

Evolution and the Novels of D.H. Lawrence: A Bergsonian Interpretation

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Abstract:

This thesis examines the degree and nature of D.H. Lawrence's interaction with the concept of evolution, as manifest in his novels and the longer of his short stories. It addresses both Lawrence's engagement with evolutionism directly informed by biology and his relationship with extrapolations of evolutionary ideas from outside the scientific sphere. In particular it considers the theories of Henri Bergson, and theosophical and occultist appropriations of evolutionary concepts. Instead of approaching Bergson as a philosopher of time, as has much previous research into Bergson's impact upon modernist literature, the thesis considers how the Bergsonian notion that a 'need of creation' drives evolutionary development is reflected in Lawrence's fiction.

Chapter One investigates the role of the imagination in interaction with nature in Lawrence's earliest novels, in particular *The White Peacock* (1911). It suggests that while creative imagination may appear to give a distorted impression of wider nature, it is nonetheless seen to be necessary for contact with the world to be enriching. Chapter Two considers the relationship between creativity and development in *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920), suggesting that creative force is seen to provide a means to resist the effects of wider cycles in nature between evolution and dissolution. In Chapter Three, Lawrence's novels of migration and self-discovery, *The Lost Girl* (1920) and *Aaron's Rod* (1922), are suggested to employ intricate Bergsonian structures, whereby the respective protagonists simultaneously explore multiple paths of evolutionary development, despite the ostensible paradoxes which result from this. Chapter Four, focusing upon Lawrence's Australian fiction, considers the relationship between the hostile environment of Australia and the evolutionary development of its inhabitants. Chapter Five considers the importance of occultist evolutionism to Lawrence, using his annotations to P.D. Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum* as a means to better understand the mystical aspects of the fiction he wrote while in North America. Finally, Chapter Six addresses the presentation of illness and injury in Lawrence's work, particularly in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), examining the relationship between the composition of an individual and his or her ability to fit into the structures of wider nature.

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List of Abbreviations

This thesis uses as system of abbreviations for its references to Lawrence's novels, and those short stories it also focuses upon. Those abbreviations are:

<i>AR</i>	<i>Aaron's Rod</i>
<i>BB</i>	<i>The Boy in the Bush</i>
<i>K</i>	<i>Kangaroo</i>
<i>LCL</i>	<i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i>
<i>LG</i>	<i>Lost Girl</i>
<i>MN</i>	<i>Mr Noon</i>
<i>PS</i>	<i>The Plumed Serpent</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>The Rainbow</i>
<i>SM</i>	<i>St Mawr</i>
<i>SL</i>	<i>Sons and Lovers</i>
<i>T</i>	<i>The Trespasser</i>
<i>VG</i>	<i>The Virgin and the Gipsy</i>
<i>WL</i>	<i>Women in Love</i>
<i>WP</i>	<i>The White Peacock</i>

Introduction

In the essay 'Corasmin and the Parrots,' from the collection *Mornings in Mexico* (1927), D.H. Lawrence describes the behaviour of a pet dog – the Corasmin of the essay's title – and of pet parrots, on a warm winter's day. Corasmin is seen to be tired, but unable to settle, partly, it seems, unsure whether to lie in the shade or the sun, and partly disturbed by the noise of the parrots. However, the piece, initially delicate and domestic, swiftly broadens in its scope. The mutual inability of the dog, the parrots, and Lawrence himself to communicate meaningfully with one another apparently impels Lawrence to write more broadly about the relationship between species. Lawrence suggests that he, as a human being, 'belongs to the next cycle of evolution' from that of the dog – a cycle, it may be assumed, even further removed from that of the parrots. Further, though, Lawrence writes that between Corasmin and him is also 'the gulf of the other dimension,' a gap which cannot be bridged 'with the foot rule of three-dimensional space.' Thus, the estrangement is conceptualized according to two ostensibly rather different schemes: one whereby it seems the human being is further advanced along a path of progression open to other species, and one whereby the difference between species appears to constitute an irresolvable distinction in nature.

However, though Lawrence intimates a relationship of order between cycles of evolution, in that the cycle to which humankind is seen to belong is the 'next' relative to that of the dog, elsewhere in the essay, this understanding is complicated, and possibly contradicted. Lawrence proceeds to explain that he 'doesn't believe in evolution, like a long string hooked onto a First Cause, and being slowly twisted in unbroken continuity through the ages.' For Lawrence, according to this essay, looking at a monkey, and by implication at a dog or a parrot too, 'there's no rope of evolution linking him to you, like a navel-string.' Even if, in one sense or another, the dog and the monkey are following in the evolutionary wake of humankind, this is not seen to confer meaningful relationship. The particularity of Lawrence's understanding of evolution has importance in terms of a wider understanding of his work, and, indeed, has implications with

respect to understanding the relationship between Lawrence's work and that of certain contemporaries. Lawrence's complicated, changing employment of evolution as a device within his work suggests an intense, previously unrecognised engagement with the evolutionary ideas of Henri Bergson, and also represents a major means by which occultist ideas permeate not just the imagery, but also the structure, of his later work. Henri Bergson's importance to many of Lawrence's peers has long been established, but a link to Lawrence's work has not previously been made – in part due, perhaps, to misapprehensions about Lawrence's likely level of knowledge of Bergson's ideas. Similarly, major studies of literary modernism and the occult have to date neglected Lawrence. The scepticism towards occult ideas Lawrence offers in letters could provide some explanation for this, as could the relative weakness of those novels by Lawrence with the most overt debt to occult ideas; neither rationale, however, is entirely compelling. The respective evolutionary ideas offered by occultists do much to contribute to the particularity of the evolutionary aspect of Lawrence's own work.

Some of the singular quality of evolutionary thought in Lawrence's work lies in its implications. For other writers evolutionary theory might be felt hopeful, in that it can be taken to suggest a connection between species, including between humankind and other species, with the potential for a richer, deeper understanding of the world if this relationship is acknowledged and accepted. In *Darwin's Plots*, Gillian Beer highlights Charles Darwin's claim that 'we can clearly see how it is that all living and extinct forms can be grouped together in one great system,' suggesting that upon such material an optimistic interpretation of Darwinian evolutionary theory can be founded. For Lawrence, however, at least on the basis of 'Corasmin and the Parrots,' this hopeful interpretation of evolutionary thought appears to be considered invalid: the shared fact of evolution does not appear to constitute grounds to assert present connection between species, even between those as ostensibly close as humankind and other primates.

If repetition can be taken to imply significance, then it is possible to be confident that Lawrence saw importance in expressing opposition to evolution, or at least to a particular understanding of it: 'Corasmin and the Parrots' does not represent the only occasion when Lawrence communicates scepticism towards evolution understood as a directional progression. In

the earlier essay 'Fantasia of the Unconscious' (1923), Lawrence expresses very similarly that 'I do not believe in evolution, but in the strangeness and rainbow-change of ever-renewed creative civilizations.' Elsewhere in the same essay, Lawrence advances the comparably broad, strong contention that 'there is no such thing as evolution,' suggesting instead that 'there is only development.' Though Lawrence extends these remarks, his additional thoughts do little to make entirely comprehensible the distinction he draws between evolution and development, but do make evident a challenge to Darwinian thought, through comment on the particularity of the origin of humankind. For Lawrence humanity is not comparable in its origin to other species:

Man was man in the very first plasm-speck which was his own individual origin, and is still his own individual origin. As for the origin, I don't know much about it. I only know there is but one origin, and that is the individual soul. The individual soul originated everything, and has itself no origin. So that time is a matter of living experience, nothing else, and eternity is just a mental trick.

How to understand that a plasm-speck could have been identifiable as in some respect human is not obvious. The extent to which this might purely be intended as rhetorical provocation, and the extent to which it, in whole or part, is intended to be understood as sincere is also hard to establish. This is particularly so, as in 'Fantasia of the Unconscious' Lawrence seems even more unafraid of possible contradiction than in 'Corasmin and the Parrots.' Indeed, elsewhere in 'Fantasia of the Unconscious,' Lawrence writes that 'nothing will ever quench humanity and the human potentiality to evolve something magnificent out of a renewed chaos.' This evolution to which the human being is compelled might be more individual than that of Darwin, constrained within an individual species, and potentially within individual members of that species, but it is identified as evolution nevertheless. Meanwhile, in 'Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious' – which was, like 'Fantasia of the Unconscious,' first published in 1923 – Lawrence makes the comparable claim that 'the will is indeed the faculty which every individual possesses from the very moment of conception, for exerting a certain control over the vital and automatic processes of his own evolution.'

Furthermore, in his fiction, Lawrence can often be felt to manifest both belief in evolution

and in meaningful relationship between species in connection with it. *The Rainbow*, for instance, in following the Brangwen family across an extended period, traces the increasing distinctiveness of each successive generation. Early generations of the Brangwens are not given first names, are identified only in terms of a set of characteristics said to be shared by every male family member and a separate set said to be shared by every female member. Once the named generations arrive, a passage towards separation begins. Will Brangwen, by the middle of the novel, comes to feel in himself 'an unalterable self at last, free, separate, independent' (R 177), while his daughter, Ursula, much earlier in her life, with less effort, feels herself 'a separate entity' and feels compulsion to 'make something of herself,' from 'the nothingness and undifferentiated mass' (R 263). This progression towards individuation does not provide estrangement from wider nature, but rather the reverse. In the famous passage in which Ursula is working in the laboratory with a microscope, studying specimens, this is strikingly evident. At first wondering what it means for the microscopic beings she sees to be alive, and what will they can be understood to possess, Ursula comes to the realization that each speck 'intended to be itself,' but that this is meaningful and valuable for the reason that 'self was a oneness with the infinite' and that 'to be oneself was a supreme, gleaming triumph of infinity' (R 409). The individuality Ursula has felt compelled to realize in herself does not have to be understood as separating her from wider nature – instead, the opposite appears to be true. However, just as Lawrence's essays are challengingly apt to court contradiction with respect to evolution, or at least to cause confusion, so too are his novels. One with infinity though Ursula might be seen to be from one perspective, she is still said to harbour an 'isolated, impregnable core' (R 455). Further, matters of the relationship between the soul and the spirit are a complicating factor in establishing the meaning of evolution within Lawrence's work. A potential for the soul to lead physical change is marked in *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), but can also be seen in other of Lawrence's works of fiction.

