and the abecedarian or self-sufficient act: each degree of fusion or personal intervention is marked in a progression of exchangeable personae which plays the power message off against its possible objections or repressions, regardless of the fictional integrity of the character in question.

But there is a further explanation for what could perhaps be called Lilly's devil's advocacy in "Nel Paradiso." By placing him as the straight-man here (a role that Aaron, following Ursula in Women in Love, more frequently takes up), ideological pressure is released from what will become Lilly's very polemical argument in "Words." To the degree that Aaron's Rod still attempts to assert its social ideal--at this point, Lilly's "dandelion" ontology and the separatist power-ethic that attaches to it--the cover offered by the picaresque will ultimately fail of its distortion, drawing Lilly dangerously into the open. We have already seen this exposure with respect to the dualism of love and hate, and his model becomes so severe, in fact, that Aaron suffers the accusation of being "a love urger" (342). As with the Ursula of Women in Love, moreover, the criticism of Aaron extends to a self-deception: he is unwilling to admit this "little dodge" (341). Surely, this is not an Aaron that we find elsewhere in the novel, and his revised characterization reveals nothing if not

Lilly's desperate and myopic insistence on the message that has been withheld to this point. Though we are nowhere given a retraction of Lilly's position on the plot level, the awkwardness of his conclusion seems to feed back into the kind of reversal found in "Nel Paradiso," where Lilly's straight-man behavior has the effect of attenuating his later explosion from a distance. We are asked to take Lilly seriously at the moment of speech, yet a memory or trace of ingenuousness and even opposition throws the whole polemic back upon itself. As a character, Lilly is not portrayed as insane or untrustworthy, but the contradictions in his behavior are left hanging, asserting both the truth and the falsity of what he severally claims without mediation. As insurance against the death of the episodic, Lilly's "heteroglossia" protracts an extended function of the picaresque after its necessary discontinuation as a formal control.

This textual delay works, then, to the degree that we realize that the final word is not Lilly's after all, or the word as he gives it to us in "Words" anyway. Even though there is no question of directed parody here, of a synthesis through genre or levels of narration of the power ethic, the message is already strangely rerouted through the revelation of what it excludes: Aaron's belief that Lilly's insistence on "dandelion being" is just so much talk, and the ingestion of the preferred male-female inequality into Argyle and Del Torre, two characters who are embedded in the picaresque effluvium, and who are left behind, both thematically and structurally, after the cafe bombing. In the first instance, Aaron, "silenced for a moment by this flood of words," implies an objection to Lilly's rhetoric parallel to the reminder, quoted above, that we aren't "like trees, alone by ourselves in the world"; in the latter, Lilly's polemic is softened by inserting the energetic denunciation of love into the mouths of otherwise minor figures who belong to their place and who drop away when Aaron and Lilly move onward. Led by Lilly's circuitous philosophical thread, one gropes back for the masonic gospel of the half-forgotten rooftop gathering, the lingering structural cue of a reversal of expectation and complication of belief.

All of this depends, of course, upon precisely such a split memory of "Nel Paradiso" when we consider Lilly's philippic in the country inn, a memory that doesn't control the novel (i.e. is not given for us to believe) as much as expose its architecture. Not surprisingly, therefore, a mechanism of delay is inserted in the form of language itself, keeping the whole affair neatly in the subjunctive and mitigating, once again, the crisis of a realized relationship between men that not only preaches disengagement and solipsism but covertly enters a social exchange of dominance and submission, power vs. love. The importance and distrust of language in the novel, in fact, makes for instructive scrutiny, faring rather poorly on a thematic level as an efficient catalyst for action and understanding. Leo Bersani, in his intelligent chapter on "Lawrentian Stillness" in A Future for Astyanax, speaks of Lawrence's use of the natural and absolute as "fundamentally incommensurable with all the dialogue apparently necessary to convince us of the insignificance of dialogue itself," a position that we have located in Lawrence's work well enough already.⁸ We know, from Birkin's ruminations in Women in Love, that "Words make no matter, anyway" (WiL, 242), but also in Aaron's Rod that Aaron's presumed obligation to Lilly, at least partly with authorial consent, involves what the former calls "word splitting" (128).⁹ As Aaron remarks in the same chapter, which also sees the appearance of Herbertson, the ultimate reducer of action to talk, "it seemed to him like a lot of words and a bit of wriggling out of a hole" (145).¹⁰ We are also struck by the two chapter titles, as Anthony Beal reminds us, which proclaim their non-association with actions: "Words" and the earlier "Talk," where, in fact, we not only have talk but writing too in the facetious maxims that Lilly builds from Jim Bricknell's Herzweh.¹¹ The irony in the transcription of Jim's philosophy, "When you love, your soul breathes in, when your soul breathes out, it is a bloody revolution" (cf. 79), enters with the sense of permanence that writing suggests. Lilly, to be consistent with the book's title and leitmotif, constructs his own Mosaic commandments on the tavern mantelpiece, scribblings of the desultory wishes of a "spineless" civilization, but cast in stone, as it were, with

epiphanic finality. Although the source of wisdom, to realign Joyce's Stephen Daedalus, is no more than a shout in the pub, the fixity of writing emerges as the best transcription, ironically, for the dead-end of the love-ethic. Love is Bricknell's sine qua non, and "talk" and writing are the chosen media to relay this sterility.

Insofar as this is the case, however, the title to the final chapter acquires a special irony. One cannot read "Words" referentially as a mere description of its content. It is epigraphic, of course, but also a reminder, reemphasizing the instruction of "Nel Paradiso," that Lilly cannot be taken too literally--that indeed, he pushes his theory too far, excluding both image and word in favor of a biomorphic integrity. The ideal of the organic absolute, which Friedrich Schlegel elsewhere criticizes as the King Gorboduc philosophy, sees the familiar danger of eliminating the intentional in favor of the pre-existent, the structural directive "for" society within a thematic distantiation outside of it.¹² In response, the literal application of "Words" is supplemented by an interdict on a conventional level, a verbal commentary of a verbal event that chapter titles in a novel are privileged to supply. "Words" is about words, the Mosaic words that Lilly articulates, but this sacred voice not only recalls the facetious commandments of "Talk" (where should the line be drawn between serious and parodic?), but suggests that these words are only words and unavoidably words. Based upon Lilly's assertions elsewhere, his closing arguments suffer a serious discount, mitigating the polemical charge that in the end, there are only "two great life-urges" and that "we've got to accept the very thing we've hated" (345). At the same time, in the design of the novel as a whole, the return of "Words" provides the ethical ground by which choice (the choice and arrangement of language) reaffirms its co-importance with being. The apodictic and determined must nevertheless be narrated, but this narration, insofar as it is denied by Lilly's philosophy of the integral self, appears through a second-order, structural orientation. Like a pun, the chapter title here spreads itself along a double axis, that of its conventional and literal meanings, allowing one signifier to operate in two

different semiotic systems, and more importantly, on different planes of referential significance. In an allegory advanced in structural sophistication from what we experienced in Women in Love, narrative statement now seems to play off against the voice of the ideologue, which loses none of its importance (it is still, in one sense, the novel's raison d' être), but nevertheless must be prevented from completing its intended project as such. Through the pivot of a narrative linguistics, Lilly both speaks the truth and speaks the truth, never cancelling his own polemical discourse, yet never escaping from the influence of its refracted antithesis.

Such a reading can easily be extended by drawing the more explicit connection between word and image that is controlled by the central motif of "concrete writing" (i.e. the Mosaic tablet) as Lilly gives it to us in his argument for "dark, living, fructifying power" (345), and as he parodies this act in "Talk." In this respect, the novel could be retitled Aaron's Rod and Moses' Tablet, the omission acting as another divergence from the overt announcement of writing.¹³ A further divergence of this sort appears in the suggested connection between words and objects ("word-splitting" and "idols," as Aaron puts it) in "The War Again," and once more in the strange but perversely predictable description of Lilly as a "Byzantine eikon" at the very end of the narrative. Clearly, this latter characterization in no way agrees with the message of singularity that Lilly proposes: the love-ethic is precisely that which exercises a spatial monopoly, "stuck together like two jujube lozenges" (111), and weighs one down, like Lady Franks's "swimming sapphires," instead of furthering the self-integrity and separateness that Lilly prefers--a "space" that attempts to void space altogether.¹⁴ As a redefinition of the "raw rock," not sketchy but iconic, this odd description turns the conveyor of Messianic law into an idol himself, a false god who, in the name of a greater truth, only pronounces his own end and will. If, as Richard Aldington claims, "David Herbert Lawrence" is the answer to Aaron's question of obeisance ("And whom shall I submit to?" [347]), the novel releases this information through the use of an otherwise incidental comparison, indirectly asserting the materiality of any escape into a transcendental absolute.¹⁵

A similar unfolding of message and method orients the reading of Lilly's "punch in the wind," an episode that, although drawn from a visit by Capt. Jack White (Jim Bricknell) to the Lawrences in Cornwall, works in the narrative as Bricknell's scene of revenge. In response to Lilly's parodic inscription of his fatuous love-whooshings in "Talk," Jim temporarily removes his antagonist's ability to speak. And even though "A Punch in the Wind" is a hugely comic scene well attuned to picaresque description, it also functions within the novel's bifurcated verbal network as a further example of Lilly's ultimate dependency upon "talk." "There's a great silence, suddenly!" Tanny remarks as her husband fights to regain his breath ("not letting the other two see," we might add), and in this most dialogue-riddled of any Lawrencian novel, the silence of the voice is indeed cause for reflection. No matter how badly words are treated, they are precisely the tools by which Lilly's argument is simultaneously forwarded and delayed, and the device, finally, through which Lawrence's story is made available to us.

We will have occasion to return to the issue of language in a structural sense shortly, but its thematic complications can only, for brevity of exposition, be suggested here as proof of the thorough contravention of almost all of Lilly's activities by an attendant counterlogic, enacted within the semiotic lattice-work the text builds, but certainly not present on the level of Lilly's stated beliefs. (Precisely because they cannot appear on this level, in fact, they emerge elsewhere, with a thoroughness that responds exactly to the rigidity of his organic absolute.) But we should briefly consider perhaps the most obvious thematic distortion that Aaron's Rod offers, a system of meanings that will also indicate the range and importance of these "semiotic networks."

Just as dialogue works within language as a textual diversion, a certain distortion is offered by the "message" of biomorphic comparison itself. We have already spoken of Lilly's dandelion which "unfolds itself into a dandelion, and not into a stick of celery," and also about Aaron's flowering rod, but this organicism extends to Lilly's name as well, which connects with the "lily" he identifies as Florence.

Names are of course another device for storing resistances, and like Birkin's own moniker (the German for "birch" is "Birke,"), Lilly's nominal designation grounds his homiletics in an earthly, specifically "marshy" (a "marsh flower" like Gudrun and Gerald) germination.¹⁶ It may seem odd at first that Lilly's dandelion ethic requires such a reminder. Yet the divisive incompatibility of method and message must not be forgotten here: that which acts as a return to the "root" thematically denies any common, structural origination. "Nel Paradiso," in this light (where the Florence/lily connection is made) carries a severe burden of intelligibility: it is at once a parody of the "heights" such theory attempts (the Ranim, or Promised Land, we might say, that Lilly/Moses projects but cannot enter), a reversal of Lilly's usual role as ideologue, and the suggestion, beneath all of this, that the flowering can only occur removed from ground level. Lilly's metalepsis of cause and effect implants the thought world into the organic world only to find that this organic world must germinate in mid-air, as it were--a condition that incites the familiar anxiety over an illegitimate transvaluation, but also satisfies the equally familiar requirement of an alternative for civilization at a distance from it. If Lilly is to remain outside the promised land (a condition, ironically enough, for its existence in the first place), he must keep a space open between object and method, referent and speech-process, so that a social solution might be forwarded which nevertheless attempts to break from all social functioning whatsoever.

Far more striking, however, is the extended manipulation of animal characteristics as a device for shifting the plane of narrative attention within which the allegory of social intervention and social rejection might then be played out. In this vein, Aaron's Rod, like The Lost Girl (where everyone seemingly moves about like a bird of one sort or another), presents a veritable aviary of positions and perspectives: Argyle is a "shady bird" (277); Lilly is a "peculiar bird" (335) and a cuckoo (of both African and Essex variety [337]); Angus Guest is a "bird-creature [who] looks down from the eaves of a house" (241); and "little" Louis Mee has a "tiny bird-like face" (259). Algy Constable, moreover, flaps his

eyelids "like some crazy owl" (257), while the Marchesa not only laments that "the bird has flown" when describing her singing voice, but is pictured as someone "throwing cold water" over Aaron's Phoenix (303). To complement this parliament of fowls, Lawrence also makes use of a snake-bird dualism, resurrecting the motif of a "hidden desire" for victimization that we noted in Women in Love, and in the present novel as the "dirty show" (97) of the Judas/Jesus connection and as Herbertson's presentiment of death. In Aaron's Rod, this indictment is, if anything, even more convoluted than Birkin's difficult logic of a covertly desired annihilation in this earlier work. Lilly carries the self-reflexive stamp that makes him alternate between Birkin and Gerald's perspectives, another internalization that preempts confrontational dialogue as the primary carrier of allegorical meaning. In "A Punch in the Wind," therefore, Bricknell forwards the rather astute (and very Birkinese) remark that "He's a profound figure, is Judas. It's taken two thousand years to begin to understand him"; Lilly, however, dissents: "A traitor is a traitor--no need to understand any further." But in speaking about Aaron shortly thereafter, Lilly picks up Bricknell's very insight in support of a man's need to "pivot himself on his own pride" (120): "Well, if one will be a Jesus, he must expect his Judas. That's why Abraham Lincoln gets shot. A Jesus makes a Judas inevitable" (130).

Every ideal, it appears, creates its own inbred "virus," which betrays the advancement in understanding with the subliminal reappearance of what was overlooked or repressed. To create a hierarchy of values is to invite the overthrow of its incidental but authoritative ordering, a systematic reversal that attempts to reroute the previously omitted back into a philosophical exchange. That Lilly should place such emphasis on the system of betrayal when it is also the seminal problem in the leadership ethic as a whole--the assertion "betrayed" by the same finality it wishes to escape--indicates the textual involution that a reader of Aaron's Rod confronts. The disguised reflection of theme and structure is too exact for coincidence, yet its relationship depends on the indirect linkage of the analogy. To reconnect narrative design with the thematic message becomes the reader's dialectical task, in

opposition to the non-dialectical direction of the work and its attempt to perpetually delay the suggested equation of Lilly's "Jesus" with Lawrence's, the objective dualism of prophet/traitor with the objectifying anxiety that Aaron's Rod as a novel countermands its own raison d' être.

The snake/bird dualism, therefore, operates as yet another function of deferral at the same time that it provides a model for how these delays operate and identifies the system of mutual attraction that Lilly wishes to jettison. The systemic refraction touches the performative instance, in fact, at precisely this point in "Low-Water Mark": splitting a structure/theme axis, the "why" or "how" pried away from the "what," Lilly rejects the model of Jesus/Judas treachery at the same time (in his ministrations to Aaron) that he finds himself sucked into the same vortex of sacrifice and concern. Just as the design of the narrative produces the very thing it constitutively excludes, so do Lilly's experiences inevitably weave their way through his ideological dualisms. And what happens to him here happens to many of the other characters (within a certain limit of interchangeability) for the snake/bird fixation itself: if Aaron is a Phoenix bird, Josephine's habit of touching her tongue to her lips "suggest(s) a snake's flicker" (39), while Lottie's final appeal in "More Pillar of Salt" combines a "strange liquid sound" (the bad implications of wetness once again) with "the swaying of a serpent which mesmerizes the fated, fluttering, helpless bird" (154). Lottie is twice more associated with a snake, in fact, once affecting Aaron as "a diabolical cold grey snake that presses and presses and cannot relax" (196), and in the same chapter, as a bird now to Aaron's snake, repeating the emphasis of the snake/bird paralysis in reversed order: "She was in love with him: a certain unseizable beauty that was his, and which fascinated her as a snake a bird" (193). Aaron is also compared to a snake in "Low-Water Mark," this time by Lilly, who chides himself that the former will surely "bite me like a warmed snake" (120). The Marchesa, finally, as befits her relatively exalted status in a securely gynophobic novel, is pictured not as a snake, but as a scorpion (309) poisoning Aaron with her love, the sting of

touch, however, being ultimately less prurient than an ocular mesmerization.

The important thing to note here is the strange fixity of the image in question. A sort of optical deadlock characterizes the given world, emblematic of a desire for self-abnegation (a prostration before the golden calf, one might say) rather than self-fulfillment, in contrast to Birkin's own avowal in Women in Love that he has "seen" many women, and now wants a woman he can touch. Ironically, then, this fixation on sight, and the paralysis that accrues from it, is not an exfoliation of the "visual imagination," as Aldritt calls it, but more nearly a parody of the concrete. This becomes clear when we compare any one of these scenes of snake/bird comparison with the "sheaves" episode in The Rainbow, or Gudrun's cattle-charge in "Water Party": Aaron's Rod presents the imagistic as a semiotic device, a conventional characterization that acts as a sign rather than as an aesthetic object, whereas Women in Love, in some places at least, retains the detail of realistic geography.¹⁷ Whenever the snake/bird appears, we are not to interpret this as an image allowing access to a certain setting or symbolic event, but as a sign which variously translates as the mark of civilization's fault, the valuation of sight over touch, the abnegation of individual being for collective consciousness, and so forth. At this point, we reenter the realm of allegory again, not only in the parallel with the Old Testament adventures of Aaron and Moses, but within the novel itself as a sort of base/superstructure system, whereby snake-like behavior identifies Lottie, Josephine, Aaron, etc., but also subordinates them to an over-all philosophical meaning. It is not hard to see, therefore, how the traditional avenues of Anglo-American criticism, which favor the aesthetic over the semiotic, the image over the sign, the symbolic over the allegorical, and the empirically concrete over the phenomenological, will find Aaron's Rod, in Vivas's words again, "a radical incoherence in substance."¹⁸ An entirely different process of artistic invention is at work here, and one which, instead of reinforcing the bond between thought and object, forever puts the finality of the latter into question through the semiotic derivations of the former. In

paraphrastic and formalistic canons of excellence, structure and theme approach a convergence (and are calculated to do so even if they don't); in Aaron's Rod, on the other hand, truth and method forever orient themselves on perpendicular axes.

ii

The effect of the snake/bird semiotics is to push Aaron's Rod in the direction of the beast fable, a highly artificial convention which allows a reduction of the social order to a supposedly simpler plane of existence (as in Orwell's Animal Farm or Chaucer's Nun's Priest's Tale) at the same time that it retains its direction toward society. One can immediately see Lawrence's attraction to such a form, for like language and the male-male bond, or like the picaresque itself, the beast fable distorts this directedness just enough to give it the appearance of disengagement and self-sufficiency. In the narratives that succeed Aaron's Rod, the fabular will be increasingly prevalent, as Joyce Carol Oates and Bibhu Padhi have each pointed out, and not only will the snake/bird combination return as Quetzalcoatl in The Plumed Serpent, but the beast fable will itself be reversed into the "Jesus fable" of The Man Who Died.¹⁹ This criss-cross of high and low, superhuman and instinctive, will also appear in "The Woman Who Rode Away," The Plumed Serpent, the Mellors of the final Chatterley book, and Count Dionys in "The Ladybird." In each case, however, the hero or heroine is either underdetermined or overdetermined, and in the novels up to Lady Chatterley's Lover at least, allegorically situated between a social directive and an asocial escape.

A further deferral on a structural level, pivoting between the elliptical plot arrangement and its devices of narration, is the stylistic interruption of authorial voice, an injection that, with its incessant finger-wagging, no doubt incites someone like Vivas to label the creation of such doctrinaire sideshows as "obscene."²⁰ The commentary begins rather innocuously in the first half of the book as a tone-setter for chapters 4 and 5, where the circumstance of evening scenes is brought to our attention by the narrator: "Our story will not yet see daylight" (51) and "our story continues by

night" (59). Supplement this with the sardonic, Thackerayesque remark that "few women can sit in front of a big box, on a crowded and noisy opera night, without thrilling and dilating" (59), and we seem to bump along on picaresque energy alone until "Wie Es Ihnen Gefällt," where Lawrence jumps in to remind us about words again: "Don't grumble at me then, gentle reader, and swear at me that this damned fellow wasn't half clever enough to think all these smart things, and realize all these fine-drawn-out subtleties. You are quite right, he wasn't, yet it all resolved itself in him as I say, and it is for you to prove that it didn't" (199). For "If I, as a word-user, must translate his deep conscious vibrations into finite words, that is my own business. I do but make a translation of them. He would speak in music. I speak with words" (199).

At the very least, this insertion indicates that the emphasis on speech as a relay for experience is not accidental: Lawrence very clearly spells out the distinction between "deep conscious vibrations" and "finite words." Not only are words finite, static, and spatial, they are the acknowledged medium of the writer, who himself breaks the referential illusion to call attention to his artificial tool. This alone should indicate Lawrence's reticence about the reified, pre-verbal vibration, a reticence he voices elsewhere with respect to the affective fallacy of the Rousseauistic "good man" and the inelegance of his perennial post-war bête noire, the urge toward love and "merging."²¹ Yet considering how words are treated thematically in Aaron's Rod, Lilly's translation from language to act is only partly credible. We find ourselves again on a structure/theme axis: without question, such a translation, as the silent interchangability of idea and expression (the translation as transparency), both identifies and instigates Aaron's "wandering off," to say nothing of Lilly's own periodic materializations and doctrine of the "new life-mode" (338). Yet the very need to call attention to this act removes it from the realm of a natural assumption to that of an intended congruency. Whatever Lawrence might refer to in his intrusion (i.e. a diaphonous semantics), its appearance indicates the opposite: turning up the "wordliness" of words transforms the implicit into the

interruptive, ironically prohibiting the seamless extension into an external reality that these words invoke. Artifice cuts off direct reference; by playing structure against theme, the narrative at this point ensures that we shall not make the translation asked of us.

Again, it must be emphasized that all of this is not an analytical imposition or happenstance. Aaron's Rod extends an internal textual logic which, though clearly beyond Lawrence's control as the artist behind his work paring his fingernails, makes passages like these "hang together." The novel, much like Proust's Recherche, builds a narrative future only within the complications of a "successive regression," or what Bergson in another context has called the "antecedent future."²² This external wagering, moreover, in which the bets are progressively staked but never collected, is precisely the design of the narrative as we have it, moving us down the road, even down the Imperial Road, but like the leadership novels that follow, never finally reaching a destination. One is reminded again of Loerke's odd suggestion for travelling in unplanned directions, a geometric peregrination that can also be understood as the plan for the picaresque, a system of Holzwege, or switchbacks, that make up the process of a Derridean sending which never exhausts its exchange. Thematically, one "arrives" only to find that something has been withheld in the structure of sending, this withholding (and this thing withheld) being the harmonic refrain which does not allow the "silent, maskless state of wordless comprehension" (199) to be the final "word" in the novel.

But Aaron's Rod, like Women in Love, also witnesses the narrative use of dream as a conveyer of meaning, a convention which returns again in Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent, albeit without the centrality of placement it assumes here.²³ For in Aaron's Rod, Aaron has an involved, prophetic dream that encodes a projected future in the wake of his broken flute. Lilly, of course, will propose a different path of redemption, but both possibilities are left open-ended, the latter by thrusting everything upon Aaron ("your soul will tell you") and the former by placing itself within a hypothetical system of oneiric suggestion. Like the device of narrative

intrusion, the dream calls attention to its own artifice, not the least because it fails to elicit an interpretation from either character or narrator. Though Aaron "for a minute tried to remember what he had been dreaming," he "quickly relinquished the effort" (335), an interlude henceforth forgotten. What we confront is another attempt to provide narrative information without a synthesis of perspective and motive, a manipulation of the redundant or incidental within a story to suggest both the discontinuity of a natural event and its impossible (non) reproduction within the covers of a book. Just as perfect translatability attempts to make language obsolete even as it calls attention to its mediatory function, so the dream suggests a direction even though its symbolism remains unanalyzed. One could argue, in this respect, that the appearance of the dream in "Words" is internally distorted ab ovo; on one hand, we have a polemical "solution," and on the other, an avoidance of direct speech altogether, both of which combine to give us not only our structure/theme axis, but the original phenomenological desire and its critique. We move in the pure experience of the moment, but this phenomenological purity is also an object to be set against the static and spatial world as it appears.

Within the dream itself, we find this split played out in the "two" Aarons: the "palpable" Aaron, who understands language but seems incapable of directed action, and the second, "invisible" Aaron, who has a presentiment of what is to come, but who strangely does not--or cannot--interject ("Will he never heed? Will he never understand?" [334]). Here again, the memory of Loerke's "world split in two" is haunting, an emblem of the double personality that not only represents Loerke and Birkin, but Aaron and Lilly as well as the two "halves" of the Midlands checkweighman. All of these doubles (to which we may add Jesus and Judas, snake and bird, even man and woman) reproduce in their own right the bifurcation of method and message that Lawrence's novels increasingly exercise from Women in Love onward.²⁴ The opposites in question are interchangeable within the logic of a perpetual difference, "an endless venture into consciousness," as Lawrence puts it in "Books," that even admits a reversal in previously valorized beliefs.²⁵ But this open-endedness is

itself split between progressive and regressive, phenomenological and deconstructive, the assiduously incompleting road beyond and the always already misdirection of terminal pathways, a "doubling within the double," as it were, that prevents Aaron's Rod from ever reaching equilibrium, even within the ideal of a non-objective potentia of consciousness. In this sense, the Aaron Sisson who bumps along the partially submerged stakes in the dream is not only the Aaron who bruises himself against the Bricknell set, the Novara set, Angus and Francis, the Marchesa, and even Lilly and Co. in Florence, but also the figure who maps the narrative's impalpable wanderings against its invisible, intratextual "second self."

In fact, the dream progression can be seen as a coda for the novel in its detail as well, beginning with the "underworld country" of "many children" and its "domestic apartments, where were all women" (333). The cannibalized miner then becomes the Aaron that would have been had he remained with Lottie (just as, in Leavis's eyes, Sisson is the would-be Lawrence with more usual ambitions), the boat trip the picaresque journey that follows, and the Astarte and bird eggs, along with the reference to Mexico, the future rebirth in America.²⁶ The eggs and fertility doll suggest an incipient Quetzalcoatl and pagan revivalism given voice in The Plumed Serpent. Yet even here, one degree in the subjunctive, the hope of a palpable new world to release pressure from the picaresque (where can the bumping along legitimately end?) is itself strangely counterpointed by Aaron looking at his watch upon awakening, "one of those American watches with luminous, phosphorescent figures and fingers" (335). For a writer whose oeuvre can be read in part as an attempt to replace clock-time with phenomenological, or "lived," time, and whose heroes (like the doctor in "The Horse Dealer's Daughter," who finds after his rescue and revival of Mabel Pervin, that his watch has stopped) everywhere reject the implications of what Leo Marx might call "the machine in the garden" (we remember Gudrun, who welcomes it, and ends up "confronted by the terrible clock, with its eternal tick-tack" [WiL, 456]), this resurrected commercialism must be read with the kind of allegorical irony we have been investigating, twisting the

given sentiment back upon itself through its divergent referential and semiotic functions. Like everything else in the work, one step forward is countered by one step backward, even to the point where the structural distortion of theme becomes itself a thematic organization in need of counterstatement. We have, in the most exact Barthesian or deconstructive exfoliation of limits, a box within a box within a box--a neverending play-off of possibility and actuality which must forever reconstitute its terms in order to evade the finality of one and/or the other.

At this point, however, we may turn to the episode which best relays the kind of allegory we found in Women in Love, a convergence of plot delay and semiotic refraction in the channel of dialogue. At this textual node, or pivot, where the picaresque license of parody and elliptical description is threatened with a final referential exposure, the derivative dissonance of chapter titles and dream visions also draws toward a redundancy in the face of the real. The achievement (or evident failure) of Lilly's vision for a reappraised selfhood integrates message and method as an objective synthesis within the work, forcing the intolerable recognition of a misplaced idealism on one hand or the simultaneous and universal redundancy of all verbal expression on the other. Though dependent on the desire to dissolve speech into a pre-existent ontology, the network of delays in Aaron's Rod is ultimately sucked into its vortex of silence, rendering its counterlogic ineffective.

Such a pressure for resolution appears, of course, in "Words," with Aaron's dream and Lilly's polemic both projecting (well-suspected) ends to the peripatetic and paratactic. But if we trace their appearance backwards, we come to that strange episode in "The Broken Rod" where Lilly seems finally to be called to account for his beliefs, and the narrative, in turn, for its excessive jumpiness. The work appears to force itself to a close, to an explanation of its form and a revelation of its rhetorical maneuvering. In the cafe scene, after this long succession of periodic episodes, we finally confront, or are swept dangerously close to confronting, the question of the tu quoque fixation: can Lilly's open-endedness, filtered through his variorum of

identity principles, the leadership ethic, and the male-male bond, escape the debilitating realization that it is, at least in part, merely a mask for another form of closure just as reductive as the "finality" of modern society's sticky mawkishness? Insofar as this question is synonymous with the existence of Aaron's Rod as a novel, however, without which none of the complex delay patterns would appear at all, much less have any meaning, it cannot be asked, even as it organizes the narrative discourse around its necessary absence. Just as the scientific or rhetorical "explanation" for a superstition eliminates the importance of the rite which makes it effective, so here, the revelation of the binding question would render Aaron's Rod obsolete in one swift mark of the pen.

But the only thing which can withhold this question from forcing its way through (for the whole novel, of course, nevertheless gravitates toward its center), is the deus ex machina of the bomb explosion. "CRASH!" Let us take a closer look at the dialogue between Lilly and Levison that leads up to it. As Lilly did in "Nel Paradiso," and as Ursula Brangwen did in the "Water Party" chapter of Women in Love, Levison plays a bit of the straightman here, an assiduously honest if somewhat unimaginative interrogator. Appearing "with a slight sneer down his nose" (334), and allowed a certain ethical condescension ("Levison smiled a long, slow, subtle smile of ridicule. It all seemed to him the preposterous pretentiousness of a megalomaniac" [328]), Levison is packaged and demoted as a déclassé intellectual unworthy of Lilly's vatic scales. In this opposition of social and metaphysical, there is the suggestive remainder of the strange brotherhood of Birkin and Loerke, Gentile and Jew, and with it both the dismissive irritation of a deracinated intellectualism and an unshakeable fascination with the "other," or traitorous.²⁷ This allows Levison to be the butt of Argyle's jokiness as well as Lilly's puzzling self-parody on slavery: Levison's lugubrious intensity is the object in both cases, and any amount of light-footed playfulness, even with subjects otherwise treated with the greatest reverence, wins justification in the attempted break-up of his crystalline seriousness. Yet Levison's disruptive role, and its magnetic

effect in the cafe dialogue, also points to his importance as an allegorized interlocutor. When he challenges Lilly on his theory, he goes beyond Argyle's disheveled hop-scotch and the occasion of parodic diversion, to an acutely disturbing insight: "The only fault I have with your system . . . is that there would be only one master, and everybody else slaves" (325). When Lilly claims that the inevitability of socialism is "not my affair," the other duly reinstates the social tie, undoubtedly to Ursula's silent applause: "'It's every man's problem,' persisted Levison" (325). The interrogation continues, with Levison asking many of the questions, as Baker has noted, that the reader himself wants to ask: "But where else?" (326), he exclaims when Lilly insists on his Protean disengagement. And shortly thereafter, following Lilly's avowal that he has "no obligation to say what I think" (327), and his suggestion that "You've got to have a sort of slavery again," Levison locks the bit into place: "You seem to have some other idea in mind, and you merely use the world slavery out of exasperation" (327). Precisely! However wooden Levison's character is made out to be, we sense that he somehow knows a lot more than he "should" know. The "other idea" that Lilly has in mind is self-integrity, but in the face of "the modern bee-disease" of ideals, it undergoes a hidden transmogrification into the very opposite "of what we call goodness, charity, benevolence," etc.--into the Judas of slavery, the amoral and asocial schematics of necessary dominance and submission.

Levison continues his interruption in this vein, raising the inevitable problem of who constitute the superior caste and how we can all agree to their election. Lilly dismisses these incidentals, and Levison is given another narrative slap to keep him in his place: "the face of the fellow gloated in these two inevitable engines [the denouement of "prison or the lunatic asylum" for Lilly] of his disapproval" (328). As the voice of pure translatability, of the exact match between word and world, he counters Lilly's lazy inattention to saying what one thinks ("Yes, if you enter into conversation, you have--" [327]) with a resilient fastidiousness of example and circumstance, threatening the exposure of Lilly's "little dodge" and winning for himself in response the charge of

smugness. Lilly himself preempts this unmasking by collapsing his doctrine into self-parody: "Bah, Levison--one can easily make a fool of you. Do you take this as my gospel?" (328). The reversal here, suprisingly cavalier is its juggling of potentially explosive beliefs, cuts very close to the bone, an impromptu revelation out of character with Lilly's obvious investment in his power ethic, both here and in the final chapter. If this is parody, in other words, then it is very difficult not to read all of what Lilly has to say as parody, successfully short-circuiting the social direction of his message, but also denying that message any significance in the first place. This latter option, however, is not the intended conclusion, leaving Lilly's reflexive attack as a local antidote to the truth-serum that Levison injects into the dialogue; when referential transparency threatens the complicated balancing act between possibility and objectification, it must be thrown off course to mitigate the revelation of Lilly's double-sided logic.

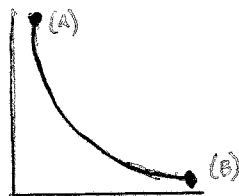
In response, Levison is at first matter-of-fact ("I take it you are speaking seriously") and then angry ("Do you mean to say you don't mean what you've been saying?"), to which Lilly responds by repeating his message in another form: "I think every man is a sacred and holy individual, never to be violated. I think there is only one thing I hate to the verge of madness and that is bullying. To see any creature bullied, in any way, almost makes a murderer out of me. That is true. Do you believe it--?" (328). Here, of course, we find the apology for singleness, the "holy individual," that is directly opposed to the bondage of the other in slavery, though both are reactions to the love-ethic and to a certain extent substitute for each other in Lilly's thinking. An analysis of his rhetoric in "Words" will rehearse this slippage once again, but we can certainly recognize in "The Broken Rod" the familiar confusion of part and whole, of the optative with the necessary and universal. Lilly's individuality is meant to be a requisite for all living, but in truth it takes its form, here and elsewhere, parodied or otherwise, as the moral opposite of what it seeks to ground. It slides down the rhetorical scale from a universal condition that relieves us from our social corsetting to a very

specialized ethical alternative that provides a thematic opposite with the same structural bondage.

In this respect, Lilly's claim is again two-edged: he hates bullying, yet his approach bullies--"almost makes a murderer" out of him at the same time, of course, that the murderer/murderee, Jesus/Judas morality is reinstated by his passion. The last two sentences in the quote, moreover, play out this opposition individually: "that is true" establishes the certainty of the argument, while "Do you believe it--?" requests assent from an audience, and hence depends on ethics and (in a narrower sense) rhetoric. One contravenes the other; within this seemingly innocuous passage, even the textual organization of the sentences replays the thematic aporia that will not be spoken.

As, in turn, it won't be, though Levison goes for the kill: "Yes . . . that may be true as well. You have, no doubt, like most of us, got a complex nature which--", a penetration left hanging by the "CRASH!" It is absolutely astounding, in light of Levison's remark here if nothing else (and there is much else), that the predominant criticism, echoed from Leavis to Vivas to Hough to Yudhishtar to Daleski to R.P. Draper to Anthony Beal to Paul Baker, etc., generally supportive, unsupportive or in between, has reached a blanket agreement in condemning Aaron's Rod for its ideological imbalance. Clearly, the balance here is not an aesthetic one, and any attempt to reduce the work to an organic arrangement of its images and the proper shaving and placing of its narrators only borrows frustration and confusion. Aaron's Rod adheres no closer to the Procrustean gymnastics of "significant form" than it speaks the doctrine of harmonic composition: the narrative is not encapsulated within a hierarchy of reliability, but "dialogized" in its recurrent repositioning of points of view--a systematic lattice-work of structural, thematic, and generic mediation that makes it difficult, in fact, to extract Rawdon Lilly from its design at all. And he almost disappears altogether now, for Levison's statement (or perhaps, more accurately, "Levison's", having become an allegorical counter as much as a figure occupying space in a Florentine cafe) pushes the dualism of fate and free will, whole and part, theme and structure, to its

ultimate pitch: the "complex nature" attributed to Lilly can be none other than this affinity for eliding one pole into the other, a fluid substitution of slavery and individuality at the same time that one "means" very different things by them. At this point, the novel threatens to run out of control, or rather, acquire an automatic progression of statement and counterstatement that no picaresque insertion can throw into a random sort again. The narrative becomes asymptotic, forced into the narrowing space between the absent narrative ground and the series of adventures that attempt to delay either its magnetism or its complete escape, between language that is purely referential on one hand and language which forever goes astray on the other. Diagrammatically, on the structure/theme axis we have developed, Aaron's Rod reaches both point (A) and point (B) simultaneously at the end of Levison's last speech in "The Broken Rod":



If we are not to continue indefinitely in this progression, the only solution is a destruction from without, the deus ex machina anarchy that the "bomb" provides.

But if the cafe bomb is also a verbal bomb that puts an end to narrative discovery, what are we to do with the left-over pieces? Levison's allegorical role, which takes him "beyond" himself, as Ursula and even Gerald became double-voices in Women in Love, has been temporarily silenced; yet its very occurrence in the narrative indicates a drive for resolution that already reached a crisis in the "Moony" chapter of the previous novel, and which gives every indication of building once more in the future. Lilly, we remember, makes mention of the inadequacy of bombing in "Words," and the man lying in the blood and debris of the shattered cafe serves as an eerie reminder of Lilly's assertion that the violation of the "holy individual" almost leads him to murder.²⁸ Though the connection is tenuous, the "man," if identified, would become Levison himself, the alter ego whose dialogical role is extinguished by the interruptive explosion. Lilly, in turn, despite his later rejection of

bomb-throwing (that he uses this metaphor at all, however, is certainly suggestive), fills the role of the bomb-thrower, the "anarchist" who will mysteriously reappear in Kangaroo's bomb scare under the suspicious mask of R.L. Somers.²⁹ The semiotic threads, however twisted and insecure, already seem to tie across the narrative wound, a testament to the impossibility of closing the novel and its facility for smuggling meaning across the lines of objective narrative portrayal. As we noted above, two projections emerge in the final chapter, each suggesting a future path to be taken. And yet each of these paths, and especially Lilly's, is already barnacled with the same complicated distortions that eventually forced the explosion in "The Broken Rod." For not even the picaresque can evade intentionality, as writing presses up against the demand for reference, yet always allows a secondary bifurcation of meaning not possible through the tautologies of existence and identity.

As long as Lawrence writes, and as long as the writing remains a directive for society even as it dissociates itself from it, narrative design will be determined by this rhetorical double-take, and all narration will take the resolution of this slippage as its telos. To counter, however futilely, this ensuing revelation, the narrative will need to build an even stronger wall of defense, one that will play off possibility and realization more thoroughly still in order to extend the Lawrencian discourse along its fictional trellises. To this end, the "Words" chapter gives us two hypothetical envois (and their already built-in reservations), while Kangaroo will see the extension of the second in a completely reorganized collection of delay and permutation within the narrative brackets of theme, structure, and genre, and the continuance of the theoretical control of the male-male bond.

NOTES

¹ Page numbers refer to the Penguin edition Aaron's Rod (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1987).

² See Oswald Spengler, The Decline of the West, I, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1980), 183 ff.

³ Letter to Mark Gertler, 18 Feb., 1918.

⁴ Eliseo Vivas, The Failure and the Triumph of Art, 23.

⁵ Paul G. Baker, A Reassessment of D.H. Lawrence's Aaron's Rod (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1983), 183.

⁶ For Jacques Derrida on the trace, equivalent (for our purposes here) to the workings of "différance" and the other Derridean non-terms of supplement, hymen, or pharmakon, see "Linguistics and Grammatology," in Of Grammatology, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 27-73; also the essay "Différance," in Margins of Philosophy, trans. Alan Bass (Sussex: Harvester, 1982), 3-27; and, with respect to Plato's Republic and Timaeus, "Play: From the Pharmakon to the Letter and From Blindness to the Supplement," in Dissemination, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 156-171.

⁷ Lilly's affinity with Lawrence in the search for a power-relationship is evident; as Leavis arranges it, Aaron's Rod uses "the direct presence of Lawrence as a character in the novel, for Lilly must be judged to be that." As Leavis remarks a little further on, however, Aaron is himself a projection of "what Lawrence might well have been if he had married in his own class and things had gone more ordinarily." This doubling has some of the allegorical effect of dream, scrambling the author/character hierarchy and replacing descriptive individuality with the different rhetorical "personalities" that need to be assumed. See Leavis, D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, 29; 35.

⁸ See Leo Bersani, A Future For Astyanax, 157.

⁹ Aaron's charge of "word-splitting," in fact, sounds much like Ursula's accusation of "word-twisting" in the "Excuse" chapter of this earlier novel, and with much the same jibe at the aestheticism of language.

¹⁰ It is interesting to note, however, that Herbertson, like Argyle and Del Torre, occasionally speaks a Lillyesque language: "You know you won't get killed if you don't think you will. Now I never thought I should get killed. And I never knew a man get killed if he hadn't been thinking he would" (140). This sounds very much like Lilly's ruminations in "Low-Water Mark" that "A Jesus makes a Judas inevitable," and recalls Birkin's conclusion in "Shortlands" that "No man . . . cuts another man's throat unless he wants to cut it, and unless the other man wants it cutting" (WiL, 27). Insofar as the allegory in both novels can be understood as the assertion and denial of both roles--Jesus and Judas, murderer and murderee--the transfer of its logic into Herbertson's discourse here seems to act as yet another mirror for the pivotal Lawrencian blindness of disengaged polemics. Like a coded clue flashed briefly across the screen, Herbertson's argument of the willing victim leaves the subliminal message that will haunt Aaron's Rod to its conclusion.

¹¹ Cf. Anthony Beal, D.H. Lawrence (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), 65.

¹² See Schlegel's review of Adam Müller's Vorlesungen über die deutsche Wissenschaft und Litteratur: ". . . dass alles eben kommen musste, grade so wie es kam, nach der bei unsern Zeitgenossen so beliebten Philosophie des Königs Gorboduc: dass alles was ist, ist" (. . . that everything must occur as it does occur according to the philosophy, so dear to our contemporaries, of King Gorboduc: "whatever is, is"). In August Schlegel und Friedrich Schlegel, ed. Oskar Walzel, v. 143 of Deutsche National-Litteratur, ed. Joseph Kurschner (Stuttgart: Union, 1892), 412.

¹³ In this case, "rod" also becomes a marking instrument, given to the "non scriptive" Aaron while Moses/Lilly is absent gathering the holy word.

¹⁴ Lady Franks's "swimming" jewels also call up the longstanding distrust of water, a tyranny of wetness that appears here as "the quicksands of woman or the stinking bog of society" (337).

¹⁵ As Aldington completes the novel: "'And whom shall I submit to?' 'Your soul will tell you,' replied the other. And Echo murmured: 'David Herbert Lawrence.'" (10).

¹⁶ The German influence on Lawrence, whether through

Frieda, or already through the Wagnerian mythology he makes extensive use of in The Trespasser, or through Lawrence's reading of Bachofen, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Wagner, through his own visit to Germany in 1912, his relationship with Fritz Krenkow, etc. is well-documented, and we should not be surprised, especially in a work that makes use of Teutonic (principly Wagnerian) names as extensively as Women in Love does, to find "Birke" appearing in disguise as well. I mention only some of the early influences on Lawrence's thought here; for a fuller account, see Mitzi M. Brunsdale, The German Effect on D.H. Lawrence and His Works, 1885-1912 (Berne: Peter Lany, 1978), and Jennifer Michaels-Tonks, D.H. Lawrence: The Polarity of North and South--Germany and Italy in His Prose Works (Bonn: Bouvier, 1976)--an especially useful guide. The further problem of Lawrence's "fascist" ideas, perhaps most strikingly enunciated in Bertrand Russell's remark that his ideas "lead straight to Auschwitz," can be introduced in Mary Freeman's "D.H. Lawrence in Valhalla?" in New Mexico Quarterly, X, Nov. 1940, 211-24.

¹⁷ The change from image to sign is worked through again in the contemporaneous "The Captain's Doll," the first half of which highlights the statue as a sort of mysterious icon, defined by its inaccessibility to any sign system. When the doll is "sold," however, it enters a system of commercial exchange, which seems to represent not only the Captain's break with Hannele (initially based on the solitariness, even disengagement, of the lovers), but Lawrence's own relinquishment of the self-defined, aesthetic image.

¹⁸ Vivas, The Failure and Triumph of Art, 22.

¹⁹ "Women in Love," claims Oates, "is by contrast, irresolute and contradictory; it offers only the finite, tentative "resurrection" of marriage between two very incomplete people." See Joyce Carol Oates, "Lawrence's Götterdämmerung: The Apocalyptic Vision of Women in Love," in the Chelsea House Critical Editions D.H. Lawrence, ed, Harold Bloom, 231. For Padhi, see his "Familiar and Unfamiliar Worlds; The Fabular Mode in Lawrence's Late Narratives," in Philological Quarterly, 64, 2, Spring 1985, 239-55.

²⁰ As he puts it in his fantastical conclusion to Sons and Lovers (this refers directly to the two "fight" scenes in the novel, one of which is labelled "offensive" [!], the other

"anything but pleasant" [!]), "the arousal of any passion, the breaking of the delicate equipoise to which Bullough referred as 'aesthetic distance,' is obscene." The Failure and Triumph of Art, 197.

²¹ For the "good man," see "[The Good Man]," in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers; for a representative essay on Lawrence's attack on the love-ethic, one might try any number of pieces collected in Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine, esp. "Blessed Are the Powerful" and ". . . Love was Once a Little Boy," collected in Phoenix II. Also of interest is the well-known "A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover," which concludes, in an implicitly ironic commentary on its title, that "All love today is counterfeit" (Phoenix II, 495).

²² Quoted in Georges Poulet, Studies in Human Time, trans. Elliott Coleman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), 36.

²³ The dream is conspicuously missing in the Chatterley series, and this is entirely in keeping with the shift in narrative responsibility that accompanies this final triad. The novels's "director" (especially in Lady Chatterley's Lover) is fate more than the author, and so the demand for a future, for the sort of prophecy that the dream produces in Aaron's Rod, is eliminated. Put another way, because time is always contemporaneous time in this later sequence, the melding of time and space is more easily accomplished, accounting for the relatively favorable critical reception Chatterley has enjoyed, and also, of course, for the superfluosness of such complicated technical devices of "futuricity" which always frustrate a present occurence by projecting a set of temporal possibilities.

²⁴ The "egoisme a deux" between man and woman extends beyond marriage, with its own polarity of sacrifice and "self-conceit," to the occasional description of Aaron looking or acting like a woman ("But here you are in bed like a woman who's had a baby" [337]), and to Lilly himself as one who ministers to Aaron, in "Low-Water Mark," "as mothers do their babies whose bowels don't work" (118). Like the other opposites in question, the man/woman duality forces Lilly into its drama even as (and because!) his ideal of separateness preaches an absolute divagation from its vortex of desire and concern.

²⁵ This focus on consciousness, itself a link to a certain phenomenological concern with the subject and its perpetual "being in the world," is repeated in the various formulae of man as a "thought adventurer" in "On Being a Man," Kangaroo, and elsewhere. See "Books," in Phoenix, 731; "On Being A Man," in Phoenix II, 616.

²⁶ Though Kangaroo will of course intervene between Aaron's Rod and the North American novel, we know that Lawrence intended, in November of 1921 (some five months or so after Aaron's Rod was completed), to travel to New Mexico directly from Italy. But by the end of January, 1922, as he writes Mabel Dodge Sterne, "I will come to the Indians, yes. But only via the east," See Lorenzo in Taos (London: Martin Secker, 1933), 28.

²⁷ Lawrence's distrust of Marxist/Jewish intellectualism (as in "The Novel," for example, or in the "Willie Struthers and Kangaroo" chapter of Kangaroo) is striking, and Julian Moynihan's discussion of Lilly's diatribe in "The Broken Rod" as "a pose of petulant nihilism colored with anti-Semitism" is also to the point here, emphasizing the "Hebraic" pose that Levison implicitly assumes.

²⁸ As he puts it in the final chapter, "you've never got to think you'll dodge the responsibility of your own soul's self, by loving or sacrificing or Nirvanaing--or even anarchizing and throwing bombs. You never will . . ." (344).

²⁹ We should also remember here the "man" who halves the world in Loerke's dream in Women in Love. This pattern of an unidentified Doppelgänger is without question a strange textual occurrence, though its appearance can be predicted as another relay of disguised, undialectical meaning.

KANGAROO

"I'm not a man, I'm a kangaroo."

"Poor dear, it was rather an anomalous call: 'Listen to me, and be alone.' Yet he felt called upon to call it."

Kangaroo comes to us as a tour de force of compositional efficiency--a novel written in about five weeks during June and July of 1922 while Lawrence and Frieda made a home in New South Wales. In this respect alone, it differs from the attenuated gestation of Aaron's Rod, which like the nearly contemporaneous The Lost Girl, advanced by fits and starts, originally inspired by a revulsion from the "old," pre-war England, but substantially rewritten and finished only after the Armistice allowed his escape to the Continent. Though many of the themes, and the central concern with narrative revelation and delay, carry over from this earlier work, gone is the more or less conscious exploration of the picaresque--a mood that fits both Aaron's peregrinations through Italy and a protracted composition process, but which seems out of place in this condensed and largely sedentary Australian novel. Instead of the diverting company of Angus and Francis, or Argyle or the Marchesa or Sir William, one substitutes "the roused spirit of the bush," an experience, as Somers admits later on, which "seems to lurk just beyond the range of our white vision," and in this very hiddenness, provides an asocial and apolitical backdrop for human action not available in a culturally saturated Europe.¹

If the picaresque would of necessity find itself frustrated in such a setting, however, a valuable generic method of deferral is also lost if the leadership theme is to be picked up again. In a binary system of aboriginal vs. political, a directed social solution cannot be so thoroughly disseminated among a number of dialogical voices: the bush is silent, and one cannot simply "wander off" without exceeding the thin membrane of social fields and their episodic diversions. One can choose "one's own isolate being, and the God in whom it is rooted" (361), as Somers will ultimately do, but so long as any leadership ethic is seriously entertained, the internal contradiction in a "directed isolation" always threatens to reveal itself without proper interdict.

Unsurprisingly, Lawrence seems to anticipate this danger from the very beginning, telescoping Somers's position on the stage of Sydney from afar. We sit with the workmen on Macquarie Street watching the "foreign-looking bloke" and his wife, complete with gladstone and hat-box, tumble across the grass in search of a taxi--a narrative distancing absent since the opening pages of Women in Love, and matured from a contemplative assessment of marriage as a meaningful institution to the sardonic discount of the overloaded couple in "Torestin." For "R.L. Somers," as the hansom driver reads on one of the bags (a cue for a nominal objectification that also begins the play on names and identities characteristic of Kangaroo) enters the scene as a bit of the buffon, his dishevelment an unmistakable compromise with the pure philosopher whose concerns otherwise exceed the mundane. The texture here recalls the uneven grain of the travel books, where domestic quibbles with the "q.b.," for example, in Sea and Sardinia, or quarrels with the natives over bus fare and roadside oranges, combine with an extended meditation on "spirit of place" and its cosmic or metaphysical extensions.² It could well be Immanuel Kant appearing before us on his daily summertime walk, trusty Lampe exactly six feet to the rear with umbrella: however prophetic the thinker, such dramatic staging necessarily dispels the mystification of any philosophical message.

But already in the same chapter, this distancing is called into question, not only because we are faintly aware that the satire is a device, somewhat like Lilly's self-parody on slavery, to distract our attention from the message that is to come, but because the narrator discards his objectivity at the nearest sign of direct conflict. At first, there is apparently an admirable reckoning of mislaid judgment: "Richard was wrong" about Australia: "Given a good temper and a genuinely tolerant nature . . . you can get on for quite a long time without 'rule'" (28). But then the temporal caveat is repeated, suggesting that the "long time" is not quite as extended as we would otherwise think: "For quite a long time the thing just goes by itself." Whatever truth might reside in the chaos of the present, eventually, as Richard cautiously warns, the lack of systematic regulation of behavior leads to a collapse, to be replaced by a more conscientious ordering.

In the next paragraph, in turn, this indirect suspicion pushes closer to the surface: "Is it [the "thing"] merely running down, however, like a machine running on but gradually running down?" The query has all the prodding suggestiveness of a rhetorical question, and even though Lawrence himself provides no answer ("Ah, questions!"), it is clear that Somers's position carries a sort of hidden fate. Like the "queer bloke" who upends the wizened locals with his self-possession, Somers's attachment to a redemptive "authority" somehow reaches deeper than the surface good-will that the narrator accuses him of misunderstanding. Somers might be wrong, just as he might appear foolish in his insistent and somewhat awkward peregrinations, but no quotidian suspicion unseats the veiled word of authority in the end, a word made all the more final by the novel's reluctance to give it direct expression.

We should be familiar enough at this point with Lawrence's narrative double-patterning to recognize this complication in design, and how Kangaroo, like Aaron's Rod and Women in Love, manipulates its turns of negativity to provide balance and body for its "cry in the wilderness." A preliminary distancing is necessary, especially in a work which finds itself without the protective umbrella of the picaresque, to inject Somers into an objective setting, deferring what is otherwise a very subjective philosophy, and allaying the fear that its political emetic induces the same disease on another level. For all of its telescopic engineering, however, this distancing actively prohibits the message from being heard, the illusion of which, even more so than with Aaron's Rod, proves necessary to the production of the novel in the first place. A textual blank, therefore, must be cradled between these two positions, the final exclamation in the beginning chapter--"Ah, questions!"--delineating the dead space between subjunction and reality. As mediation between an ultimate truth and the demand for a perpetually floating signification, questions are in fact the only relevant form of address, and certain questions rather than others. To ask a version of the unaskable challenge, the challenge of a tu quoque ontology which both exists and declaims (either in relation to the self or to a political ideal), is to bring Lawrence's writing to its logical end and goal, yet also to provide the synthetic closure that he

himself is structurally barred from completing. As Heidegger explains in his Heraklitus Seminar 1966/67, "if we speak with a thinker, we must heed what is unsaid in what is said," to which it must be added that this thinker's work is the very product of his inability to do the same.³

Despite the injunction against asking the final question, protective of the possibility of writing itself, Kangaroo goes further than Aaron's Rod did in locating the self as the question-asker. In "Neighbours," for example (a chapter devoted as much to the apology for separateness as it is to neighbourliness), the narrator locates the difficulty without hesitation: "Poor Richard Lovat wearied himself to death struggling with the problem of himself, and calling it Australia" (33). This sentiment will be repeated, with RLS's "half-knowledge," at the end of "Harriet and Lovat at Sea in Marriage," where Somers himself must "break open his doors to this fearful god who is master" (176) before asking it of mankind; but even in this early revelation, the tone borders on the flippant, and Lovat is strangely protected from full recognition of the problem by a narrative parody on his misdirection. This is the "queer bloke" all over again: the importance of dramatic distancing reemphasized, the dialectics of revelation and deferral can advance one more step without synthesizing itself into an encapsulated finality. As Aaron's Rod proved, one can only "drift on in a series of accidents" for so long before the narrative requirements of characterization and setting force a convergence with the given political stance. When this occurs, great pressure is exerted on self-agency to keep the subjunctive nature of the proposed social alternative alive. The self must be introduced to satisfy the demands of the absent question (which is no less magnetic for its hiddenness), but not introduced so that these demands will be entirely met, lest the question itself be asked. Thus the problem of self-consciousness appears in deferred form, as an insightful remark by a narrator whose tonal breeziness highlights its screening artificiality. Narratively, the effect is similar to Ursula's allegorical dialogics in Women in Love, or Levison's Socratic interview in Aaron's Rod: we are told "believe this," but also, "don't believe this," the former because the insight is unmistakable, the latter because it is

undercut by the context which allows it to emerge.

The introduction of self-agency, however, serves another important function in Kangaroo, and one that leads directly to the leadership issue broached in "Neighbours" through the "neighbour" himself, Jack Calcott. If the problem is R.L. Somers rather than Australia, introspection begins to occupy the space left open by the obsolescence of the picaresque, and thus the male-male tie finds another delay in this entirely new direction, even as it will ultimately lead to an equally threatening solipsism and self-reflexion. From the surfeit of social contacts in Aaron's Rod, however, which frustrates any leadership programme through a progressively concentric fragmentation, we go to the preliminary exclusion of all externals in favor of the self--a dynamic that is perfectly in keeping with the nature/politics dualism that Kangaroo establishes from the very start, and which will ultimately allow Somers an escape from Nationalists and Socialists alike in favor of the (supposedly) unmediated and uncontaminated "call" of the Dark God (375). The exposure of "poor Richard Lovat's" self-delusion is a better tool than a copy of Frost's "Mending Wall" to keep Calcott on the other side of the hedge. Jack's game isn't poetry anyway (a cause-and-effect man, he prefers the more propaedeutically tactical chess), and as a result, the narrative can build a psychological--even literary--wall far more effective than a temporary patching of the bougainvillea.

In the following chapters--"Larboard Watch Ahoy!", "Jack and Jaz," and "Coo-ee"--the mateship question is brought into the open, with Jack admonishing Somers not to "leave your shirttail hanging out" (53), and the latter threading his way through the argument for political commitment. In each section, the dialogue of engagement and disengagement enacts itself in miniature. "Larboard" introduces the chess game, which quickly becomes "guerrilla warfare" (47), and which not only recalls the old Jesus/Judas dualism (Jack's tactics are "the Judas approach" [47]) but influences the particular language used to describe Richard and Jack's relationship. One of the many silences that exist between the two men is underlined at one point as a "check-mate" (73), while Harriet charges that "it will be the same old game here as everywhere" (77), to which Somers answers, "I intend to move with men and

get men to move with me . . ." (77), and so on. As a game, a gambit, chess provides the language of social entry, the risk in plotting one's strategy with and against another man; at the same time, however, all the moves direct themselves to an inevitable end, and the possibility of resignation or non-resumption. As we are told early on in a tone of choric prescience, "He never again invited Jack to a game of chess" (47).

More interesting, however, is the double-jointed use of the chapter title itself. "Larboard Watch Ahoy!", we learn, refers to the duet Jack once sang with another "chap" at the "Harbour Lights Concert." But the title plants in Harriet's mind the memory of Somers' Cornish friend, who often sang the same harmony--the William Henry Hocking who reappears as John Thomas in "The Nightmare," and with whom Lawrence himself had a very close relationship in 1917. Through this memory, and perhaps even more significantly through the nominal repetition (John ---> "Jack"), Somers reenters as Jack's proleptic "other chap," even as he is physically absent on the plot level--a kind of Proustian recherche that also has a conspicuously semiotic moment in the non-thematic linkage of names. But if Somers is the present/absent partner in the musical evening, the Lawrence narrator also comments upon this ambiguous commitment through the chapter title, which now suggests a warning, already given by Somers himself, about the problems inherent in the "duet" of friendship. The language is not merely descriptive, but also performative, serving as an injunction to be on guard (to keep one's watch) because something is clearly about (Ahoy!). Put another way, the figural meaning of the title is supplemented by a literal meaning, which mitigates the harmonic concordance that a duet ideally achieves.⁴ As with Aaron's Rod and Women in Love (which also play on the dangers of harmony and "singing back"), an intratextual dialogue splits its divergent message along a verbal hinge. In what emerges as the most rhetorically lively and Protean of Lawrence's novels, Kangaroo also promotes the stiffest requirement to trust tale and not teller, speaking with a forked tongue the different languages of commitment and withdrawal.⁵

At this point, we may wonder what all this stage-work anticipates, and in "Larboard Watch Ahoy!" what follows is,

unsurprisingly, Jack's first mateship offer: "'I know,' he said in a broken voice, 'that we was mates'" (54). Somers, in turn, "was rather bewildered," and then, under the weight of Jack's heavy-footed emotionalism ("But all I want is that your feelings should be the same as mine, and thank my stars, they are" [54]), advances to being "almost scared." Although an escape has already been prefigured in Somers's self-concern and the twitting of his political illusions, the "movement with men" that provides the novel with its inspiration pushes the two men together as possible "mates." There is obvious pressure on Somers to "join up," and his escape from the Digger's constrictive empathy takes the form, as it did with the chapter title "Larboard Watch Ahoy!" and with the multiform arrangement of rhetorical cues in Aaron's Rod, of an indirect verbal network of doubt. Harriet's peevish summation of the Wyewurk evening provides the link here: "Really, it was as if he'd [i.e. Jack] got his arm round all the four of us! Horrid!" (56). When Somers adds that "He felt he had, I'm sure," the scene closes with an uneasy adumbration of the "white octopus of love . . . the vast white strangling octopus" (361) that is repeatedly used as a metaphor for constriction and suffocation within the ideal of "Love, self-sacrifice and humanity" (292). As we will see, the octopus image itself will split into literal and figural applications; here, however, Jack's cloying handshake becomes the tentacle of commitment that Somers has already, through the proleptic association of metaphors, dissevered.

Of principal interest in "Jack and Jaz" is the introduction of Jaz Trewhella, who, in keeping with the Celtic underpresence in the novel, proves to be a Cornish emigrant. By the time Somers is introduced to this "queer little bloke," the "Jack" half of the title has already secured a further grip on matehood when, having upset the chessmen (no more tactics evidently), he throws his arm around Somers and exclaims, "this is fate . . . and we'll follow it up" (65). At this point, Somers becomes predictably reticent, "withdrawing his hand" from the other's "clinging" grasp and instigating a long silence which concludes with Jack's admission that "in a way we're mates and in a way we're not" (66). This "cryptic remark" of discipleship and rejection then leads into the first meeting between Somers and Jaz--a

Jaz who plays much the same role the Stranger did in The Trespasser. Because Somers himself could not assume such a position without disrupting the novel's counterbalancing hierarchy (the same strategy that remains from Women in Love), Jaz becomes the voice of circumspection, expressing some of Somers's reservations, but sufficiently distanced from him to substitute as a foil for Jack. The Somers/novelist in a sense preempts Jack's chess game, just as he preempted the hole in the hedge, by objectifying two of Somers's desires and then opposing them to each other.⁶ For all that Jack claims in the way of fate, Jaz demurs by calling Somers's political leap a mistake (82). This conflict is reworked from yet another angle, in turn, when Harriet expresses her own doubt about Somers's venture, and resurrects the writing/action dichotomy: "Besides, you liar, haven't you your writing? Isn't that all you want, isn't that doing all there is to be done?" (79). The unspoken answer is, as always, "no," but such a bald finality can only be expressed--and here the unique difficulty of Lawrence's leadership novels--through the polysemic misdirections of language.

As the story develops, "Coo-ee" sees a change in residence, the Somerses now occupying a cottage by the same name belonging to Victoria Calcott. As with "Larboard Watch Ahoy!", however, "Coo-ee" is nominally performative as well as being conventional and descriptive, supplementing its objective reference with the call that Somers must answer from Australia and the Nationalist movement. To assume residence of Coo-ee is already to acknowledge the Coo-ee that Jack, and by extension Victoria, has sounded. This sound, this call, this language, will return at the close of "Kangaroo is Killed" (the original end to the novel) as the unmediated call and its equally absolute answerer--"This God without feet or knees or face" (375)--a relationship that Somers originally seeks as a political injunction in the doctrine of "natural" authority. As we noted above, this shift in psychological topography will provide Lawrence with an entry into the pure, isolated self when the political ideal drifts into an ethics of merging with its "dozy" inhabitants, spiritual sublimations, and wet walls of sentiment. Already, "coo-ee" becomes, through its imitative etymology, one of those "weird, wordless cries, like animals" (367) that the narrator opposes

to "the chatter of words"; yet also, more immediately, it is what the bungalow is called, and the specifically human sound, however onomatopoeic, "to fetch the rats in" (95). Both call and echo, coo-ee speaks the invitation of social intercourse as well as the unmediated sound of "natural" truth.

The architecture of this "coo-ee," however, is more variegated and instructive than this preliminary harmonics of the echo. We find, first of all, Somers "calling" to the kingfisher, who "liked to be talked to" (98), but cannot respond. On the other hand, it is the ocean, "the huge noise of the sea" (100), which ceaselessly surges against the island continent, circumscribing its outline without human agency or purpose, as Calcott himself remarks at one point. Within this disjunction of anthropic voice and oceanic noise, a mutual translation that reaches no receiver as such, appears the conversational circuit of Jack and Somers, with yet another transmission of the masonic confidence of mateship. The scene in question is a masterpiece in contextual comedy: Jack's confidence, with a secrecy that begs for a muted tone of voice (the fear being that there are potentially too many answerers), is drowned out by the oceanic roar, forcing him to shout his message into Somers's ear:

"I say," Jack turned his face. "I shan't be making a mistake if I tell you a few things in confidence, shall I?"

"I hope not. But judge for yourself."

"Well, it's like this," shouted Jack--they had to shout at one another in unnaturally lifted voices, because of the huge noise of the sea. There's a good many of us chaps as has been in France, you know--and been through it all--in the army--we jolly well know you can't keep a country going on the vote-catching system--as you said the other day. We know it can't be done."

"It can't," said Somers, with a shout, "for ever."

"If you've got to command, you don't have to ask your first if it's right, before you give the command.

"Of course not," yelled Somers.

But Jack was musing for the moment.

"What?" he shouted, as he woke up.

"No," yelled Somers.
 A further muse, amid the roar of the
 waves (100).

Jack's argument is all but interred under the "huge noise of the sea" which asserts itself, even unnaturally, at greater volume than the leader-cum-follower ethos that passes between the men as conversation. Surely, we think, Calcott and Somers could find a better time and a quieter place for such confidential musings! Yet the significance of a repeated reference to the crashing sea and the comedy of shouted dialogue lies precisely in its mistiming, an ironic desecration of what should be discussed with the utmost of seriousness. Like the authorial interventions in Aaron's Rod (and the later chapters of Kangaroo), the reemphasized boom of the ocean calls attention to itself as an interruption, obviating the transitional smoothness of the discourse by sliding back and forth between the incompatible syntagms of speech and setting, object and background. When we realize, moreover, that the interruptive sound emanates from the same source as the unmediated, non-human call that Somers will heed in place of the political shout of Kangaroo's silent revolution--the same medium, in fact, that Somers will use for his escape from Australia (note the symbolic breaking of the colored streamers in the Sydney harbor [393])--this counterpoint of object and ground becomes doubly significant. Challenging the good-faith of Somers's adventure, it also indexes a now contaminated source of this challenge.

Yet the delay of "loudness" serves still another purpose here, that of forwarding the immodulation of tone to Kangaroo himself, who is frequently seen "barking" his responses at Lovat. In "Kangaroo," therefore, the man of that name booms and yells to such an extent that the narrator calls attention to this anomalous characteristic: "Somers felt simple startled amazement at these sudden shouts--loud shouts, that you might also hear in the street" (129). Like the roaring oceanic noise, Kangaroo's barking becomes a conspicuous background disturbance, disrupting the "what" of Kangaroo's gregarious badinage with the "how" of its presentation, brought to our attention by the Lawrence narrator, moreover, if we prove too dull to locate the incongruity ourselves. In this respect,

the human roar becomes both a reminder and a rival for the unmediated, natural call; taking up the same structural function in the narrative, it continues the pattern of delay and disruption, yet as a voice for social concern, it attempts to overshoot what is elsewhere called "the cold, lovely silence, before crying and calling were invented" (140). To justify Kangaroo's importance at all in a novel which bears his name and explores his politics, he must be given equal time and equal volume with the naturalistic self-sufficiency that always stirs in the background, like the dark mystery of the bush behind the shoreline rim of Australian civilization. Although the venture with Kangaroo fails before it is ever given the chance to succeed, Somers's "movement with men" is designed, we should remember, with the same focus of leaving the "raw rock unfinished." In reaction to the constricting influence of love, with its attendant images of water, stickiness, and harmonic merging, comes the male-male bond and its political extensions, perpetually new explorations into an expanding universe to maintain what Birkin termed "star-equilibrium" against the threat of gravitational collapse. The infolding of the political expansion itself is the ironic effect of Somers's Australian adventure; yet its initial design, before it becomes submerged in the "wordless cry," requires that its investigation of the Lawrencian rhetoric of separation be given serious, if not exclusive, attention.

In this light, it is not surprising to detect in Kangaroo's doctrine, as he relates it to Somers in their incipient acquaintance, much of the "right" Lawrencian phrasing: "I think if a man is truly a man, true to his own being, his soul saves itself in that way. But no two people can save their souls alive in the same way" (125); "The secret of all life is in obedience" (126); "I can't speculate about God. I can't do it. It seems to me a cold, antish trick. But the fire that is in my heart is God . . ." (136); "Evil is the great principle that opposes life in its new urges," (126); and so forth. Although such anointed rhetoric is often placed in Kangaroo's mouth as, among other reasons, compensation for his premature dismissal, the tone and message are not parodied at the moment of their expression. The long monologue on obedience and evil leaves Somers "abashed before

it" in self-reflection, and Kangaroo's spirited attack on the "malignant resistance to the life principle . . . The life opposers. The life-resisters. The life-enemies" (127) sounds so much like Lawrence/Somers, down to a match of the staccato, gun-shot repetitions and hyphenated neologisms, that Somers can only nod weakly in agreement: "I believe it also." Kangaroo, it appears, is a man for all seasons (is he, however, shot "out of season"?), to the point where, as he tells Harriet, "Like a unicorn, the family knows no female" (133). Both male and female, he represents the perfected balance of opposites within himself, a prelapsarian, ambosexual demigod foreshadowing Ramon's related apotheosis from the normal marriage bond in The Plumed Serpent, and the noli me tangere self-completeness of The Man Who Died.⁷ If the sea collects all, so does Kangaroo, and if the sea allows for "self-sufficient vigour" (140), so too, at least at first, does the Jewish Jehovah Ben Cooley, who seems to preach the voiceless language of authority ("I Am Who Am") that holds out the salvific branch which the Lawrencian hero has long been searching for.

The structure we must consider, then, is one in which the sea and Kangaroo seem to coincide but somehow don't, the delay system mitigating what it otherwise compares. This divergence of nature and culture will become manifest on the plot level when Somers, for all intents and purposes, rejects Kangaroo before their initial meeting in the "Kangaroo" chapter; but the mimetic distortion, the notion of the call, and the focus of its resistance all come together in "Coo-ee" itself, giving rise to one of the most ingenious (though no doubt "accidental") wordplays in Lawrence's oeuvre. For "coo-ee," most immediately the call that Jack, in the name of Kangaroo's organization, plants in Somers's ear "in a soothed tone" (103), is a near homonym for "Cooley," the hyphen replaced by an "l"—the "l" of "love," we might say. It is love, of course, that will doom Kangaroo's scheme in Somers's view, and it is significant that its elision in the call leaves not a blank, but a hyphen, a visible mark that conjoins two fragments into a ruptured word. The effect, at least when read in the direction of the pun, is one of omission, the hyphen now standing for what has been exorcised but not

entirely eliminated. "Coo-ee," therefore, does not wholly escape the contamination of Cooley, who indeed provides the call (though in the end, not the right, "unmediated" one), and whose presence, whose "love," remains within the fragmented "coo-ee" that will become the oceanic call as well (we note again the onomatopoeic nature of the sound). Even the natural ideal, it seems, retains traces of the socially regurgitated--an insight we will return to in our argument that the oceanic and unmediated itself becomes in part a narrative function of delay within the rhetorical pattern Kangaroo traces.