Evolution can be felt to impact upon Lawrence's fiction, his essays, and his poetry. Among these, however, his novels offer the medium in which patterns of development might be said to find the most space to unfold. While Lawrence's essays constitute a valuable resource, the interaction of Lawrence's evolutionary ideas with other elements of his work can be felt to be at

its most live, and therefore most enlightening, in his longer fiction. To approach Lawrence's poetry, plays, shorter fiction and travel writing with the same critical perspective as that employed here could certainly be enlightening. However, to incorporate consideration of these into the present work would risk consideration of any given text being too superficial.

Further, the present work heeds Mark Kinkead-Weekes's warning that 'any sentence beginning "D.H. Lawrence" needs immediately to specify which Lawrence one is talking about and when – needing time as well as complication if one wants an accurate overall view.' In part with this in mind, Lawrence's work is, as much as possible, approached in the present work in the order of its writing, in that this allows the gradual modifications in Lawrence's understanding of evolution to be traced. Further, though, the thesis is informed by a consciousness that even at a single time Lawrence could accommodate within himself ostensibly antagonistic attitudes. This is well demonstrated with respect to evolution by the 1929 essay 'Introduction to These Paintings.' In it Lawrence writes that that 'after years of acceptance of the "laws" of evolution' he finds 'he can't, with the best will in the world, believe that species have "evolved" from one common life-form' – a statement enlightening with respect to the broad passage of Lawrence's thought, and his increasing doubts about the veracity of the claims made by science. However, there are important notes of moderation and complication around this, as Lawrence concedes that his 'instincts and intuitions may still be held back by prejudice,' and that the 'mere mental asseverations' he may possess with respect to scientific law are not potent enough for him 'to believe, with the true imagination.' The present work, then, considers the output of a writer who felt himself able, simultaneously, to believe and doubt, and finds his work able in itself to encompass scepticism and conviction at once.

Lawrence's recorded acquaintance with evolutionary theory began in 1905, the year in which he turned twenty. He is recorded as having read work by Charles Darwin that year, and is known to have read *The Origin of Species* by the following year. In the years after this, he also read *The Riddle of the Universe* by Ernst Haeckel, *Man's Place in Nature* by T.H. Huxley, and *First Principles of a Synthetic System of Philosophy* by Herbert Spencer. Lawrence's close friend of the time, Jessie Chambers, recalls that 'this rationalistic teaching impressed Lawrence deeply,'

and contends that 'he tried to fill up a spiritual vacuum by swallowing materialism at a gulp.' Lawrence was at this time questioning the Christian faith he had been brought up to hold; John Worthen records that 'by 1908 he was no longer a believer in the Christian God,' but that he also felt he "still had some religion left." As a result, he seems to have gravitated towards biologically derived evolutionary systems of a kind which provide comparably comprehensive accounts of the nature of the universe to those offered by religion. Haeckel and Spencer in particular extrapolate far beyond the development of species in their respective works read by Lawrence, employing the concept of evolution as a universal device for understanding change within entities living and non-living. Each, in effect, offers Lawrence a model for employing the notion of evolution as a pattern with application beyond biology alone.

In spite, however, of the kind of views which were to be expressed in *Mornings in Mexico* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, considerations of evolutionism in Lawrence's works have tended to process the concept in terms of coherence with the patterns and processes identified as evolutionary in scientific works: they have not, in other words, considered alternative evolutionisms to explain the disdain and scepticism Lawrence so often directs towards Darwinian models of development. Roger Ebbatson's instructive *Lawrence and the Nature Tradition* (1980) and *The Evolutionary Self: Hardy, Forster, Lawrence* (1982) each approach evolutionism in Lawrence's work in terms, largely, of Darwinian and Spencerian theory. The former addresses Lawrence's first three novels, while the latter considers *The Rainbow* (1915), and, to a lesser extent, *Women in Love* (1920). Given that the critical foundation of Ebbatson's work is in material Lawrence read so early in his life, this orientation towards Lawrence's earlier novels is reasonable. The greater artistic worth Lawrence's earlier novels are usually felt to possess may also be a factor: Ebbatson himself does not directly explain why he focuses on the works he does in either *Lawrence and the Nature Tradition* or *The Evolutionary Self*. However, the partial picture which results risks distorting a major aspect of Lawrence's work; the doubt that human evolution is purely or primarily biological evident in Lawrence's later work is already implicit in certain respects in his earlier work.

Ebbatson (writing, it may be highlighted, prior to the publication of *Darwin's Plots*),

summarizes the argument of *The Evolutionary Self* as being that in the work of Hardy, Forster and Lawrence, and other contemporaries, 'human character is for the first time in literature envisaged as subject to the laws of biology.' This purported biological grounding, for Ebbatson, 'enabled the novelist who had saturated himself in Darwinism to do something akin to what Zola claimed for naturalism – to make “a totally new start” by “getting to know man from the very well-springs of his being.”' Ebbatson further contends that 'in the cases of Hardy and Lawrence the evidence of lengthy and detailed study of the theory [of evolution] is incontrovertible and becomes a defining characteristic of the novels themselves.' This thesis acknowledges numerous insights in Ebbatson's work, but does not find Lawrence's engagement with Darwinism so strategic, or so monologic: even in Lawrence's earliest works, challenges to biological evolutionism can be detected.

In part the present thesis is facilitated by the considerable resources which have emerged since Ebbatson's works on Lawrence were published. In that *Lawrence and the Nature Tradition* was written in 1980, and *The Evolutionary Self* in 1982, Ebbatson was almost entirely unable to benefit from the invaluable resource constituted by the Cambridge editions of Lawrence's works, which then largely remained to be created and published (*The Evolutionary Self* uses the first volume of Lawrence's collected letters, published in 1979, but no other intersection between Ebbatson's works and the Cambridge series exists). Given the new evidence provided by the Cambridge editions of Lawrence's works, notably his letters, the thesis can have assurance about a greater breadth to Lawrence's evolutionary knowledge than Ebbatson then could, and can utilize this assurance.

One further volume approaches Lawrence's writing primarily in terms of Darwinian theory. Ronald Granofsky's *D.H. Lawrence and Survival: Darwinism in the Fiction of the Transitional Period*, published in 2003, addresses the period in Lawrence's writing immediately after the limit of Ebbatson's focus, considering in particular *The Lost Girl* (1920) and *Aaron's Rod* (1922). Granofsky, in contrast to Ebbatson, postulates that Lawrence's own writing method was in itself evolutionary, in the sense that Lawrence is suggested to use his fiction as means to put into competition with one another different models of characterization and of processing the wider

world within the environment of a given work. Though Ebbatson does write that 'the propositions expounded by Darwin flowed into and became part of the novelist's imaginative equipment, part of his sense of self,' this does not lie at the centre of his analysis of Lawrence's works. Granofsky, however, writes of 'Lawrence's attempt, in the immediate post-war years, to imagine a revolution in the hierarchical organization of English society by making use of several doctrines from nineteenth-century evolutionary theory' and further suggests that 'Lawrence's image of himself as a writer resulted in a narrative strategy in which his older concerns were made to evolve into his newer ones through the environment of fiction itself.'

This thesis sees coexistence, and even competition, between differing evolutionary models within individual works by Lawrence, but does not conceive of their interaction in terms of such a meta-contest. Though different ideas within a single work might stand opposed, particularly when a given character embodies ideas which compete with those endorsed by a work at large, this need not be felt to constitute competition: a character whose apprehension of his or her evolutionary nature does not cohere with that demonstrated by the action of the novel itself can seldom be usefully said to fight to change the reality of the work.

This thesis can be said to depart from both Ebbatson, Granofsky, and other critics who have addressed evolutionism in Lawrence's work in that it considers each of the twelve novels to bear Lawrence's name – including the co-authored *The Boy in the Bush* (1924), written with M.L. Skinner. Though a number of these works might not be considered particular artistic triumphs, *The Boy in the Bush* among them, each, to some extent, contributes to a fuller knowledge of Lawrence's understanding of evolutionary systems, and human beings within them. Given that Lawrence's approach to evolutionary thought changes considerably with time, there follows a considerable impact upon the nature and structure of certain of these works. It is enlightening to see how Lawrence utilizes elements of Darwinian thought in his earliest fiction, but in some sense it is even more revealing to see how these components of Lawrence's fiction are complicated and reconsidered as his work progresses. In addition to Lawrence's full-length novels, the thesis also addresses the novellas *St Mawr* (1925) and *The Virgin and the Gipsy* (1926), each of which constitutes a valuable example of an aspect of Lawrence's evolutionism: *St Mawr* is especially

enlightening with respect to Lawrence's understanding of the dimensionality of different species, while *The Virgin and the Gipsy* adds to an understanding of how sickness can be felt to relate to evolutionary development.

A further proximate work, at least in the sense that it considers the fiction Lawrence produced throughout his career in terms of contemporary science and wider theory is *D.H. Lawrence, Science and the Posthuman* (2005) by Jeff Wallace. However, Wallace's work has a rather different goal from the present study. *D.H. Lawrence, Science and the Posthuman* is concerned with Lawrence's understanding of the mechanical world and the potential mechanization of humankind. This thesis, though informed by science in many aspects, by contrast can be said to focus the organic within Lawrence's work, rather than the mechanical. Nonetheless, in that Lawrence often appears to approach the mechanical and organic as a binary, reference to one is enriched by reference to the other, and this thesis frequently engages with Wallace.

Among evolutionary voices other than those of Darwin and his immediate followers, this thesis in particular considers D.H. Lawrence's acquaintance with the ideas of Henri Bergson as significant. A notion similar to that Bergson advances whereby a 'need of creation' drives evolutionary development can be seen in a good deal of Lawrence's work, while other ideas regarding development which Lawrence's novels employ can also meaningfully and beneficially be linked to Bergson. Jeff Wallace utilizes Bergsonian theory as a resource through which to analyse aspects of Lawrence's work; this thesis sees a stronger connection, whereby large elements of Lawrence's work are considered to exist in the form they do due to Lawrence's engagement with Bergson's ideas.