With this extensive, though not explicit, preparation for the near miss that Kangaroo's ethic will provide, the first meeting between writer and lawyer is predictably a failure. In fact, as we suggested above, this failure is already in line before their luncheon, Somers reaching the preemptive conclusion that "He would never pledge himself to Jack, nor to this venture to which Jack was concerned" (120). At this point, we may very legitimately draw a line across the page and append "The End,"; without the teleological lure of the mateship "venture," Kangaroo seems to lose its raison d'être as a novel, and Kangaroo his importance as the prophet of power to grant and protect selfhood and integrity. The plot arrangement of event and setting converges with the otherwise distinct resistance to exposition, thereby pulling the multi-levelled narrative back into one plane of meaning. The incompatibility of figure and ground, in turn, loses its textual function, and one wonders whether the novel might be more appropriately titled Waiting For Kangaroo after all, with a Kangaroo who is not fictitious so much as cripplingly anti-climactic, Somers doing a round of visits in a ballet of positions already plotted beforehand.

Yet Kangaroo does appear ("came at once," in fact), and the meeting goes ahead as planned. Though Somers's de facto disqualification of mateship leaves the final result pre-determined, his conclusion has, on evidence that the luncheon did in truth take place, been forced into the background as a kind of memory-trace similar to the semiotic messages relayed through the duet, the call, and the "octopus arm" of friendship. Lawrence, bracketing both start and finish, leaves the intervening space open for investigation. This not

only allows the novel to stretch itself (however disconnectedly) to acceptable length, but accommodates Ben Cooley in fashioning his own collapse. This he readily does, given the novel's Manichean adjudication of positives and negatives, through the ironically intransigent doctrine of the "warm heart," another version of the love-ethic that transforms "Coo-ee" into "Cooley" just as the latter imagines himself "a pouch to carry young Australia in" (134). Yet things, even now, are not that simple or one-sided, for Kangaroo's suffocating paternalism, like the call itself, is a far more sophisticated transmitter of value than one would otherwise expect from a being who expresses blank incomprehension at Somers's rejection of love (149), and claims for himself, furthermore, that he is not a man at all but a kangaroo (132), presumably incapable of rational distinction. If the call splits itself between sound and voice, the booming surf and echo chamber, Kangaroo is bifurcated into an "authoritative" love and an emotionalism worked "from the head" (151). Recovering Ursula's argument in "An Island," he implies that the real issue concerns different kinds of love and not love in opposition to some other reality.

In developing his careful reticulation of values, therefore, Kangaroo takes the oddly Lawrencian stance that the ideal relationship is that which tries "to withhold the other, to keep the other true to its own beloved nature. To any true lover, it would be the greatest disaster if the beloved broke down from her [!] own nature and self and began to identify herself with him, with his nature and strength" (149). At the same time, however, this identifiably Lawrencian description quickly devolves into an intellectual bullying and slavery to desire, "fretting like a tugged chain" (154). Although Somers "believed that it was all true" (150) with respect to Kangaroo's theory, he rejects the possibility that love can accomplish such an optimal separation, a position perfectly in keeping with his preliminary rejection of the Digger leader, but an arbitrary rejection in light of language that makes up Kangaroo's explanation of proper love in the first place. The use of phrases like "the tangible unknown" (150), "the flame of life," the "separate, strange

self" (149), and "the voice of life . . . and the evil of anti-life" (126) in the building of Kangaroo's petition leaves the adequacy of Richard's demurral in doubt. The whole issue seems to turn on the question of the appropriate signifier and not on the nature of the relationship itself: whether we choose love or the "dark god," the experience, properly understood, is the same.

But why then do such metaphors appear at all when they directly compromise Somers's pre-emptive decision? There is no question of parody here (where, as with Lilly in "The Broken Rod," would the limit be drawn?), and a realist solution of vacillating perspectives, of "trying it out on all sides," proves untenable: rhetorical repetition already precludes the possibility that Kangaroo and Somers are autonomous characters whose subtle differences bely an otherwise close bond; the ideological transfer, as a violation of the last boundary of character definition, is a muddying of beliefs unaccountable as an effect of an "exploratory consciousness" or even a Bakhtinian polyvocals.⁸ The answer presses itself upon us that Kangaroo's delineation of the love-ethic in terms of "the fire of life" and "the tangible unknown" (180) appears as it does precisely because the decision to condemn him has been prematurely reached, as if the rejection were a set-up that justifies the extended novel as an attenuated countervoice, an infiltration of Lawrence's most private (and distinctive) fictional code in an act of narrative penance. Kangaroo's assumption of Lawrence's ideology, in other words, is a rhetorical response to Somers's final evasion of the male bond as a reality. Just as the division of "calls" is double-edged, so too is the doctrine of love we find here, justifying Kangaroo's challenge to Richard that "aren't you merely inventing other terms for the same thing that I mean, and that I call love? (150)"--a remark that guarantees the trace of love in what Somers will henceforth oppose to it, in the same way that Kangaroo's bark echoes in the oceanic noise, and the "l" in his Christian name inhabits the written structure of the "coo-ee," neither present, nor absent.⁹

This network of "memory traces," therefore, enunciates the "singing back" that is required of Kangaroo in its

commentary on, and exfoliation of, Somers's decision "that mating or comradeship were contrary to his destiny" (120). The peculiar kind of silent dialogue that emerges is not unlike that of a book with a double preface, each half announcing a text, in opposition to the other, that never actually appears, though its symptoms are everywhere present and occasionally enter the narrative as a further differentiation of character and setting. What is broken off with Somers's resignation, the original thesis suddenly rendered superfluous, nugatory, a mistake, is then resumed in the "body" of the novel as a reaction to this initial rejection, a commentary on its inability to expand itself thematically. Yet this second preface must also divide itself, lest the countervoice reestablishing Kangaroo's ideological importance (i.e. the doctrine of merging) take over as the controlling discourse. As a model for the perpetual non-factoring of either side of the narrative equation, it is helpful to recall Paul de Man's remark pace Benjamin--that the fragment, like the translation, is capable of infinite refragmentation--which Kangaroo plots as a polyphonic design of the inconclusive and distorted echo.¹⁰ What Kangaroo takes back from his prefatory dismissal, he will give up in turn to Willie Struthers, to Jaz, and to the "natural call" that however compromised, remains at the end as the new direction to be pursued. As we noted with respect to the picaresque in Aaron's Rod, the future must be kept open, but systemically so. It is not a matter of an opening which will henceforth be closed or filled, but of the radical, irreducible demand for openness itself--not only in Pater's sense of the pure experience (which corresponds to Birkin's phenomenological anti-factualism, for instance), but as a perpetual oscillation between two absolutes which ironically require an intermediary to assure their individual illusions of direction and totality: Wallace Stevens' "it is and it/ Is not and, therefore, is" sustained in the production of a narrative ellipsis.¹¹

To solve the problem of male bonding is not only to jeopardize the need for writing itself, but to collapse (one fears) the whole problem into the vortex of "D.H.L.", a death of the author, as it were, beyond the radiated self-consciousness of a fictional characterization or semiotic discourse. Phenomenological immediacy is then amputated by the ultimate dissolution of the contingent and subjunctive, which disappear between the lines, like the Cheshire Cat, when the realization of the political ideal is (impossibly) to hand. As Diane Bonds has remarked in her chapter on "Lawrence and the Paradox of Language," which effectively negates the misdirected celebration of Lawrence's realism through the manipulation of the spatial image ("These moments bred in the head and born in the eye" (150), as Somers rather sourly claims), "it seems that it is the principle of difference, not the nature of the things that differ, that energizes his writing and sharpens his thought."¹² As an observation upon the Lawrencian parallax, this is an invaluable insight into the nature of his narrative art.

ii

Already in "Kangaroo," however, the question "what now?" is answered by the supplementation of the written word. If the narrative must progress but never arrive as such, this is accomplished in part by the insertion of quotations, which allow a bifurcation, or doubling of meaning, between what they themselves mean and how they are used in the novel. The most immediate example of such secondary referencing is Somers's own poetry that Kangaroo quotes back to him--"your hands are five-branded flames--noli me tangere" (128). To my knowledge, this line does not appear in any of Lawrence's own poems (though it would fit the almost contemporaneous "Tortoise," and indeed, a number of the lyrics collected in Birds, Beasts, and Flowers), yet the language, and even the style (note the hyphenation) are unmistakably Lawrencian.¹³ The effect produced, a shift from "narrative" to "discourse" in Benveniste's terms, or from fabula to szujet in Shklovsky's, is similar to that of Smollett's introduction within the text of Humphry Clinker, or of Sterne's within Tristram Shandy (one

also thinks of Hitchcock movies here): the illusion of fictional autonomy, of the distanced and objective creation with its self-determining world, is destroyed by the reference to a fictional aetiology.¹⁴ Like the authorial parabasis that jerks us out of our suspension of disbelief in Aaron's Rod (and in Kangaroo as well), the sudden appearance of R.L. Somers as an objective source, the writer confronted with quotations from his own writing, creates a past that is not a narrative past, as we find in Faulkner or the novel of the "foundling hero" (Henry Esmond, for example, or Tom Jones), but a retrospection that multiplies the types of pastness that we are presented with. In Absalom! Absalom!, there is a past which precedes (and indeed defines) Quentin Compson, but no past that within the novel itself, precedes its own writing: Quentin, Miss Rosa, and Sutpen do not have "careers" abstracted from the novel (or novels) in question. In Kangaroo, on the other hand, the temporality of events on a plot level is supplemented by an otherwise extraneous reference to Somers as a poet, and an influential and well-known poet at that. This allows him to enter Kangaroo "undercover," an assignment that one undertakes for the time being.¹⁵ This calculus of withdrawal extends to its thematic meaning, in fact, the noli me tangere acting as the doctrine of disengagement in Somers's political thesis as well as his ambiguous justification for rejecting Kangaroo's love-ethic. An assumption of purity is made at both ends--what Somers writes facilitates its political possibilities within the novel, while the how of its enactment provides the escape from any overtly successful plan. R.L.S. (the initials of another author who wrote on escape and matehood, we note) is thereby drawn up into D.H.L., who as poet and essayist precedes the figural puppets of Kangaroo and his Australian drama.

Kangaroo holds forth another medium of verbal doubting, however: the Sydney Bulletin. Indeed, newspaper articles are extensively used in the novel to provide an allegorical commentary on the sequence of plot events, with one full chapter--"Bits"--a pastiche of journalistic "bits" from the Bulletin. In "Kangaroo," this technique is introduced with respect to the tiger-kangaroo hunt that Jack relates to Somers and that subsequently appears in print. After Kangaroo's

thematically unrelated delineation of tiger and unicorn, drawn from Lawrence's own essay, "The Crown" (where, we will remember, it is the "tiger's" [sic] destiny to try to consume the unicorn), this "yarn," as Jack calls it, becomes an uncanny harbinger for the future power relationship. Kangaroo likens himself to the unicorn ("the tiger and the kangaroo" [128]), and implicitly Somers is cast as the tiger, which in Jack's story not only disembowels the kangaroo, but proves to be somewhat of a mystery, there being "no pussy aboriginal of any sort" (130). In the first case, the theriomorphic extermination adumbrates the death sentence that Somers passes upon the Digger leader, not only by rejecting his alternative ab ovo, but by ultimately refusing to pronounce his love in "Kangaroo is Killed." As a result, Kangaroo whispers bloody murder ("You've killed me. You've killed me, Lovat!" [369]), while Jack hovers in the background as a silent spectator, just as he does in the story he relates to Somers about "a thing I once saw" (150).

In the latter instance, the cat is suggestively an outsider, a "pommy" (we remember Somers's ruminations here on the etymology of this word in "The Battle of Tongues"--a richly associative title in its own right) whose foreignness looks forward to the enigmatic description of the bomb thrower in "A Row in Town": ". . . an unknown anarchist, probably a new immigrant from Europe" (353). When we recall, moreover, Somers's description of himself as "finally a sort of human bomb" (184), the geometry is unmistakable: Somers and the tiger-cat both prove to be "immigrants," and both, through the added connection of the anarchist bomb-thrower, emerge as a cause, indirect or otherwise, of the "kangaroo's" death.¹⁶ The bombing motif, carried over from Aaron's Rod, also puts a convenient end to the attenuation of political circumstance. Just as the terrorist destruction of the Florence cafe dissolves any requirement for coherent thought and coherent activity, enveloping the work in temporary chaos, so Somers acts the foreigner who remains ecdemic by exploding the plot into "bits." By consuming Kangaroo in the disorder of political activity, he escapes the scene of the crime, an "Adieu, Australia" already prefigured in "Kangaroo" with Jack as the only witness for this preliminary homicide.

But the network of covert incriminations extends even further. Kangaroo's, death, as the allegorical sub-narrative suggests, also provides food ("one leg torn clean from the bone"), and in this respect becomes reminiscent of a Eucharist meal. Though Kangaroo himself, as befits his Jewishness, is explicitly associated with Jehovah as well as Christ, the sacrificial relationship between consumer and consumed, master and traitor, remains intact. Not only do we remember the imbalance of the "tiger" and the unicorn, and the Jesus/Judas counterdict with its historical anomie in the revealed treachery of the Last Supper, but the eucharistic ritual finds an odd and circuitous route to William James and, of all things, the "Welsh rarebit." In a novel which, like so much of Lawrence's work, explicitly devalues the "pledged word" in favor of the "genuine feeling faithfully followed" (160--note the alliteration, however), language again provides information that cannot be acquired through Somers's accepted ideological stance. In this case, we may begin almost anywhere on the rhetorical chain that works along the sacrifice of Kangaroo as figural "rabbit." In "The Battle of Tongues," Jaz remarks that Kangaroo is "a funny sort of Saviour" (143), who might be crucified, however, "If the wrong party got hold of him." Jaz, not unexpectedly, is referred to by Kangaroo in "Willie Struthers and Kangaroo" as "the instinctive traitor" (229), bringing back the Jesus/Judas opposition that places Jaz as "the wrong party" in his own remark, a Jaz who, like Somers, proves to be a foreigner and thus implicated in the equation of foreignness with esurience and treachery. This connection is reemphasized in the figure Jaz immediately uses to illustrate betrayal: "There's many mites in a pound of cheese" (143). According to the proper meaning of the aphorism, a "foreign element" in the cheese acts analogously to the Judas figure in the political milieu. This is what Jaz's gnomic witticism conveys in the context of their conversation, and the relationship we are expected to draw in order to follow the dialogue on a plot level. Yet the analogy also isolates the activity of eating: mites consume the cheese from the inside in the same way that a disciple denies, and so "devours," his master and god, an extended reenactment of a eucharistic cannibalism.

These figural, or proper, associations are twisted into a literal reference, in turn, through Somers's rejoinder that "Then I'll toast my cheese" (143). This rhetorical pivot has the effect of a joke ("Ha-ha!" says William James), and signals an alteration in roles through its linguistic gamesmanship. Somers is now the divinity who eradicates the parasite with excessive heat, the martyred and protective Christ that emerges in "The Nightmare" contra that self-proclaimed Jehovah, Ben Cooley. But toasted cheese also provides the bridge to a metonymic "Welsh rabbit" that Jaz offers by extending the gustatory connection one step further: "Oh yes, I like a bit of toasted cheese myself--or a Welsh rabbit, as well as any man" (143). A folk etymology for Welsh rarebit, a well-known dish of toasted cheese, the Welsh "rabbit" assumes the function of a sacrificial refection, as indeed it becomes, "by coincidence," when at a Wyewurk dinner party, "Victoria had made . . . a Welsh rabbit." Coincidence indeed! Who, in this recurrent zig-zag of proper and literal dissections of the controlling "cheese" metaphor, could this rare-"bit" be but Kangaroo himself, the god to be devoured by both disciple and traitor, the absent host providing repast for those under and within him of the "wrong (dinner) party"?

One remembers too, in this respect, how often Kangaroo is identified as a wonder ("He's a wonder, is Kangaroo"; "and he keeps on being a wonder"; "yes, he's certainly a wonder"; "I can see that Kangaroo's a wonder"; "Oh yes, he's a world wonder," etc.), a repetition conspicuous in its own right, but reminiscent, through yet another semiotic thread, of that previous wonder ("Ja, er ist ein Wunder")--Bismarck--the rabbit of Women in Love. In this earlier novel, Gerald jokes about cooking Bismarck for dinner, a harbinger for his eventual fate in Kangaroo, where the astounding network of references belies any purely "accidental" association. When we note, finally, that Kangaroo is addressed by Harriet as "Kaiser" (i.e. Kaiser <---> Bismarck), the rhetorical linkage is unmistakable, a parasitical counternarrative which enacts the ambiguous sacrifice of master/disciple that the given ideology of male-bonding and difference excommunicates. As a textual sign responding to an equally artificial manipulation of narrative design, the "Welsh rabbit" served up to Somers is

none other than Kangaroo/God himself, the ideal sacrificed through the premature rejection of the political "venture." An expiation of guilt, and at the same time a self-incrimination in the sacrificial Jesus/Judas dualism, the eucharistic "Last Supper" provides the expanded narrative of doubt that the polemics of social concern cannot manifestly admit.

At this point, it is not hard to locate the internalization of message and method that functionally supplants the Ursula/Birkin dialogues of Women in Love. The allegory between different textual voices ensures a greater anonymity if these voices are no longer allotted to specific characters, but operate on the plane of language itself. The bifurcated sign can spread across the whole of the narrative without inciting an ideological contradiction in the assumption of apparently incongruent perspectives, or dialogical debates which are given no synthetic resolution within the work. Although the network of verbal associations, substitutions, and reversals remains interruptive, and while dialectics by no means returns as a structural principle in either Aaron's Rod or Kangaroo, the linguistic virus that multiplies in both novels actively resists a collection and comparison with its thematic "other." Because the division occurs as what Barthes likes to call a "semioclasty," or splitting of the sign, and not as a parsing of ideas or values, every remark can become the occasion for a double-meaning, every observation the site of reflecting logics.¹⁷ In this sense, the fear of achieving the political objective, of finding the ideal socially motivated instead of socially transcendent, can be "discussed" within the work without ever appearing as such in its syntagmatic construction. Somers's premature rejection of Kangaroo, and the revelation of its prematurity through his associative recasting as both esurient traitor and rival messiah, become a dialogue smuggled, as it were, into the text, an allegory of motives that brings the act of withdrawal to account for its apparent aberrance. The play of prefaces, where each "chapter" displaces its predecessor in perpetuo and without resolution or "body," allows not only a simple delay of meaning, as the picaresque or the oceanic noise refracts that which gives rise to it, but

"delays" the delay itself, as it were, discussing the manifest political rejection in such a way that the reason for its occurrence, and even its own latent vitiating, can only be supplied by the reader.

If, however, Somers engages both roles of disciple and master, devouring Kangaroo yet installing himself as a variable "dark Lord and Master" (196) to be devoured in his own turn (this apotheosis to the shadowy divine is repeatedly emphasized in the second half of the novel, especially in the long "Nightmare" chapter), the Judas who is also his own Jesus ingests (the verb is appropriate) the entire problem of mateship within himself. The novel unfolds as the spectacular carnivalesque of a Lawrencian internal monologue, fictionally rehearsing the seminal anxiety of speaking for society in forms and images that by definition, must remain outside of it. As such, it is not surprising that one of the devices used to keep the complicated exfoliation of contrary motives forever in motion, expanding its root-system in such a way that the illusion of integration is implied but put forever out of reach, is the enjambment of the self as double-faced pivot within the same system of delays that attempts to efface it. Already in "Volcanic Evidence," therefore, we find both a play on Somers name (Lovat--"Love is in your name"), nominally tracking the love relationship that he thematically excludes, and the introduction of self-consciousness: "As for him, he was forced to recognize the devil in his own belly" (183). Because every other character in the mateship duad eventually becomes subsumed into Somers's, and by extension Lawrence's, aporia of commitment and withdrawal, he himself becomes the focus of a double-mirroring, a self-knowledge that now probes close to its own duplicity, yet must remain, as with the Kangaroo/Tiger story, the male bond, and the picaresque occurrence, just this side of full revelation.

Not unexpectedly, this internal "devil" quickly transmogrifies into "a sort of human bomb, all black inside, waiting to explode" (184), and is allegorized as another "bit," this time in the Sydney Telegraph. "Volcanic Evidence" becomes the narrative of "sleeping volcanoes," ready to explode without warning from "that awful subterranean abode" (187) and wreak destruction (the randomness and surprise of

the anarchist?) upon thousands. This extended and suggestive analogy is reintegrated, in turn, into Somers's emotional state ("If the mother earth herself is so unstable . . . What can a man say to himself if he does happen to have a devil in his belly" [187]), and a further connection made with, of all things, the ocean, "uneasily moving." In the same way that Kangaroo's call anthropomorphizes the natural call, denying the possibility of an extra-social experience, the ocean which "would thrust an angry shoulder out of the watery bed-covering, to give things a little jog" (187), is initially linked with the prosopoeia of the volcano, and then, morphologically, with Somers's devilry, the bomb threat, and even the exploded stomachs of man and animal Kangaroos. All are drawn up, in turn, into the self, which acts as a magnet for the other comparisons, dragging with it a legacy of incompatible associations when it eventually makes the move toward an unmediated call and a "non-human human being" (375). Already, the alternative to male bonding as a structural blank is being consumed by the intentionality that it has not yet had the opportunity to oppose.

What we might call a systematic interpretive remaindering continues in "Harriet and Lovat at Sea in Marriage," where the "good ship Harriet and Lovat" becomes an extended allegory for the love bond and its various shipwrecks. The story told, in fact, complete with descriptive asides and forced word-play, could well serve as a "Bully" article itself, and in any case becomes a "bit" which relays the Somersian philosophy in a partly facetious, overwritten style, as if to admit that a declamatory tone is no longer possible, and that any connection with characters real or fictitious is, to quote Huck Finn, a "stretcher." Yet within this by turns sardonic and pi-jawing discourse, we reconnoiter the familiar concerns of mastery and "companionship," as well as the rhetorical license which inevitably cues us in to perhaps the most salient "message" of them all. Therefore, not only is there talk of "lord-and-masterdom" aboard "the hymeneal bark" (189), and of the disingenuous asperity of woman "once she gets an idea into her head" (190), strung along on a bewildering series of self-consciously artificial metaphors, but the "poor bark Harriet and Lovat" is in danger of being "swallowed" by

the ocean's "great jaws" (191), another scene of aleatory homicide that puts the "master" in the position of the sacrificed god. One reads on to confront a clever portmanteau in the frigate Hermes ("which name still contains the same reference, her and me, but which has a higher total significance" [193]), a parallel to the suggestive Cooley ---> Coo-ee, except that the elided letter (the "S" for Somers?) now leaves no diacritical trace within the hastily arranged, and contextually unconvincing, marriage relationship.

At the end of this short chapter, finally, comes the self-revelation that turns the quick-footed verbal hijinx back inward, a mirroring not unlike the reflexive finish to "Volcanic Evidence." Significantly, however, the insight given here is something "which he half knew": "that before mankind would accept any man for a king . . . Richard Lovat, as a lord and master, he, the self-same Richard who was so strong on kingship, must open the doors of his soul and let in a dark Lord and master for himself" (196). To know this fully would be to call down the Messianic tone which generates the search for the "blank form" in the first place, and to destroy the whole crusade of writing as "thought adventure" in Lawrence's post-war aesthetic. And yet to not know it to any degree would be to remain completely ignorant of the multi-layered "sea" of associations that repeatedly qualify Somers's own actions and statements, denying any significant role for self-consciousness as a textual delay. As it stands, half-knowledge is precisely what we get, now and always, along a chain of aberrant causality that the enigmatic folk rhyme asserts at the end of the chapter:

The fire began to burn the stick,
The stick began to beat the dog,
The dog began to bite the pig,
The pig began to go over the bridge,
And so the old woman got home that
night . . . (196).

In this progression of inverted effects, the novel finds its own logic of readjustment, "from below, the lower doors," a curious instruction by analogy that itself serves as a mitigation of full self-knowledge.

Kangaroo, therefore, operates on four levels of meaning, its design the enumeration of one or more of these levels as a function of the salient concern with an always partially withdrawn and partially revealed message. On the most literal level, the novel winds its way through its travels and observations, from Wyewurk to the country house to Kangaroo's rooms in Sydney to the voyage on the bark "Harriet and Lovat," because, after the rejection of what Somers might call Kangaroo's "saucy plate" (313), the novel has no choice but to fill itself with "bits" of information only tangentially related to the (now diverted) aim of political leadership. "Chapter follows chapter, and nothing doing" (312): the pattern becomes sufficiently obvious, and sufficiently jejune, for another authorial parabasis, jolting the work out of its drift and roll (and in this sense, after the first meeting between Somers and Kangaroo, the picaresque is revived, however unintentionally) toward the second level of meaning, that of the extended delay structure which continually frustrates the flow of plot events. Like the interruptive background noise of the sea, the chess game, and the poetic quotation, or even the premature dismissal of Kangaroo's mateship hierarchy or the original purpose of the male-male bond itself, the breezy, confidential scolding and meta-discourse that appears at the start of "Jack Slaps Back" and elsewhere fragments the narratives to such an extent that indeed, nothing does happen, not even the rhetorical "nothing" that bumps us up and down the Victoria coastline with Harriet and Somers.

On yet another level, however, Kangaroo counters the illusion of a self-enclosed system of proposition and counterproposition, of the collection and concatenation of opposing "discourses" split along a linguistic axis. As such, the novel becomes a whole of incongruent parts, of more parts, in fact, than it can apparently accommodate. Like a mathematical sum with a negative, the addition of the coefficients finds a result which underrepresents the number of palpable objects indicated.¹⁸ This anaclastic procedure, which stops short of dialectical synthesis, still takes inclusion as its end, and the network of verbal associations, though only soluble elsewhere, as the complement to an

ideological counterbalance. On the fourth level, however, the complementarity itself is delayed, forever put out of reach so that the recondite illusion of prefacing the preface, squaring the sums, never actually makes itself present either. The allegory of literal and figural that dances through the shared masks of consumer and consumed, Jesus and Judas, master and disciple, is itself, as it were, "allegorized" in a procedure similar to what Paul de Man locates in Proust and Rousseau in his Allegories of Reading.¹⁹ Always on the impossible knife-edge of half-knowledge, of being half-full and half-empty, half-alive and half-dead, the allegory of commitment and withdrawal (and recommitment) attempts to stay perpetually one step ahead of its own (non) signification.

iii

A number of key scenes from the second half of the work are worth delineating here with respect to the four-tiered meaning structure just outlined. After a rather lazy chapter in which some historical background to the Digger movement is provided, and predictably diverted through the rambling reportage of "Library Night" (circulation vs. codification), the "Pictoria" (both pun and disjunctive visual apparatus), the Australian saleswoman (including a discourse on suitcases which are "always flying open" revealing--what else?--"a skinned rabbit" [213]), and the austral precursor to Susan with a Coo-ee dishtowel through her horns, we move toward the meeting with Willie Struthers.²⁰ On the surface, this somewhat secretive engagement only seems to expand the field of ultimately unpalatable political correctives and provide the occasion for the critique of another delapidated ideologue. But the spidery-fingered Willie Struthers offers more than meets the eye, an uncomfortable concession forced upon us when we realize that he speaks at times very much like that other underrated interlocutor, Levison of Aaron's Rod. "Whatever you may say," he remarks at one point, "the socialistic and communal ideal is a great ideal, which will be fulfilled when men are ready" (217). Such a confident determinism, with its misunderstanding of the working class, leads Somers to a familiar kind of dismissive condescension

("Richard was almost rude"), and a familiar, inadvertent self-revelation. When Somers responds to Struthers's socialism by concluding that "Only the Anarchists" would follow it up, the chosen example is unsettling: is Somers, through the network of associations we have traced, one of these Anarchists, hoping for a revolution (a throwing of bombs?) that he here, and elsewhere, deprecates? The reversal is certainly in place: Struthers's doctrine of inevitability recalls Lawrence's own Hegelian systematics in the Hardy study and Birkin's thoughts on necessary social change in Women in Love, while Somers, insofar as he becomes the anarchist bomb-thrower in "A Row in Town," is the only one who eventually does take action in the novel, throwing the whole political conflagration into irremediable chaos. In the sort of allegorical double-speak that is manipulated and remanipulated in the leadership works, Somers denies the efficacy of Struthers's programme at the same time that he anticipates its fulfillment in his own "revolutionary" activity.

His conclusion that the Anarchists are "too few" (217), in turn, wins the appropriate objection from Struthers that "I'm afraid they are growing more." Indeed, Struthers is staring an unwitting double-agent right in the face, a suspicion that forces Somers to fortify his attack-by-ignorance: "Are they? Of that I know nothing. I should have thought they were growing fewer." This Kafkaesque piece of dramatic irony, which turns an otherwise puzzling digression into a series of cryptic harbingers, has us all howling off-stage, "Of course you do, R.L.S.!" even as we concede the literal appropriateness of his remark. Struthers, who seems to recognize the awkwardness of this comedy of double-reference, "did not seem to hear this. At least he did not answer" (217). The narrative appears to suspend itself for a moment in a lacuna between literal and analogical meaning: why shouldn't Struthers hear, or answer, when Somers's opinion on the number or existence of Anarchists has really nothing to do with the failure of other men to act? When Struthers subsequently hangs his head and admits that change may not immediately be in the offing, we slide back under Somers's ideological cloak; yet, for that one moment, that one interruption or stutter, the suggestion is made that Struthers

doesn't answer because the question is Somers's question to himself, and that he doesn't even hear, in fact, because call and answer are conducted on a narrative level to which he has no access.

Just as Somers plays the anarchist despite himself, however, so does he emerge in "The Nightmare" as the Christ figure he rejects in favor of the Dark God. As a narrative space-filler, "The Nightmare" recounts in detail Somers/Lawrence's Cornish war experience, a tale only tenuously related to Australian mateship, and one which blurs its thematic connection through the exceedingly long digression into a previous European disillusionment. As a belated defense of his isolation from Kangaroo and as an introduction to the ethics of the "unmediated call," we find that this recherche both pre-empts his mateship explorations (it is the war, we learn, which already dictates his aloneness) and anticipates the expression of radical singularity which will increasingly concern The Plumed Serpent and Chatterley. As a readjustment of this pre-emption, furthermore, it is Somers who will position himself as Christ (thus connecting himself with Struthers's brotherhood ideal after all), but also as Christ betrayed, wresting the function of "master" from Kangaroo. As a displacement for what is initially also a displacement (the transfer of authority to an external character), this second usurpation restores the narrative focus to the accepted Lawrencian persona, whose reasserted divinity has been infected by the cannibalistic treachery he is now manifestly capable of, not the least to himself--a snake, we might say, swallowing his own tail. Within the novel as a whole, therefore, this extended chapter serves as a kind of retrospective rehearsal for Somers's denial of Kangaroo, who becomes, in turn, a latter-day Lawrence figure inviting his own assassination (suicide) through his insistent idealism and autocracy. Not only is Richard "Lovat," and not only does he expound a doctrine that seems only incidentally at odds with Kangaroo's paternal monarchy, but he assumes, allegorically, Kangaroo's position at the top of the pile--saviour to be crucified, and devoured, by his "alien" countrymen. In this complex double-reversal of self-agency, the Welsh "rabbit," the skinned rabbit that

falls out of a suitcase (we recall that the novel opens with travelbags, one of which is printed "R.L. Somers"), and the decapitated kangaroo that is eaten by the "foreign" tiger, all become variations of a eucharistic meal in which Somers himself is the real sacrifice--the private last supper, in fact, which John Thomas brings them in Cornwall, and which contains, through a striking concatenation of semiotic cues, the body and blood of its ministrand and "host."²¹

"The Nightmare," therefore, is also noteworthy in the detail of its allegory for the proleptic demise of Kangaroo. Richard Lovat, we find, plays Kangaroo to John Thomas's Somers, and a budding mateship between them is prohibited by the defection of the disciple. Without doubt, this betrayal is emblematic of a more encompassing social violence and exile which the chapter is quite clear about ("England had lost its meaning for him" [286]), yet John Thomas's behavior, especially during their ride into town on market day, becomes strangely significant in the way Struthers' response (or non-response) was significant before: it seems to hit at a sub-narrative which leads its own life apart from the literal events of the story. The mood here is set already by John Thomas' name, which despite its euphemistic glance at a pre-Christian vitality (as in "John Thomas and Lady Jane"), is conventionally a remembrance of the Christian disciples John and Thomas. "John Thomas Buryan" is indeed more an insouciant Farmer Boldwood or Tom Brangwen than he is the high-priest of revised sexual mores, and his destination in this particular episode is not the Bacchic grotto or, as it is to be shortly, the gamekeeper's hut, but a bustling Cornish marketplace, where, significantly enough, a rumor is floated regarding the infiltration of two German officers disguised in English cloth. The source of this "buzzing story," we then learn, is "some fisherman" (265), who not only miraculously appears in the next line as "three fishermen" (by what trinitarian slip of addition did this occur?), but whose incredulity resurrects the tone of revelation that accompanied the initial gathering of the disciples. This second-hand witnessing not only suggests the mystery of the divine presence, conjoining the two submarine officers as Christ-figures, but it implicates Somers himself, in much the same way that he was both present

and absent in the Wyewurk duet, in the additional suggestion of spying. The Germans represent Christ in the context of the rumor, but also substitute for Somers himself when we learn that it is the charge of spying that will lead to his most painful eviction from Cornwall.²²

But where does John Thomas come in? Or, rather, where does he not come in, for it is his unexplained absence that allows the detectives time to ransack the Somers' seaside cottage, and Richard the leisure to stroll "about the Cornish seaport" (265) and collect his rumor. The break-in, which has already occurred by the time John Thomas appears "well after seven" (267), is motivated, we learn, by Harriet and Lovat's "decision" to put themselves "under suspicion" (267). But the charge of treason to the Crown, never explicitly stated, is also "more than the fact that you [Harriet] are not English born" (269), a remark that has Harriet up in arms ("Then what? What?" she cried), but which the officer "refused to answer." This enigmatic silence, much like Struthers's silence in a novel in which much is left unspoken and uncomfortably suggestive, seems to offer an answer on another plane of narrative meaning antithetical to the literal one of action and speech: the legal crack-down originates from the implied accusation of Somers himself as a traitor, the Jesus, this time, ostracized by his community and exiled to silence and death ("the whole episode was one of his serious deaths in belief" [274]).

In this respect, the placement of Somers's parable of the spy becomes doubly important as an allegory for the ransacking that "coincidentally" occurs during John Thomas's unexplained absence. Buryan, by implication, is the informant, the traitor who fails Somers at the very moment ("at nightfall") that Lovat hears the rumor (the cockcrow?) that replays the theme of perfidy. The Christ who is known and "execrated" (265) by the townspeople now becomes the messiah impugned by his closest disciple--the Lawrence figure cut off from society and precipitating his own crucifixion. "But he failed them" (265): this lugubrious judgment far exceeds the importance of a missed dinner engagement, and suggests a Biblical tonality applicable to the allegory of John Thomas's desertion rather than to the incidental occupations of a farmer's market. When

Buryan finally appears, moreover, it is Somers who asserts, rather cryptically, that "I shall never come with you again," and shortly thereafter, in the same prophetic tones, that "I don't think I shall ever drive this way again" (266). When John Thomas is then described as "facile," the bit is secured, not with respect to his deft handling of the team, but as a covert shadowing of his duplicitous nature. Buryan duly disappears after dropping Somers at his door, and later we learn that the Buryans themselves ("They") "had told the one [policeman] who came to the farm that Mr. Somers had driven to town" (267). On a plot level, this is merely a relay of information with "realistic motives": it is reasonable for a farm girl to speak the truth to a police officer. Yet in the sub-narrative of betrayer and betrayed, it becomes a displacement of the sacrifice of R.L. Somers, devoured by the people for whom he acts as "host." Unsurprisingly, the logic involved recalls the distortive process of Freudian dream psychology in detail, the verbal cues running across a censored matrix to a reassembled allegorical drama. We should not be surprised, in turn, to note that the only "obvious" (i.e. decipherable) word on the bits of paper confiscated from Somers's jacket pocket is "Traum." "Pure German," it is itself a phonetic agglutination of "just vocal, almost animal sounds" in the "Seal Woman's Song": one of Somers's "weird wordless cries" misunderstood as the encoded message that it isn't, and also as the encoded message that it so hauntingly is.²³

At the end, John Thomas reappears to take Harriet and Lovat to the station, to remind Somers of his prophecy ("You remember you said you would never drive to town again. Eh?" [272]), and to bring the two repast "from the farm Sunday dinner" (273). Again, Christ's words during the Passover Supper ring dimly in the background: "The man who has dipped his hand in the dish with me is the man who will hand me over," calling up all the different occasions of eating as sacrifice that Kangaroo provides, not the least of which becomes the "last supper" between Somers and Kangaroo where traitorship is broached and the final split achieved.²⁴ Here, by the pregnant suggestion of a Eucharistic cannibalism, Somers is given his own flesh to consume.

As a footnote to this whole episode of betrayal comes the enigmatic statement re Uncle James: "Only one was not there-- Uncle James. Many a time Somers wondered why Uncle James had gone down the fields [sic], so as not to say good-bye" (272). Why indeed, except that Uncle James, nominally another disciple, substitutes for his "brother" John as the Peter/Judas traitor, a displacement appropriate to the "dream-work" logic elsewhere in evidence, and strangely reminiscent, too, of Mrs. Crich's remark in the "Shortlands" chapter of Women in Love (where the murderer/murderee problematic is first announced) that she "doesn't know John from James." Furthermore, this "James" seems to return in the Australian theater as that "traitor," Jaz Trewhella (his Cornish birthright is significant here), just as "John" becomes the "Jack" of Wyewurk and Digger nationalism (both variants, ultimately, of Jack Murry?), not only through the metonymy of the duet in "Larboard Watch Ahoy!", but through his slyly perfidious role as witness and informant.²⁵ In the midst of this frenetic transportation of scene, motive, and meaning, we are left with the unmistakable image of Somers, no less moving and allegorically significant than Kangaroo's own death throes, as the "immobile face of a crucified Christ, who makes no complaint, only broods silently and alone, remote" (274).

iv

If the "Nightmare" chapter appears as a distorted mirror for Somers's own Australian adventure, pre-empting Kangaroo's rank as the "First" yet reemphasizing the calumny of the traitor, its internalizing effect leaves the narrative with few possibilities for further development.²⁶ On a plot level, the different episodes and narrative "histories" must be collected into some kind of satisfactory denouement: Kangaroo is to be tested and eventually killed, Jack reveals his blood-lust and bitter aggressiveness, the political tension between Diggers and Socialists must be diffused, and Somers must find a satisfactory avenue of escape. Philosophically, however, the placement of Somers as both Jesus and Judas, ideologue and skeptic, mitigates the continued transmission of these figurations upon external, objectified, characters. The

battle of political commitment and withdrawal, as an enactment of the central allegory between social origination and its transcendence, locates itself, after "The Nightmare," securely within the Somers protagonist himself, who cannibalizes his own "flesh" in the same way that the novel consumes its stated ideal of "moving with men." This equation of the Lawrence-figure with narrative procedure leaves Somers with an empty stage in which to speak in colloquy with himself, never to admit outright his double-role as consumer and consumed (hence the always indirect, verbally encrypted betrayals in "The Nightmare"), yet never to escape this dualism either. As a result, his internal dialogue pivots on the same self-reflexivity of "Harriet and Lovat at Sea in Marriage," and with much the same "half-knowledge" of his motives, a pattern clearly projected in both "Revenge! Timotheus Cries" and "Bits," which each refactor, with reference to the self, the familiar division between being and intentionality.

In "Revenge!", the problem of vengeance replaces the "human bomb" as the suggested palliative for "the white octopus of the human ideal" (294), whose tenacles, so constricting, have flung Somers (and Lawrence too) from the mechanical "coffin" of England like a poisonous corpse. After such outrageous fortune, so thoroughly documented in "The Nightmare," the urge is "to get clear. Not to save humanity or to help humanity or to have anything to do with humanity . . . Now, all he wanted was to cut himself clear" (293). Yet within this cutting away, this wandering off that characterizes both the picaresque of Aaron's Rod and the unmediated call that Somers investigates in Kangaroo, there appears the original ambiguity of distantiation: to cut "clear" is also to cut "from," a severance acquired only through the literal, additive mathematics noted above. To subtract one from the many--the universal equation of the deracinated self--does not leave one less than the many (or make the many themselves into "nothing"), but creates a world where there is one in addition to the many and conspicuously absent from it; the deviation can never replace the source, but only work against it from the inside, using its own vectors of separation. Translated into Somers's desire for vengeance, this "horrible bitter fire" (293), though justified

as "inevitable enough" (293), becomes the emotion that guarantees the ineradicability of the "from"; the "old dark gods," in whose name this reaction is carried out, do not merely exist outside of all measures of human thought and feeling, but are reached in relation to "the last encircling arm of the octopus humanity" (294), a point that becomes strikingly clear when the octopus is later given a literal, natural reference.

Somers's conclusion, therefore, that "Life makes no absolute statement" (295), and that "Till the Call comes, the Answer is but an unborn foetus" (296), provides a "cutting away" that is qualified in both example and context. The call, like the octopus, trespasses the division nature/culture, as we found in Jack and Kangaroo's "coo-ee," sounding an echo of socially regurgitated answers as well as wordless, inhuman cries. Insofar as revenge is also a "reflex," moreover, we revive the difficulty first raised in "The Crown," and most exhaustively argued in Birkin's "black river of corruption": where does a systematically exonerated ethics of darkness, with its polemical attack on the virtues of consciousness, language, and love, cross over into a systematically exonerated ethics of detachment? Even the "isolate, absolute self" (309), as Richard will argue in the next chapter, quickly transforms itself into a beatitude, a normative fixation that slides one back "into the balm of humanity once more" (309). It seems, in fact, as if the Dark God, and its various isotopes of aloneness, are rhetorical projections on the same line as the extant social mechanism they attempt to replace: both halves are influenced by the attitude with which they are used. Taken out of the realm of history, however, into that of ontology, they assert an untenable opposition to the octopus-tangle, forcing a dualism of either/or that not only manufactures, ironically enough, the Jesus/Judas vortex, but conditions the uncanny pedagogy of "half-knowledge" that prohibits a full revelation of terms and motives. When the ultimate question of self-agency is raised: "Am I too Timotheus crying revenge?" (293), one can only give half the answer on any one level of meaning. Within this semiotic fault, Kangaroo, the mateship investigation, and even Somers himself, ultimately disappear, protecting the

difference, the blank of perpetual non-realization, that outlasts them all. As Somers concludes, with an appropriate self-contradiction, "the greatest revenge on the lie is to get clear of the lie" (294).

A similar logic of illogic returns in "Bits," a chapter given over to the episodic and verbally playful journalism of the "Bully," which, as we learn, "would make Bishop Latimer forget himself and his martyrdom at the stake" (297). But even if the peripatetic Bulletin, in line with the distractive nature of the plot in the second half of the novel, makes us forget Kangaroo's martyrdom, as well as Somers's own betrayal and crucifixion, it still provides important textual information in the condensed form of the news item. The "Bit," as a kind of metonymic fragment, remains necessary as the conveyor of a message that may be both highlighted and recessed within the medium of a writing about a further writing. This allows for a disjunctive plot that can be diversionary (as in the "Cheer Up" story, for example), and yet morally significant, much as the beast fable in Aaron's Rod provides a semiotic message under the supposed relief from human motivation. Here, the "Globe" story about a lack of telepathy in bullocks leads to a comparison between cattle and whales, and an eventual condemnation of man as a kind of bullock-like lemming, incapable of the "marvellous vivid communication" (307) that sperm whales, "those grand, phallic beasts," evince. Again, a wordless communication, this time by telepathy, is pictured as the ideal, and proves doubly interesting insofar as telepathic communication is precisely the kind required for an understanding of Somers's structure/theme bifurcation. One must have a simultaneous awareness of message and method, granting the immediate, intuitive apperception that Somers clearly does not have, and even resists acquiring. The natural call, catalyst for the entry into a new relationship, seems beyond its apologist, whose model of the isolate self remains contaminated with the "balm of humanity" in a quizzically persistent half-knowledge.

Somers, for his own part, admits a similar failing ("I am a fool"), and his self-revelation, that of seeing himself in his own creation, seems to offer yet another avenue to an understanding of his rhetorically transumptive position. Yet

at the last moment, he backs out; instead of realizing the "absolute," in his terms, as itself an intentional, or relative, position, he reappropriates the tautological "I am": "Let me get back to my own self" (308). After a few turns along what he calls "one of those endless conversations" (308) with himself, another logically incongruent statement is made to stand, more or less, as the final word: "even relativity is only relative. Relative to the absolute" (309). Faced with the injunction to both know and not know, he transforms the whole episode into a highly inventive conceit on the "fly in the ointment," ending not with any resolution, but, through the distancing agent of the analogy, with a shift in emphasis to "The bulk of mankind," who are, predictably, "all bits" (309). As the narrator puts it near the end of the chapter, drawing together the tension of the contaminated call/echo, the "relativity" of the absolute message, the artificially familiar tonality, and the elliptical word-play: "Poor dear, it was rather an anomalous call: 'Listen to me, and be alone.' Yet he felt called upon to call it" (311).

The difficulty in keeping the novel afloat at this point is evident: like the ouroboros played upon in "Him With His Tail in His Mouth" and associated with the self-devouring oblivion of "Love, Self-sacrifice, and Humanity" here (but also, of course, with the implied cannibalism of the eucharistic meal), the novel threatens to "idle," in Wittgenstein's term, to the point of repetitious redundancy. We still await, of course, some sort of denouement for Jack and Kangaroo and the whole Australian mateship affair, a wrap-up that will begin with the acerbic effrontery of Jack's "coo-ee" to Harriet, and progress to the public "Row" that explodes between Kangaroo and Struthers, the sentencing of the mob's incitors, Kangaroo's grisly and somewhat pathetic death, and finally, Richard's new faith in "Non-human gods" and "the non-human, human being" (375), and his "adieu" from Australia altogether. As witness to verbal allegory, moreover, there are a number of other episodes which also bear the kind of reading we have promoted (e.g. the problem of the "two flows" in "A Row in Town"; the further network of call, bomb-thrower, and newspaper article at the close of this chapter), extending the problematics of commitment and withdrawal, the what and

the why, through its thematic exercises. In conclusion, however, it might be more profitable to examine the entry Somers ultimately attempts into the natural world already prefigured as part of the nascent structural blank, an entry that is as double-sided as the object it takes for its vehicle.

In "Kangaroo is Killed," therefore, the death of the Digger leader leaves the support of "one's own isolate being, and the God in whom it is rooted" (361), as the alternative to be followed, and as the alternative to be shored against the tangle of "the white octopus of love" (361). The image is striking, and the message, again, the evidently clear one of an isolate self in its wordless setting; the disease of love, "a vast white strangling octopus" (361), must be jettisoned, and with it "the clutter of words . . . old dust and dirt of corpses: words and feelings" (367). Somers, in this frame of mind, his political responsibilities all but exhausted (by his devouring hand, one might say), and disengaged from a choking past of "language, love, and meaning" (367), stands at a tidal pool watching the marine life. All along, we will remember, the sea and its inhabitants (whales, shells, birds) stand against the land-beings (monkeys, kangaroos, even tigers) in the relationship of the natural to the social (and self-conscious); but here, what does Somers espy but "an arm studded with bright, orange-red studs or suckers" (366): an octopus. To be sure, it is a "dark shore octopus," and not one, to go back to yet another characterization of the metaphor in "'Revenge! Timotheus Cries," which possesses "white arms enwreathing the world" (293). Nonetheless, the very appearance of this animal, as with the "Welsh rabbit" or the "foreign" tiger, provides an associative link back to an unnatural, metaphorical octopus of social strangulation, splitting literal and proper senses of the analogy into two different semiotic systems. The white octopus is to society as the dark octopus is to the call of the sea, but the octopi within this allegory reveal a literal similarity to each other, a link that is emphasized by the "white beaks" that the tidal pool octopus possesses. Of all the marine animals that Lawrence could possibly have chosen to distinguish natural from social, the unmediated call from "the clutter of words,"

he chooses the one that contaminates this very separation. Like the call that is also an echo, and like the Wyewurk rabbit that is both substantiation and transubstantiation, the natural object carries its own social contamination as a differential alternative that deconstructs Lawrence's attempt to make it into an absolute. And why, we ask? As with all the other bifurcated textual associations, from Lovat's name to Coo-ee/Cooley to the "human bomb," to Struthers's talk of Anarchists, to the host variously eaten and offered, to a telepathic half-knowledge, the "octopus" establishes two levels of signification which dramatize the central conflict of escape and repetition, of rhetoric and logic, of the relative and the absolute, at the same time that it prohibits their synthetic resolution within an objective narrative frame. With the inclusion of the "unspeakable desire" (375) and the "radium-swooping" voice of the sea within the code which it seeks to supplant, even this new alternative, the sailing to America which is also an introduction to a revival of the Dark God, returns as yet another return, an envoy that will give the appearance of direction only to catch itself up within its own self-consuming origination. In this sense, The Plumed Serpent will be a further development of what has already been decided in Kangaroo, as the latter becomes a preface not only to its own prefacing but to the novel it could not be, and the former strings a further suspension between the need to actualize itself and the correspondent injunction to remain perpetually "as if."

NOTES

¹ D.H. Lawrence, Kangaroo (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1968), 19; 87. Further references are taken from this text.

² Such a "grain" is the effect of any number of literary devices, including that of excessive realism, which interrupt the intended narration of events. A fine example of indirect discourse, employing native dialect and stylized speech for comical effect, appears in "As Far as Palermo" in Sea and Sardinia:

"Suddenly I am aware of the q-b darting past me like a storm. Suddenly I see her pouncing on three giggling young hussies just in front--the inevitable black velveteen tam, the inevitable white curly muffler, the inevitable lower-class flappers. "Did you want something? Have you something to say? Is there something that amuses you? Oh-h! You must laugh, must you? Oh-laugh! Oh-h! Why? Why? You ask why? Haven't I heard you! Oh-you spik Ingleesh! You spik Ingleesh! Yes-why! That's why! Yes, that's why."

Here, in fact, the narration extends through four layers of dialogue: the implied voice of the Lawrence-speaker who views the episode in retrospect, the "I" who participates as the amused and somewhat cynical observer (indicated by the syntactic repetition of "Suddenly I am aware . . . Suddenly I see . . ."), the "q-b's" vocal attack on the raggazze, and their parodied mispronunciation ("you spik Ingleesh! You spik Ingleesh!"). The effect of this macaronic interlineation is a dissemination of the uncomfortably centripetal "I," not for realistic purpose (the essays in Twilight in Italy project a far more convincing "spirit of place"), but as an invitation to a discursive carnival, whereby the prevailing ideological consciousness conceals itself within a series of diversionary escapades. Narratively, this bastardized dialogism becomes a

device for delaying a specifically fictional denouement, all the more urgent in the absence of an adequate closure conveniently provided by the completion of travel. Avrom Fleishman, in "He Do the Polis in Different Voices," discusses the Bakhtinian extensions of Lawrence's "polyvocalics," and provides other examples from Sea and Sardinia to this end. See his essay in D.H. Lawrence: A Centenary Consideration, 162-179. See also The Sea and Sardinia (London: Heinemann, 1964), and Mornings in Mexico and Etruscan Places (London: Heinemann, 1956).

³ See Martin Heidegger and Eugen Fink, Heraclitus Seminar 1966/67, trans. Charles H. Seibert (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1979), 67.

⁴ Paul de Man does much with this opposition in his Allegories of Reading; re Rousseau's Confessions, the ribbon, the name "Marion," and Jean Jacques's youthful tormentors, Fazy and Pleince, all have associative meanings (i.e. those that depend on contiguity of thoughts, incidental resemblances, or verbal homonyms) that are at odds with, or unrelated to, their discursive meanings. In the discussion on Proust, the aporia between figural and literal significations turns on Giotto's "Charity," whereby the kitchen maid's "offering" of the corkscrew parallels the particular terrene Charity in the original painting, yet introduces by association (in a way that is markedly Proustian) Françoise the cook, who is nothing if not uncharitable. The bifurcation exists, in other words, between what the allegory as rhetorical figure intends to organize and the descriptive qualities that resist this transformation. For our own purposes, this split can be extended to what a title names and how it goes about naming, the proper and literal divisions of allegory. As was the case in Aaron's Rod, moreover, such "titleing" is merely one of the ways in which this conflict in meaning is played out, though perhaps with a greater order and directness than de Man, with his theory of "the total arbitrariness" of associations, is willing to allow in his Rousseau or Proust. See Paul de Man, Allegories of Reading, 72-78, 278-301.

⁵ "John Thomas," as we will see in "The Nightmare," has an important, and somewhat cryptic, role to play in the novel,

becoming the "traitor" who is then retrospectively substituted for Jack (through Harriet's memory) in "Larboard Watch Ahoy!".

⁶ Lawrence's manipulation of Aaron and Lilly in Aaron's Rod has a similar function here, with the male bond stretching self-doubt between supposedly "objective" characterizations in both novels.

⁷ Graham Hough and M.B. Howe have each noted Kangaroo's transcendence of normal sexual patterning, though with a regrettable Freudian emphasis. As Hough puts it, "there is a strong element of that curious homosexual feeling [in Kangaroo] that Lawrence never seems to have recognized as such." The Dark Sun, 111. In Howe's words, "Kangaroo is a composite figure, a hermaphrodite who incorporates what is most appealing, and at the same time most threatening, in both mother and father." The Art of the Self in D.H. Lawrence (Athens, Ohio: Ohio U.P., 1977), 92. It is worth noting, however, that Kangaroo, in Jack's words, "Can't get his pecker up now" (116), as the result of a mysterious disease. The hermaphroditic procreator of a new race of men, he is, significantly enough, made out to be impotent.

⁸ Bakhtin, despite his contention that "The hero's word about himself and about the world is every bit as valid as the usual authorial word," nevertheless retains a notion of the author as "exhibitor" or "ventriloquist" (Cf. "Discourse in the Novel"), a final authority who, in the name of an ultimate, thinly veiled reality, arranges all his talking marvels like a master showman. The transference of the same rhetoric to two or more speakers is as alien to this model, which often seems little more than a theoretical justification of Bakhtin's interest in folk irony and the carnivalesque, as it would be in Booth or Percy Lubbock, or in Barbara Hardy or Alan Friedman for that matter, who would explain this rhetorical complication as a variegated picture of an uncertain reality. See Problems of Dostoyevski's Poetics, 4 and passim; "Discourse in the Novel," in The Dialogic Imagination, 259-422.

⁹ "Cooley," a recognizable if not common Anglophonic name, also links up with his servant, who is, significantly enough, Chinese (i.e a "coolie"). This provides another interesting gloss on the "last supper" motif--Kangaroo as the

traitorous servant--that recurs with such energy in the novel, any number of people auditioning for the two roles in the Jesus/Judas pattern.

¹⁰ See de Man's essay, "Conclusions: Walter Benjamin's 'The Task of the Translator,'" in The Resistance to Theory (Manchester: Manchester U.P., 1986), 73-105.

¹¹ The Wallace Stevens fragment is from "A Primitive Like an Orb," in The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens (New York: Knopf, 1955), 440.

¹² Diane Bonds, Language and the Self in D.H. Lawrence, 28.

¹³ With respect to "Tortoise Shell," one remembers especially the magic of fiveness in its arrangement as a cross: "five and five again . . . Not in stone, like the Judean Lord, or bronze, but in/ life-clouded, life-rosy tortoise shell." The phrase "noli me tangere," will return as a cry of redemption for "The Man Who Died" and as one of Ramon's epigraphs of transcendence in The Plumed Serpent; the "five-branded flames," finally, resonate with the chthonic Persephone wedding ("and three dark flames . . . at the marriage of the living dark") in the later "Bavarian Gentians." See D.H. Lawrence: Poems, selected by Keith Sagar (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 115; 241.

¹⁴ Benveniste's approach, predictably, is from a linguistic direction, but the clarity of his writing and his sustained interest in language as a system of communication as well as a system of signs qualify his discussion of narrative perspective as a useful critical reference. See "The Correlations of Tense in the French Verb," in Problems in General Linguistics, trans. Mary Elizabeth Meek (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971), 205-215. Other essays of related importance in this collection: the better known "The Levels of Linguistic Analysis" (101-111), "The Nature of Pronouns" (217-222), and "Subjectivity in Language" (223-230). The distinction between fabula and szujet (roughly, "story" vs. "form"), central to that branch of Russian formalism most concerned with narrative devices (Tynianov and Shklovsky), is detailed in Shklovsky's Teorii Prozy (Moscow, 1925), which unfortunately has not yet been translated into English. Yuri Tynianov's Problema Stichtovornogo Jazyka has been translated

as The Problem of Verse Language, by Michael Sosa and Brent Harvey (Ardis, 1981), and includes a less extensive repertoire of narrative "devices" and a slightly different understanding of the categories of fabula and szujet. In both cases, however (and in Benveniste as well), the important point is the consistently maintained structural division between a self-reporting "realistic" narrator and the bi-planar arrangement of teller and tale within the narrative. Good accounts of this distinction, with respect to Russian formalism and Shklovsky in particular, can be found in Victor Ehrlich, Russian Formalism: History--Doctrine, 4th ed. (The Hague: Mouton, 1980), and Jurij Striedter, Literary Structure, Evolution, and Value: Russian Formalism and Czech Structuralism Reconsidered (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

¹⁵ There is ample evidence in Lawrence's letters of the period that his attraction to Australia was influenced by the anonymity he could assume in this capacious continent, and also, it appears, by the need to "prepare" for Mabel Luhan, whose "call" to Lawrence's creativity is played out by Kangaroo's with Somers. This game of biographical match-up, however, should not misdirect us from the narrative function of role-playing as an escape through language.

¹⁶ Note the additional connection between the natural kangaroo "with his entrails ripped out" (130), and the death of the human Kangaroo by a gunshot wound to the stomach.

¹⁷ Roland Barthes, in an interview with Raymond Bellow, quoted in Textual Strategies, ed. Josue V. Harari (London: Methuen, 1980), 30.

¹⁸ In other words, 3-3 "equals" 0; however, the negation is a mathematical operation and does not refer to the nature of the numbers themselves, which still, strictly speaking, each represent 3"x", allowing for more referents than the arithmetical logic permits. This gives us a model, in fact, for what might be called the "remainder," or excess of the signifier, which must "smuggle" the additive quality of the concrete into its own logical operation.

¹⁹ De Man calls this second allegorization "irony" (or alternately, in Proust, "Reading"), which becomes the locus of signification and the structure of difference in the given

text. The "sudden revelation of the discontinuity of two rhetorical codes . . . becomes the permanent parabasis of an allegory (of figure), that is to say, irony. Irony is no longer a trope but the undoing of the deconstructive allegory of all tropological cognitions, the systematic undoing, in other words, of understanding." Paul de Man, Allegories of Reading, 300-1.

²⁰ Printed and visual media are conjoined here in their most disjunctive forms, the movie being the successor, as Benjamin points out, to the photograph and newspaper article as a cancellation of the "aura" of story. See Walter Benjamin's remarks on the media of film and tabloid press in "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," and "The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction," collected in Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968).

²¹ For an extended discussion of host and guest, see J. Hillis Miller's "The Limits of Pluralism: The Critic as Host." Miller's essay is in fact a particularly useful exploration of the kind of logic one finds in Kangaroo, where a similar problematic of trope and performance is enacted in a narrative.

²² Also note that Jack accuses Somers of being a spy when the latter announces his plan to leave Australia.

²³ See Freud's model of distortion patterns in the dream work in Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, trans. and selected by James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), 170-183. Also Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles," in Fundamentals of Language, 76-82, and Lacan, "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious," in Ecrits.

²⁴ Matthew 26:23, from The Holy Bible, King James Version (New York: American Bible Society, 1967). I have chosen this translation for its emphasis on the pun "hand," which, in context, proves to be a very Lawrencian usage.

²⁵ Kangaroo, therefore, proves right in his assessment of Jaz as a "traitor." The apparent reason for the complicated transfer of guilt from John Thomas to Uncle James is also worth comment here. When driving Harriet and Somers to the train station, John Thomas is described, without irony, as smiling "in his bright, wondering way." The whole episode, in

fact, carries the mood of cheerful nostalgia on that final, "lovely, lovely morning," as if the preceding suggestion of treachery has been completely forgotten. It is surprising, in one respect (though predictable in another), that this inconsistency has not been noted: Lawrence evidently wishes to "salvage" John Thomas even as he condemns him, and the displacement we mention seems to occur for this effect. James, the older "brother" (in following Biblical precedent), takes the blame for what appears to be John Thomas's perfidy, allowing the latter's parting with Harriet and Richard Lovat to end--incongruously--on a note of goodwill. No adequate reading of the passage can fail to reject the conclusion that this is another instance of Lawrence's presumed "experimentalism," a position Worthen, Yudhishtar, and Hough all take up when they give Kangaroo good marks: the novel at this point plainly posits two opposing directions (brotherhood and betrayal) that Lawrence does not control, and that can only be understood in light of the philosophic and rhetorical maneuvering we have outlined.

²⁶ The problem of usurpation, especially as a temporal inversion which sets the belated figure "ahead" of his precursor, can be understood in Harold Bloom's revisionary influence theory as apophrades, the last and most effective ratio of power and repression. Though it is difficult to say what, if anything, is being repressed in this particular instance, Somers clearly pre-empts Kangaroo's importance by recalling an episode in which the Messiah figure is betrayed prior to the present event. On the other hand, of course, John Thomas's perfidy depends, as an implication, upon Somers's priority as a traitor himself. The "Nightmare" chapter, therefore, reverses Somers's belatedness in one instance and reinforces it in the other. Bloom's theories of revisionism and influence saturate all of his work from his famous tetralogy (The Anxiety of Influence, A Map of Misreading, Kaballah and Criticism, and Poetry and Revisionism) to the present. For a concise explanation of apophrades, or the temporal inversion of influence, however, see his remarks in "Poetry, Revisionism, Repression," in Poetry and Repression: Revisionism From Blake to Stevens (New Haven: Yale U.P.), 19-21.

THE PLUMED SERPENT

"The dead are on their journey, the way is dark.
 There is only the Morning Star.
 Beyond the white of whiteness,
 Beyond the blackness of black,
 Beyond spoken day,
 Beyond the unspoken passion of night,
 The light which is fed from two vessels
 From the black oil and the white
 Shines at the gate."

--"Huitzilopochtli's Night"

If Kangaroo suspends itself between the enactment of a political solution and its simultaneous redirection, The Plumed Serpent attempts a retreat from political engagement of any sort in order to preserve the integrity of the revitalized soul that Lawrence continues to project. At the beginning of Chapter XVII, "Fourth Hymn and the Bishop," Don Ramon makes his intentions clear: "Above all things," we read, "I don't want to acquire a political smell. I don't want to be pushed in the direction of any party. Unless I can stand uncontaminated, I had better abandon everything" (271).¹ But even before this, when talking to the somewhat ambiguously portrayed Cipriano in "The First Rain," he establishes the apolitical line as the only appropriate path for a Quetzalcoatl resurgence. After Cipriano suggests a future ascendancy to the Mexican presidency, Ramon responds with another strong disclaimer of his socio-political intentions: "Politics must go their own way, and society must do as it will. Leave me alone, Cipriano. I know you want me to be another Porfirio Diaz, or something like that. But for me that would be failure pure and simple" (210).

But if the outer form has changed, the inner message remains constant. As Ramon relates in the same chapter, "We have to shut our eyes and sink down, sink away from the surface, away, like shadows, down to the bottom" (211). And at the bottom now is precisely the mystery of the "Plumed Serpent," uniter of the "Two Ways" as Ramon calls it elsewhere, and protector of the radical dualism that preserves

the separateness of the individual in the face of the familiar victim/victimizer suicide. Neither political, nor social, nor religious in any orthodox sense (Dona Carlota's death prefigures the dismissal of the non-catholic Catholic church), Don Ramon's philosophy of the "Morning Star" is both the most confident and the most apocryphal of Lawrence's narrative investigations into social leadership. By creating and sustaining a visionary frame that neither Aaron's Rod nor Kangaroo could manage, The Plumed Serpent builds a new world and a new consciousness from the bottom up ("It will probably make you open your eyes," he tells Curtis Brown), a self-sufficient culture combining handicrafts with ritual slaughter and the broad brush of a political fiat.² The scene is at once dramatic and surreal, the disappearance of any social setting clearing the way for Lawrence's fullest fictional expression of what is described in "The Flying Fish" as "The Greater Day."³ Testing the resiliency of what still remains, in outline, a realist aesthetic, The Plumed Serpent ignites a sporadic explosion of what Lawrence at the time called his "chief novel so far," oscillating between mundane and fantastical to the point where everything (and nothing) seems reasonable and achievable.⁴ At the close of this Mexico novel, without any anarchist pyrotechnics to clear the slate and resituate the pieces, the so-called "leadership search" will reach its ambiguous end.

Many of these manichean impulses can be traced to Lawrence's discovery of Old and New Mexico in the early twenties. Much of the work completed in Taos--"The Woman Who Rode Away," St. Mawr, and "The Princess" in particular--rehearses the confrontation between the accultured ego and a native blood-consciousness. In the three fictional pieces, Lederman's wife, Lou Witt, and Dollie Urquhart all serve as preliminary sketches for Kate Leslie, with different experiences of initiation that engender a spectrum of divergent effects.⁵ The conflict between the moral self and the dark, unnamable, passionate self, repeatedly reweven into new patters of commitment and skepticism, is dramatized again in the drafts of The Plumed Serpent, where Kate is initially left to follow her own inclinations, but in the published novel remains "Here!" against her will. Without question,

Kate's uneasy integration of her European autonomy and self-governance with Ramon's mythic pantheon of Quetzalcoatl is the central narrative problem in the work, and one which can be approached through Lawrence's continued concern with spirit of place, and particularly with the spirit of place that a pre-Columbian America suggested to him. As he admits in his first book of intuitive pseudo-science, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, the lure of "America" served as the inspiration for a renascent physiology of "psychic centers" and their philosophical significance.⁶ Whereas the Old World is, as Lawrence tells Waldo Frank, "a mass of ruins from the past," the New World opens out into an "Other," primitive, non-European mode of existence: the "unconscious" against the overly conscious, the fantastical vs. the rational, and the physically vital vs. the intellectually deliberate.⁷ In short, America comes to be precisely the kind of blank signifier represented by the male bond and by Birkin's piece of unfinished, "raw rock."⁸

One can also date The Plumed Serpent as the first of Lawrence's novels to carry the mood of resignation into an escape by death. It shares with Women in Love a certain apocalyptic concern, but whereas Birkin's insistence on "death-knowledge" is specifically launched against war-time England, the resurgence of the "Morning Star" seems to signal a break with the pedestrian world altogether, a drift into the incantatory trance of pure Being that befits the twilight passage of Arthur at the close of Tennyson's Idylls of the King more closely than the pontifications of "lapsing out" that Birkin expounds in Women in Love. In fact, The Plumed Serpent appears at the beginning of a series of late writings that all, as L.D. Clark points out, contain figures of an ark, or "Ship of Death," which relieves the itinerant of his wandering and initiates him into a restricted realm of the twice-born.⁹ The merchant ship in "Here!", with "her massive, sky-spangled cargo of life invisible" (474) serves this function in the Mexico novel, and although its symbolic effect is muted, it belongs to what is elsewhere called the "high plateau of death" as a secession from mundane reality. One remembers here, too, the TB/malaria attack that brought Lawrence close to death immediately after the completion of

The Plumed Serpent in Oaxaca in 1925 (and before final revisions were made to the manuscript and typescript), the inspiration for that most famous send-off of the released spirit, "The Flying Fish," dictated to Frieda in Mexico City. Both works explore similar themes and concern themselves with the death of a rational, Anglophonic existence prefatory to a rebirth "on the other side" in the newfound "Pan world" (342). Although "The Flying Fish" is clearly the more somber of the two narratives, directly reflecting Lawrence's illness, The Plumed Serpent also seems to anticipate a transsubstantial going forth, drawing its strength from a new relationship to death and to what Don Ramon at one point terms "the next days" (299).

But again, as with the earlier novels, the "life" as such finds its most sophisticated expression within the fiction itself. The decisive bifurcation between the nightmare of history and the fabular atavism of Quetzalcoatl creates new possibilities and new problems in narrative design. Without the socio-political anchor that retains Aaron and Somers within the net of probable adventures (the former, however, more than the latter), The Plumed Serpent no longer struggles with the same problems of realization. Somers's confrontation with Kangaroo is a serious crisis in Lawrence's rhetoric of achievement, creating the unnatural requirement to reject what is always understood as a kind of non-terminal goal. Events and motives are perilously close to an ultimate clarification, and therefore to a crippling revelation of the relativity of point-of-view; Lawrence's revised ethic borrows as much from previous worlds as it deviates from them, forcing a perpendicular geometry of structure and theme that holds to the same Jesus/Judas logic it decries. In The Plumed Serpent, however, a Platonic division between an extant, historical existence and "the next days" makes such a clarification irrelevant, for whatever is unveiled in the realm of the concrete is already superseded by an apocalyptic expectation. As a result, instead of the constant side-stepping of action and commitment, the Quetzalcoatl revival is unbelievably successful on political fronts as well as religious: "Montes declared the old Church illegal in Mexico, and caused a law to be passed, making the religion of Quetzalcoatl the natural

religion of the Republic. All churches were closed . . . The Archbishop was deported, no more priests were seen in the streets . . . There was a great sense of release, almost of exuberance" (461). Compared to the fastidiously attenuated evasions in the other leadership narratives, this exuberant auto da fé engineers an overwhelming occupation of the political scene, indicating a radical shift in value that now leaves the worldly concerns of politics and sanctioned religion as a vacuum to be filled by the frustrated desires of the past. Having moved beyond the "political smell," The Plumed Serpent offers its all-consuming odor as a gratuity to what was once the magnetic concern in Lawrence's fiction.

This discount by saturation also signals the decline of the various devices of verbal allegory that we have plotted from Women in Love through Kangaroo. Although the intra-textual refraction remains important to the extent that a realistic portrayal of contemporary actions and beliefs is attempted, The Plumed Serpent returns, with one key exception, to the convention of descriptive chapter titles, and exhibits (again with an important, though aborted, exception) none of the associative networking of the Australian novel or the anonymous characterization and Socratic "confession" of Aaron's Rod.¹⁰ In this respect, it satisfies the formal niceties of aesthetic distancing more successfully than its immediate predecessors, and justifies Robert Langbaum's claim that, while "the personal relationships do not ring true," the novel as a technical achievement is "carefully wrought."¹¹ With the structural blank relocated to a life-beyond-death (or death-beyond-life), the burden of narrative presentation shifts to the impossibility of describing the indescribable; whereas before, one dare not bring the transcendental into the field of the concrete, now one cannot translate the concrete into the anaesthetic negativity of the newfound "Third Way" of the Morning Star. Put somewhat differently, The Plumed Serpent becomes inherently allegorical, and so no longer depends, for the most part, on the kind of textual allegory that relays information between the opposing desires of political commitment and withdrawal. A split frame of reference is built into the novel's thematic arrangement, and does not, therefore, need to be inserted into the text in

opposition to its aesthetic design. Any significatory excess is welded into the hinge between these two worlds as a mediation for realistic credibility and the fabular ideal: the Kate Leslie who can neither leave nor stay, and who forever represents not only her own uncertainty, but the narrative tension between the allegory of present and future.