In major studies of Bergson and modernism, D.H. Lawrence has not tended to receive any significant degree of consideration. *Henri Bergson and British Modernism* (1996) by Mary Ann Gillies makes no mention of D.H. Lawrence, while the collection *Understanding Bergson, Understanding Modernism* (2013) affords his work only fleeting acknowledgement. Partly, this may be because Lawrence's knowledge of Bergson has been thought limited. The Cambridge

edition of D.H. Lawrence's letters incorrectly footnotes a 1913 letter to Arthur McLeod in which Lawrence thanks him for sending a 'Bergson book,' suggesting only the minor Bergson work *Laughter* was available at this time in English. In fact, *Matter and Memory*, *Time and Free Will* and *Creative Evolution* had all been published in English translations between 1910 and 1911, in addition to *Laughter*. Moreover, the publication of Bergson's work in English translation coincided with a wider spike in attention to his theories in the English-speaking world. Mary Ann Gilles explains that over two hundred articles in the English language were published on Bergson in newspapers, journals and books between 1909 and 1911.

Partly, also, possible connection between Lawrence and Bergson has received limited attention because a standard framework through which Bergson's ideas are connected to modernist literature has limited applicability in Lawrence's case. Gillies identifies 'three broad themes as representative of the central points of intersection between Bergsonian philosophy and modernist writings,' The first of these 'revolves around knowing how to define the world in an empirical way, while at the same time accounting for the need for some sort of ordering myth or structure to deal with origins and the continued existence of this world.' Though the patterns of the evolution of species which Bergson proposes can be seen to provide a significant element in structuring certain of Lawrence's works, it is not evident that Lawrence aims for the kind of empirical definition of the world Gillies intimates, and thus Bergsonian fluidity does not sit in contrast with an empirical register in Lawrence's work.

The second theme Gillies proposes as a meeting point between Bergson's work and modernist literature is in 'the need to deal with the problems of identity,' specifically 'the question is the nature of the self, particularly in light of the discoveries of contemporary psychology.' This concern must be considered one held by Lawrence, given the existence of 'Fantasia of the Unconscious' and 'Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious.' A relationship between Lawrence's fiction and the ideas of Sigmund Freud has been traced since *Sons and Lovers*, in which the strong bond between Paul Morel and his mother is often viewed in Freudian terms. Rather than Lawrence, though, Gillies particularly connects the aspect of Bergson's work centred upon psychology with the fiction of James Joyce. For Gillies, 'Bergson claims that the social self,

although useful for our interaction with others, is no longer vital because it has solidified' and instead 'it is the vitality of the inner self – indefinable and seldom known because of its states that continually evolve and merge with each other – that forms our total self.' Gillies then suggests that 'such a constantly changing, constantly growing self resembles Joyce's own fictional portraits.'

The third theme Gillies identifies as connecting Bergson's ideas to modernist literature centres on 'the problems of representation in art,' in particular 'the constant shifting of the basis and modes of representation.' Gillies summarizes Bergson as advancing the view 'that representation meant a spatialization of flux,' an idea which she connects especially with Virginia Woolf's work. For Gillies an underlying principle in evidence in much of Woolf's work 'is that because events are felt and perceived differently, their representation must somehow capture the multiplicity of possibilities.' For Lawrence, the flux of reality is a pronounced concern, but spatialization is not an essential in the representation of that flux. To capture multiple possibilities does not have to imply separating them in space. Particularly in *Aaron's Rod*, distinct modes of development represented through metaphors of rootedness and migration exist simultaneously within Aaron Sisson, and, as such overlap both in him and in the novel.

Sanford Schwartz comparably links interest in Bergson to a particular understanding of the possibilities of artistic representation. He suggests that T.E. Hulme, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot each 'stress the opposition between intellectual abstraction and concrete sensation' and contends that they thereby 'share Bergson's belief that art is a principal means of lifting the veil of conventions interposed between us and our immediate experience.' Broadly such reasoning could potentially be used to connect Lawrence with Bergson. Lawrence is very much interested in the creative process; painters, craftspeople and musicians pepper his novels, while the creation of a work is often seen as a means to access deep truths: Will Brangwen's wood-carving, and Paul Morel's painting each are liberating for the process in itself, as well as rewarding for the product.

Elsewhere, too, the relationship between Bergson and modernist literature, and English modernist literature in particular, has been seen to centre upon certain aspects of Bergson's philosophy. Bergson's *durée* has often been foregrounded, sometimes to the regrettable exclusion

of his other ideas. For Suzanne Guerlac, in *Understanding Bergson, Understanding Modernism*, 'the unthought that [Bergson] exposed was not Being, or writing, but time, time that was irreducible to space, that could not be measured, and that occurred as qualitative intensity: time as force.' Similarly, Daniel R. Schwarz, in his assessment of Bergson's significance within modern art and modern literature, highlights 'Bergson's work on the complexity of time' as being among a number of ideas of the period which 'left human beings without bearing.' Aspects of Lawrence's work do instantiate this focus, such as the passage in *The Trespasser* in which the protagonist Siegmund McNair resists the forced structure of time governed by the clock – insisting that he is 'not made up of sections of time' (T 98). However, this is not the only potential device through which the presence of Bergsonian structures might be felt in Lawrence's work, and, indeed, probably ought not to be seen as the most productive channel through which to connect Lawrence's work to Bergson's. With Lawrence's prior interest in evolution, and with what Jessie Chambers had seen as his misery in adherence to materialism and rationalism, Bergson's creative evolutionism, possessing among its elements an emphasis on transcendence through imagination, is likely to have resonated with Lawrence.

The evolutionary dimension of Bergson's thought is one which has not previously been central in considerations of the relationship between his work and literature produced in its wake. In this much, there can be value in the present work to those with an interest in wider modernism, and not exclusively to those focused upon Lawrence. The lines of connection between Lawrence and Bergson which this thesis explores might be added to the lines of connection between Bergson and modernism identified by Gillies. The relationship with Bergson's ideas this thesis sees in Lawrence might reasonably inform the understanding of the relationship other writers had with Bergsonian thought. In that creativity and change are a key concern for certain of Lawrence's contemporaries, much that this thesis proposes can have relevance when applied to wider literature of the period.

Further evolutionary ideas, more distant from evolutionary biology, are encountered in Lawrence's reading from later in the 1910s and onwards. In the middle of that decade, Lawrence developed an interest in occult, theosophical and esoteric thinking, much of which incorporates a

version of evolutionism in its structure, albeit one somewhat removed in form from that to which a biologist might adhere. In 1915 Lawrence read *The Golden Bough* and *Totemism and Exogamy* by James George Frazer, which, he claims, sharpened in him a conviction that 'there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and nervous system.' Subsequently, he read a number of works by Helena Blavatsky, P.D. Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum*, as well as the journal the *Occult Review*. Blavatsky and Ouspensky both comment directly upon Darwinism and wider evolutionary biology, as do certain contributors to the *Occult Review*. Blavatsky frequently addresses the ideas of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. While Blavatsky summarizes her own evolution as one whereby 'the physical 'evol[es] gradually from the spiritual, mental, and psychic,' her criticism of Darwin and Spencer tends to be controlled, and often offered alongside praise. Thus, in *Isis Unveiled*, Blavatsky writes that Darwin's 'only mistake may be that he applies his system at the wrong end.' Similarly, in *The Secret Doctrine*, Blavatsky endorses much of the evolutionary theory advanced by Herbert Spencer. Finding similarity between the cosmic cycles she claims to occur, and the alternating evolution and dissolution of *First Principles*, she questions if 'Mr. Herbert Spencer [had] read and studied ancient Hindu philosophers.' Further, Blavatsky suggests that 'it is curious to notice how, in the evolutionary cycles of ideas, ancient thought seems to be reflected in modern speculation.'

Lawrence shares with Blavatsky a sense that science is beginning to rediscover an ancient wisdom previously discovered through religion and ritual. In *Apocalypse* he writes that 'the modern physicist is on the brink of Nirvana' and that 'Einstein himself is in the same state of consciousness, essentially, as an Orphic initiate was in, four centuries before Christ.' More than this, however, Lawrence's understanding of evolution bears, at least in the early 1920s, important resemblance to that of Blavatsky. Lawrence's suggestion in 'Fantasia of the Unconscious' that humankind is unique in its origin is one which it seems Blavatsky would broadly endorse, and the further contention that the soul is part of that origin appears to support the view that the spiritual leads the physical.

The sense of distance between species which Lawrence expresses in 'Corasmin and the Parrots' might also be felt in general coherence with Blavatsky's ideas, but it seems to find a more

precise correlate in Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum*. For Ouspensky different evolutions exist in different species, limiting the extent to which species can be seen as connected to one another:

I do not deny the law of evolution, but the application of it to the explanation of many phenomena of life is in great need of correction.

Firstly, if we accept the idea of one common evolution, after all it is necessary to remember that the types which develop slower, the remnants of evolution, may not continue to follow after, and at a slow pace *the same* evolution, but may begin an evolution of their own, developing in many cases exactly those properties on account of which they were thrown out from basic evolution.

Secondly, though we accept the law of evolution, there is no necessity to regard all existing forms as having been developed one from another (like man from the ape, for example). In such cases it is more correct to regard them all as the *highest types in their own* evolution. The absence of intermediate forms makes this view much more probable than that which is usually accepted, and which gives such rich material for 'theosophical' discussions about the obligatory and inevitable perfection of all.

In sum, Lawrence, as evolutionary sceptic, has forebears in his reading. Though Lawrence writes that *The Secret Doctrine* is 'in many ways quite a bore, and not quite real,' and though he calls certain of Ouspensky's suggestions 'rubbish,' their respective ideas are evidently not rejected entirely in Lawrence's direct comment upon them. In particular, he contends that reading Blavatsky's work can 'enlarge the understanding immensely.' Further, Blavatsky and Ouspensky can be felt to provide imaginative fuel which contributes to the content and form of Lawrence's fiction. The marked mysticism of *The Plumed Serpent* is paired with structural elements which appear to be derived from esotericist theory. These esotericist elements, however, should perhaps be felt to exist in Lawrence's work in synthesis with the preceding evolutionary thought to which he had been exposed, instead of being seen to replace it entirely. Where the structure of *The Rainbow* can, in part, be felt to merge elements from Bergson and Spencer, *The Plumed Serpent* adds ideas from Blavatsky and Ouspensky to surviving aspects of Bergsonian and indeed Darwinian thought.

Lawrence's interaction with occult ideas has, however, received little critical consideration. Whether or not Lawrence is felt to subscribe wholeheartedly to any of the ideas advanced by Blavatsky, Ouspensky or any of their contemporaries, the quantity of work he read by such writers in itself demonstrates a deep interest. So too does the fact that Lawrence felt

compelled to react in writing to much of this material. In 1960 E.W. Tedlock documented Lawrence's extensive annotation of his copy of *Tertium Organum*, but no significant subsequent study has built upon this resource. These annotations can, however, be considered particularly valuable in understanding the fiction Lawrence produced around this time, especially *St Mawr* and *The Plumed Serpent*.

In *Literary Modernism and the Occult Tradition*, Leon Surette argues that 'literary scholarship has neglected – even suppressed – the important contribution of occult speculation to the theories and practices of the High Modernists.' Though Lawrence might not be felt a high modernist *per se*, *Literary Modernism and the Occult Tradition* makes no substantial mention of D.H. Lawrence, a fact Surette concedes is a 'glaring omission' given what he regards as 'Lawrence's manifest occultism.' For Demetres Tryphonopoulos, writing in the same collection, 'the occult has had a number of periods when popular interest has peaked,' one of which, he suggests 'was the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.' The interest he identifies during this period Tryphonopoulos regards as a reaction to the perceived ascendancy of science. He writes that 'the dominant role that science had assumed in modern culture, and science's exclusion of all knowledge that is not quantifiable, sparked this interest.' With respect to Lawrence, such feelings have already been seen directly expressed in 'Introduction to These Paintings' and the other essays highlighted here. Thus, where for other writers, evidence for such attitudes might be contingent, for Lawrence it is clear.

However, Surette argues that occultist understandings of the nature of the world are structurally opposed to evolutionism. He suggests that 'the romantic nostalgia for the past is echoed in occultism's adherence to the ancient view of historical process as degenerative, in contrast to the Christian providential view and its Jacobin and Darwinian heirs.' Nevertheless, this attitude towards development over time is not the sole one it is possible to perceive in occultist writing. Blavatsky and Ouspensky do each employ a notion of evolution as part of their respective conceptualizations of the world, and can each be considered to support advancement as at least potentially possible.

Because it considers a great deal of evolutionism considerably removed from science, it

might seem reasonable to suggest that much of this thesis exists similarly removed from the field of Literature and Science, and cannot therefore have significant relevance in this area. This need not be felt to be so, however. In *Forging the Missing Link*, Gillian Beer contends that 'categories always have in them an element of chosen kinning and exclusion,' giving the example that 'both Darwin and Huxley pointed out that no observer outside humankind would have invented a special category for man as opposed to other primates.' Applied to the study of literature and its relationship to science, it is not obvious at which point to rule an idea with its ultimate roots in science as no longer meaningfully connected to science. Lawrence's layering of unscientific versions of the concept of evolution on top of unquestionably scientific understandings makes finding the border of scientific thought (if such a thing exists) especially challenging in his work.

Daniel Cordle identifies seven avenues for research within the field of Literature and Science. These are:

1. The Two Cultures Debate
2. The Influence of Science and Technology on Writers
3. The Representation of Science, Scientists and Technology in Literature
4. Science Writing as a Genre of Literature
5. Shared Metaphors and Discourses
6. The Responses of Literature and Science to Common Topics
7. Relations between Literary Theory and Science

The present work includes elements of the second of these, but can perhaps be connected more with the fifth. Tracing the discourse of evolution in Lawrence's work means, in large part, mapping the relationship between his particular use of the concept, the use of the concept found in science, and that found elsewhere. Therefore, to say Lawrence's evolutionary thought becomes distant from science implies maintaining a sense of the relative position of each within a matrix of ideas – maintaining an idea of connection in spite of distance. How to conceptualize such simultaneous connection and estrangement is a concern Lawrence himself often raises with

respect to scientific thought, as demonstrated in his sense that shared evolutionary history does not imply present connection. This thesis considers Lawrence's own answers to what meaning remote connection can have, and finds them instructive with respect to this wider concern of Literature and Science.

Daniel Cordle considers the exploration of the shared metaphors and discourses of science and literature as the approach to the study of Literature and Science which faces 'the most dangers, including the difficulty of identifying, and quantifying the importance of, discourses.' This apparent danger can be seen as having two dimensions: the importance of a discourse within a writer's work, and the importance of that discourse beyond the work of the writer in question. The live interest in both the ideas of Bergson and in occultist theory at the time Lawrence wrote has already been highlighted. The evolutionary aspects of each may not have been the primary cause of that interest, but can be felt part of what made their respective ideas feel relevant: each interacts, as Demetres Tryphonopoulos notes, with science, challenging its pre-eminence.

In terms of Lawrence's work, this thesis does not seek to suggest that evolutionary theory – be it biological, be it Bergsonian, or be it that of occult or theosophical writers – is the central idea explored in any given novel Lawrence wrote. It does, however, represent a concern across the entire span of Lawrence's work, which makes it somewhat particular, given the vast changes in Lawrence's output across his life. Lawrence's fraught relationship with scientific thought often appears to be fought over within his work through evolution as metonym for science at large. 'Corasmin and the Parrots' constitutes one such instance. Having disdained the vision of evolution as a deterministic series of occurrences, Lawrence writes that:

I prefer to believe in what the Aztecs called Suns: that is, Worlds successively created and destroyed. The sun itself convulses, and the worlds go out like so many candles when somebody coughs in the middle of them. Then subtly, mysteriously, the sun convulses again, and a new set of worlds begin to flicker alight.

This pleases my fancy better than the long and weary twisting of the rope of Time and Evolution, hitched on to the revolving hook of a First Cause. I like to think of the whole show going bust, *bang!* – and nothing but bits of chaos flying about. Then out of the dark, new little twinklings reviving from no-where, no-how.

This vision includes a good deal which is also in evidence in Lawrence's novels. It brings together the cycling of creation and dissolution, the explosion which marks the culmination of this cycle, and the mystery of the forces which leads this process. Beyond this, though, it also displays desire, rather than conviction, that this vision is the correct one: this is what Lawrence prefers to believe, what pleases his fancy, but not more. In a sense, this can help explain why evolutionary development is so frequently explored, from so many perspectives, within Lawrence's fiction. In that Lawrence is not entirely convinced by a particular evolutionary vision, scientific or otherwise, there remains reason to play with ideas, reason to experiment.

In terms of tracing the progression of Lawrence's ideas, the first chapter of this thesis addresses the struggle between scientific and mystical modes of perceiving nature in Lawrence's first three novels, *The White Peacock*, *The Trespasser* and *Sons and Lovers*. The second follows the patterns of creation and destruction which develop across *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. In each of these, there exists an apparent antagonism between elements of the respective cosmologies of Henri Bergson and Herbert Spencer. The third chapter explores the apparent tension between models of evolutionary development built upon a need for migration and an apparently competing need for rooted, plant-like growth witnessed in each of *Aaron's Rod*, *The Lost Girl* and *Mr Noon*. This push in multiple directions is seen to be strongly Bergsonian.

Lawrence's Australian novels, *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* are the concern of Chapter Four. It suggests an interest in volcanism in evidence in each can be linked to Henri Bergson's understanding of the precise nature of the evolutionary process, which has a markedly volcanic quality, not unlike the one described in 'Corasmin and the Parrots.' The fifth chapter addresses Lawrence's North American work, looking at *St Mawr* and *The Plumed Serpent*. How the occultist models of evolutionary development in each interact with Bergsonian and Darwinian elements is the concern of this chapter. Finally, the sixth chapter, on *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *The Virgin and the Gypsy*, considers the focus upon illness and injury in those works in terms of their relationship with evolutionary processes.

The Mystic Against the Scientist, the Organism Against the Mechanism:

The White Peacock, The Trespasser and Sons and Lovers

I

D.H. Lawrence's first novel, *The White Peacock* (1911), opens with its protagonist, Cyril Beardsall, not only watching, but also listening to, the movement of fish through a mill-pond. Attentive to the sounds around him, Cyril processes the noise of the stream leading into the pond as a 'murmur[ing] to itself' (*WP* 1); a conception which implies the utterance is recognizable as a voice – not necessarily one intended to be heard by a wider audience, but nonetheless there to be eavesdropped upon by a sufficiently patient listener.

Cyril's contemplation of the pond in its present form is, however, also informed by reflection upon its apparent past; he approaches the fish within it as the 'descendants of the silvery things that had darted away from the monks, in the young days when the valley was lusty' (*WP* 1) and conceives of the pond and its surroundings together as 'gathered in the musings of old age' (*WP* 1). The very murmur of the pond in itself is concerned with the past, at least in Cyril's view, in that to him it speaks of 'the tumult of life which had once quickened the valley' (*WP* 1). By implication, reflecting upon the pond is not, for Cyril, solely vitalizing through the direct effect of observing the flora and fauna currently living there. Whether in part or primarily, it is as a bridge to a livelier past that the pond has certain of its value in the present. This vision is apparently not complicated or contradicted for Cyril by the fact that the very existence of the pond, having been constructed to serve a mill, is owed to humankind and human-constructed industry. Cyril, seeing himself as pure observer, seeks instruction from nature, but not connection with it. He thus does not position himself to develop within nature, to evolve through interaction with it.