Not unexpectedly, Kate becomes the extension of the narrative voice in a novel which is the first to return to the female perspective jettisoned after The Rainbow. Her position is as important to the functioning of The Plumed Serpent as Ursula's was to the pre-war novel, and she is laboriously cast and recast, as we noted above, in the three short novellas Lawrence wrote in New Mexico in the summer and early fall of 1924. From the beginning, Kate is portrayed as adventurous yet also vigorously analytical. Whereas Owen, in a chapter that remains largely unchanged from the "Quetzalcoat1" manuscript, exhibits a kind of pop-eyed American inquisitiveness, Kate is at first patiently expectant, then skeptical, and finally repulsed and outraged by the ritual decapitation that makes up the spectacle of a Mexican bullfight.¹¹ With a sardonic smirk that carries over from the social sketches of Aaron's Rod, and will make its way into a number of the later essays, Owen is burdened with "a will-to-happiness," the spurious fakery of the ideal of excitement: "Isn't it thrilling!" cried Owen, whose will-to-happiness was almost a mania, "Don't you think so, Bud?" (5). Later, his rubber-spined Socialist sympathies leave him the butt (literally and figuratively) of an improvised gallery seating, and when Kate leaves in disgust, we are told, in perhaps the most derisive remark of all, that Owen "looked like a guilty boy spellbound" (16). Kate, on the contrary, retains her dignity ("No, I don't like it"), and braves the hostility of the crowd in removing herself from the slaughter, while Owen returns to his seat, "rain pouring on his bald head" (17).

As with Connie Chatterley, however, Kate is not spared the measure of Lawrence's scorn. "Like most modern people, she had a will-to-happiness" (5), the same fault that Owen parades, and the kind of neatly tied optimism-by-habit that will make her not only skeptical about, but strangely inadequate for, the mythological invocations of the

Quetzalcoatl revival: "in love again with her old self, and hostile to the new thing" (407). These remarks, given as thinly veiled authorial parabases, are no longer descriptions of Kate's feelings, but more fundamental devaluations of her character. When she claims that she is "only a woman" (406), or believes that "ultimately she belonged elsewhere" (423), both direct and indirect statements operate on an objective level of plot-arrangement, expressing the uncertainty that we recognize as one of her characteristics; when she is given a "will-to-happiness," however, the locus of meaning shifts from story to discourse, and what is at stake is not her adherence to a set of beliefs or emotions, but her reliability as a fictional observer. The message Lawrence presents in this discursive commentary is no longer "X thinks . . ." but rather "X is not to be trusted whatever she thinks," an incision into the veneer of the story that allows Lawrence to postpone any final delegation of authority, and to collapse the whole fictional presentation into a circular indecisiveness when it fails to do justice to its subject. When this pattern repeats itself in Chatterley, destroying the credibility of the only witness for the hero's increasingly insular, self-evident message, the novel form seems to lose effective access to the new "truth." As the structural blank becomes diaphanous and insubstantial, the novel, with its lingering insistence on some form of concrete description, is jettisoned entirely in favor of shorter, fragmentary expressions (and media) more sympathetic to fabular narration.

In The Plumed Serpent, however, we are prepared for this textual escape quite early in the novel, and its development finds both diversionary assistance and thematic parallel. After the high comedy of Owen's search for "Life," and the abrupt change in mood occasioned by Kate's preemptory exit from the stadium, we reverse gears again in "Tea-Party in Tlacolula." Ostensibly an event staged for the reacquaintance with "The only person Kate knew in the capital" (28), and a convenient literary device for establishing social "connections" to be taken up in future chapters, this cozy Kaffeeklatsch quickly expands into a parliament of back-bench personalities with well-worn panaceas and provincial irritations. Present are the irascible Judge Burlap and his

faded Midwestern wife, the "fresh and lively" Mr. Henry, the enthusiastic Owen, Kate herself, and the pragmatic but socially well-versed convenor of the House, Mrs. Norris. Ramon and Cipriano appear as well, but are significantly muted by the continual banter of habit and opinion: the banana skin tragedy, the argument over green jade, the socialist controversy, and the neat play on words with "sesame cakes." As with Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo, silence plays off against the saturation of talk, a more secure truth implied in activity and an economy of language.

To a certain extent, this "ghastly tea-party" (149) serves as a material foil for what is later referred to as "the deep bath of life" (61), that "life-issue" (70) which opposes itself to Owen's supercilious collection of experiences or Villiers's deracinated economy of excitement. Through the exploration of a lesser existence, the path is opened to a greater, and a smooth transition is effected from an **expatriate** hacienda culture to the indigenous blood ritual of a refashioned Mexico. For this end, Judge Burlap is appropriately dismissed with the "tren" that takes him back to his quarters, and Owen and Villiers are sent away when the comedy of oranges and banana skins begins to interrupt the exploration of a new life "from the middle" (80). The retention of the first two chapters largely unaltered from the Quetzalcoatl draft, therefore, wins vindication as a counterpointing device, Lawrence duly collapsing the satirical machinery more representative of Thackeray or Waugh when the closed universe of foibles and corrections suddenly proves inadequate to a revitalized metaphysics of place.¹³ Unlike Aaron's Rod, moreover, where such a transmogrification is hastily arranged (and misarranged) in the final two chapters of a picaresque adventure, or Kangaroo, which disqualifies itself from the beginning, The Plumed Serpent balances its initial diversion against a much longer and more important investigation into the new social relationship. Although this apportionment is possible only because the rules governing self-revelation and achievement in the Mexico novel are significantly different from those in the other leadership narratives, it provides the illusion of an aesthetic balance and a syntagmatic coherence absent since Women in Love.

But the transition to a "Greater Day" is not a straightforward dismissal of the quotidian and risible "lesser day," and the retention of Owen for yet another social engagement suggests that the organizational virtues of The Plumed Serpent are a somewhat misleading effect of philosophical concerns only tangentially related to an organic aesthetics. In "Fortieth Birthday," Don Ramon hosts a dinner party which counters Mrs. Norris's own aviary of personalities in the previous chapter, a collection of patriotic nationals in opposition to the decidedly ineffectual back-line Anglophones in Tlacolula. Yet even here, as the move from outside to inside is structurally enacted, Kate and Owen being the only connection between the two occasions (and the latter in diminished comic relief), all three of Ramon's Mexican guests--Toussaint, Garcia, and Mirabal--are less than heroic illustrations of the passion they manifest. None proves as ludicrous as the Americanized Owen, but at the same time, each speaks with a voice of authority that Owen is denied, leaving their consequent diminishment a significant cleavage within the voice of the "life-issue" that Kate experiences here, we are told, "for the first time" (70). Mirabal, who gives his testament first, talks of the magic of names--"the fertility of sound" (65)--much as Ramon will later ask Kate to become the First Woman of Itzpapalotl, "for the sound of the name" (347). Mirabal also speaks the narrative of the changing of the religious guard ("Ah, it is time now for Jesus to go back to the place of the death of the gods, and take the long bath of being made young again" [65]), a theme that will direct several of the Hymns of Quetzalcoatl and enact the philosophy of "manifestations" that is increasingly emphasized; as Ramon formulates it in "The Living Huitzilopochtli," "The final mystery is one mystery. But the manifestations are many" (394). Without question, Mirabal's rhetoric agrees with the dominant one of transition, couched in language that is not Owenesque, but suitably mystical and even semantically unclear.

Yet as soon as he finishes his peroration, we are told that "He looked long at Kate, then dived for his soup" (65). In context, it is difficult to conceive of a more shattering challenge to the importance of what has just been spoken.

Combined with his subsequent, over-exuberant reverie ("Ah! Yes! Exactly! Exactly! . . ."), an exclamatory oppression relayed "with a clapping French resonance," Mirabal's theatrical display deflates the significance of his message into another interruption of misdirected self-importance. What he says is severely devalued by the satirical framing of his "how," and when he dives for his soup again in a subsequent paragraph, it could well be Judge Burlap dyspeptically rejecting a sesame cake, or the Jim Bricknell of Aaron's Rod packing his mouth with forkfuls of food: gastronomic idiosyncracies that bring the tone of high-seriousness into an immediate anti-climax of undiscipline.

Garcia, "a rather short, soft young fellow of twenty-seven or eight, who wrote the inevitable poetry of sentiment" (55), is mostly silent during the dinner engagement, and while Kate "liked him," he has already come under attack as one of the epateurs writing "weary script of socialism and anarchy" (54). "Mechanical as a mousetrap," and "very tedious," he nevertheless comes to agree with Kate's disgust on aesthetic grounds, though he retains a certain political righteousness and revolutionary fervor. His philosophy, like Cipriano's, is a Solomonic either/or markedly similar to the murderer/murderee logic that continues to be the sign of a decadent embracement of the machine. This regimented segregation of feeling and idea gives way, in turn, to the gloomy Toussaint, whose pessimism precludes a satirical attack on a too finely educated expressivity, and whose doctrine of the spark of coition carries the recognizable Lawrencian turn of phrase: "At the moment of coition, either the spirit of the father fuses with the spirit of the mother, to create a new being with a soul, or else nothing fuses but the germ of procreation" (68). Yet he is curtly reduced to being "didactic," and his theory of "automatic continuity" is a Darwinesque recidivism that may operate successfully in a prosaic world of mechanical activity, but will be rejected as a model for the vitalist ideal that Ramon expounds. If Toussaint speaks the truth about the doom of the "half-breed," then Ramon's Quetzalcoatlism, which is specifically designed as a religious revival for half-breed Mexico, is just another bit of orchestrated nonsense. But since Ramon's word is

already destined to prove stronger than Toussaint's, the latter must be suitably qualified in facilitating an acceptable hierarchy of perspectives: to compound his intellectual aridity, he subsequently engages in a well-cushioned dialogue with Mirabal in which he "flares on" with his obviously therapeutic tedium, a kind of improvident burning of the wick from which, it is implied, no lasting energy can be drawn. The conversation never quite reaches the airing of idiosyncracies that characterizes "Tea-Party in Tlacolula," but neither is it an unqualified success for the Quetzalcoatl rhetoric. Just as Kate earns a triad of preliminary sketches in the Taos novellas, Ramon and Cipriano find their doctrine rehearsed by Ramon's Mexican guests, a polyvocalic contest of values that occurs within the work itself this time (and not in previous narratives), and which spreads an incipient shadow over the collective practicality of Ramon's indigenous movement. Three flies in the ointment, as it were (a favorite Lawrencian figure), Garcia, Mirabal, and Toussaint highlight the likely misappropriation of his message by the "people," and the consequent requirement to fill the narrative of description and setting with the necessary misdemeanors of the unenlightened.

In this respect, Ramon's fete secures a tighter affiliation with Owen's shenanigans and Mrs. Norris's afternoon gathering than it does, say, with Kangaroo's comessation with Somers in Kangaroo: the rhetorical crosspollination in the Australian novel serves as an allegorical recovery of Kangaroo's worth in face of Somers's (and Lawrence's) secret fear of uniting vision with reality, whereas the adumbration of inadequacy in The Plumed Serpent exacerbates the difference between the two. The narrative focus has shifted from a movement toward the concrete (in the form of a parallel but nevertheless politically "real" world) to a withdrawal from it into an explicitly fabular mythology. The fact that Kate, and not Ramon, acts as the central narrative conduit already indicates this shift, and rearranges the allegory of commitment and delay from one in which "star equilibrium" must fight the imminent encroachment of the concrete, to one where any concrete realization necessarily fails of its task. A powerful vacuum appears, therefore,

between the mundane world and the transcendental ideal which now turns its back on its leaden origin. As an ideological force, this mundane existence becomes essentially meaningless; but insofar as The Plumed Serpent avoids the plastic transmogrifications of the experimental novel, it extracts a pledge for an acceptable fidelity to concrete scene and action. The allegorical energy that is not taken up into the antinomian alignment of the work, in turn, appears as the double-bladed requirement to make "events" credible and yet leave them ultimately illusory. Between these structural incisors, Owen, the tea-party and dinner guests, and even Kate herself, are squeezed, not as a means of returning narrative meaning to a dispossessed owner, but as a way of filling up space where no meaning can finally enter. In the end, Toussaint's implied condemnation of the hopelessness of half-breeds is swept aside by the amazing political auto da fé that Quetzalcoatlism engineers, and whatever semiotic trace he might have left in earlier works is summarily etiolated.

Where "Fortieth Birthday" leaves off, the introduction of Juana, Kate's Sayula criada, and the ubiquitous threat of banditry take up the line of secular adventure. "The Move Down the Lake" opens with a gruesome but staccato account of murder and thievery in the tempo of a matter-of-fact Hollywood Western, accented by Villiers's sudden reappearance with his scare-story of decorated castration. The violence is excessive but always at arm's length: Kate herself admits that "she had seen no horrors apart from the bullfight" (110-1), and the reported massacres carry a relish for repulsive detail within an ostensibly objective accounting that borders on the comical. No visible blood is spilled, and the compounding of rumor progresses much too quickly for the real horror in "the strange aboriginal fiendishness" (109) of Mexico to be transmitted. Treachery becomes more of a leitmotif than a concrete enactment, a perpetual burr under the saddle whose value lies in its hiddenness, in the constant threat of chaos rather than its achievement. Although Don Ramon will suffer directly from an assassination attempt in "The Attack on Jamiltepec," another Jesus/Judas drama in a long line of terrorist activities (and one prefigured in some detail in the homicide of the wealthy Jose--both are "sold out" by one of

their servants), the structural opposition of power and its disruption leads beyond a tidy plotting of individual occurrences. The suggestion of betrayal is in fact everywhere, and on a worldly course, its ubiquity proves more imposing than its local gradation: "there will always be a traitor" (346), Kate remarks in "Marriage by Quetzalcoatl," while Don Ramon is certain that "His people would betray him . . . Cipriano would betray him [!]" (212), and Dona Carlota tells him exactly the same: "They will betray you" (231). In "Casa de las Cuentas," moreover, Kate thinks that "Perhaps the white man has finally betrayed his own leadership," so that "the dark races will at once attack him, to pull him down into the old gulfs" (162). Somewhat later, after the bird-on-a-string episode in "Home to Sayula," she concludes again that "This country would have its victim. As long as time lasts, it will be the continent divided by Victims and Victimizers" (240), whereas the "objective" narrative voice in the same chapter extends the relationship to a universal condition: "The victim, the inevitable victim, and the inevitable victimizer" (235).

This dualism is catalogued elsewhere as well, and covers almost every socio-political engagement imaginable--the interaction between men and men, between men and women, between the white man and the Indian, between the "dark races" themselves, between bourgeois and epateur, between reiver and reived, between master and mozo, between father and son, between lover and beloved, etc. etc. The effect of such a saturation of inevitable perfidy is to render any secular activity of nugatory value, an irritation that cannot help but be comical in the absence of any secular truth to elevate it into the tragic. Banditry emerges in its extreme repetition as a structural matrix to cover "our paltry, prying, sneak-thieving day" (201), a "lesser day" apparently excluded from any form of tangible salvation. It is very difficult, in turn, not to see this as a narrative of Lawrence's own experience and sentiment, and as an implicit gloss on his previous novel writing: his social and intellectual alienation leads him to "phallic" solutions increasingly removed from the potentialities of an established world, leaving the quotidian realm open to an acerbic wit and comic spirit first exercised

in Aaron's Rod. Even the Utopian claims for "moving with men" in a work like Kangaroo are now seen as misdirected, to be accomplished not in political Australia or even in political Mexico, but in the rarefied air of the "Morning Star." Yet the problem, here and elsewhere, is fundamentally one of narrative body: the task of erecting a world that must provide some ground and entry into the mythological (a tautological "Greater Day" is inaccessible outside of discourse), yet ultimately discount itself as anything more than a carnival of harlequins and exchangeable masks of deception. Only by "speaking" the problem, and by using language to discount its own significance, is the proper relationship between sacred and secular established.

The domestic comedy of Juana and her flexibly extended family serves much the same function of divorce by counterpoint, and helps lubricate the eventual apotheosis into the "whole self" when the soberly pragmatic uncertainties of partial commitment and alloyed belief overwhelm every possible manifestation of contemporary existence. Like the diversions offered by Owen and Villiers, the Tlacolula set, and Ramon's own supporters, Juana pulls the drift toward "the hidden greater thing" (120) back into the servile sordidness of what Virginia Woolf at one point calls "the life of Monday or Tuesday."¹⁴ Much is made of Juana's colloquial speech, her limping "bottom-dog insolence" (120), and her fussy and cloying attention, as well as the inflated local catastrophes of miscounted change, the bargaining egg-woman, the lice-picking exhibition, the ineffectual sensitivities of Maria del Carmen, and the economy of Concha's heavy, tortilla-slapping behavior. Between episodes treated with the greatest reverence--readings from Quetzalcoatl leaflets or Don Ramon's pronouncements on instinct and manhood--appear the most banal confessions, as if to highlight the impossible distance between real and visionary:

Kate walked down towards the kitchen.
Concha was slapping the masa, the maize
dough which she bought in the plaza at
eight centavos a kilo.
"Nina!" she called in her raucous
voice. "Do you eat tortillas?"
"Sometimes," said Kate.
"Eh?" shouted the young savage.

"Sometimes."

"Here! Eat one now!" And Concha thrust a brown paw with a pinkish palm, and a dingy-looking tortilla, at Kate.

"Not now," said Kate.

She disliked the heavy plasters that tasted of lime.

"Don't you want it? Don't you eat it?" said Concha, with an impudent, strident laugh. And she flung the rejected tortilla on the little pile

(234).¹⁵

This erosive battle of wills continues for some time, then suddenly jerks into another entrancing recital of the imminent reappearance of Quetzalcoatl, to be interrupted yet again by a disquisition on the "Santissima's" white feet, then taken up a third time into the mysterious events in "the dark reaches beyond the burning of the sun," and so forth. Whenever the mood turns serious, a hypnotic incantation leading one out of the "world's cog-wheels" into the greater mystery of the unknown and unknowable, a shambling, accentual triviality is inserted to break the spell and bring one back to the reality at hand. In this case, however, the fracturing demystification is not a gesture toward the real, or even an insurance against realization, but the necessary effect of an inaccessible vision. As we are told in "Marriage by Quetzalcoatl," "One cannot have one's own way, and the way of the gods. It has to be one way or the other" (352); the way of the "soul-star" or "star-oil" or the "jasmine flower," in other words, against the known world of the concrete image and the lucid phrase. Because "star-oil," as its neologistic form emphasizes, escapes what Eliot would call an "objective correlative," any attempt to include such a "blank signifier" within the design of an aesthetic realism must fall flat. Allegorically divided, yet irreducible in The Plumed Serpent as we have it, the real and the visionary, the visual and the rhetorical, progressively emphasize the absolute incompatibility of their two claims.

Yet to the extent that Lawrence's fiction remains the dominant vehicle for this structural blank of Quetzalcoatl schismatics, this separatist ideal that still serves the function of Birkin's unfinished, raw rock of Rodin, it

confronts the delicate problem of eroding its own medium of expression in the name of what it advocates. The only mirror, or lamp, by which Ramon's Dark Sun can be seen is one which necessarily functions outside of its subdued brilliance. As we will discover in delineating Ramon's various "techniques of release," the relinquishment of whole being necessary for full membership into the next world is in fact equivalent to death, both literally and figuratively removed from the realm of choice and human fallibility. At this point, we enter the circular logic of "The Crown's" perfect relationship that is perfect, a linguistic tautology which Ramon will imitate in his own right ("We can do nothing with life, except live it" [395]), but which cannot acquire any meaning outside an imperfect world acting as its irreducible respondent. At the point where Ramon's vision succeeds, we have no way of knowing, absurdly enough, whether it succeeds or not; systematically beyond any form of expression, the withdrawn monad does not await a more propitious use of intellectual weaponry, but charts the limits of any attempt at such an anthropomorphic appropriation. Any light that one can possibly shine on "the innermost place" (421), therefore, necessarily reveals an always-already alloy with the baser metal of quotidian existence, an existence which must somehow represent the Greater Day whether it, or the vision itself, desires this or no. Although the novel emphatically divides secular from sacred, it also frustrates this antinomian clarity by forcing the sneak-thieving day to gravitate toward its opposite, not only as a lingering concession to "leadership" ideals, but as a functional imperative of description itself.

The allegory of commitment and withdrawal that we plotted in earlier works, therefore, sub-divides into an awkward manufacture in which the lesser day must cover more ground than it can accommodate in an aesthetically balanced narrative. A heretofore recessed code of association is now coopted into the thematically explicit allegory of temporality and "wholeness," giving it the formal relief of more traditional definitions of allegory.¹⁶ This cooptation effectively cuts the line of independent communication suggested by the Cipriano/Cyprian mirror (see note 9): an

indirect accusation of betrayal that fails, as a result of Ramon's ultimate escape from "mere" humanity, to institute a chain of semiotic messages between plot and sub-text.¹⁷ Textual pressure is transferred, however, to a secular field, which manufactures a certain narrative confusion outside of the dialectical arrangement of plot-events. In the most exact sense of allegory as we have identified it in Lawrence's novels, textual information passes back and forth between conflicting narrative demands that cannot be resolved by the work itself: at the unavoidable risk of conceptual incoherence, all the secular actors that we have introduced as fractured and collapsible diversions in a visceral reality change their costumes behind the stage and reemerge, without the director's knowledge or consent, as irreplaceable witnesses to the vision they can only imperfectly imitate.

To be certain, not everyone is reassigned a speaking part. Of the characters we have examined, in fact, only Kate and Juana remain as more than silent spectators to a further counterpointing, with the latter an intermittent accomplice to the compacted mediatory function that the former serves. Whereas the criada of the Casa de las Cuentas, therefore, is merely entranced by the hypnotic power of the indigenous revival, Kate vacillates at every turn between coming too near (thereby losing perspective) and straying too far (thereby losing her compass). Indeed, in the transition from being "just a woman" to becoming Malintzi of the Green Dress, and from exercising a "modern will-to-happiness" to lapsing out in the subterranean folds of Cipriano's blood-being, "beyond her knowing," Kate becomes as much a representative of a necessary and recurring difference as she does a flesh-and-blood character with resolvable uncertainties. What Teresa says to her in "Here!" could well apply as a structural principle for the novel as we have it: "You will always fight, You would fight with yourself, if you were alone in the world" (476). Kate is alone, not only in the world of her actions, but in the discourse of the narrative, where her battle knows no alternative to the degree that it coalesces with the fiction-making process itself. To stop fighting is to rest on either side of an unstable median, freezing, on one hand, the progression of Quetzalcoatl fabulations as self-fulfilling

prophecies beyond the pale of reflection, and denouncing them, on the other, as incoherent ravings which threaten the rational governance of ordinary life. Only by launching Kate into a perpetual motion, which she agitates throughout the work and more tightly and nervously as it draws to its (non) close, can the novel extend itself to the ironic length of indecision that it does.

All of this is perfectly in keeping with Lawrence's compulsive rewriting of the final chapter from the "Quetzalcoatl" draft to the proof stage, as well as the different models of immersion and withdrawal that he explored in "The Woman Who Rode Away," St. Mawr, and "The Princess." Without question, the ending proves to be extremely problematic, squeezed between the need to somehow write the last word (just as Ursula must be allowed some concluding experience in The Rainbow), and the realization that any conclusion, even an explicitly arbitrary one, will incarcerate Kate and the structural tension she must maintain. The difficulty is not merely one of finding an adequate disposal for a character, but of the continued viability of a text, which depends (in this case) upon a Quetzalcoatl ideal at least tangentially fluid and representable; the light Kate shines upon the Greater Day is alternately too strong and too weak, forcing the alteration itself, like the flickering electric lamps of Sayula, to be the focus of attention in place of the object of its illumination. As a result, Lawrence leaves the final chapter without a title even in the heavily revised proofs, and after the novel's eventual publication, continues to express doubts about the ending.¹⁸ In response to Secker's badgering, he finally decides, in November of 1925, to call the last section "Here!", an extremely ambiguous title which at once emphasizes the impossibility of escape from Mexico (Kate must "belong") and represents it, through the exclamation, as an imposition.¹⁹ In The Plumed Serpent's supreme example of semiotic dialogue, the chapter title "speaks back" to its content, which proves to be equally indecisive when Kate ends the work with "You won't let me go!" (487). Neither "here," nor "there," neither entirely wishing to remain nor entirely wishing to leave (nor both nor neither), Kate is suspended by desires that are

already part of a more inclusive rhetoric. Her "word" is never the last word, and even though it finds no temporal or spatial successors on the physical surface of the page, it is inscribed within a virtual network of communication that sustains her indecision in the structural incompleteness of the text.

ii

The eventual goal of these narrative gymnastics--the preservation of a viable Quetzalcoatl vision--repeatedly checks itself off against the devices that are used to assure its purity in the face of a "political smell," or other such alloy. Ramon, who answers the requirement of self-sufficiency much more consistently than Cipriano does, attempts this desired isolation, with varying success, through a quaternity of thematic divisions: a separation of classes, of nations, of professions, and of languages. Each reinforces the bifurcation between mundane and transcendental that projects the structural blank, represented here by the exchangeable allotropes of the Morning Star, into an uncontaminated blood-consciousness, "where the dead are living, and the living are dead" (421). No longer required to pry the work apart from its clenching self-revelations, the blank now assumes a role similar to the phenomenological sketch of immediate, asemantic experience. Although Ramon's world is explicitly fabular where Ursula's was "realistic," neither The Rainbow nor The Plumed Serpent manipulates an empty signifier as a wedge between conflicting textual demands. In fact, as I mentioned in section one, The Plumed Serpent's failure to do so transfers this responsibility to the realm of secular description, which must play out the allegory that the apocalyptic Quetzalcoatl envoi relinquishes, and which The Rainbow has not yet confronted. In this respect, The Plumed Serpent still bears the scars of a deracinated, separatist ethic that must release, in fractured form, the pressure of a suppressed origin in human choice-making; yet it leaves this task to the secular perspective itself, preferring, like The Rainbow, to turn its visionary energies outward.

Ramon's escape through the door of class difference stands as the initial formulation of the division between the elect and the damned that will become a recurrent motif in Lawrence's last writings. When Ramon speaks of "Natural Aristocrats" (272), in "Fourth Hymn and The Bishop," of course, such an idea follows logically from earlier ideas of self-fulfillment, and finds immediate resonance in a number of Lawrence's essays collected in Reflections On The Death of a Porcupine.²⁰ But the exclusion of the average person is a revised pragmatism at odds with the search for a worldly Blutbruder and the egalitarian designs of "moving with men." Ramon's leadership ethic, whereby the "flowers of every race are the natural aristocrats of that race" (272), is a recognizable extension of Lilly's power principle and Somers's investigation into feric election; yet in the Mexico novel, those that are to be led no longer have any responsibility to fulfill their own receptive natures, as the Unicorn does in "The Crown," for example, or as the lamb does in "The Reality of Peace." Instead, the pedestrian crowd aligns itself as a collection of inferior beings who need to be driven into the appropriate enclosures so that they do not contaminate the ostensibly "collective" mystery. Not only are the people "no more capable" of ruling than "leaves of the mango tree are capable of attaching themselves to the pine" (the comparison is suitably organic), but they are, as Ramon claims shortly thereafter, "all monkeys to me . . . you must hate people and humanity, and you want to escape" (275).

Predictably, this black condemnation of the masses wavers between a matter-of-fact assertion of incapacity (functionally equivalent to Birkin's insistence on an incipient dialectics of corruption), and a suggestion of their possible rejuvenation. Without the implicit offer of improvement, Ramon's claim to represent Mexico better than the Orthodox Church is unfounded, and the popular spread of his doctrine a woeful mishap in conception as well as in practice. Because neither is held to be the case, the fescennine spirit of the ordinary man must be given at least a potential uplift, and hints are scattered throughout the novel to this effect. As one of Ramon's incantatory poems establishes, "the living live,/ And the dead die./ But the fingers of all touch the

fingers of all/ in the Morning Star." (422); and as he puts it elsewhere, "if I want Mexicans to learn the name of Quetzalcoatl, it is because I want them to speak with the tongues of their own blood" (272-3). Yet it is difficult to grant this hope any real authority beyond its role as a necessary, but ultimately ineffectual, bridge to that which resides on the other side of the "gulf." As we are told point-blank in "Kate is a Wife," "some men are not divine at all. They have only faculties. They are slaves, or they should be slaves" (458); and as Ramon claims yet again in "Fourth Hymn and the Bishop," "there is only one way of escape: to turn beyond them [people] to the greater life" (275).

The division between national values is fraught with many of the same difficulties, but erects a provincial barrier that actively discounts external solutions. Here the emphasis is not on a firm-handed, yet ultimately fruitless mastery ("for men are not worth it" [196]), but on the voice that "must speak to the Mexicans in their own language" (289), as Ramon tells the bishop: "God is one God, but the peoples speak varying languages, and each needs its own prophet to speak its own tongue" (290). The boundaries extend to cultural matters as well, and Kate's Europeanness is emphasized whenever she decides, as she does in "The Living Huitzilopochtli," that "I've had it put over me" (407). Her resistance to Cipriano, so important to her retention as at least a nominally independent witness, is inevitably grounded in the fastidious skepticism of what is called "her old footing" (379). Though she is condemned for it, as Somers was for his "pommy" sensibilities in Kangaroo (she is, as we noted above, "hostile to the new thing"), the occasions of resistance to "this thing of sheer reciprocity" (424) are multiplied in the final chapters, supporting the claim that it is her diffidence sui generis that emerges as the pivotal narrative structure. First she wants time to consider Cipriano's proposal of marriage, then "to go home" as a final rejection of their "high-flown bunk" (407), then, after further entreaties and initiations (set up, it often seems, only to give her extra material for another round of hesitation), it is back to London for Christmas, a repeated wave of skepticism, several

digs at her "duplicity" (470), a self-incrimination and added determination to leave, and ultimately, her distressed, echoing cry of "Here!" In the wake of this impossible vacillation, it is hard not to ask, as she herself does more than once, what possible service she could offer to the decisive action-men of Quetzalcoatl. A productive answer appears, as we have seen, through a careful investigation of the novel's structural arrangement; on the level of character and motive, however, Kate's wariness, and even deceit, only highlights her unsuitability for the indigenous revival Ramon outlines. Despite his entreaties to the contrary, the pantheon is suitable for Mexicans only, and Kate resolutely, and with embarrassing explicitness, fails to qualify.

If the division by race severs Kate from the nether side of passionate commitment ("Every dog has his day--And every race" [438], she remarks about her own rationalized failure to "fan" Joachim's blood), Ramon's isolation by profession distinguishes him from Cipriano, his acolyte and "First Man of Huitzilopochtli." Except for scattered remarks about Cipriano's somewhat prepossessing martiality, and the early suggestion of betrayal, the portrait of the male respondent is arguably the least fraught with splenetic accusations and suspicions of infidelity in Lawrence's fiction. Their respective roles are spelled out quite clearly, and each meets the other in what Ramon calls the "abiding place" (298), the mysterious territory that precludes all definition (only admitting a series of suggestive metaphors) and therefore also precludes the victim/victimizer magnet that characterizes merely "human" interaction. Cipriano is Huitzilopochtli-of-the-knife, his profession the tracking of bandits and the bloody dispatch of traitors in the name of the "Masters of Death"; never does he encroach upon Ramon's anchoritic reserve, nor is he expected to enlist in a spiritual regency of selective castaways to hold out against imminent degeneration. With the release of hope for the social masses comes a newfound tolerance that will allow even Cipriano to go his own way, a latter-day Gerald or Kangaroo unburdened by the previous imperative for unity of purpose. Without any need to reject Cipriano, therefore, Lawrence has no occasion to resurrect his authority through allegory, and the physical

communion between the two leaders in "The Living Huitzilopochtli" achieves the "perfect unconsciousness" (404) ("Cipriano within the womb of undisturbed creation, Ramon in the death sleep") that was not possible, or sustainable, between Aaron and Lilly, Birkin and Gerald, or Somers and Kangaroo.

The fragmentation of professions, however, also extends to the different roles assigned to male and female in Quetzalcoatl philosophy. Here again, the relationship is remarkably frictionless, an allotment of functions that allows the love-bond to succeed in the same way that the Blutbrüderschaft ideal finds its own placid reorganization: a collection of self-defined fragments instead of interruptive, bullying wills (the distinction is drawn in "Malintzi"), men and women in the ambit of the Morning Star complement each other precisely because they no longer make any demands upon each other. The problematic of love is untangled by means of a super-effective division of labor that justifies the exclusion of one of the partners through a pre-ordained institution of irreconcilable differences: Teresa is not equal to Ramon in any contemporary sense, yet this imbalance is "natural" and justifies the latter's escape into the neocratic pantheon which Teresa is significantly excluded from. Kate, too, must learn the "woman's salute," and wear the Green Dress in her ascension to the First Woman of Itzpapalotl, initiatory rituals that distinguish her from Ramon and Cipriano, and facilitate the inaccessibility of any of these three figures if the need for such inaccessibility should arise. One wonders, in fact, if a sacrifice of her "whole soul" (449) would ironically disqualify Kate from the spiritual elect as it seems to do with Teresa: completely within the system, as it were, she would now have promoted herself to a self-abnegation beyond the need for Ramon's attention or influence. In any case, in a novel where Kate and Cipriano both fail in receiving "one's nobility from the gods," turning "to the middle of the sky for one's power" (479), and where the only character other than Ramon who might be said to do so (i.e. Teresa) is left inferior to her husband, one figure alone walks the stage of his own elusive design.

The most significant division between elect and non-elect, however, occurs through the manipulation of language itself. Like the Midlands dialect Mellors will put on to assert his independence from conventional mores in Lady Chatterley's Lover, there is, as Teresa remarks in the Mexico novel, a certain "Quetzalcoatl language" (448) distinguishable from common speech. Predictably, this new language, here and elsewhere, expresses itself as a grammatical circularity: "the man who is more than a man" echoes Cipriano's extended "Man that is man is more than a man" (423), Kate's refrain, "The blood is one blood" (457), and the isocolonic, question-and-answer dialogue between Ramon and General Viedma ("Is it dark?"/ "It is dark."/ "Is it alive? . . ." "Surely it is alive" [403], etc.). All of these are figural variants of Ramon's eidetic "We can do nothing with life, except live it," which is itself a rhetorical construction (a polyptoton) with the effect of an exclusive experiential declination. In the one case, the same signifier (e.g. "man") stands as both subject and object, and in the other, two forms of the same signifier ("life" and "living") cover the range of being and action. Expression, therefore, is explicitly underdetermined with respect to what it points to; language that is language, we might say, is always more than language.

Yet things are more complicated than they appear. In each case, the particular figure calls attention to its estrangement from normal, semantic usage, opposing its form of (highly idiosyncratic) expression to commonplace constructions, thereby emphasizing the former's linguisticity rather than muting it. The irony is a familiar one in Lawrence: only through rhetorical deviation, and indeed as the meaning of such deviation, is the attack on rhetoric launched. Therefore, as we read about Kate in "Marriage by Quetzalcoatl," "Language had abandoned her, and she leaned silent and helpless in the vast, unspoken twilight of the Pan world" (342); yet this "Pan world," a neologism in its own right, gives rise to a series of metaphorical substitutes ("star-oil," "the innermost place," "the gulf," "the Morning Star," etc.), and highly artificial grammatical forms whose absence would signal a return to the conventional semantics of the workaday world. By manipulating a rhetoric which attempts

to evade referentiality, Lawrence instills a "language of no language" that divides Quetzalcoatl initiates from the common herd at the same time that it justifies the universality of a pre-verbal, non-religious vision.

The various hymns of Quetzalcoatl are a gold mine, in fact, of an almost overly-poetic management of trope and figure. It is not hard to understand, in turn, why these incantatory poems have suffered such sustained censure, although no one has yet bothered, it seems, to explain them on their own terms rather than as some dyslogistic offense to good taste or realistic form.²¹ Aesthetically, talk of a baptism by star-oil or of "the blue-wind of Quetzalcoatl" (421) jars upon the mind expecting a languorous vision under the shady ilex tree or something in the line of what Leavis chooses to call a "full delicate, firm and marvellously informed thought-context."²² But the inflated language, and the string of increasingly abstract, anaesthetic descriptions of the absolute (what exactly is star-oil?), are perfectly in keeping with the unworldly nature of Quetzalcoatl fulfillment, and its invention of a rhetoric untainted by the conventional demands of semantic communication. Attempting to speak from a position in which speech is irrelevant at best ("Man is a column of blood, with a voice in it . . . And when the voice is still, and he is only a column of blood, he is better" [446]), and to speak about something that escapes, by definition, any anchor in concrete or intellectual definition, the "Quetzalcoatl language" is necessarily both circular and divisive, allowing those beyond the pale to speak the silence of blood-being inaccessible to more prosaic dispensers of non-hyphenated discourse.

One can understand, in this respect, the importance of the totem name which supplants a Christian designation and acts as a badge for the communal membership of the selected few. In becoming the Living Quetzalcoatl, or the First Man of Quetzalcoatl, Ramon associates himself with the movement as a whole, sinking his identity ("away from the surface," he says in "The First Rain," "away, like shadows, down to the bottom" [211]) into its fabular, ritualistic narrative. Kate and Cipriano, too, acquire mythological names, and undergo a double marriage-ceremony that emphasizes the difference

between civic and religious communion. As members of a newly elected pantheon, moreover, both characters assume a familiar: for Kate the water bowl and for Cipriano the blooded knife. Only Ramon, who earns the Yahwistic privilege of existing beyond graven images, requires no manifestation as such.²³ This revised trinity, in fact, bears a remarkable resemblance to the Judeo-Christian structure of the Genesis and gospel trinities: Yahweh (Ramon) with the Edenic marriage of his First Man and First Woman, and the New Testament Christ with his disciple (Cipriano) and reborn Mary Magdalene (Kate), whose former prostitution (the "ravishment" of Joachim) has been sacrificed to a new vocation and a new attitude.²⁴ The name of Quetzalcoatl also carries with it an explicitly demonic emphasis, insofar as the "Lord of the Two Ways" (324--eagle and snake) is also the Morning Star, or "Lucifer" star, the transplanted Edenic serpent resurrected in at least one of the hymns ("The snake has kissed my heel" [384]), and which appears throughout as an apocalyptic symbol.²⁵ Not only is Ramon God, therefore, but he is Satan as well, covering the entire territory of mythological existence where Cipriano and Kate are only fragmentary manifestations. At once everything and the only thing, Ramon's totemic transcendence, like the defamiliarized rhetoric that expresses it, provides the illusion of inclusivity at the same time that it becomes the sharpest edge of solitary election.

iii

As a narrative, therefore, The Plumed Serpent gravitates toward these two centers of attention: on one end, Kate's mediatory role between a visceral Mexico of tea-parties and tortilla slapping and the masonic renaissance of Quetzalcoatl mysteries; and on the other, Ramon's ethics of a self-defined self and noli me tangere socio-political disengagement. What we have called the structural blank, or alternately the blank signifier, is released from its function as a lever between conflicting textual pressures, receding into a representation of the "not quite" in the spirit of Ursula's phenomenological dialectics of The Rainbow. Yet whereas Ursula's world is

still aesthetically coherent, an expanding, open-ended universe in which the division between the immediate and the factual is pushed ahead by the margin of experience itself, The Plumed Serpent is a bi-planar organization of concrete and visionary, two discontinuous, self-evolving Monads with different, if parallel regulations. The Mexico novel, in other words, shows the influence of Birkin's apocalypticism of "after us, not out of us," and enacts the duality of a halved planet hauntingly prefigured in Loerke's dream in the same novel. A combination of a reopened future and a well-scarred past, The Plumed Serpent marches resolutely forward into the baptismal waters of a new cosmos at the same time that it carries the ineradicable reminder of a diseased civilization at its feet.

Out of this radical separation of secular and sacred, an allegory of actions and motives emerges to identify the pregnant gestures of Don Ramon from the mistaken and trivial occupations of most everyone else. The dissemination of wisdom for the "Greater Day" is always just that little bit beyond the capacity of the "lesser day," which attempts to approach it on several fronts (including those of Cipriano and Kate), but is eventually found wanting, contaminated with the "political smell" or the individual will that makes the earth, in Don Ramon's words again, "a place of shame." The interpretive matrix, here and always, is functional rather than thematic: ontologically, man as a column of blood stands in polar distinction to any transcendental self; yet within the narrative, as its operative design, both coalesce to oppose the merely human properties of decision-making. "The time of alternatives has gone" (347): with pronouncements like this one, the narrative axis shifts, as it has shifted in each of the novels we have analyzed, from a concrete ideology to a textual structure--the tale, in Lawrence's formulation, getting its own back from the teller.²⁶

Yet however well both tale and teller are then taken up into the structure of a bifurcated universe, the division between shame and hope creates narrative problems as severe as anything faced in Women in Love or the other leadership novels. The allegoresis between prophetic truth on one side and what is called "the impurity of sharp sight" (203) on the

other gives way to a different kind of allegory--an allegory of mediation--that is pressed into service to fill the vacuum left by Ramon's desertion of the social stage. As the figure who must narrate the Quetzalcoatl movement, yet also belong to it, Kate is forced to link two unlinkable realms of existence, forever vacillating between unacceptable positions of acceptance and withdrawal. If she allows a European skepticism and sense of autonomy to win out, not only does she recede into the prying, sneak-thieving falsehood of the excessively moral, she obviates, as a discursive tool, any further access to the narrative, which, in the absence of direct intervention by Lawrence himself, depends on her sympathetic observation. On the other hand, if she becomes too sympathetic, her perspective is engulfed by the ultimately insouciant, anaesthetic totality of the "Two Ways," a baptism into the whole self that guarantees, as Ramon and Teresa suggest, a revitalized life, but only at the cost of eliminating one's power to describe it. In the difficult bifurcation of saved and damned, to cross the definite but indefinable limit between the two is either to sacrifice story to discourse or vice versa; as a narrative experiment in quantum physics, an extreme condition of representative value collapses one half of the equation at the moment when the other half is secured. Only through a perpetual confusion of activity, which Lawrence's textual practices emphasize with remarkable clarity, can Kate avoid this either/or deadlock. Yet, in a saturating irony that directs Women in Love and the other leadership novels, this structural hypallage can only be effected at the cost of a radically incomplete narrative, closure to be supplied by the only figure who escapes the vortex(t) Lawrence facilitates: the reader, belated traveller that he is, who breathes life into a paralyzed work.

In Ramon's case, the turn away from what Kate at one point calls "the itching, prurient, knowing, imagining eye" (203) is a reinforced resistance to all aesthetic complicity and all merely "human" connections to be defined by the phenomenal observer. Even the physical bond with Cipriano, sinking down into the unconscious darkness where "objects" as such are of no importance, is of limited moment, an initiation

scheduled as one schedules an important meeting, and given with the beneficence and meticulous care of a father instructing his son. The energy in Birkin and Gerald's wrestling match has been lost, and no occasion remains for Lilly's badgering tone or Somers's nervous diffidence: the male bond finally "works" because it has devolved into formal ceremony (the truly private no longer admits such crowding), and can therefore divert its structural function as a delay for self-knowledge (the allegory has moved elsewhere). In preparation for Lady Chatterley's Lover, the Self has become more important than the search for a soul-mate, and a Self-contained vision the only salvation from the miasmatic moil of humanity. While the Chatterley series will abandon what Lawrence calls the "ich-dien sort of business," substituting a rhetoric of sexuality for the serpentine poetics of the "non-human human being," it will only extend Ramon's isolation from the world around him, which Mellors is then increasingly condemned to tolerate.²⁷ In his own way, despite the promise of "tenderness," Mellors draws the lines of an individual "intangible, remote, and without intimacy" (277) even more sharply than Ramon does. The nobility that Ramon acquires from the gods, and which is the sole escape from murder and treachery, will become a trust in phallic authority, as reliable and undeviating in its divorce from an insane civilization.

NOTES

¹ All quotes are taken from the Vintage The Plumed Serpent (Quetzalcoatl) (New York, 1959).

² Letter to Curtis Brown, 10 January, 1925, in The Cambridge Edition Collected Letters, V, 193.

³ See "The Flying Fish," in Phoenix, 780-798.

⁴ Letter to Dr. Edward McDonald, 29 June, 1925, in Collected Letters, V, 272. Similar remarks, including the more famous "most important novel, so far," are to be found in several other letters of the period.

⁵ "The Woman Who Road Away," St. Mawr, and "The Princess" were in truth written between the first draft, "Quetzalcoatl," in 1923, and Lawrence's complete reworking of the manuscript (now The Plumed Serpent), between October 1924 and January 1925. Kate, who leaves for England at the close of "Quetzalcoatl" to consider Ramon's mystical path from a distance, becomes gradually incapable of such an escape as the revisions progress, until she cries out, in the novel as we have it, "You won't let me go!" (487). This embittered lament, inserted by Lawrence in proof corrections, emphasizes his uncertainty over the proper balancing between old and new worlds.

⁶ Cf. D.H. Lawrence, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (London: Heinemann, 1923).

⁷ Letter to Waldo Frank of 27 July, 1917, in Letters, iii, 144: "I shall come to America. I don't believe in Uncle Samdom, of course. But if the rainbow hangs in the heavens, it hangs over the western continent."

⁸ Jean Baudrillard, in his recent book America, makes a similar point about the role of the terra nova as a fiction perpetually beyond the accepted moral code of an established civilization. Lawrence himself discusses the American reaction to European literary dominance in his introduction to Studies in Classic American Literature, but rejects the validity of the "henceforth be masterless" claim as equally restrictive; by repositioning the variables, however, the "masterlessness" of Lawrence's alternative--a submission to

the promptings of the solar plexus--fits Baudrillard's requirement for an empty signifier: a new self that is by definition reborn in the assumption of "Americanness." See Jean Baudrillard, America (New York: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, 1989). Also Studies in Classic American Literature (London: Heinemann, 1964), 1-8.

⁹ See L.D. Clark, "The Only Thing Is To Build an Ark," in The Minoan Distance: The Symbolism of Travel in D.H. Lawrence (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980), 338-379. A propos here are the "plague-ship" of "The Flying Fish," the ark implied in the "Noah's Flood" fragment, the "little boat" of tenderness that divides Connie and Mellors from the external world in Lady Chatterley's Lover, the floating vicarage in The Virgin and The Gypsy, and the "ark of faith" in the late poem "The Ship of Death."

¹⁰ A semiotic chain is, in fact, started between Cipriano and Ramon's youngest son, "Cyprian," with regard to the Jesus/Judas treachery motif. General Viedma is directly or indirectly charged with treachery on more than one occasion, whereas Cyprian (also "Ciprianito") tells his father that "When we are men we ought to kill thee" (389). When Ramon's two boys are introduced in "Auto da Fé," Cyprian is, significantly enough, the only one named, while the connection with Ramon's "second" is made immediately thereafter when he tells Kate that he "saw Don Cipriano--and Dona Carlota, and my boys!" (296). The biblical parallels are suggestive (the youngest of his sons as the "prodigal"), and predictably familiar (the disciple as traitor), but Cipriano never does betray Ramon, and the associative connection is not pursued any further. As we will see, Ramon's ascension to a kind of invincible godhood lends the novel an inherently allegorical structure which absorbs most of the need for supplementary, textual allegories of this nature: because Cipriano's loyalty or betrayal is ultimately irrelevant, there is no need to divide his motives along different narrative axes.

¹¹ See Robert Langbaum, Mysteries of Identity (New York: Oxford U.P., 1977), 288, 289.

¹² This scene is drawn, in fact, from Lawrence's own bullfight experience. As Frieda tells it: "we saw a big bullfight . . . I fled and Lawr. white with rage followed me--"

my last impression--a small flash and blood and a heap of bowels on the ground--vile and degraded the whole thing. . . .
 ." In D.H. Lawrence: Letters to Thomas and Adele Seltzer, ed. Gerald M. Lacy (Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1976), 87-88.

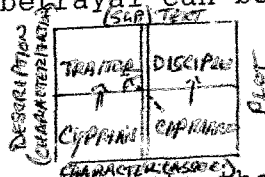
13 As The Plumed Serpent indicates, Lawrence's membership in the sodality of a specifically English comedy of manners--what Meredith called "the first-born of common sense"--is an intermittent affair at best (although often entirely overlooked by his critics). One could say that he finds himself forced into comedy through the back door as it were, when the audience for his more demanding, astringent prose disappears. As both a pattern of textual delay and a parting slap against a perversely unenlightened society, the twiggling of habit and manner that first appears in Aaron's Rod plays a minor role in all of the succeeding novels, including the Chatterley series.

14 See Virginia Woolf, "Modern Literature," in Collected Essays, II, (London: Hogarth, 1966), 106.

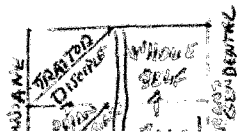
15 Note the allotment of exclamatory punctuation (imperatives and interrogatives) used to distinguish Concha's "savage" manners from Kate's even-tempered control. Although it runs to comic effect here, this same device cues the discount of Mirabal in "Fortieth Birthday."

16 This is the allegory of "higher" and "lower" levels of meaning first set forth in Quintilian. See Book VIII of M. Fabii Quintiliani, Institutio Oratoria, ed. David M. Gaunt (London: Heinemann, 1957). As Maureen Quilligan remarks, however, this thematic definition is more in the spirit of allegoresis, which ignores the specifically verbal interchange characteristic of allegory proper. See Quilligan, The Language of Allegory., 25-96.

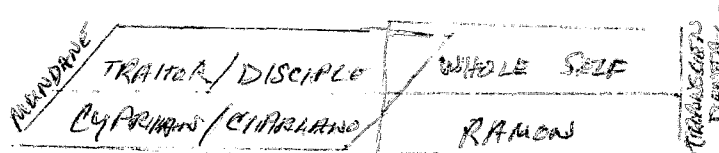
17 Cipriano's betrayal can be diagrammed as follows:



Ramon's introduction into the scheme, however, crowds the associative crosspollination of characteristics into the left half of the diagram, eliminating its allegorical function:



A further allegory, through the contamination of the "whole self" with the traitor/disciple dualism (the pattern of "Him With His Tail in His Mouth"), is inhibited by a shift in the axis of attention:



Point (A), in turn, becomes the point of narration which Kate Leslie occupies, draining all allegorical pressure into her mediatory position.

¹⁸ For an extended discussion of the revision process, see L.D. Clark's introduction to the Cambridge Edition The Plumed Serpent (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1987), xix-xlvii, and note 426.2; also Frieda Lawrence, Not I, But the Wind . . . (London: Heinemann, 1935), 142.

¹⁹ Letter to Martin Secker, 12 November, 1925, in Collected Letters, V, 336.

²⁰ See especially the title essay, "Blessed Are the Powerful," and "Aristocracy," which speaks of an "aristocracy of the sun" in much the same way that Ramon proposes a revised catholicism or pantheon of pagan deities.

²¹ As Hough concludes, "the failure is almost complete. The hymns are formally abominable; the prose virtues of intelligence are in abeyance . . . the imagery is false" (The Dark Sun, 137); Frank Kermode complains the the "fictive religion" is doomed not sui generis, but specifically as an effect of "the spurious rhetoric that attends it" (D.H. Lawrence [London: Fontana, 1973], 110); L.D. Clark adds that "the worst side of Lawrence was never more evident" than in these scenes (Dark Night of the Body [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964], 13); John Worthen is more charitable, but strains neutrality in his assessment that the hymns create "a very soft, flaccid kind of poetry (or poetic prose); the ritual chants and hymns read as if they wrote themselves" (D.H. Lawrence and the Idea of the Novel, 162). Even Daniel Schneider, in a resolute defense of the novel, admits that much of what he chooses to call "tapestry-work" "supplants vital human interaction; Lawrence subjects the reader to pure

symbolism, pure didacticism" (D.H. Lawrence: The Artist as Psychologist, 232).

²² Leavis, Thought, Words, And Creativity, 51.

²³ We remember here that the pinata effigies hung up by the "people" (including a caricature of Don Ramon) are specifically referred to as "Judases," their heretical function an inversion of the Mosaic golden calf.

²⁴ Ramon's divinity and Cipriano's position as acolyte or symbolic "son" also provides another gloss on the Cipriano/Cyprian link. All the threads seem to be in place, but the paronomastic structure remains dormant as a textual force, Ramon's godhead placing him outside the historical contingencies of betrayal.

²⁵ Cf. Lawrence's letter to Else Jaffe of 12 June, 1929: "Yes, I am all for Lucifer, who is really the Morning Star." Quoted in the introduction to the Cambridge Edition The Plumed Serpent, xlvii.

²⁶ It is worth noting that all of Lawrence's literary criticism on the novel as a genre was written coterminously with The Plumed Serpent. Much of it concerns the workings of a semi-autonomous language of truth which sifts the "quickness" of life from the "immorality" of the author's "unconscious predilection." The job of rescuing tale from teller was announced as early as the introduction to Studies in Classic American Literature, and the concentrated renewal of interest here seems to indicate Lawrence's extended uncertainty about how much of an authorial emptying out, or kenosis, is necessary (or possible) in his own writing.

²⁷ Lawrence speaks of the "ich-dien" solution of The Plumed Serpent in his famous letter to Witter Bynner, 13 March, 1928, in The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Aldous Huxley, 711.

WOMEN IN LOVE II, OR GERALD IN THE TABLEAU VIVANT

"I believe in the phallic consciousness, as against the irritable cerebral consciousness we're afflicted with: and anybody who calls my novel a dirty sexual novel is a liar: it's phallic. Sex is a thing that exists in the head, its reactions are cerebral, and its processes mental. Whereas the phallic reality is warm and spontaneous and--but basta! you've had enough."

--Letter to Curtis Brown, 15 March, 1928

Despite the deliberate retreat from many of the characteristic concerns of Lawrence's earlier fiction, the Chatterley novels win ample praise for their exposition of "tenderness" (as Lawrence writes to Bynner), and for a less frenetic tone unimpaired by religious mysticism or revivalist politics.¹ Daniel Schneider gives Lady Chatterley's Lover high marks for being "unparalleled in its dynamic power," with Connie and Mellors's love reaching an equally "unparalleled beauty and significance"; Graham Hough tells us that "I should state my conviction at the start that it is one of the most careful, consistent, and solidly based of Lawrence's fictions"; and H.M. Daleski writes in The Forked Flame that Lawrence's "attempt to determine that basis of an abiding relationship between the sexes," after the "cul-de-sac" of The Plumed Serpent, "is at last successfully concluded."² After the difficult textual machinations in this Mexico fiction, to say nothing of the intricate associative patterning in Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo, we seem to be faced with a more relaxed and even suburban novel, a reaffirmation of good form and good writing that is not only reassuring but therapeutic. In the wake of "Howl" and The Story of "O" at the very least, the emphatic repetition of obscene language and the detailed chronicling of the vari_ form sexual act is hardly the aesthetic jolt it once was, and as an antidote to the kind of structural crisis Kate faces at the end of The Plumed Serpent, the ethics of fucking offers a welcome alternative to the continued irritation of conscious indecision. Having the courage of one's tenderness and the license to burn "out the shames, the deepest, oldest shames, in the most secret

places," any further abstraction into a new paganism or pantheon of mythical demi-gods is irrelevant.³

But as we discovered in The Plumed Serpent's own attempt at social disengagement, a narrative retreat cannot simply be a divestment of all concern, a unilateral election into the "way of the gods" at the expense (as Ramon suggests) of the "way of men." Even if the character in question proves suitably superhuman, we are still faced with the problem of getting the story told, a matter of perspective that must account for the magnetic effect of the retreat on the teller without plunging the novel into a didactic exordium. In this respect, the Chatterley narratives are very close to The Plumed Serpent in their structural set-up, a central, specifically female "narrator" filtering an otherwise intangible vision and promoting the progression of the story through her continuous but never complete education.⁴ Because this mediation eventually becomes synonymous with the narrative itself, one should anticipate similar problems in making the new solution of tenderness credible as a concrete aesthetics. Mellors is no less "transcendental" than Don Ramon, and while the former's dialect stands at an opposite ontological pole from the poetic and fabular Hymns of Quetzalcoatl, they are functional equivalents in the escape from the language of the marketplace, which increasingly becomes the language of all human interaction apart from a certain "cunt-awareness" (301). However the neologism is positioned (as a rhetoric of the stars or of the body), it ultimately serves as a self-defeating (though necessary) medium for a specifically non-visual, aschematic "tender touch" (302).

As with The Plumed Serpent, therefore, the Chatterley novels force a sharp crease, more deeply furrowed as the story is successively revised, between a social consensus and a personal vision that is increasingly negative and embattled. As a "wild animal" (269), fighting the insanity of civilization on all sides ("the whole damn thing is doomed" [325]), what Mellors stands for is less important than the fact that he refuses capitulation. Quite against Foucault's criticism of Lawrence for bringing sex into the light of day (thereby heralding a false sociological revolution), the

language of coition is meant to guarantee a resistance to any naturalizing procedure: a kind of "purloined letter," (both literally and allusively), the so-called obscenity turns the table on the obvious by playing upon the conventional demand for the euphemistic.⁵ In a final strike against the world of machines and motor cars and cocktails at six, its fictive illusions are reflected back against it, allowing the "real" fiction--that of Mellors's phallic consciousness--a temporary reprieve in the ensuing paralysis. As we will see, this reprieve is indeed temporary, and the gloom which settles over Mellors in Lady Chatterley's Lover is a recognition that one can manipulate a game of mirrors for only so long, and that in the absence of any pseudo-religious auto da fé, a tautological privacy proves to be the only effective protestation.

Drifting into a solipsistic defense, Mellors implicitly redirects attention toward the "active" characters of Connie and Clifford. The latter, a fatuous landowner/industrialist with a peculiarly English tone of civility (no such figure could have appeared in any of the leadership works), increasingly acquires an almost Dickensian odor of mechanical evil. A ripe example of what Marxists would call the gluttonous flaccidity of Late Capitalism, he is the worldly twin in a Blutbrüderschaft ideal now irreparably smashed by the "machine" of civilization's falsehoods. The "fugitive dreams of friendship" (206) that Connie had wished for between the two men is little more than a nightmarish staging of opposites by the end of Lady Chatterley's Lover, a perverse parody of the Birkin/Gerald camaraderie in which Clifford becomes responsible for the "world" and Mellors for the anti-world, all trespass ending in mutual annihilation. A latter-day industrialist Gerald Crich with the spurious moral instruction of a Parson Saywell, the Clifford of Lady Chatterley's Lover, with his rationalized cuckoldry, his blueprints for technical production, and his Proustian "well-bred anarchy," comes to represent not only himself, or even his class ("I believe there is a gulf and an absolute one, between the ruling and the serving classes" [197]), but his race and milieu as well, a cripple who is nevertheless a symbol for a universal collapse.⁶ As we read in chapter VII of Lady Chatterley's Lover, in one of the many passages in

which Connie ruminates on behalf of the author, "Poor Clifford, he was not to blame. His was the greater misfortune. It was all part of the general catastrophe" (74). And even after she begins to doubt the force of this determinism ("And yet was he not in a way to blame?"), her conclusion, and Mellors's also, is an unambiguous and almost dismissive resignation in the face of the unchangeable: "His whole race . . . were all inwardly hard and separate, and warmth to them was just bad taste." (74). If Mellors is fated to wholly reject this "race," Clifford, like a stock character in a folk drama or morality play, is fated to wholly accept it.

But the Clifford and the Mellors we find in Lady Chatterley's Lover are more sharply patterned than the figures who appear in the first draft of the novel. In The First Lady Chatterley, begun in October of 1926, Clifford is a noticeably more beneficent overlord, with an occasional sense of humor and without the reemphasized mechanical catatonia he exhibits in the final version. The obsessive, self-manipulated gambling with Mrs. Bolton enters only in the third draft, while his "tuning into the wireless" and capitalist rationalization for profitable mining are almost gratuitous additions to the early novel, restraints of an increasingly estranged and egoistic temperament which are marched in to dismiss Clifford at the end as "no longer really human" (FLC, 202). For the most part, his fault in The First Lady Chatterley is a general weepiness and rather maudlin, vain tolerance: he irritates Connie with his abject questioning after her happiness and spineless worship of her beauty ("I shall fall into mariolatry . . . what a wonderful woman you are!" [FLC, 246]), but he is rarely the brittle autocrat and pontificator he becomes in subsequent drafts. What is emphasized initially is Clifford's ineffectiveness--his paralysis as handicap rather than horror--whereas in John Thomas, and even more so in Lady Chatterley's Lover, this impotence loses its appeal to pity altogether and becomes a vicious and self-consuming weapon, to the point where Connie's eventual conclusion that her husband is somewhat demented cannot seriously be questioned. In one of the few scenes in the final version in which all three central characters are

present, Clifford's maniacal wilfulness reaches a climax when he attempts to drive the stalled wheelchair up the flowered slope of the wood. A less frenetic Clifford also finds himself helplessly stalled in the first version, but the tone there remains civil and even apologetic ("Parkin, do you mind wheeling me? I beg your pardon for the way I spoke to you" [FLC, 113]). In Lady Chatterley's Lover, however, Clifford engages in an almost paralytic fight-to-the-death against the machine:

"She's done!" said the keeper. "Not power enough."

"She's been up here before," said Clifford coldly.

"She won't do it this time," said the keeper.

Clifford did not reply. He began doing things with his engine, running her fast and slow as if to get some sort of tune out of her. The wood re-echoed with weird noises. Then he put her in gear with a jerk, having jerked off his brake.

"You'll rip her inside out," murmured the keeper.

The chair charged in a sick lurch sideways at the ditch.

"Clifford!" cried Connie rushing forward. (203)

But even here, Clifford seems to exceed himself, becoming a mechanism in his own right, or a gear grinding against another gear in what is later said to be "the machine of external circumstance" (257). Entering a realm of automatic, super-conscious tyranny, like Cathcart in "The Man Who Loved Islands," or Paul in "The Rocking Horse Winner, or Pauline Attenborough in "The Lovely Lady," Clifford's demonic behavior becomes less a matter of choice than a doom he is fated to fulfill. At the beginning of the final draft, in fact, the tone is set for the whole work: "Ours is essentially a tragic age . . . The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins" (1). And while Lawrence cannot resist an astringent satire on Clifford's mores, the fault runs beyond him, leaving his benevolence or tyranny of secondary concern. Commanding a jealous grip on life, his insouciance is nonetheless manufactured from without: "Having suffered so much, the capacity for suffering had to some extent left him . . . in

his face one saw the watchful look, the slight vacancy of a cripple" (2).

Mellors, too, is transmogrified from the backwoods, lower-class Parkin of The First Lady Chatterley and John Thomas and Lady Jane into The-Man-For-All-Seasons who chooses isolation in the final draft. Limited by class, by political outlook (Parkin becomes a paid-up Communist in The First Lady Chatterley), and by a certain physical clumsiness, the early gamekeeper is not the center of attraction that the almost superhuman Mellors, with his repertoire of exchangeable roles and dialects, becomes in Lady Chatterley's Lover. As a result, the first two drafts are more neatly triangular in design, with Connie vacillating between mutually attractive, or unattractive, life-modes: a vigorous sexuality and "blood being" with Parkin on the one hand, and the privileges of title and cultural sophistication that Clifford offers her on the other. As Connie reflects on her split life in The First Lady Chatterley, "Her two men were two halves. And she did not want to forfeit either half, to forego either man" (FLC, 71). Yet without a marked imbalance in the scale of value, The First Lady Chatterley seems to lack energy and direction, a problem corrected by sharpening the satire aimed at Clifford and inflating Mellors beyond the social and intellectual imperfections that inconveniently clothe Parkin. As Gavriel Ben-Ephraim remarks in his essay "The Achievement of Balance in Lady Chatterley's Lover," the "awful sensuality" between Lady and gamekeeper "is therapeutic only for Connie . . . Mellors, superior in ultimate shamelessness, is kept at a mythic distance."⁷ Whatever this may mean aesthetically, it signals a change in the structural geometry of the developing novel, drawing the Mellors-character away from his fragmentary insufficiency toward the role of the complete man whose self-imposed isolation is synonymous with an exclusive expression of sanity in an insane world.

The resketching of an isosceles structure into one which opposes two incommensurate ideological vectors, one overwhelmingly superior to the other, also induces a change in Connie's mediatory position. As an inquisitive but somewhat timid adventurer from the stale certainties of the manor house, her choices in The First Lady Chatterley are not

particularly appealing on either side of the garden gate. Parkin is a "limited little individual with no beyond" (FLC, 218), while Clifford evolves into a "cunning ape" of "deadness and fixity" (FLC, 251); whatever they might individually represent, neither of them qualifies as a whole self, nor is Connie a figure who seems capable of responding to that which makes "demands upon the deeper woman in her" (FLC, 219). Without a genuine commitment to the phallic mystery, which often appears as a muted and partial alternative awkwardly inferior to Clifford's Platonic seminars, Connie never acquires the urgency in The First Lady Chatterley that she does in the final drafts, where her relationship with the gamekeeper develops into what Lawrence thinks of as the one link to salvation amidst a howl of civilized chaos.

Although she never loses her quality of being a "modern woman" of the kind Lawrence spent considerable energy satirizing in essays like "Making Love to Music" and "The Jeune Fille Wants to Know," Connie shifts from being a cavalier, if not dishonest, hedonist to a Kate Leslie-like acolyte in a new doctrine of "manly fucking." Whereas The First Lady Chatterley is a fast-paced, almost picaresque drama of inadequacy, a contest of increasingly stale alternatives manipulated by a flippant, indecisive woman of class, the final draft is a clear exercise in good vs. bad, the worldly partnership one of inadequacy now rather than irrelevance. In this light, despite the problems of fictional representation that Lady Chatterley's Lover confronts, it is surprising that so many commentators, including Frieda Lawrence herself, see the first draft as the best of the three.⁸ Clifford, to be sure, is not the blackened monster depicted in the final version, nor is Parkin the aloof superhero that Mellors turns into, but in The First Lady Chatterley nobody is really anything, and Frieda's claim that Lawrence wrote it "out of his own immediate self" only makes sense if such an "immediate self" is the same which prefers the levelling comedy of Aaron's Rod and parts of The Plumed Serpent to the high seriousness of Birkin's search for star-equilibrium or Ramon's Quetzalcoatl fiat. For the first draft has in common with the Mexico novel a certain tonal light-heartedness--even flippancy--in its depiction of social events, an ironic

casualness that remains only in occasional, undigested passages of John Thomas and Lady Jane and Lady Chatterley's Lover. At the opening of the novel, therefore, Connie's presumed fortitude in the face of a "tragic age" is quickly undercut by her being "As a matter of fact . . . one of those very modern, brooding women who ponder all the time persistently and laboriously" (FLC, 17). One thinks immediately of "Ruth," the "transcendentalist girl" in "Nobody Loves Me," with her "nasty, pronounced benevolence" and her cerebralized ethics, or again of the "modern woman" in "The Real Thing," "always tense and strung-up."⁹ Also an emblem of her class and race ("somehow, having got into the swim, she couldn't get out" [FLC, 141]), Connie perpetuates the banal privilege of morality and motorcars, a domesticated noblesse oblige which drains feeling from form and leaves one with a nervous, by turns dismissive, inconsistency.

This emphasis on flippancy as well as moodiness is secured shortly thereafter when Lawrence recounts Connie's Continental education, an artistic/Bohemian experimentalism that leaves her "not happy but thrilled" (FLC, 17--my emphasis). Such a loaded adjective (dangerous even in the slight lisp required to pronounce it) recalls Gudrun's self-congratulatory irony in Women in Love and has the overtones of a "learned" exuberance to match Mirabal's assurances and Dona Carlota's histrionics in The Plumed Serpent. Being well instructed in Lawrence's heavy-bladed satire on falsely intellectual women and the pretense of an artistically self-conscious modernity, we are clearly not meant to read Connie sympathetically here.¹⁰ A biography in shorthand, hastily elided connective and all, Connie's past is trivialized by its sketchy, discontinuous compression: "Came the war, and she had to feel bitter about it all" (FLC, 18). Going on "from day to day, from day to day, in a strange plodding way" (FLC, 18), her regimen of "acceptable" emotions (however current or "thrilling") is the mark of submission to a social habit which she never loses. Continuously unable to forfeit "all [Clifford] stood for . . . all the things he stood for" (147), any "tender" consummation between gamekeeper and Lady, we are led to believe, is an unstable match from the start. The

Connie of The First Lady Chatterley resolutely fails to make up in desire what she lacks in psychological breeding.

Her inherent inadequacy, of course, does not reduce the desire for a sensually complete life to a nugatory role in the thematic development of the first Chatterley draft. Without some doctrine of "manly fucking," and some call to Connie's deeper womanhood from "my Lady's fucker" (FLC, 253), none of the Chatterley drafts would possess a center. All the important revisions, including the mold of Clifford's paralysis and Mellors's oppressive fatalism and estrangement, root themselves in the fundamentally inarticulate experience of bodily motility, the non-human humanity that takes over from an irradiating "dark sun" or Morning Star as a narrative blank. But in The First Lady Chatterley, Lawrence stacks the deck far too heavily against a possible alliance between Connie and Parkin for any reliable tenderness to evolve. She is always a little too frivolous and a little too emotionally "modern" to bring off the proper "flow of sympathy" (FLC, 226) that would make their sexual investigations more than capricious exercises in flouting social convention. As Duncan Forbes, a subordinated "insight" character like Major Eastwood in The Virgin and the Gypsy and the mysterious "musician" in the present work, will later claim: "No man would die of love for a really modern woman, such as she is" (FLC, 236). It is a harsh condemnation, supported not only by Connie's half-hearted agreement to Forbes's conclusion about "You and I" having "very shallow hearts" ("I don't know what I think--I'm most frightfully tangled up" [FLC, 209]), and by her own admission that "We are all maniacs" (FLC, 142), but also by Parkin's instinctive recoil from what he takes to be her self-deception (Cf. 228-29), and by occasional remarks dropped by a conveniently distanced narrator: "She was safe from him. She could enjoy all the voluptuous pleasure of contact without any risk" (FLC, 221). Though we assent to the honesty of Connie's passion for the gamekeeper and the release it offers both of them, we are always aware, as Connie realizes herself, that "she dared never let him see the sickness that was in her soul. She must always play the lady, the donor, she who gives the gift" (FLC, 204).

Both her reliance on social position and her spiritual sickness are brought out in the oddly extended tête-à-tête with Forbes, a figure completely recast in the final draft, but one who serves, like Major Eastwood in "The Virgin and The Gypsy," as a kind of choric sidelight for distinctly Lawrencian ideas on love and aristocracy. Handicapped by a misanthropic capriciousness that takes satire as its philosophy ("the most decent thing to do was to mock it all" [FLC, 212]), whisky as its solace, and a "reckless, surging despair" as its nihilist entertainment, Forbes is nevertheless an invigorating presence who comes off as a "relief" from the turgid seriousness of her knight and gamekeeper alternative. When he argues that "what we want is a flow of life from one another to release some natural flow in us that urges to be released," this could well be Lawrence himself talking, with the kind of diction and rhythm not available to a less articulate Parkin. But Connie, somewhat illogically, immediately dismisses Forbes as "trying to force her in some way" (FLC, 243), and hence it is "with relief" (at his insight? his overstrained wit?) that they part company. This odd episode, which seems to mark a point of irrepressible conflict between ideology and aesthetics, provides two different consequences: on one hand, Connie's rejection of Forbes's doctrine of "passionate human contact among ourselves" (FLC, 242) brands her as a psychological illiterate, incapable of discovering her "deeper desire" (FLC, 218) in Lawrence's terms. In support of the gathering evidence for her insufficiency, whatever she might pretend to in releasing her hidden being, it is destined to be a half-hearted and untrustworthy enterprise. On the other hand, Forbes's words (here and elsewhere) bring Parkin's inability to enunciate such insights to the fore. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for Mellors's rise above clearly defined class distinction is Lawrence's need to have the "natural" man speak the sophisticated language of social commentary, including the harsh condemnation of a woman's "freedom" that is transferred from Forbes in The First Lady Chatterley ("it's a devil's instinct in her nowadays" [FLC, 229]) to Mellors himself in the final draft.