That Cyril approaches the pond with the reverence he does may appear to place him in a tradition of thought, particularly connected with the Romantic movement, whereby the natural world can or should be approached by a human being as a means to experience a connection to

earlier, simpler times. As Kevis Goodman writes, 'Romanticism and nostalgia are so frequently associated as to be nearly synonymous.' Goodman also cites Paul de Man's depiction of Romanticism as 'nostalgia for the natural object, expanding to become nostalgia for the origin of this object.' Though Goodman argues that an understanding of nostalgia in Romanticism should, at least in part, be informed by the more medical meaning of the concept of nostalgia which was primary in the early nineteenth century, she nevertheless accepts a broad truth to those accounts of Romanticism which find a warm, sentimental yearning for the past within it.

British Romantic poetry was dear to Lawrence, particularly early in his life. According to Lawrence's childhood friend, Jessie Chambers, Palgrave's *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics* 'became a kind of bible' to her and Lawrence. She explains that, when she was eighteen (in 1905/6, at which point Lawrence would have been around twenty years old), 'Lawrence carried the little red volume [i.e. the *Golden Treasury*] in his pocket and read to me on every opportunity, usually out in the fields.' The fourth volume, which contains key works by the most celebrated Romantic poets, was a particular favourite for Lawrence and Chambers, and certain of its poems Lawrence would read 'over and over again' to Chambers, among them 'The Recollection' by Percy Shelley and William Wordsworth's 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.' These two poems each present manifestations of the desire to recapture a vision or memory of a lost, more wonderful nature through contemplation of the natural world in its present form.

In Wordsworth's 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality,' the fact that 'there hath pass'd away a glory from the earth' is felt through witnessing apparently diminished natural features and events:

–But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have look'd upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
 The pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

It is in part the childhood excitement in experiencing natural phenomena as novel which

Wordsworth mourns no longer experiencing; the poem opens with recollections of how, in youth, 'every common sight' had felt glorious and fresh. However, in the section of the poem above, the loss is seen to be vocalized by the natural features themselves, rather than by their observer; here, it is flowers and trees which are said to speak for themselves of their own former glory.

Therefore, if the passage is taken at face value, it can be felt that the loss experienced is not wholly illusionary – the flora corroborates the sensation of loss felt by the observer. The natural world, it can be understood, has the capacity to recall previous times in which it possessed greater potency, and nature is, significantly, shown to be able to communicate this recollection through a means fit to be rendered as vocalization.

Meanwhile, in 'The Recollection,' Shelley (who names himself within the poem), hopes to trace an 'epitaph of glory fled' from the earth. Walking through the countryside, apparently seeking a residue of this absented wonder, Shelley comes to stand, thoughtful, by a forest pool – in a temperament and environment at least superficially similar to those in which Cyril is found at the start of *The White Peacock*. However, the pool in 'The Recollection' reflects its surroundings to a more favourable effect than does the mill-pond in *The White Peacock*:

Sweet views which in our world above
 Can never well be seen
 Were imaged by the water's love
 Of that fair forest green:
 And all was interfused beneath
 With an Elysian glow,

 An atmosphere without a breath,
 A softer day below.

The pond, while an unfaithful mirror, has value in the fact that it provides the possibility to see a beauty otherwise unreal in the present time, and can therefore stimulate an uplifting emotional response, while also sustaining fading memories of the supposedly greater nature of the past. The view constituted by the reflection may be considered artificial and natural at once: it is a distortion, and in that much is unreal, but it is also natural insomuch as it is generated by a pool which does not owe its existence to humankind. In this much it stands in contrast to the pond at

which Cyril Beardsall stares, which provides a rather different dichotomy of artifice and naturalness: as mill-pond it is a human construction, but it fails to enhance the impression of its surroundings; indeed, in its gloominess, the pond does not appear to reflect at all that which is nearby (*WP* 1). If attention to it is to provide favourable reflections, they must, therefore, in substantial part, be generated by the observer, constituting artifice in this respect.

More broadly, in *The White Peacock* as a whole it is the case that if the natural world is to stimulate mystical reverie, its observer must play an active role in the distortion involved. Though Cyril, as narrator, is seldom conscious of his role in manufacturing a vision of Nethermere, the change he detects upon returning to the valley after moving away to London can be seen by the reader to be a change in him rather than in the environment:

I went home to Woodside early in September. Emily was staying at the Ram. It was strange that everything was so different. Nethermere even had changed. Nethermere was no longer a complete, wonderful little world that held us charmed inhabitants. It was a small, insignificant valley lost in the spaces of the earth. The tree that had drooped over the brook with such delightful, romantic grace was a ridiculous thing when I came home after a year of absence in the south. The old symbols were trite and foolish. (*WP* 267)

Given Cyril's evident capacity to mistake his internal impressions for external qualities, the experience of connection to a purer, simpler past, via nature, as seen earlier in the novel, is more unequivocally an artifice in *The White Peacock* than in these apparent Romantic forerunners. Rather than the Romantic poets, for Roger Ebbatson, it is George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, Richard Jefferies, W. Hale White and E.M. Forster whom together represent particular forebears and contemporaries of Lawrence in a more singular branch of a wider nature tradition, this particular line of nature-oriented writing identified as distinct in that it is centred not only upon the pursuit of a generic 'transcendent unity' with the natural world (a state of being venerated in both 'The Recollection' and 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality'), but further characterized by the fact that in its works 'the social is subsumed within the natural.' The tradition, as Ebbatson sees it, synthesizes the Romantic vision of nature with that which emerges from evolutionary theory. Ebbatson explains that, in light of Darwinian theory, 'the fixed realm of

nature dissolved into what Loren Eiseley describes as the “phantom” of an “emergent world of change.” The flux of human relationships, the change in perception wrought by mental and physical maturation – such, for Ebbatson, are not seen in these works as estranging the human being from a static nature, but as the human manifestations of an inescapable, natural resistance to fixity.

Lawrence, by the time he wrote *The White Peacock*, was familiar with a number of works by the writers Ebbatson places in this tradition, Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* among them. Cyril Beardsall resembles Jude Fawley in a number of respects. Both see nature exclusively, or predominantly, through a Romantic filter, but are exposed as deluded for so doing. These protagonists represent figures unable or unwilling to accept nature as the complicated product of evolutionary processes; therefore they each persist in approaching it through simpler interpretative frameworks.

In *Jude the Obscure*, Jude seeks to continue with an artificial understanding of nature as simpler and more benevolent than it is in actuality. He finds 'nature's logic [...] too horrid for him to care for,' and the fact that 'mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another' is said to be sickening to his sense of harmony. In that maturation from boy into young man has brought him knowledge of these aspects of nature, Jude further wishes that he could 'prevent himself growing up.' Only, it seems, in ignorance of the true qualities of the natural world can be felt the kind of comfort in nature described by the Romantic poets.

Cyril Beardsall, like Jude, can be seen as consciously aiming to deceive himself. Certain of Cyril's narration may be understood more as an attempt to convince himself of the mystical qualities of Nethermere than as communication intended for an audience. By the end of the novel, Cyril's struggle to deceive himself is unmistakable. Walking through Nethermere after a period of absence, he aims to find magic in the wood, but cannot convince himself to believe in his fantasy. 'I said to myself that the dryads were looking out for me from the wood's edge,' Cyril's narration explains. 'But as I advanced they shrank, and glancing wistfully, turned back like pale flowers falling in the shadow of the forest' (*WP* 306).

That Jude and Cyril each have some consciousness with respect to the fact that they are

attempting to delude themselves interfaces with the idea Ebbatson advances that the return to nature could not be felt to represent a return to simplicity in the aftermath of *The Origin of Species*. In that the state of nature at a given time is the product of millions of years of the interplay between the individual struggles for survival undertaken by billions of creatures from millions of species, nature should be seen to represent a challenge to the limits of human understanding. The result, in terms of the impulsion to return to nature, is that the natural world is an awkward domain to which to retreat to experience comfort: the human being is misguided if he or she seeks simplicity and purity in evolutionarily-informed nature. Attempted reconnection with a better past through nature is still more complicated than the attempt to experience a better present in existing nature: the nostalgia for a former, better environment less influenced by human beings may persist from the time of the Romantics, but this can now be considered to be fused with the wish for the revalidation of earlier, more comprehensible and more reassuring systems of belief regarding nature.

Thus, if Cyril Beardsall of *The White Peacock* describes nature as 'pure' and 'holy' (*WP* 129), this may well be felt to represent unjustified, wishful thinking, knowing the implications of *The Origin of Species* and other works of evolutionary biology which followed it. Even if a deity created the world, the notion that persistent evidence of that deity can be identified in nature as it presently exists seems weakened in a world in which circumstantial conditions guide the development of creatures, rather than a grand plan. The competitive, hostile natural world Darwin describes in *The Origin of Species* does not definitively exclude God, but its world hardly feels 'pure.'

Nevertheless, the application of language with religious connotations to the natural world recurs in Lawrence's fiction throughout his life, peaking with the pronounced mysticism of *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), in which 'magic' is found in the land of Mexico, and in which pre-Christian rituals harness this magical energy. In both *The White Peacock* and the novels which immediately followed it, *The Trespasser* (1912) and *Sons and Lovers* (1913), the spirituality which is applied to the natural world is less accented, but is nevertheless significant. In each, in spite of the implications of evolutionary biology, the natural world is approached, rightly or

wrongly, as holy. The conflict between the natural world of the biologist and the mystic is important in each of Lawrence's first three novels.

In *The Trespasser*, the protagonist, Siegmund MacNair, finds 'worship' the fit response to nature: the natural earth, by his view, constitutes an 'abbey' from which the day and the night can be worshipped in their turn. This holiness is, however, not tied to a particular vision of a deity, Christian or otherwise. Looking up at the sky from beside the sea, Siegmund finds himself certain 'it was all sacred, whatever the God might be' (*T* 128). The universe as Siegmund understands it is not the unguided cosmos of a distant or absent deity implied by Darwinian evolutionary theory. Subsequently, in *Sons and Lovers* (1913), Paul Morel is attracted to the humble Miriam Leivers, in large part because of a 'common feeling for something in nature' – the character of this sensation being partly understood as religious. Though Paul recognizes Miriam's approach to the world around her as 'anthropomorphic,' she nevertheless is lauded for 'stimulat[ing] him into appreciating things thus;' (*SL* 179) the mode of appreciation in question incorporating a 'religious intensity which made the world for her either a nunnery garden or a paradise' (*SL* 179). Miriam's religious veneration of the natural world is understood as vivifying: things 'lived for her' because Miriam 'kindl[ed them] in her imagination or in her soul before she felt she had them.' (*SL* 179) In this much, she and Paul share with Cyril Beardsall, and to a certain extent Siegmund McNair, a complicated relationship with nature, whereby it is apparently only through imaginatively building upon nature as it exists that interaction with the natural world is experienced as vitalizing.

That Cyril is to be seen as deluded in his understanding of the world is the view of David Bradshaw and other critics, and is felt by many to be to the detriment of *The White Peacock* as a novel. For Bradshaw, 'Cyril's method of evoking his surroundings tells us more about him than it does about his environment,' while his habit of feminizing nature is 'particularly deadening' in Bradshaw's view. Gavriel Ben-Ephraim offers a similar concern regarding Cyril's propensity to distort in his narration, arguing that his use of pathetic fallacy is not merely a stylistic annoyance,

but instead represents 'a species of emotional legerdemain' through which he 'converts an indifferent cosmos into a benevolent nature.' He contends that it is Cyril's emotional state at any given point which determines the accuracy with which he represents nature at that time. In particular, Ben-Ephraim argues that when Cyril requires consolation, his objectivity is lost, and he begins to sentimentalize his environment. Though Ben-Ephraim does not directly link this sentimentalization to Romanticism, it can doubtless be felt to draw upon it. Certainly, the fact that Ben-Ephraim terms this aspect of *The White Peacock* 'pastoral fallacy' implies that the novel is to be linked to earlier literary means of representing nature.

However, Ben-Ephraim's argument is weakened, at least to some extent, by the fact that his primary example of Cyril sentimentalizing Nethermere draws upon his recollection of the valley shortly after he has moved to London. The distorting effect of distance therefore contributes to a particularly shaded depiction of the valley. While still in Nethermere, Cyril's narration alternates, often swiftly, between the sentimental and the callous: though his regular use of cloying adjectives such as 'sweet', 'charming' or 'pretty,' (*WP* 59, 9, and 1 respectively) simplifies and nullifies his surroundings, Cyril is capable of communicating darker moments with blunt frankness, and does not resist doing so. When, for instance, George drowns an injured cat to 'put her out of her misery' (*WP* 13), Cyril communicates the incident without judgemental comment, providing a very simple, matter-of-fact account of the incident in itself, focusing on reporting the remarks of his companions. Nevertheless, distorted perception of nature, and of the meaning and quality of human interaction with it, is a principle feature of *The White Peacock*, even if the level of misrepresentation fluctuates. Much of that distortion is apparently informed by the Romantic tradition.

In light of this, it might be felt that for Cyril to listen to and observe his environment with the intensity he does merely represents the reproduction of a process described in Romantic poetry, performed as a means to understand himself as Romantic, whether or not meaningful or valid comprehension of the natural world is achieved through this behaviour. However, as the novel progresses, and nature is listened to further, it becomes clear that this approach does yield some degree of genuine insight: Cyril demonstrates understanding of challenges faced by given

creatures, and the competition between various species.

II

In the same respect that the mill-pond is experienced as vocalizing comprehensible sentiments, so too are a number of birds and other animals in and around Nethermere, a fact significant for the way in which it informs an understanding of *The White Peacock* as endorsing human connectedness with wider nature. On four occasions lapwings are mentioned, and on each they are found issuing lamentable cries, as in the chapter 'Lettie Pulls Down the Small Gold Grapes:'

Then I heard the lapwings in the meadow crying, crying. They seemed to seek the storm, yet to rail at it. They wheeled in the wind, yet never ceased to complain of it. They enjoyed the struggle, and lamented it in wild lament, through which came a sound of exultation. All the lapwings cried, cried the same tale, 'Bitter, bitter, the struggle – for nothing, nothing, nothing,' – and all the time they swung about on their broad wings, revelling. (*WP* 83-84)

Similarly peewits 'cry and complain' (*WP* 156), and make 'poignant lamentations and protests' (*WP* 218). In addition, a rabbit 'screams' (*WP* 22), while an angry peacock 'yells' (*WP* 148), and pigs 'shriek' (*WP* 198). Each word represents an understandable, but unusual, means to describe the noise that the animal in question might make when in distress. In each case the verb selected seems, at least partly, to reference the human sound it usually describes. For Cyril, it seems, taking seriously the voice of nature appears, at least in part, to entail translating it into something human, rather than appreciating it entirely as it communicates itself: to describe the noise of a bird as a complaint or lamentation may be intended as elevation, in that it implies a human-like capability to reason and to issue communication with content. However, it serves instead to misrepresent the noises the bird issues, which in themselves are complex inasmuch as they represent the products of long evolutionary processes – possessing meaning endowed by the action of time, rather than by the force of an individual's faculties of reasoning and expression. As

Michael Squires writes, with respect to *The White Peacock*, 'because the human and the natural are perceived and described in the same terms, they seem in accord' – a false impression.

That the birds are said to complain of 'struggle' may be felt to echo Darwin, whose *Origin of Species* is, after all, subtitled *The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. For Darwin, struggle for life is universal, and can be seen as the concrete goal of an individual as well as the abstract, 'metaphorical' goal of a species. In this much, it represents in Darwin's use a device through which the various levels of the process of evolution can be translated one into another; struggle, conceived as common to the individual and the species at large, represents a means to map the action of one onto the other. In other words, it is through figuring an individual's action as struggle that he or she can be seen as cohering with the nebulous goal of his or her species at large – which is also to be represented by the same term. The concept of struggle, employed in this way, thus already connects with translation: it is a means to layer the individual and the species on top of one another. That these lapwings are said to speak of their own action as struggle cannot but read as an awkward mistranslation, given all of this; an individual bird could not contextualize itself in the way referring to its action as struggle implies.

Translation is more overtly explored in *The Trespasser*, but there a marked contrast exists in its rendering. In that novel Siegmund is of the belief that Helena is 'incommunicable' and that she can't render herself into language' (T 143). However, Siegmund's vision of Helena's supposed uniqueness is troubled by the fact that it verges on being self-contradictory: Siegmund also holds the conviction that Helena 'has her own, private way of communing with things, and is friends with them' (T 143). Revealing herself need not, of course, be part of a communion, but any communion which encompasses friendship, by its nature, does appear to mandate making oneself known to the other parties. If she is friends with wider nature, as is suggested, Helena must to some extent be able to translate herself into a form understood by it, even if Siegmund is unable to recognize this.

In the essay 'Whistling of Birds', first published in the *Athenaeum* in 1919, Lawrence would later write at some length about his own ideas as to the origin and meaning of birds'

singing. Writing on the occasion of hearing the first birdsong of the spring, he suggests that the song is not generated through the volition of any given individual bird:

Where does it come from, the song? After so long a cruelty, how can they make it up so quickly? But it bubbles through them, they are like little well-heads, like fountain-heads whence the spring trickles and bubbles forth. It is not of their own doing. In their throats the new life distils itself into sound. It is the rising of the silvery sap of a new summer, gurgling itself forth.

The notion that a single life force exists across different beings, acting through them, an agent rather than an essence – is already detectable in *The White Peacock*. Some of the novel's most seductive passages are those extended rhapsodies in which Lawrence's voice appears to overcome Cyril's, and in those life is found at its most expansive. In lines such as 'it was a clear morning, as when the latent life of the world begins to vibrate afresh in the air' (*WP* 152), or 'he quivered with the wonderful beauty of life that was weaving him into the large magic of the years' (*WP* 239), the suggestion of a single life force is found in especially explicit form. The latter case especially is noteworthy, in that it is George who is identified as experiencing this phenomenon: it is beyond Cyril's individual reach to identify such a particular sensation in George from the outside. The rhetoric is anything other than nullifying or deadening – a more capable, more expressive voice temporarily takes over the narration; the greatness of interconnected nature reflected in this greater voice, possessed of wider knowledge, briefly channelling itself through Cyril.

The notion of the mystical as meaningfully representing a component in *The White Peacock* is seemingly disdained by Roger Ebbatson, who makes the simple claim that it 'is in essence a novel about evolution.' He accounts for the novel's moments of romantic wonder in nature as 'wish-fulfilment;' nature in *The White Peacock* is, for Ebbatson, 'amoral,' and its purpose he considers unidentifiable to the novel's characters. Jeff Wallace also appears to attach limited importance to the mystical aspects of the novel, asserting without the moderation of qualifiers or caveats, that 'it is by now securely established that *The White Peacock* is Lawrence's "red in tooth and claw" novel of Darwinian struggle for existence.' Though struggle between individuals is a

persistent feature of the novel, a full account of the nature of *The White Peacock* needs to account for the elements of mysticism and romance which the novel also incorporates. Despite the futility of individual struggle, there is the perception of a greatness to wider nature in *The White Peacock*. Individual beings, human and non-human alike, may seldom be able to see beyond their own struggles, but this does not mean they are to be taken as inevitably isolated; a spiritual interconnection between all aspects of wider nature is suggested, and this suggestion, it seems, is intended to be felt broadly legitimate.

In both *The Trespasser* and *Sons and Lovers* nature continues to vocalize itself. In *Sons and Lovers*, blackbirds 'shriek and scold' one another (SL 174), while peewits 'wheel and scream' (SL 153). In *The Trespasser*, meanwhile, Siegmund and his lover Helena walk through a fir copse 'listening to the birds like a family assembled and chattering at home in the evening' (T 86). Through doing so, they are moved to reproduce in their interaction with one another the interaction between a bird and its environment: Helena 'let Siegmund predominate; he set the swing of their motion; she rested on him like a bird on a swaying bough' (T 86). Again, then, because their action can be described in the same terminology as the action of other species, they superficially appear in accord with wider nature. The passage does not expand upon the meaning or result of reproducing the behaviour of a bird. Nonetheless, the moment hints at the fact, later made more explicit, that Siegmund is attracted to the idea of experiencing connection to nature, rather than to the connection in itself: such distorting translation of the action of another species cannot reasonably be taken to represent becoming closer to that species, or closer to understanding it.