Weighted against the Forbes of the 1926 manuscript, however, Parkin is clearly the inferior philosopher, an uninformed provincial whose hold on Connie's intimacy can never expand beyond what she calls at one point the transmission from "naked man to naked woman" (FLC, 138). If Forbes (with his "usual nervous tension") proves unsuitable as a Lawrencian hero, his remarks about men and women still rank him higher than Parkin as a spokesman for "tenderness," and even for the incipient phallic relationship which the latter can only experience and not articulate as a renascent social phenomenon. As a result, Forbes's dismissal necessarily calls for an emphasis on Parkin's limitations, a development awkwardly evident in the motor trip the three take near the end of the work, where any alliance across the British class divide emerges as a hopeless impossibility. From the moment she spots him on the side of the road, "ridiculous, rather small, rather stiff . . . a ridiculous little male on his guard and wary of his own self-importance" (FLC, 216), she realizes that whatever "deeper" demands he made on her womanhood, he remained "A limited little individual with no beyond." Naively consumed by the fetish of Wragby's grandeur where Forbes professes either an outright condemnation of social ambition and ego-fed sentiment or a baldly pragmatic enjoyment of "indoor space, and a hot bath, and fresh vegetables" (FLC, 207), Parkin appears as more of an object of farce here than as a serious candidate for Connie's lasting affections. The contemptuous abortion of Parkin's name (and by implication his character) to "Op" and its glibly rendered variations of "'op along," "'oplites," and "'op, skip, and a jump" unstintingly reduce him to a buffoon, a satirical target who drags any possibility for a significant relationship down to the level of a fortuitous diversion. Connie is flippant enough to take Parkin's name in vain (this clearly could not happen with Mellors), Forbes finds a somewhat hypocritical amusement in the occasion for verbal art it affords him (we remember that the two men "liked one another instinctively" [FLC, 228]), and even the "objective" narrator joins in the satire: "'Mine? What for?' said the surprised and suspicious Op" (FLC, 221). At this point, we are beyond what any one character thinks of feels--and Connie expends no energy in

defending her "Op"--and at the level of an anthologized condemnation of his character, a regimented Saturnalia carried out for structural ends that override any sense of "realistic" or objective fidelity. Op himself, up against it from all sides, can only accept this high-handed abuse (even from the narrator), or else collapse into the "egotism" of his class.

As with Clifford and Parkin, therefore, Connie evolves into a social type incapable of crossing certain boundaries of understanding and commitment. However convincing her assessment of Parkin as "a ridiculous little male," Lawrence is also quick to remind us that "practically every modern woman sees her man in this light, the light of her contemptuous superiority" (FLC, 217). A product of modernity to the same degree that Parkin is an instrument of class, Connie's "stream of passion" is ultimately dammed up by a certain self-ironizing priggishness that belongs to the "tragic age," inescapable and only intermittantly relaxed. When we read, therefore, that "she [Connie] gazed towards him with maternal solicitude on her warm face, and with ridicule laughing up its sleeve in her heart" (FLC, 217), or that "with Constance--and she knew it--the great stream of the deep desire was most of the time shut off" (FLC, 238), the novel settles into a stalemate of failure and insincerity, offering no alternative to the general fragmentation on all sides. What Forbes says about the "common people," letting "the mangy dogs of their egos run loose and piss on everybody's doorpost" (FLC, 215) could be applied (and Forbes does so, in fact) to Connie and Clifford as well, creating a narrative without a hero and without any allegorical miscegenation, but without any direction or purpose either. Lawrence, never the chronicler of decadence in the aesthetically disinterested manner of the early Eliot or the early Joyce, does not create a panorama of futility in The First Lady Chatterley, but an inexpert dry-run at a theme that will require a strong alternative for narrative energy.

As it stands, the only hope for the central triangulation in The First Lady Chatterley is in further rounds of amusement, or in the kind of hollow optimism that Connie voices at the end: "Ah well! The future was still to hand!" (FLC, 253). In response to the exclamatory punctuation at the

very least (the last four sentences, in fact, are all imperatives), Connie's analeptic prerogative is highly suspicious, a recit of the quadratic emphasis that introduced her bohemian "thrilling" at the opening of the novel. Why should we take Connie at her word to "get away" from Clifford's intellectual leprosy and her own dishonesty and thrilling, when she has just proven unreliable in rejecting Forbes's Lawrencian message? How reliable can a hastily resurrected Lady Chatterley of the flesh be when her recurrent promise not to "change" Parkin ends in an insistent challenge to do precisely that in marrying him and establishing a new life for the two of them? More to the point, how can a "narrator" who trespasses upon his narrative by agreeing to a designation chosen within the story be trusted to present an objective account of civilization and its discontents, even if such aesthetic considerations were foremost in Lawrence's mind? In depicting the paralysis of a culture with the (affected) sang froid of the artist paring his fingernails behind the stage, even if we believed (for whatever innocent or misguided reasons) that this was ever Lawrence's method, The First Lady Chatterley certainly fails in its execution. The only tenable reading for what was initially not meant to be a novel at all is as an over-extended story which has outgrown a descriptive or satiric containment, yet fails to find a discursive thread appropriate for a longer narrative. The ending, therefore, is clearly, if unintentionally ironic, turning the work against itself where further expansion would only produce a broader index of deformities; "thoughtlessly dashed off without care for its quality," as Derek Britton claims, Connie's wide-eyed projection caps a novel whose tragedy is not so much Parkin's grinding class ego or even Connie's emotional anorexia as it is the inability of a diseased society to produce material worth writing about.¹¹ To Lawrence's hasty and inadequate denouement, we can only append a belated "but it isn't really" and move on to John Thomas and Lady Jane, which reads in many places as more of a sequel than reworking of a story which was originally not conceived as a novel at all.¹² Connie's thoughts are as penultimate in The First Lady Chatterley as Lawrence's own, and we are never convinced that she has produced a significant

commitment to any philosophy, nor that she would ever be able to do so.

ii

If The First Lady Chatterley is fortuitously, if posthumously titled, suggesting as it does a preliminary sketch for successive and presumably weightier Lady Chatterleys, it also bequeaths a legacy of structural faults to be resolved when the novel is taken up in earnest. On the one hand, Connie's commitment to tenderness (of phallic rather than maternal definition) is too glibly occasional for the emergence of any seriously considered sexual liberation, the narrative moving toward picaresque impertinence rather than toward a reawakening "to the existence of legs" (275), as Connie will put it in Lady Chatterley's Lover. On the other hand, neither Clifford nor Parkin seem important enough to justify allegiance in the first place. Ironically, an effective portrayal of social damnation seems to require an exceptionally strong individual for contrast--either the author who is brave enough to enter the waste land of modernity unaided, or a character whose recalcitrance provides fate with its fictional purpose as an incarcerating menace. Again, the understanding of narrative as a fictional drama, and not simply as a segment of life lifted from the stream of common observations, is crucial here; "circumstance" as an inescapable determinant only comes into being through the screen of values (conscious or otherwise) which elects fate as a radial force, always in implied contrast to the point of view which depicts it.¹³ This creates an extremely interesting, and potentially complicated, antinomy between a fate which broods over a work, and the continual need to fuel such a ubiquitous energy with an equally heroic individualism. Lacking the latter, The First Lady Chatterley can produce only a diluted solution of the former, and instead of an apology for tenderness under seige, we get, despite extended passages of vivid local coloring, a kind of offhand social satire. Fate never comes to play a significant role in the novel because only a wash of inadequately defined characters exists

to oppose it; strong characters can never arise, moreover, because fate is not yet in place to define their importance.

In the attempt to break this deadlock, and stimulate a chiasmus of vibrating opposites, Lawrence chooses, as he did in The Plumed Serpent, to work from the middle: Connie is more sharply and sympathetically drawn in John Thomas and Lady Jane than she was in the early draft, and her commitment to a phallic mystery is duly intensified. The early dialogues between Connie and Clifford are lengthened, moreover, to give Connie further opportunity to contradict Clifford's heavy-handed mental bullying, and later passages which compromise Connie under the "evil spirit" and "squalid freedom of the social swim" (LCL 141, 2) are rewritten to reflect her awareness of a new truth. As we read in John Thomas, "She had wanted to have her cake and to eat it. She had wanted to keep Clifford and Wragby and her ladyship is she liked"; but henceforth "Parkin would be the pivotal point in her life" (JTLJ, 300--my emphasis). Whereas the revised Connie can picture a transition from "the wearisome solitary individualistic I" (JTLJ, 301) to a new wholeness, her predecessor remains entombed in a narrative preterit, regressing in fact into the security of Clifford's wit and privilege: "She wanted to have her cake and eat it . . . And she could not forfeit all the things he stood for" (FLC, 147).

The extended, high-brow tête-à-tête between Connie and Forbes is also dropped in John Thomas, clearing away the awkwardness of having a minor character set the ideological tone, and thereby rearranging the respective merits and demerits of art vs. "nature." The Duncan Forbes of The First Lady Chatterley casts the early Parkin into a rather poor light, showing him up as an instrument of sexual vigor but also as a bit of an ill-bred vulgarian, unable to pronounce the ideology of sex as well as experience it. In the second version, however, the omission of Forbes allows a starker contrast to be drawn between Clifford's literary facility and artistic dabbling, and the sexual dialect of the gamekeeper's hut. To a certain extent, the introduction of Tommy Dukes, one of Clifford's smoking-room companions, leaves Forbes's wit a redundancy; yet Dukes, the Toussaint of John Thomas, is limited by the social setting in which he appears, and his

good-humored garrulity never escapes the pleasantries of "entertaining." Whereas Duncan is Connie's friend, and moves fluidly between drawing room and pub lounge, Dukes belongs not only to a segregated location and class (Clifford's Cambridge connection), but to an impotent race and civilization as well. As he admits to Connie with striking candor, "I belong to the mechanistic experiment . . . But I wish I could have crossed over, to the democracy of touch" (JTLJ, 65). "I tell you," he insists somewhat later, "I'm on the wrong side of the fence . . . I don't belong to the democracy of touch myself: I only prognosticate it" (JTLJ, 68). In the end, despite Dukes's loaded apology for "a new fire to erect the phallus" (JTLJ, 70), Connie concludes that Clifford's friends are all "second-rate men" (JTLJ, 69), crucified half-selves (Clifford, we remember, was wounded on Christmas day), to be denied the resurrection vouchsafed to the external Pan, Oliver Parkin.

This emphasis on a civilization with the fate of a Johannine impotence clarifies the exclusive relationship between words and action, and conveniently stacks the odds against the one individual who will hold out for the latter. The symbolic implication of Clifford's Christmas dinner party, in fact, cuts the distinction between nature and culture, the phallus and the pen, and the present age and a future one, in double force: if Christ's birth inspires the cry that "Pan is dead" (as Lawrence explains in "Pan in America"), then Christ's death, as represented by Clifford and his cronies, suggests Pan's resurrection. There being only one important male character absent from this preliminary comessation, there is likewise only one "Pan," whose presence now stacks up against a congeries of delapidated souls. As a result, Parkin's class limitations in The First Lady Chatterley become an untenable handicap, and except as a protection against the slow creep of Cliffordian mechanization, are deemphasized in John Thomas. Connie bears the effect of this change, as Mellors will to an even greater degree in Lady Chatterley's Lover: "It was a great relief to her that that vague, yet very profound class-mistrust which had lain like a negating serpent at the bottom of her soul, was now gone" (JTLJ, 301). The conviction that "If she had to belong to a class let it be the ruling class" (FLC, 139) can hold no authority in the wake of

an expanded prologue on the perfunctory habits and windy monologues of impotent gentry; as with the preliminary banquets in The Plumed Serpent, the "lesser day" is dramatized to the point of parody in order to emphasize the unique salvation of the Greater Day that opposes it. The narrative logic now becomes as clear as Ramon's division of quotidian and mythical in the Mexico novel: "It's so different," said Connie to Hilda, "knowing life, and being it" (JTLJ, 309).

Clifford himself, of course, as the most garish emblem of his decrepit age, undergoes a concordant retailoring. To secure the prevailing distinction between words and action, Clifford is inflated with philosophical parables, literary allusions, and moralizing aperçus at every turn. In his post-holiday collapse, he takes to reading to Connie from Plato's Phaedrus for after-dinner communion with "pure light" (JTLJ, 87). Connie finds it merely "conceited, egoistic, anti-life," Plato's transcendentalism "the exalted ecstatic track," yet Clifford continues with his allegory of black and white horses and his patronizing references to Connie as "my dear child," graduating him into the role of mentor and parabalist. Clifford's knowledge is schematic rather than intuitive, his horses two functionaries on a mental chessboard in contrast to Parkin/Mellors's ease with animals ("always connected with horses, a clever fellow that way" [96]), and profession as a proprietor of wildlife.¹⁴ Connie specifically associates her husband's self-professed emotional and artistic anarchism with "simulacra" (JTLJ, 223), whereas his avid reading of Racine, Proust, and Joyce, none of them Lawrencian favorites, becomes a kind of private stage for masturbatory pleasures, the "pleasant tickling" (JTLJ, 342) and secret tremor of the senses with which "men like Clifford play about like dirty little boys" (JTLJ, 238).¹⁵ The condemnation is slashing and malicious, harsher by far than the attack on his "tolerance" in The First Lady Chatterley; here he becomes a monstrous disfigurement saddled with a mania for intellectual perfection and emotional etiolation ("The only way is to have few emotions as possible: none, for preference"), a manichean neurosis of duty and anarchy that precludes any ambiguity about his position in relation to Parkin. As "natural" and

literal as the latter is shown to be, Sir Clifford is almost a perfectly precipitated abstraction.¹⁶

Nowhere is this opposition diagrammed with greater decisiveness than in Clifford's embellished missives to Connie about "our mild local excitement" (289). The language here is precisely the kind of Cliffordese one would expect: the Latin tags ("in purus naturalibus"), the witty flights of metaphor ("I have this bit of local garbage from our particular garbage bird, our scavenger crow, our sacred ibis, our intimate buzzard, Mrs. Ivy Bolton" [JTLJ, 289]), and most noticeably, the frequent use of literary allusion. Bertha Coutts, therefore, is said to raise Cain, the affair strikes Clifford as a subject for "the Cent Nouvelles, and some of the modern dirty French stories" (JTLJ, 305), while Parkin "has in him a touch of the great Rabelais. Nemmens male!" as well as the perversity of the Marquis de Sade and the belated contrition of Don Rodrigo. Set against this is the skaz of Parkin's voice as Clifford reports their subsequent discussion: no admirer of Proust, or even the "great Rabelais," would come out with "Fuckin's fuckin, an' every man should stan' by his own" (JTLJ, 306), or boast of "havin' a cod atween my legs" (JTLJ, 302). Not only is dialect contrasted with the King's English, but allusive speech, with its coded referencing and euphuistic tenor, collides with the tautological symmetries of direct description: fuckin' is fuckin', as Parkin avers--no less, no more. Whereas Clifford's account of Bertha's return and scandal makes use of a literary code and a multilingual faculty for metaphorical comparison, all rhetorical concerns that work on two levels of meaning, Parkin's rhetoric is the language of anatomy, calling a spade a spade (cf. "The perfect relationship is perfect") in order to restrain the suggestive, subjunctive power of words that only operate as "simulacra," the "clever furbelows on an empty skeleton" (JTLJ, 223).

Clifford's linguistic "tickling" also signals a turn in his sense of humor, another device for levelling an exclusive ego into common feeling and common language. As a result, his acerbic imitation of dialect ("Towd 'em where you caught 'em, like?" [248]) is not a jest, as Parkin discovers, but a question propelled by a "faint little sneer." In addressing Parkin's resignation, moreover, Clifford initially transmits

both a jovial camaraderie in defusing Parkin's bitterness ("Live it down, man, live it down!" [FLC, 153]) and a willingness to share in the blame after Parkin insults him: in addition to his assertion that "I considered it impudence" (JTLJ, 306), The First Lady Chatterley has "but I suppose I provoked it" (JTLJ, 153). Such contrition, a trait of a blander, more benevolent and relaxed Clifford, is elided from the second and third drafts, his answer increasingly accompanied by a superior tone of amusement, and his humor recessing into an abrupt and defensive send-off. All further sympathy with the "squalid" affairs of the lower classes is raised up to the trappings of an ethereal prose, within which the affair of Parkin's "scandal" is relayed: Clifford writes two letters to Connie in Europe and she can finish reading neither of them, dropping the last in mid-sentence as if to emphasize his unbearable prolixity. If Connie doesn't shut him up, Lawrence suggests, he will commandeer the whole work with his intellectual headache. In filling part of the vacuum left by Connie's delinquency in The First Lady Chatterley, Clifford's verbosity awards him a certain malefic importance in this second draft, deepening his cerebral dementia as an unambiguous foil for Parkin's sexual flame. Clifford's logorrhea alone makes his antagonist come off as a desperately sane redirection of civilization; and without the sophisticated irreverence and human sensitivity that made Forbes an awkwardly attractive figure in The First Lady Chatterley, Clifford's flag for the cultured life negatively secures the bond between Parkin and Connie.

As befits Parkin's expanded importance as protector of a phallic ideology as well as a phallic sexuality, Lawrence drops the galling nominal parody that reduced him so bitingly to a figure of ridicule in the first draft. Indeed, this second Parkin has reversed the controls on an autonomastic reduction to such an extent that his Christian name is really an assumed label in John Thomas. When this is brought to our attention by Mrs. Tewson immediately before Connie's disastrous visit to "Blagby Street," it guarantees that Lady Chatterley's lover will no longer fit into the limited interests and prejudices of his working-class hosts. Where they are identified by name and profession, Parkin is given

access to a trans-social realm: in place of "Op," the acquired persona of "Parkin" adds a mythical nomination to the already suggestive reference in the name itself (i.e. "Park-in" in the sense of a park or retreat).¹⁷ Just as Connie escapes Wragby for the cottage in the wood, Parkin is allowed to transcend its near homonym, Blagby, despite the stubborn lure of the past that lingers in both cases. Indeed, the reduplication Wragby/Blagby, like the dismissive reference to "Generals Fulano and Tulano" in The Plumed Serpent, suggests a dualism of inadequate alternatives to be overcome by some appeal to a "Third Way." As the visit with the Tewsons emphasizes, however, this Third Way must cut its path through a doubly restricted access: the insentient machine not only expands from the manor house downward, but from No. 57 Blagby Street upward, a "depressing ugliness" (JTLJ, 367) that now polarizes the ethic of tenderness from two sides. Removed from the working-class, Parkin must oppose it as well, confronting a fate which threatens him from without rather than one which propels him blindly from within. In this respect, too, John Thomas cures the first draft's attenuated irrelevancy by foregrounding Parkin against his own social origins, a man who fights the paralysis of "things" and abstractions on all sides, thereby dramatizing his defiance, and fate's creeping certainty, all the more fully.

This is not to conclude, however, that the substantial rapprochement between Connie and Parkin is unproblematic. However distant Parkin proves to be from the Tewsons and their "modern emotional incompleteness," his disposition seems to rob him of a certain depth as well: the defiance called for by his position is not always one he is individually able to assume. While he is clearly more culturally sophisticated than his original in The First Lady Chatterley, Parkin is not yet the strong individualist that Mellors will become, and in the absence of an insulated self-direction, lapses back into the habits of his old environment. A man of considerable vigor in showing up Sir Clifford's "half-balled" pretensions, Parkin nevertheless inspires Connie's remark that "lately, in Sheffield [with the Tewsons], he too had lost it, and this had put her out of her reckoning. She was almost afraid of

meeting him: that pinched, rather insignificant little working-man of Blagby Street" (JTLJ, 371).

Nor, of course, is Connie herself completely exonerated from the burden of her social and intellectual faults. If Clifford and Parkin are set in sharper relief, pulling against each other and against the edicts of mechanical evolution, one (the white horse?) fanatically driving ahead and the other (the black horse?) retreating into his receding sanctuary, Connie herself becomes the figure who must hold the team in check. In The First Lady Chatterley, she could afford to be the frivolous observer without affecting anything except her own trustworthiness. In John Thomas, however, the stakes are much higher, and she takes over Kate's role as a pivotal narrative mediator--the only one who can adequately chart the intensified animus between manor house and sacred wood. As a result, the inadequacies carried over from The First Lady Chatterley--Connie's regressive fondness for culture and society and a fundamentally half-hearted commitment to a new "being" with Parkin--are all the more granular and rebarbative here. Although Lawrence's introductory remarks on Connie's superficial lusting after "tickling" Bohemian swank and the fashionable ideas of the nouveau artiste are dropped (to be reinstated, interestingly enough, with added venom in the final draft), she is still capable of believing that "strange frenzies of the explosive [i.e. "frictional" or destructive] energy . . . sometimes seemed to her the utmost desirable" (JTLJ, 371). And after Clifford's ghoulish filibuster on the divorce question ("I have not made out the entire bill. But I should probably not consent to divorce you, upon request" [JTLJ, 253]), a drawn-out episode in which his presumptuous superiority is confirmed as "a psychic condition . . . deeper almost than instinct" (JTLJ, 251), Connie still finds herself under his influence, not because she cannot escape, but because she doesn't wish to: "she knew, in her heart that . . . she did not want finally to break with him . . . she did not want it finished" (JTLJ, 254). The statement is unambiguous: her skip in courage is something she knows, the real truth "in her heart" rather than a visceral suspicion or intellectual belief. We are back, despite the omission of Connie's educational enthusiasms, to the Kate Leslie with an

instinctive will-to-happiness, and a profound resistance to "the new thing"; whatever she may otherwise say or do, Connie's ultimate response is an evasion of what Parkin represents.

This point is made clear, in fact, near the end of the novel when she admits (or rather, when Lawrence admits for her) that her love has been somewhat of a facade. Answering Parkin's clanging accusation, "You don't want me" (JTLJ, 335), "Her face fell a little. It was true. Why don't I?" she said, half anxious." Whatever sympathies we may have with her kinetic negation of class mistrust in favor of "warm-souled men and women" (JTLJ, 300) this fatal anxiety, perhaps by its very lack of development, stands out as a crippling damnation of her character. Even if Lawrence means to bring her closer to Parkin's phallic principle (and this, in the light of her other remarks, is unquestionable), he also leaves a very significant barrier to any projected consummation intact: Connie cannot give herself except as an indirection, as a kind of frisson of resistance to any absolute--Clifford's, Parkin's, or that of the grimy money-consciousness of Blagby Street. Like Paul in his odd relationship with Clara Dawes in Sons and Lovers, Connie is not able to say "yes," but only "not no." And like Kate's indecision in The Plumed Serpent, she only seems to require a phallic male as a stop-gap for an incomplete life; when she asks, in her final words, "you'll come to me if I can't bear it?" it is a conditional that is every bit as unstable as the original Connie's chirpy effervescence in The First Lady Chatterley. Parkin answers "yes" here, but we know that his is not only a world-weary affirmation, but an acquiescence to the psychological flaw that will keep them apart. Connie doesn't really want Parkin in the end, and while she is the all-important middle term in the contest between fate and individual integrity, she seems destined, in John Thomas at least, to mitigate the same juxtaposition of values that her role is increasingly designed to protect.

The comparison with Kate Leslie as a structural intermediary is at this point very compelling. Both are female narrative filters collecting the slag of what expresses itself as a textual allegory in Women in Love and the

subsequent male narrations, and both find themselves, as a result, in the untenable position of holding together two exponentially divergent forces without even the possibility of finding a stable equilibrium. As with Kate, Connie's function (and this becomes even more demanding in Lady Chatterley's Lover) is to approximate an equilibrium between commitment and withdrawal that will illuminate Parkin/Mellors's cause without dissolving into it entirely. Insofar as all recruitment ideals are dropped in the Chatterley series, however, Connie's full acceptance of the "living flesh" (JTLJ , 218) must break through a new resistance to collective truth, threatening to compromise Parkin/Mellors's position as the one man unique enough to weather the storm, and ironically, by virtue of his isolation, to make the storm important enough to weather. If Kate joins the band of Quetzalcoatl demigods, The Plumed Serpent ceases to be a novel (becoming science fiction perhaps, or theosophist astronomy), but the move is nevertheless prepared for on a plot level; in the Chatterley narratives on the other hand, a paradoxically happy ending would only compromise the individuality that the ethic of tenderness engenders, destroying the integrity of the story in whatever generic form it might assume. As it stands, Connie must perpetually vacillate between the two poles of good and evil, the salubrious and the malefic, and if she appears to fall too much to one side or the other, must be righted (but not quite) in order to restimulate the contest of opposites.

Such an explanation helps account for the indictments that are returned against Connie in John Thomas, and for their abruptness and general disengagement from the rest of the text. As narrative parabases, they check the magnetic flow toward a fully realized phallic communion which Parkin's retailored heroism inspires and which this second draft, in its particular attention to what Lawrence called "bottomless pools" of lyrical description, sketches in greater detail than the other two.¹⁸ The relatively soft chiascuro of their love-making (as in the "forget-me-not" episode, for example), and the languid descriptions of the wood serve to make Parkin's world larger and less influenced by external circumstance than is acceptable for the decisive tension between what Connie terms "iron and the living flesh" (JTLJ, 218). Clifford's

manor-house decadence must be shown up, but not forgotten in a pastoral retreat, which gives the impression that all the energy expended on dressing up Clifford's demonic influence can be unbuttoned at the end of the garden path. If, as Parkin claims near the end, "Everything is prison. I know that" (JTLJ, 370), then indeed any alternative must be a temporary Eden, with the trace of money, logic, and class-distinction around every corner. As Parkin himself realizes, he will certainly be hunted out of any isolation he chooses, and to have Connie commit herself fully to his ideal would defeat the narrative importance of his resistance and compromise his isolation as well ("I only want to be by myself" [JTLJ, 367]). If The First Lady Chatterley veers too far from the tenderness that is its ostensible subject, therefore, John Thomas comes too near, an approach that the final version, Lady Chatterley's Lover, will attempt (with mixed success) to adjust.

iii

G.B. Strickland's view that the aesthetic form of Lady Chatterley's Lover is altered "disastrously" from earlier drafts should alert us to the tenor of the revisions made to this final version.¹⁹ Clifford and Parkin are already heavily shaded "types" in John Thomas without the free-running comedy that limits ideological inflation in the first draft. Now, if Connie is not to be allowed an absent drift into the peaceful solemnity of the wood or a sustained orgasm in the gamekeeper's cottage, Clifford's mechanical evil needs to be even more far-reaching, whereas Mellors requires a greater repertoire of masks and cultural accomplishments to showcase his self-sufficiency, and the degeneration he confronts. Clifford's parable of black and white horses, therefore, applies more rigidly in Lady Chatterley's Lover than it did in John Thomas, and the narrative mood is increasingly one of romance rather than realism, of allegory rather than event, and of caricature rather than description. Frieda's assertion that in this last draft, "Lawrence wanted to make the contrast between the cynicism and sophistication of the modern mind and the gamekeeper's attitude sharper," and that he did so not as

the novel "came out of him" as with The First Lady Chatterley, but "aware of his contemporaries' minds," indicates the polemical retrenchment that Lady Chatterley's Lover will commandeer.²⁰ Like the final draft of Women in Love in contrast to its preliminary manuscripts, Lady Chatterley's Lover proves to be a tightly stretched ideological battlefield between figures that exceed mundane pursuits, individual principalities that no longer partake of each other's hospitality, but set their larger-than-life agenda in the final, apocalyptic fight between Good and Evil, between phallic integrity on one hand and the industrial machine and supercilious class leadership on the other. As he instructs Aldous Huxley before the first printing of the unexpurgated draft, "That novel must be put down [people's] throats . . . We must put salt on the hypocritical and snaily tails, the good public": the urgent message, we can be sure, is not to be Clifford's.²¹

If the second Chatterley draft, then, despite some necessary reservations, celebrates Connie's coming-out into a new ontology of the "living flesh," the final version is undeniably the showcasing of Oliver Mellors vs. the world. In this respect, he is literate and informed about current affairs as his predecessor is not, commanding language where Parkin often seemed controlled by it. This distinction makes itself felt not only in Mellors's increased use of letter writing in communication with Connie, but in his conscious manipulation of dialect for effect rather than as natural speech. While the Parkin of John Thomas is also a letter writer, Lawrence still feels it necessary to identify his work as "not so very badly written" (JTLJ, 367), as if to remind us that elegant prose should be the exception for him rather than the rule. The fact that Lady Chatterley's Lover ends with one of Mellors's letters, moreover (whereas John Thomas closes on Parkin's voiced affirmative), indicates Mellors's graduated facility with rhetorical expression, writing the "last word" that cannot be presented orally. Such a manipulation of language as a coded bridge across physical distances, a relaxation of class strictures in itself, belongs more securely to Clifford's verbal art and artifice than to the prelinguistic finality of "being"; Mellors's growing

dependence on linguistic communication signals a challenge to whatever legitimate cultural superiority Wragby retains. Tenderness itself might be silent, its description a rhetoric of literalness that confounds, if anything, the conventional periphrasis of sexual discourse, yet to oppose Clifford's world and to defeat him at his own game scores a double victory, enlarging Mellors's importance as both agonist and anchorite. Parkin's rhetorical limitations only lead to a forgetting of external strictures, whereas Mellors's retreat carries the more powerful conviction they have been consciously rejected.

Just as Mellors was once an officer, therefore, but "preferred to become a private soldier again" (305), he becomes a stylist who chooses to speak the King's English with Connie or Clifford, yet descends into a Midlands dialect when evading the socio-political assumptions embedded in standardized communication. Likewise, with his "bit of French and German, very much aloft" (216), he dissociates himself from the working class, so much so in fact that Lawrence's own experiences with Jessie Chambers provide the background for Mellors's early ambitions with "a schoolmaster's daughter over at Ollerton" (215). The mateship between Parkin and Bill Tewson during the war, in turn, is replaced by Mellors's lieutenantship in India, a position that not only allows Connie to refer to him as "an officer and a gentleman," but permits him to talk knowledgeably about Indian affairs with Sir Malcolm in the latter's private club(!). Mellors's former relationship to his colonel, as a reworking of officer/servant intimacies in The Prussian Officer and The Virgin and The Gypsy, also allows Mellors a platform on which the working classes might be criticized ("All the lot, their spirit is gone dead. Motorcars and cinemas and aeroplanes suck the last bit out of them" [234]), an option that was clearly not available to Parkin with his "man in the trench" connections.

But if language revives Mellors and makes him a more integral and self-directed character, its effects also deepen Clifford's tragic, but also farcical, insanity. The contrast between Mellors's renunciation of further intellectual and cultural advancement and Clifford's draconian distillation of mechanical energy is all the more heavily counterweighted by

Mellors's graduation into a character who uses language intentionally rather than as a foreign set of symbols fortuitously arranged in coherent expression. Clifford's intellectual fatuity shows up in a bad light when Parkin's eidetic utterances are determined by the limitations of class or character; when these limitations are removed, and obscenity clearly becomes a matter of choice rather than habit, Sir Clifford is doubly condemned--a man who uses language, and who uses it wrongly.²² His pretentious letter to Connie is leavened by additional allusions to Cellini and the Miller of the Dee ballad, and its tripping presumption leaves Mellors's hard-bitten dialect, now understood as a challenge to Clifford in its improper form, as an almost farcical demolition of Clifford's elegant adjectives. "We must perforce," he concludes, "take it philosophically" (292), a remark that underscores his impotence and rigid divorce of inner life from outer. Taking it philosophically will eventually lead to his utter collapse into a "perverted child-man" after Connie reports her infidelity, and to a penultimate apotheosis into "the incarnation of good," while "people like Mellors and Connie remain "the incarnation of mud, of evil. He seemed to be growing vague, inside a nimbus" (322). A weird, self-inflective denouement for his parable of Platonic horses, the supercilious, rhetorical Clifford is unmanned by his complete inability to cross over into "cunt awareness" and the language of "being" that he speaks. Not recognizing his own cuckoldry in the dialogue with Mellors that he repeats in his letter, it is Connie's plain language that ultimately reduces him to a wailing idiot.

It is not insignificant either that Clifford is portrayed as a writer, and in this draft a highly successful one. Although Derek Britton suggests Osbert Sitwell as the model for Clifford (in fact, there are elements of Norman Douglas and Lawrence himself in this sketch as well), his "raptus" of power goes beyond any biographical portraiture.²³ When Sir Malcolm pronounces the verdict on Clifford's stories as "clever, rather spiteful, and yet in some way meaningless" (14), however, it is a summary that Lawrence would undoubtedly support himself. In another letter to Huxley in March of 1928, a range of Western artists from Michael Angelo to Proust

are dismissed for their unilateral attempt "to intellectualize and so utterly falsify the phallic consciousness," a sweep so broad as to be critically meaningless, but one which highlights his extreme distrust of the non-referential, anagrammatic manipulation of artistic form.²⁴ Although Mellors, as befits his newly literate status, is a book-owner himself, he is again a "good" reader to Clifford's "bad" one, choosing a work on India (127) rather than Proust or Racine, and staying clear of Clifford's fascination with the theory of efficient mining procedure. Unlike Clifford, in fact, Mellors finds, in chapter X, that he cannot finish his book, being too busy with thoughts of Connie; sense mitigates intellect here, whereas for Clifford, wrapped in his reading or his declamatory moralizing, "The life of the body . . . is just the life of animals" (254). If Mellors is strengthened by his acquisition of, but power to refuse, language, Clifford is condemned for the "raptus" of non-presence and surrogation that it produces in him--the prime intellectual disease, as Lawrence had already portrayed it so scathingly in *Loerke*, of the self-ironizing metalanguage of art and modern culture, which substitutes the false security of the letter for the immediacy and integrity of physical motility.²⁵

If Mellors and Clifford are polarized by the question of literacy, Connie's own relation to the effects of culture is more equivocal. As Clifford progressively stiffens into a kind of insentient diabolism, and Mellors extends himself, despite his own conviction to protect his "own aloneness, and stick to it" (155), into a diversity of social arenas, Connie both intensifies her investigation of phallic intimacy and suffers from relapses into wilfull self-assertion. In *John Thomas*, Lawrence omits the slightly derisive account of her bohemian education, which allows Connie to explore the possibilities of her sexual awakening without the debilitating suspicion that this is merely a repetition of that insouciant "adventure." In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, however, the whole episode reappears with added harshness. A "free" girl, loved "with all the passion of mental attraction" (!), she "was never in love with a young man unless he and she were verbally very near" (4--my emphasis), a revelation that, in light of the opposition drawn between gossip and "plain" speech,

becomes an unmistakable jibe at Connie's personality. Talk of the wrong, "mental" sort is in fact everywhere: the "queer thrill" she achieves with her Wandervogel is prompted by "TALKING" (Lawrence's capitals); the Cambridge group she later takes up with (sounding very much like the Bunny Garnett/Heseltine/Garsington set portrayed in "Totem" and "Gudrun in the Pompadour" in Women in Love), is primarily a collection of arm-chair critics, mockers "who know what they're talking about, or talk as if they did" (6); and Tommy Dukes admits that he can't progress beyond "talking" with a woman, while Clifford, predictably, is "the most modern of modern voices . . . turning everything into words . . . always coming between her and life" (51, 97).