That the struggle to survive vocalized in these works should indeed be seen as evolutionary, at least in part, is evidenced by Lawrence's familiarity with a number of major works of evolutionary biology. Jessie Chambers asserts that Lawrence had read some of Darwin's work by 1905, and it is also known that he took a copy of *The Origin of Species* (1859) to the Chambers' family home, Higgs Farm, in 1906. Then, from 1907, Lawrence's engagement with

evolutionary thought broadens. In that year he read *Man's Place in Nature* (1863) by T.H. Huxley, and Herbert Spencer's *First Principles of a Synthetic System of Philosophy* (1860), the latter of which proposes that evolution should be seen as a universal process, its action affecting all bodies, animate and inanimate, massive and microscopic. He also read Ernst Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe* (published in German in 1899, and in English in 1901) in 1908 – a massively successful work of biologically-inflected philosophy which tackles the question of the place for God in an evolutionary nature by suggesting the monist view that God can be found in the substance of all matter.

Broadly, it can be said that the tension between mystical and scientific understandings of nature dominates *The White Peacock* and *The Trespasser*, particularly manifest as a conflict between the means of interaction with the natural world which each appears to impel. Moreover, though the conflict between scientific and unscientific approaches to nature may appear less pronounced a concern in *Sons and Lovers*, the search for a means to integrate these modes of understanding nature is both present and important. Indeed, the question of how biological and spiritual means of approaching nature should balance or integrate with one another is present in the longer fiction Lawrence produced throughout his life. In different periods, different methods of resolving one to the other are apparent, while different notions of what constitutes the biological or spiritual human are also in evidence at different times. However, it is never the case that the scientific ever entirely eclipses the mystical, or the reverse.

To resolve science and religion is a concern of both Herbert Spencer and Ernst Haeckel. Each sees in the concept of evolution the founding principle of a comprehensive system which can both unite all knowledge and yet still accommodate the divine unknown. Though the evolutionary philosophy of Spencer is radically different from that of Haeckel, the two share similarly grand scope and ambition. While the former builds up from an interpretation of particle physics as evolutionary, whereas the latter is structured around an exploration of the possibility of establishing a biological foundation for the ethical and moral codes of society, each ultimately suggests both science and religion are legitimate areas of inquiry, and each to some degree is enlightening.

For Spencer the 'law of organic evolution is the law of all evolution,' and evolution, seen as being practically synonymous with progress in many contexts, is near-ubiquitous. His *First Principles of a Synthetic System of Philosophy* is divided into two sections, the former concerning the unknowable, the latter the knowable. The law of evolution visible in the known universe is identified by Spencer as a key to understanding what might constitute the unknown, in that extrapolating the law of evolution as far as possible should reveal the limits of possibility, and therefore can provide a degree of insight into the nature of any potential deity.

Haeckel, meanwhile, aimed to develop a similarly comprehensive 'System of Monistic Philosophy,' founding upon the principle of evolution an answer to the 'world-riddle' of the meaning of being, thereby uniting the fields of enquiry of 'the scientific observer and the speculative philosopher.' This sense that through a synthesis of ostensibly opposed sympathies a greater truth might be found – that bringing together the mystic and the scientist is not a worthless or destructive exercise – is one also present in Lawrence's early novels.

The possibility offered by active interaction with nature is contrasted with its reverent observation in the opening chapter of *The White Peacock*. Cyril's silent contemplation of the mill pond is interrupted by the unexpected appearance of the boisterous George Saxton. The question with which George initially disturbs Cyril – 'What is there to look at?' (*WP* 1) – does not receive a direct answer, but it is doubtful any could have satisfied the restless George. The question is the product of incomprehension; for him, nature's secrets do not lie exposed, but must be revealed. Thus, having declared the pond and its surroundings 'all right for a doss' (*WP* 1), he is soon driven to poke at the source of a buzzing sound, uncovering a bees' nest through doing so. Having revealed it, he continues to interfere with what he has uncovered:

"Come here – come here!" he said, imprisoning one poor little bee under a grass stalk, while with another stalk he loosened the folded blue wings.

"Don't tease the little beggar," I said.

"It doesn't hurt him – I wanted to see if it was because he couldn't spread his wings that he couldn't fly. There he goes – no, he doesn't. Let's try another."

"Leave them alone," said I. "Let them run in the sun. They're only just out of the shells. Don't torment them into flight."

He persisted, however, and broke the wing of the next.

"Oh, dear – pity!" said he, and he crushed the little thing between his fingers. Then he examined the eggs, and pulled out some silk from round the dead larva, and investigated it all in a desultory manner, asking of me all I knew about the insects. When he had finished he flung the clustered eggs into the water and rose, pulling out his watch from the depth of his breeches' pocket. (*WP* 2)

George, metaphorically and literally, is better able to grasp the particulars of his environment than Cyril. Though evidently at a cost to those bees with which he interferes, he finds answers to his questions – he learns that the bees cannot fly, while he also comes to know the nature of the silk-producing larva better than he would have from observing only its exterior. However, as the novel unfolds, it becomes clear that Cyril's reserved approach is also considered to yield understanding. While George finds knowledge of a few details, a few individual processes, he does not realize there is a need to establish a relationship between them for this knowledge to be beneficial – something Cyril discovers, to some degree, in listening to the voice of nature. Indeed, that George fails to place these discreet items into a wider system of knowledge is pivotal in his eventual decline; the concluding sentence of *The White Peacock* sees George understood as 'a condemned man' owing to the fact that he is 'alienated,' 'apart' and 'obscure' (*WP* 325).

In *Sons and Lovers*, Herbert Spencer is mentioned by name as exemplar of the kind of subject a high-minded discussion might centre upon. When Paul is talking to his mother, defending the time he spends with Miriam Leivers, he mentions 'painting,' 'books' and 'Herbert Spencer' as examples of things he can talk about with Miriam, but not with anyone else (*SL* 251). The note of youthful pomposity Paul demonstrates during this episode might make both he and the name he cites appear ridiculous, but the synthesized search for meaning is nevertheless valued in the novel. Though Paul leads a life governed by practical concerns to a much greater extent than both Cyril Beardsall and Siegmund McNair, in that the need to work and earn money is seen to be a pressing concern for he and his family, in *Sons and Lovers* it is explored how he might resolve his material needs with an emotional fulfilment drawing on both practical knowledge and spiritual sensation.

Miriam Leivers constitutes an example of this mode of being to a certain extent, but a

more rounded integration of the biologist and the mystic is seen in her mother. Indeed, among the Leivers family, it is Mrs. Leivers to whom Paul is first drawn: he is attracted to the fact that she has instilled in her family a 'yearning for soul intimacy' and 'close connexion' with other people (SL 178). It is his interest in Mrs. Leivers which first drives Paul into repeated visits to the Leivers' home, and thus allows his acquaintance with Miriam to deepen into a relationship.

The capacity for deep interaction with others shown by Mrs. Leivers, it can be understood, has been developed in large part through a profound interest in wider nature identified as 'religious' (SL 178). The interaction with nature which arises from it, however, is neither as passive as that of Cyril Beardsall, nor as intrusive as that of George Saxton. On a number of occasions, Mrs. Leivers takes Paul and Miriam to see the nest of a jenny wren, explaining that by feeling the nest 'it's almost as if you were feeling inside the live body of the bird' (SL 179). Through this, Mrs. Leivers illustrates to Paul and her daughter a point at which knowledge and sensation coincide – the discovery of the residual warmth left by the absent wren is a fact both the mystic and the biologist can be imagined to value. Moreover, the indirect transmission of heat from one creature to another represents a meaningful interaction between species which does not necessitate cruel interference. A human being can, it is shown, interact with wider nature without destroying it. There is romance to this incident, but it is not the product of delusion.

The significance of biological theory to the young Lawrence is further exemplified by his part in a written correspondence from the later part of 1907, conducted with Reverend Robert Reid, the minister of Eastwood chapel – the place of worship attended by Lawrence and his family. In a letter dated 15 October 1907, Lawrence explains that 'the reading of Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Renan, Blatchford and Vivian in his *Churches and Modern Thought* has seriously modified my religious beliefs.' Lawrence does not explicitly state what changes have taken place in his attitudes. However, his questions betray the direction of his thoughts:

I would like to know, because I am absolutely in ignorance, what is precisely the orthodox attitude – or say the attitude of the nonconformist Churches to such questions as Evolution, with that the Origin of Sin, and as Heaven and Hell [sic].

I know these are tremendous issues, and somehow we hear of them almost exclusively from writers against Christianity [...] It seems remarkable too, that change has always originated in a people antagonistic to the Church. It is essential that we should understand the precise position of the Church today.

Lawrence's reading has evidently shaken his Christian faith. Nonetheless, evolution is still referred to as a question – one to which religion may provide an answer. However, a further letter to Reid, from December 1907, communicates greater doubt on Lawrence's part. In it, he explains that he is still keen to retain a religious faith, albeit he is unsure of the form it must take for him. Lawrence describes himself as 'emotional, perhaps mystical,' and tells Reid that he believes in a 'cosmic harmony.'

In this letter it is shown that Lawrence is now ready to entertain paths to the resolution of the mysteries of life which do not cohere with established Christian teaching. He writes that he 'cannot believe in the divinity of Jesus,' though 'a Cosmic God I can [...] believe in.' Indeed, the letter as a whole can be seen as that of a writer labouring to understand his own views. For instance, for Lawrence to say that he 'cannot be a materialist,' as he does, implies that he experiences a compulsion, on some level to be one; the biological theory he has been reading, it can be supposed, has left Lawrence struggling to resolve his mystical, emotional nature to the logic of a scientific conception of truth which takes observability and measurability as its touchstones. Additionally, in this instructive letter, Lawrence links the act of listening to external voices to the beginning of revelation, in a way which would later be reflected in his work. He argues for the belief 'that a man is converted when first he hears the low, vast murmur of life, of human life, troubling his hitherto unconscious self.' The murmuring of life, albeit here human life, certainly prefigures in some respect the kind of murmur which Cyril hears in *The White Peacock*.