Such "talk" even comes to dominate the sex act, the unpleasant business of male orgasm in particular, which becomes the "final spasm of self-assertion, like the last word, exciting, and very like the row of asterisks that can be put to show the end of a paragraph, and a break in a theme" (4). All of this Connie undergoes with a kind of Faustian self-justification, expending herself in the act of "primitive reversion . . . without herself coming to her crisis, while he was merely her tool" (4). Sounding presciently compatible with Mellors's Ollerton lassie who "just didn't want it" (216), and, in her manipulative indifference, like "the hard sort, that are the devil to bring off at all, and bring themselves off" (219), Connie's "beak-like" thrilling is also associated with lesbian women in particular ("writhing their loins till they bring themselves off against your thighs"), the kind of narcissism that makes Mellors "fairly howl in my soul" (219). Although Connie is no lesbian, she has a distinguished past as a careless desecrator of the phallic mystery, and Lawrence's decision to extend and reemphasize this most inadmissible of flaws casts serious doubts on how genuine her commitment to Mellors can ultimately be.

Without question, of course, Connie also learns to speak Mellors's language of fucking, and the threshold to this new rhetoric--the "very power of silence . . . a potency of silence" (67) that the forest exudes--is one she actively crosses. Yet the emphasis is not at all on her development from frivolous socialite to an acolyte of touch: Connie

suddenly finds herself on the other side, as it were, without any indication of a change of heart from the palmy days of her Continental education or her more recent fling with Michaelis. In fact, the necessary transition passages that would justify the reinclusion of her Dresden experiences as a device for narrative contrast (i.e. look how far she's come . . .) are not only missing, but in some cases omitted from the final draft (as with the paragraphs delineating Connie's loss of class consciousness in John Thomas). Perhaps not merely, as Philip Hobsbaum complains, "a body to be excited, a set of loins to be hunted out," Connie is nevertheless more of a structural instrument than a character modelled on the principles of realistic verisimilitude.²⁶ As a result, her early transgressions linger throughout the work as an unresolved influence on her behavior, and an ongoing discrepancy develops between what is said about Connie and the initiation into phallic tenderness itself. We are shown in any number of passages that she evidently passes the test with "Moses in the bulrushes"; yet at the same, we can never forget, and are frequently reminded in fact, that her sexual superficiality, and even mendacious wilfullness, still supervise her actions. No attempt is made to integrate this conflict dialectically, nor is Connie ever shown up because she cannot do so herself; instead, the reversal of gears that we find in chapter X, with Connie lapsing out into the "live beauty of contact" (133) one moment merely to find that she has "willed herself into . . . separateness" (133) the next, acts as a characteristic scissoring of motives: inconsistent only because realistic portrayal has become of secondary importance (and not because this advances her as a "believable" figure), Connie argues both sides of the nature/culture divide as the narrative locally requires.

In light of Mellors's poorly disguised role as a magnetic Übermensch of the body, this structural manipulation is not hard to understand or to diagram. A shaman of the phallus, Mellors, like Don Ramon before him, rises above his workaday surroundings to a mythic stature: he is arguably the new St. George of England, driving his lance (the metaphor is appropriate) through the esurient evil of an industrial, pseudo-artistic nation. In this role, his rampancy is capable

of starting a revolution, and requires followers to ratify its validity. At the same time, however, Mellors's world is one in which dragons spring from the ground at every turn, leaving no one behind--and this includes Connie herself--to act as a dedicated disciple. On a structural level, moreover, Mellors's influence on all important gradients along the cultural spectrum (negatively or otherwise) devalues Connie's importance as a mediator; at the same time, his deracinated isolation inflates her role as the one interpreter who can and must relay his salvific message. If we are not to return to the ideologically uncomfortable narrations of Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo, Connie must commit herself to Mellors to fulfill his tenderness ethic, yet be proven inadequate so that he alone will shine undiminished against an insane civilization. None of this can be integrated dialectically, in turn, because no equilibrium between the two desires can ever be reached; as with Kate Leslie, Connie functions as an allegory-surrogate, perpetually vibrating between opposite thematic poles (never losing sight of one or the other), and back and forth between the literalness of story on one edge and the discursive distancing necessary for a fictional narrative on the other. In a quantum discontinuity, the progression of the narrative (velocity) guarantees that no stable image (position) can be maintained; conversely, the stability of such an image, in this case the crystalline isolation of Mellors's self-enclosure, can only be achieved outside of any discursive form.²⁷

As if to emphasize the dialogical nature of Connie's function in the novel, and to dissuade us from assuming that her off-hand behavior has faded into the past, Lawrence updates her cavalier frisson by inserting a hastily prepared fling with one of Clifford's "doggy" guests. Introduced as an outsider and as a socially disreputable artist "with that strange immobility of an old race that is hardly here in our present day" (24), Michaelis could pass at first glance for a representation of Lawrence himself. With an enthusiastic American audience, and with a commission to write a play about Clifford, the link between writer and character is suggestive. Yet Michaelis develops into an unmistakable figure of ridicule whose self-deprecation ("For he, in a sense, asked to

be kicked" [20]) and fawning theatricality reflect badly on Connie for having him as a lover. In contrast to Mellors, whose potency is neither "trembling" nor "childlike and defenseless" (27), Michaelis fails the one ineluctable test of the heroic figure in the novel: "He was the . . . excited sort of lover, whose crisis soon came, and was finished" (27). Nor is Connie shown to be waiting for better things: she trains him to satisfy her own "passion," a masturbatory procedure that rings a dangerous echo of Mellors's former relationship with Bertha Coutts. Whereas Mellors rejects such lesbianism from the start, however ("I hated it" [218]), Connie is clearly "satisfied" ("Ah, how good!"[28]), and her subsequent "thrilling" and professions of love are all handled with an offhand, matter-of-fact tone unmistakable as a caustic deprecation of what is potentially a sexual awakening. The whole affair is conducted on the scale of a suburban flirtation, a cynical playing-about-on-the-side that generates mechanical emotions, a farce of sexual exploration, and even, with respect to Clifford, the lurid suggestion that he might well have approved of their after-hours romp. If the adultery, as Connie suspects at the beginning of chapter IV, is hopeless, it can only be so because she herself is also incapable of entering a phallically meaningful bond.

This abrupt check on her reliability, moreover, does not end upon her first meeting with the gamekeeper, and makes its presence felt not only in her erstwhile confessions of willed separation, but in the delineation of her appeal in contrast to the diseased habits of those around her. Instead of the (impossible) direct commitment to Mellors, Connie offers a convincing demolition of a number of false prophets, representatives of all that Mellors stands against in order to provide the illusion of a conclusive congruence of perspectives. The surrogation appears most convincingly, of course, with respect to Clifford himself, but occurs in Lawrence's handling of two other figures of the work as well-- Connie's sister Hilda, and the almost completely recast Duncan Forbes. In Hilda's case, she evolves from being primarily a convenient catalyst for the Venice trip to a malicious harpy in modern technicolor who has Mellors "seeing red." When she complains, with some justification, that Mellors's dialect is

an affectation, a cultural manipulation of a lack of culture, the response predictably acquires the authority of a homiletic discourse: "He looked at her, feeling her devil of a will" (264). His awareness here is perceptual, an intuitive strike on a preestablished truth: Hilda is wilful, and Mellors recognizes it. When they part company, therefore, the leave-taking is far more divisive than the relatively placid diffidence of opinion presented to us in John Thomas (The First Lady Chatterley does not include this scene). Instead of a respectful, if diffident, handshake (cf. JTLJ, 274), Mellors advises Hilda that "Women like you needs proper graftin'," her resistance to which makes her "deserve what you get: to be left severely alone" (266). Connie, in her turn, is allowed to confront her sister's rejection of "either real tenderness or real sensuality" (274), without directly supporting Mellors in an act of sexual or ideological unity. Like Ursula in "Continental," Connie is conveniently enlisted as a Lawrencian mouthpiece, voicing a rhetoric of commitment that functions effectively with an extremely hostile and perhaps inferior audience, but leaves a suspicion about its continuity when assertion rather than correction is required. "Because of Hilda's opposition, she was fiercely on the side of the man, she would stand by him through thick and thin" (261--my emphasis). By splitting the sphere of influence for Mellors's "warm-souledness," Lawrence projects Connie as a devotee on the less demanding plane of sororal relations, yet keeps her real commitment on a broader scale in doubt.

A similar elevation by contrast operates in the Venice holiday itself, which begins with the inauspicious remark, furnished by Lawrence again, that Connie is in the grip of "the machine of external circumstance" (257), and, as in the first draft, "doesn't want to" extricate herself. The journey having been mined as another entertaining jaunt of the age, and more damagingly, of Connie's character, Lawrence can proceed to show her to good advantage without losing sight of her underlying frailty. Hilda, therefore, latches onto jazz, always a Lawrencian bete noire, like a narcotic. Slithering in and out of the "mass of human flesh" and plastering her stomach against the next available "so-called man" (281), she fills the brittle portrait of modernity that represents all

that Mellors does not represent. Connie, for her part, "was rather unhappy," and unlike Hilda, who "half liked being drugged," only wants to be left alone. Although Connie's presence is in itself damaging to her credibility as the right lover for Mellors, she rehearses the proper Mellorsian attitude in the midst of a hypnotized crowd of cynical hedonists, moving her confidently forward into the Lawrencian alternative even as her integrity can be conveniently dismantled on a more fundamental level.

With respect to Duncan Forbes, the attack is launched on the familiar target of the contemporary artist. In a novel in which writing and art seem to become synonymous with social decadence on all levels (we remember that even Connie's adultery is betrayed to Bertha Coutts by a signed book), Forbes becomes the apogee of the ironic, Loerke-like experimentalist. Although he is given a bit of his former artistic intuition (at one point he expostulates to Connie: "It's the one thing they won't let you be, straight and open in your sex" [287]), this Lawrencian wisdom is buried under a pop-eyed mania for art that "was all tubes and valves and spirals and strange colors, ultra modern" (310). Nor does he command the respect that the Jewish sculptor does in Women in Love; not a dispassionate "sewer-rat," he is on the contrary maudlin and fawning, a self-centered emotionalist when the machine is relaxed that precipitated Michaelis and Dukes, and even Clifford himself, as magnets for an antinomian oscillation of order and chaos. His friendship with Connie, in turn, especially in light of his ideological importance to The First Lady Chatterley, becomes a telling contrast in values, pitting a rather pathetic instrument of a "personal cult" of art against a "natural man" who consciously dismisses such "titified" owlshness in favor of the "bowels of compassion" (311). Connie, of course, rejects the former's "self-conceit" and "sickly sentiment," but her allegiance is neither complete ("He's better than that, really" [312]), nor a direct commitment to Mellors. She agrees with his understanding, but always in reference to an external object or event, whereby a unity of purpose is vicariously felt, but suggestively withheld from a final accounting. Mellors is present this time for a triangular geometry, but the effect is

unchanged from Connie's resistance to Hilda or Venetian society: any step forward is qualified by being a possible, perhaps likely, step backward as well.

Unsurprisingly, this vacillation reaches a crisis point at the close of the novel. As with The Plumed Serpent, Lady Chatterley's Lover faces the structural problem of ending a narrative that, technically speaking, can't end. Any position that Connie finds herself in will necessarily be a false one, and even though Mellors's heroic resistance diminishes her importance as a character, she cannot be discarded without severing the one link that exists between Wragby Wood and the outside world. Mellors's ethic of "fuckin's fuckin" may antedate any vicarious linguistic utterance, but it cannot precede the novel in which it appears; the story of Mellors must be told, and if no one remains to tell it, either because the one man who lives it cannot, by definition, contaminate "being" with the language of narration, or because the one woman who expresses it cannot rid herself of worldly imperfection, then Lady Chatterley's Lover ceases to exist as a narrative. To the degree that tenderness and the machine become mutually exclusive sets, individuality on one half and the "world" or fate on the other, the narrative logic becomes a trace structure rather than a dialectics of plot, each move across a fluid and non-linear boundary carrying the memory of its opposite, neither of which can be drawn up into a resolution of motives. Connie, as the graph of such a trace structure, plotting her points, as it were, on a four-dimensional chart, converges with the process of narrative itself, a process that must end somewhere (if only in the author's death), but always and necessarily leaves any possible ending incomplete.

In Lady Chatterley's Lover, closure is attempted, ironically enough, through the device of a letter. It is a letter, moreover, that calls attention to its own literariness: "If I could sleep with my arms around you, the ink could stay in the bottle" (328). But such a reunion is precisely what can't happen, and Harry T. Moore's blithe assumption that "the reader knows [!] they will soon be together again" is the product of a complete misunderstanding of how the narrative works.²⁸ In a sense, all that remains

are "so many words, because I can't touch you" (328): the final touch, making the words redundant, precludes the story being told, its absence, on the other hand, a sentence of deferral that precludes its resolution. Although Mellors writes his letter to Connie, absorbing the pressure for speaking the last word that paralyzed Kate in The Plumed Serpent, the textual logic is the same in both novels, with the letter functioning as a device for sub-dividing the mediation between commitment and withdrawal into the "as if" structure of written communication. Once this device is used, furthermore, with the expectation given of a future meeting, any such meeting, as a final, "Pentecostal" consummation between the two lovers, is put forever out of reach. One can imagine a potentially infinite sequence of letters progressively more self-conscious to account for the distinct lack of action, but a physical communion cannot happen without destroying the carefully wrought opposition between Mellors and the outside world, and therefore, in a sense, destroying the reason for the writing of Lady Chatterley's Lover in the first place.

Instead, more ink is spilled, not within the novel but as a gloss on it by Lawrence himself. Like the compulsive reworking of Kate Leslie's denouement in The Plumed Serpent, Lawrence returns to his narrative again in the "A Propos" in order to add yet another "afterthought" (353) to what becomes a suspicious inability to ever let the ink stay in the bottle.²⁹ Predictably, the message is again one which opposes "Word" and "Deed," even as this Word increasingly reveals itself as the only means for allowing the Deed to acquire any meaning. And lest we still believe, at this late date, that the novel plots Connie's education from her early superficialities to a tardy allegiance to Mellors's tenderness, and that Lawrence's manipulation of auxiliary characters is designed to bring lady and lover closer together (and not as a division of levels of commitment), Lawrence makes it clear that "Even it is a question if the woman who turns to him will really stand by him and his vital meaning" (358). Where Mellors is "being hunted down, destroyed," a doubt is thrown in about Connie's adequacy--not, of course, in the terms we have raised (this, strictly speaking, would be

impossible), but as a further suggestion, another doubt productive of more commentary, that keeps the radically open question of Connie's mediation in the "open." Therefore, not only do we meet with another strangely prescient, disjunctive reservation ("Likewise, if the lady marries the gamekeeper-- she hasn't done it yet-- . . ." [358]), but find that Lawrence's A Propos ends not with a restatement of the argument but with a quotation from yet another letter. In this letter, moreover, Lawrence is accused of giving Connie "a poor choice--as usual!" (360) precisely the artificial tipping of the scales that Lawrence engineers in Lady Chatterley's Lover, although with a different emphasis than the woman correspondent intends. Again, we are faced with a retailored insight, provided in a linguistic exchange which is recorded in a "postscript" (Lawrence's word) to a novel that ends with a letter, which instructs us that words are secondary and even destructive anyway. Only through words, we suspect, and only through words that escape the asemantic assault of Mellors's language of the organs, does the narrative find any meaning at all.

iv

Despite the attenuated reshuffling of the "last word" to Lady Chatterley's Lover, necessary but at the same time arbitrary and incomplete, the novel avoids the kind of allegorical intersplicing that appears in Women in Love and the early leadership works. As with The Plumed Serpent, the shift to a nominally objective, female narrator allows the ultimately transcendental vision an escape from immediate ideological confrontation; insofar as the story is told about Mellors, his ideal need not compromise itself in providing the contrast necessary for narrative discourse. With the Chatterley series, moreover, the force of the "Ich dien" solution is dropped, slackening the last threads of a social communion to replace the present state of insanity. The machine of external circumstance is irreversible, but unlike its influence in The Plumed Serpent, also inescapable: one can only hold out now in the restricted tautology of "vital meaning" until the world finally creeps in and drowns all.

Mellors himself is quite clear on the point, and his fatalism and lugubrious mood distinguish Lady Chatterley's Lover from its earlier drafts, and from the Mexico novel of 1925 as well. The "ghastly world of smoke and iron," he reminds Connie at one point, "won't disappear" (229), while the denigration of the English into "priggish and half-balled and narrow-gutted" parasites merely follows "the fate of mankind, to go that way" (234). His own existence in resisting this fate is also in doubt: registering the irony in a polemical disengagement, he ambiguously resigns himself to "try an' live my own life: if I've got one to live, which I rather doubt" (230). The deforestation of Wragby wood brings the realization home that "the world allows no hermits" (126), and in the face of Mellors's final conviction that "I don't believe in the world, not in money, nor in advancement, nor in the future of our civilization" (300), the "forked flame" between the lovers is a temporary palliative at best. As he tells Connie near the close of the work, "The men are very apathetic. They feel the whole damned thing is doomed, and I believe it is" (325). If Connie is fated to fail Mellors, then, her individual guilt is absorbed by the belief that the entire planet is destined for collapse in any event.

The allegory that appears in the work is contained, therefore, within the pressure Connie experiences as a mediator rather than within Mellors's vision itself. The aporia of method and message that generates the associative networks in Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo is now ameliorated through an allocation of "how" and "what" to two different characters; Connie assumes the burden of the former, leaving Mellors to argue the delicacies of content without irritating concessions to the world he has evidently rejected. Although the increasingly antinomian geography of "us" vs. "them" substitutes a quantum movement for a Cartesian gradation in any linkage between the two sides, this is a technical problem which threatens the possibility of novel writing more than it does Mellors's sovereign isolation. He is never in danger of betraying himself, in other words, because Connie is already there, as Lawrence implies, to carry out the betrayal for him. And in a world in which such betrayal is inevitable, her action is not of the greatest importance anyway. What needs

to be stressed above all is the purity of his resistance to any capitulation with conventional attitudes and actions, with the whole infrastructure of reason, art, language, and society in fact, leaving an extremely narrow "ark" of sane survival whose only adequate expression is the ironic, temporary, and ambiguous victory of silence. As the last representation of the blank signifier in Lawrence's novels, phallic tenderness retains its purity only by expelling everything else in the world as a potential contaminant, including the properties of language which perversely multiply in the act of denouncing their own importance.³⁰

As we might expect, therefore, the one example of allegory as we have plotted it since Women in Love occurs as a coded indictment of Connie herself, yet because Connie is ultimately dispensable to the work's ideology, never evolves into an important textual factor. Its form as well as its function, in fact, mirrors that of the Cyprian/Cipriano connection, with Connie Chatterley in the role of First Lieutenant to the Cause, and Connie Mellors serving as the "false" offspring. If Cipriano as the disciple, the symbolic "son," potentially betrays Ramon through the rebellion of Cyprian, Lady Chatterley, as daughter to Mellors's ideas, opens herself to the charge of being a violently self-conscious "false little bitch" (60), destined to betray Mellors's campaign to protect himself from the "poaching" influences of the outside world. Connie Mellors's "tricks as a little monkey" (61) are an echo of the "monkeyishness" (302) that civilization perpetuates through art, and her sorrow over the dead "pussy" is a gruesome harbinger of Connie Chatterley's resistance to Mellors's plan to "shoot" the Cliffords and Berthas of the world into extinction ("It's not being very tender to them" [304]). Although Lady Chatterley agrees with Mellors's assessment of his child, in her mind a "spoilt, false little bitch" (62), the nominal association between daughter and lover emphasizes, as Lawrence himself does in the "A Propos," the probable inadequacy of the latter as a proper respondent for Mellors's "vital meaning." Relayed allegorically because the "story" as such cannot incorporate a dialectical precipitation of commitment and withdrawal, this semiotic code marks the fault in the novel's apparently

seamless apology for "being," projecting Connie's double-edged mediation as the "remainder" unaccountable on the terms the narrative sets for itself. With the unlimited power of contracting margins, Mellors's integrity is never in doubt; the whole problem lies in representing him through a narrator who must necessarily be committed to his program (thereby establishing its importance and magnetic attraction), yet must be made, against the novel's thematic arrangement, to fall short of the stated ideal. A conflict irresolvable within ideological boundaries, it supplies a code for its solution on an athematic, semiotic level of meaning.

The relative benignity of this allegory, however, brings Lady Chatterley's Lover closer to The Plumed Serpent than to the earlier leadership novels in narrative design, and reinforces the observation that Lawrence's concern is now with the form of the structural blank itself, rather than with its function as a social panacea. If anything, the division between sacred and profane is even more intractable here than in the Mexico novel, and unmistakably groups theories of social evolution, whereby a transition from "mass" to individual could be effected, with Clifford's Whiteheadian philosophizing. While the upper classes remain trapped in their "raptus" of big business or the fatuous insincerities of art, "the mass of people", as Mellors tells Connie, "oughten't even to try to think, because they can't" (326). Although theirs is to "frisk" with Pan, the herd proves to be just as much under the spell of jazz and motorbikes as the "nobs," leading to Mellors's conviction that "the whole damn thing is doomed" and that even education through leadership and submission to a greater authority is fruitless. In a world in which "warm-hearted fucking" can almost by definition find no partner to consummate its ritual, the alienation between self and world is almost complete, with the latter temporarily absenting itself while the artistic vision holds firm. What is called for, without the promise of Ramon's "next days" of Quetzalcoatl, is an imminent change of discursive form rather than one of locale: once Mellors is swallowed up by a world he is powerless to alter, no Mellors can reappear again on a narrative stage, there being no more unlimned space for the mini-drama of self-integrity to be played out. In this sense,

society's anaclastic movements are irrelevant, all deeds of possession signed over to its governance. No allegory of motives is necessary, in turn, because a diseased civilization is no longer the target for a salvific message that must always remain the impossible negative ground outside of its object; self-endurance rather than universal salvation becomes the literary watchword.

As his last novel, Lady Chatterley's Lover also bears a close resemblance to his most complicated one, Women in Love. Gerald on his horse, reigned in at the railroad crossing, now becomes Clifford in his wheelchair, stalled on the verdent slope, the man who tries to control nature ending up as the capitalist at the mercy of the machine.³¹ Gudrun and Ursula, moreover, return as Connie and her sister, with Connie's decision to seek out Mellors's tenderness in the face of Hilda's cynicism echoing Ursula's affirmation of Rupert's philosophy of hopping off under Gudrun's biting and "worldly" satire. To square the quaternity, amidst a profusion of minor characters and a familiar geographical setting (Midlands---> Europe), appears the Birkin-surrogate, Mellors himself, whose alternative to a diseased civilization is no less radical if ultimately a good deal more funereal and resigned. The Birkin who rolls naked in the primroses becomes the Mellors with flowers ringing his penis, both wishing an end to the present form of existence and finding a temporary antidote in private ceremony. But the third way that Birkin runs to find with Ursula disappears through the sun-door of Ramon's journey to the Morning Star, leaving Mellors in the binary extremism of one man against the Flood. Lady Chatterley's Lover, in fact, is the novel Women in Love would have been had Loerke witnessed Birkin's "moony" instead of Ursula, initiating a bifurcated planet in which escape proves to be a vain illusion and marriage an uncertain panacea at best. Instead of the inductive twinning and Blutbrüderschaft of "Gladitorial," there is now a Mellors striding forward shotgun in hand, and a Clifford who fights back with an acrid pen, both drawing blood not as a sign of male bonding, but as part of a fervid desire, explicitly stated in Mellors's case, to exterminate the other. It is a contest, we might say, of who fires or gets "fired"

first, the only analeptic factor being Mellors's final resignation to the vicissitudes of circumstance.

But perhaps the most telling comparison operates between Lady Chatterley's Lover and the first novel in our investigation of Lawrence's narrative design, the pre-war Rainbow. Although none of the dramatic parts match up as they do with Women in Love, Mellors's exeunt provides an instructive gloss on Ursula's entry into fictional illimitation: neither novel can end properly and both pressure a solipsism that threatens to exclude any external perspective. Yet where The Rainbow faces an overcrowding of potential experiences, each of which dissolves into fact under the pressure of its successor, Lady Chatterley's Lover confronts a sharp dilation of immediacy, the impression already a recycled commodity, well-worn with the mechanical illusions of certainty. In The Rainbow, closure is granted by arbitrary imposition insofar as the range of Ursula's discoveries is potentially limitless, language forever catching up with a perceptual and aesthetic phenomenology; in Lady Chatterley's Lover, on the other hand, the ending is equally arbitrary but for precisely the opposite reason: no experience remains adequate to Mellors's pre-linguistic absolute of the phallic self, and no description outside of the ironically indirect semantics of the sexual proper noun can ever absent itself sufficiently, leaving nothing to be said in a novel which must nevertheless say something in order to make its silence "clear." Opposite ends of a telescope, The Rainbow and Lady Chatterley's Lover are also at opposite ends of narrative design, the one flooding the field of aesthetic possibility, the other distilling aesthetics into the progressively narrower Monad of the Self, which is then cast adrift by that which it excludes. The ark which carries all the world under the sign of the rainbow now becomes the ark weathering the storm against that world, until it perishes in its own exile or dissolves into the great mechanical twitch. The peace of life and the peace of death lie on either side, like the covers of a book, or like the two halves of a planet, between which there are only too many words and outside of which there is no more tale to tell.

NOTES

¹ Letter to Witter Bynner, 18 March, 1928, in The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Aldous Huxley, 711.

² Daniel Schneider, D.H. Lawrence: The Artist as Psychologist, 237, 243; Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, 151-2; H.M. Daleski, The Forked Flame: A Study of D.H. Lawrence, 312.

³ D.H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover, Orioli Edition, ed. Ronald Friedland (New York: Bantam, 1983), 267. Quotes from this novel are indicated by page numbers in parentheses, those from The First Lady Chatterley (FLC) and John Thomas and Lady Jane (JTLJ) by number and prefix.

⁴ A useful distinction can be made here between "mood" and "voice," or between the character (Connie in this case) through which the narrative is filtered and the narrator proper, who can change allegiances while remaining a nominally objective organizer of plot. Genette, in his Narrative Discourse, identifies this difference in point of view, often so subtly shaded (especially in the "realist" novel) as to be indefinite, as a problem of "focalization." In his scheme, Lady Chatterley's Lover, in common with most of Lawrence's work, would be classified as a variable, internal focalization, wherein the narrative is told through the thoughts or emotions of more than one character: i.e. Parkin/Mellors as well as Connie. However, as is also typical of Lawrence, such structural categories do not entirely suffice, for the difficulty in designating Connie as either narrator or character lies in Lawrence's frequent exchange of internal and external points of view, using Connie as a sympathetic observer at one moment, but condemning her lack of seriousness or even her lack of integrity the next. These alterations, moreover (and here we lose Genette as we lost Bakhtin in his "ideological" aesthetics), are not always done for aesthetic affect: Connie is often, though less frequently and less allegorically than Kate or Ursula Brangwen, a kind of voice from the dark, relating a particular experience or emotion that requires local explanation (it hits upon a "complex," as it were, of Lawrencian themes) regardless of its

disruption of the more general portraiture. Because this unusual and problematic focalization is a Lawrencian habit, profitable work could be initiated in sorting through his narratives from such a structural perspective. Done correctly, it would produce a more schematic understanding of what I have chosen to discuss as allegory. See Gerard Genette, Narrative Discourse, trans. Jane E. Lewis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 161-194, et passim.

⁵ Foucault, in the first volume of his History of Sexuality, quotes from the A Propos in aligning Lawrence with those who confuse the liberation of sex with the "supposed" liberation from "the power mechanisms of sexuality." "We must not think," he writes, "that by saying yes to sex, one says no to power; on the contrary, one tracks along the course laid out by the general development of sexuality. It is the agency of sex that we must break away from, if we aim--through a tactical reversal of the various mechanisms of sexuality--to counter the grips of power with the claims of bodies, pleasures, and knowledges, in their multiplicity and their possibility of resistance." Aside from the uneasy suspicion, however, that Foucault has merely turned Lawrence's terms against him--Lawrence's "full conscious realization of sex" being exactly what Foucault means by "sexuality"--his model inhibits the understanding of language (endemic in his often unrefined equation of discourse with power) as a means of resistance itself: by speaking "plainly" about sex, the eidetic description of practices and pleasures protects itself from the instrumental exigencies of euphemistic appropriation in a given episteme. See Michel Foucault, A History of Sexuality, Vol 1: An Introduction, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1980), 156-159. See also Lydia Blanchard's essay, "Lawrence, Foucault, and the Language of Sexuality," in D.H. Lawrence's "Lady": A New Look at Lady Chatterley's Lover, ed. Michael Squires and Dennis Jackson (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), 154-169.

⁶ In tracing Clifford's verbosity to the rector in "The Virgin and the Gypsy," a number of parallels between the novella, written in January of 1926 and the Chatterley novels, begun in the fall of that year, come to the fore: Yvette, torn between nature and culture, is a preliminary Connie, Joe

Boswell a sketch for Parkin/Mellors, Yvette's "dog-like" suitors harbingers for the "doggy" Michaelis, and so forth. See Keith Cushman, "The Virgin and the Gypsy and the Gamekeeper and the Lady," in D.H. Lawrence's "Lady": A New Look at Lady Chatterley's Lover, 154-169.

⁷ Gavriel Ben-Ephraim, "The Achievement of Balance in Lady Chatterley's Lover," in D.H. Lawrence's "Lady," 136-153.

⁸ See Frieda's introduction to The First Lady Chatterley (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), 9-16.

⁹ Cf. "Nobody Loves Me" and "The Real Thing," in Phoenix, 196-203, 204-211.

¹⁰ Significantly, Parkin rejects this same word in a late conversation with Duncan Forbes, who speaks first here: "Thrilled by you?"/ "Ay! 'Appen she [Mrs. Tewson] is."/ "You thrilled by her?"/ "I like her, but I'm not thrilled by her" (FLC, 236). This reads much like a trap set by Duncan to liven up his "usual nervous tension," but Parkin is not given the philosophical machinery to attack this position beyond a simple denial of its suspect emotional claim. That Lawrence intends an attack, however, is clear, not only in this interchange but in the pejorative tonality of Mirabal's "thrilling" in The Plumed Serpent, and in the "thrilling and dilating" of women opera viewers in Aaron's Rod. Like "phosphorescent," "thrilling" inevitably carries the burden of Lawrence's fictional (and not so fictional) censure.

¹¹ See Derek Britton, Lady Chatterley: The Making of the Novel (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 179.

¹² As Lawrence writes to Secker shortly after beginning The First Lady Chatterley, the work in progress is to be "a story--shortish." This reemphasizes his confidence to Else Jaffe a week earlier that "I feel I'll never write another novel" (The Cambridge Edition Letters of D.H. Lawrence, V, 559). The unusual lack of ambition (first drafts are more often either "pot boilers" or "queer," "so out-of-this world" projects beyond the reach of the anticipated public) helps account for the perfunctory nature of this initial draft.

¹³ Iser's anatomy of narrative strategies is again helpful here, specifically his observation that a didactic counterbalancing perspective "does not produce an aesthetic object that will rival the thought system of the social world"

as much as "offer a compensation for specific deficiencies in specific thought systems." See his Act of Reading, 86-103.

¹⁴ It is worth noting that chess is one of the games that Clifford instructs Mrs. Bolton in, and another occasion for the display of his "superiority." Connie, for her part, "got intolerably wearied at chess" (JTLJ, 108).

¹⁵ For Lawrence's views on Proust and Joyce, see "Surgery for the Novel--Or a Bomb" and the introduction to Verga's Cavalleria Rusticana, in Phoenix, 517-520; 250. See also D.H.L.'s comment that the last part of Ulysses is "the dirtiest, most indecent, obscene thing ever written." Quoted in D.H. Lawrence, Interviews and Recollections, ed. Norman Page (London: Macmillan, 1981), ii, 208.

¹⁶ As Dennis Jackson has argued, much of Clifford's positivistic philosophy is borrowed from Whitehead's Religion in the Making, passages from which ("one of the latest scientific-religious books") Clifford reads to Connie in chapter XVI. See Dennis Jackson, "Literary Allusions in Lady Chatterley's Lover," in D.H. Lawrence's "Lady," 170-196.

¹⁷ This Edenic link also extends to Parkin's replacement, given the otherwise unlikely name of Alfred Adam. "The Park of Eden," furthermore, is Lawrence's own phrase for Paradise in the A Propos (349).

¹⁸ Lawrence speaks of "bottomless pools" of contemplation in his letter to Brett of 19 December, 1926. In Letters, ed. Huxley,

¹⁹ G.B. Strickland, "The First Lady Chatterley's Lover," in D.H. Lawrence: A Critical Study of the Major Novels and Other Writings, ed. A.H. Gomme (Sussex: Harvester, 1978), 159-174.

²⁰ Frieda Lawrence, A Foreword, 10.

²¹ Letter to Aldous Huxley, 17 March, 1928, in Letters, ed. Huxley, 710.

²² For a comment on the connection between obscenity and the "common people," see Lawrence's letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell: "I want, with Lady C., to make an adjustment in consciousness to the basic physical realities. I realize that one of the reasons why the common people often keep--or kept--the good natural glow of life, just warm life, longer than educated people, was it was still possible for them to say

fuck! or shit without either a shudder or a sensation."

Letter of 28 December, 1928, in The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, II, ed. Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1962).

²³ See Derek Britton, Lady Chatterley's Lover: The Making of the Novel, 140-165 *et passim*. Michael Squires's thorough and impressive book on the three novels, The Creation of Lady Chatterley's Lover, emphasizes Lawrence's own self-portrayal: "The bullying "will" that Connie and the narrator find repugnant in Clifford is precisely what Lawrence adds of himself to version 3." To this one might add Lawrence's (and Clifford's) career as a writer and "dabbler" in oil painting, as well as their common physical impotence. See The Creation of Lady Chatterley's Lover (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U.P., 1983), 58.

²⁴ Letter to Huxley, 27 March, 1928, in Letters, ed. Huxley, 716.

²⁵ Loerke in this sense becomes what Barthes would call, as he does in S/Z, a "writerly" painter, with a temperament that is verbal rather than iconic, and a style that is polysemic instead of concrete. Both Clifford and Loerke are seen as perverted formalists, subduing the life of the body to that of its abstracted ideality, and thereby granting art an autonomous form that Lawrence, no doubt a "readerly" thinker for Barthes, rejects out of hand in Lady Chatterley's Lover. See Barthes, S/Z, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), 3-16.

²⁶ Philip Hobsbaum, A Reader's Guide to D.H. Lawrence (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), 85.

²⁷ Lydia Blanchard, in her related but less "scientific" argument, pinpoints Lady Chatterley's Lover as a "study of the tension between ideas, between the need to rescue sexuality from secrecy, to bring it into discourse, and the simultaneous recognition that the re-creation of sexuality in language must always, at the same time, resist language." "Lawrence, Foucault, and the Language of Sexuality," in D.H. Lawrence's "Lady," 33.

²⁸ Harry T. Moore, The Priest of Love (New York: Penguin, 1974), 536.

²⁹ The A Propos, a greatly expanded version of what was originally titled "My Skirmish With Jolly Roger," was finished

in October of 1929, and follows the text of the Bantam Lady Chatterley's Lover used here. The essay also appears in Phoenix II, 487-515.

³⁰ The quote standing as headnote to this chapter is perhaps the most striking example of this weariness of explanation. If we take Mellors's (and Lawrence's) position at its most extreme, fucking is fucking, and any effort to go beyond what Garrett Stewart terms the "allotropes of Being" seems destined to lead one hopelessly astray.

³¹ The draft printed by Orioli was in fact completed in *Les Diablerets*, an Alpine setting reminiscent of "Continental" and "Snowed Up": one might say that Gerald, in the guise of Clifford Chatterley, now undergoes a second death by ice.

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