Indeed, it may be said that between the hypothetical biologist and the mystic there is a significant point of agreement: that the natural world is the source of ultimate truth, albeit from the respective perspectives of each, truth and justified belief are seen very differently. There is, it

may be said, agreement that, in one sense or another, it is important to listen to nature. The mystic may, typically, be characterized as seeking a pure, unmasterable nature – insomuch as, untainted, it may be hoped that the natural world might provide an echo, or a recapitulation of divine intent. Effectively, it might be said, the mystical interaction with nature shares much with that of the Romantic, in the sense of seeking a nature able to recollect and recount its past – in this case, the time of the Creation and its interaction with the Creator. On the other hand, the biologist, at least in certain circumstances, approaches nature actively rather than passively. Through experimentation or field work, the biologist can be seen to be coaxing nature to speak, rather than waiting for it to communicate itself organically. Lawrence's December 1907 letter to Reid suggests that he has tired of waiting for natural revelation – he has, he explains, 'watched for the coming of something from without;- it has never come.' Therefore, tired of waiting for nature's truth to proclaim itself, it is understandable that biology's many discoveries can have been seductive.

III

As well as a contrast between active intervention and passive observation, there is also a distinction to be made between Cyril's analytical book-oriented approach to learning and George's folksy, unanalytical interpolation of received wisdom. For Cyril, educating George consists of giving him 'the gist of what I knew of chemistry, and botany and psychology' (*WP* 59) and passing on 'what the professors had told me; of life, of sex and its origins; of Schopenhauer and William James' (*WP* 59). Cyril's is thus a learning of great thinkers and grand ideas; a learning which means listening to the knowledge of others. By contrast, George has 'hardly a single dogma, save that of pleasing himself' (*WP* 59), while, more significantly, it is said that he 'understood the drift of things very rapidly, and quickly made these ideas part of himself' (*WP* 59). By not distancing received knowledge from his conception of himself, George stands as a composite, built from pieces drawn from a wide range of sources, unmodified and therefore little

able to fit together without gaps remaining.

In the same chapter, 'The Education of George,' the fragmentary quality of George's corpus of barely-processed knowledge is demonstrated further. Talking to Cyril, George explains that Cyril's sister, Lettie (who is often given the most astute insights in *The White Peacock*), has described him as similar to 'one of those coloured marble mosaics in the hall' (*WP* 65). The explanation, as provided filtered through George, is hard to follow; he reports that the perceived similarity is in the fact that he has to 'fit into [his] own pattern, because [he is] there from the first' (*WP* 65). Nevertheless, the quality of being a composite is one of the strongest connotations of the mosaic as an idea, and this connotation may be assumed to be at work in likening George to a mosaic, albeit this fact is not expressed directly.

However, George also reports that Lettie sees him as uncomfortable with respect to this quality in himself. She argues, it is reported, that George '[does not] want to be like a fixed bit of a mosaic' (*WP* 65) and instead wants 'to fuse into life, and melt and mix with the rest of the folk' (*WP* 65). Composed of unintegrated practical learning, George embodies what Spencer or Haeckel might see as the consequence of the fragmentation of fields of inquiry – the various aspects of him do not know how to connect to one another.

In contradistinction, Cyril's readiness to listen to nature renders him able to see evidence of a larger pattern and a rhythm to the environment as a whole. Through his contemplation he is accurate in sensing a fundamental weariness to the land he inhabits. He understands that not only is Nethermere old, it is significant that it is so. Its agedness is not understood as a neutral geological fact, but is instead seen as a bodily fatigue in the fabric of the earth: it is perceived as a physical, discernible exhaustion which impacts upon the human and non-human action played out within its confines.

The oldness of Nethermere is particularly evident in the chapter 'The Education of George.' There, the hillside is twice described as 'dishevelled' (*WP* 58 and 70), and is 'ruinous with the gaunt, ragged bones of old hedge-rows' (*WP* 57). More widely, the earth is said to be 'like a woman married and fading' who 'does not leap up with a laugh for the first fresh kiss of dawn' (*WP* 58). Continuing in a similar vein, Cyril then likens the mist over the valley to

'memory in the eyes of a neglected wife' (*WP* 58).

It is important, in terms of reinforcement for these ideas, that both Lettie and the maid Marie voice similar sentiments. Lettie speaks of Woodside, at the centre of the valley, as 'so old, so sweet and serene' (*TWP* 108), while Marie sees it as part of a world that is 'old and good' (*WP* 108). Furthermore, Lettie perceives in the old earth hints of a former knowledge:

'Look at all the snowdrops' – they hung in dim, strange flecks among the dusky leaves – 'look at them – closed up, retreating, powerless. They belong to some knowledge we have lost, that I have lost and that I need. I feel afraid. (*WP* 129)

While Cyril may see the aged quality of the valley clearly, he is also unseeing in a certain respect, in that he displays no capacity to connect the systems and patterns of wider nature to himself – being unlike George in this, who takes items from the world into himself, but cannot connect them to one another once he has done so. While, for Lawrence, the processes of wider nature must encompass human beings, inasmuch as the human and human consciousness only exist 'within the vast, uncomprehended and incomprehensible morality of nature and life itself,' Cyril proves unaware of the fact that the natural order he detects is also determinate of his potential for deeper well-being: his Romantic understanding of Nethermere makes of it a 'landscape' (*WP* 80) to be observed and not a system in which he must participate.

As a consequence, Cyril's partial knowledge is often detrimental in many respects. Though capable of moments of insight, when Cyril detects weariness in the natural world around him, he is implicitly included in this, but fails to recognize this fact. The result is that he, and the novel's other central characters, tend to blindly reproduce Nethermere's fatigue in their own apathetic behaviour. Cyril and his friends are shown in most instances to be guided in selecting actions by immediate triggers alone. Although the awkward advances in time during the novel's final third contribute, presumably not by design, to a sense of purposelessness, in general what should constitute the most significant decisions in the lives of the characters are ostensibly made for scant reasons, if motivations of any kind at all are discernible in a given case. When, for instance, Cyril moves to London towards the end of the novel there had been no prior suggestion

of an intention to leave Nethermere.

The futility which the peewits and lapwings apparently intuit is therefore reflected in the human action of *The White Peacock*. Likewise, when Leslie joins the local Conservative Association, and subsequently runs for parliament, successfully, it is despite having shown no political concern at all at any prior point in the novel. Even the eventual decision that Lettie should honour her engagement to Leslie – rather than to favour the advances of George – is eventually made for her. Although her oscillation between the two represents one of the lengthiest sustained plot strands in the novel, her dilemma is only finally resolved by 'An Arrow from the Impatient God' in the chapter of that name; from the moment Leslie suffers relatively minor injuries after crashing his car, Lettie's fate is determined for her. In short, then, Nethermere is a world in which the plans of the human inhabitants are rarely the product of design rather than accident, betraying in them an apathy attributable to the unacknowledged effect of their comparably weary environment.

While apathy prevails in *The White Peacock*, in *The Trespasser* humankind's impotence next to wider nature inspires dramatic action. Unlike Cyril Beardsall, Siegmund McNair does appear to exhibit consciousness of a supposed involvement in wider nature, but decides based upon this that as an individual he is essentially without value. As he reasons, shortly before his suicide, 'if one bee dies in a swarm' it is nothing, 'so long as the hive is alright' (*T* 163). 'The humming of life' (*T* 163) – the song of the nature which transcends individual species – continues in spite of the periodic loss of individual voices.

That Siegmund should react to understanding himself a part of wider nature by ending his life might appear troubling, insomuch as human smallness within nature is celebrated in other works by Lawrence, such as 'Whistling of Birds.' That Siegmund should draw despair rather than joy from his experience of connection with outside nature might suggest that *The Trespasser* represents an idiosyncratic outlier within Lawrence's work, reacting against the nature tradition *The White Peacock* can be seen to develop. Siegmund ostensibly succeeds in the Romantic quest to find the meaning of nature's voice but ultimately finds the opposite of elation through doing so.

However, Siegmund's sense of worthlessness can be seen as a matter of false

consciousness. His conceptualization of the interconnection of living beings, human and not, matches that of a Romantic tradition in the rhetoric deployed and the system built from it, and therefore faithfully mimics the kind of revelation born of genuinely experiencing a direct connection with nature. However, in Siegmund's case the supposed revelation has emerged from a false experience of contact with wider nature: on the Isle of Wight he places his lover, Helena, between himself and outside nature, thereby preventing him from establishing meaningful connection with nature in itself. Though Siegmund credits Helena with bringing him into connection with nature (*T* 98-99), and though Helena accepts the praise without protest, this experience of interface with nature is bogus. Helena cannot possibly be 'the motive in everything' (*T* 99) as Siegmund asserts. Helena consistently obfuscates nature, for Siegmund: lying on the beach he only sees the stars through the veil of her hair (*T* 99), and even states to Helena that while away from her, he had found 'a little white bay, just like you' (*T* 90). In short, connection with nature does not fail to benefit Siegmund; instead, he fails to connect with it in any meaningful respect.

In *Sons and Lovers*, what is potentially the novel's most celebrated passage lauds what appears to constitute truer integration between humankind and the environment. The episode in which Mrs. Morel, pregnant with the as yet unborn Paul, walks in the moonlight and feels the hills, the lilies, the houses, her unborn son and herself 'all swum together in a kind of swoon' (*SL* 34) is exemplary of this. Though Mrs. Morel feels an element of fear and sickness during the experience, she is nevertheless apparently enriched by this; certainly, her lasting closeness to her son can be traced to this episode.

Mysticism largely fails, in *The White Peacock*, to give purpose to life for Cyril, but his passive approach does not harm the natural world in the way scientific and, by extension, technological human intervention may. A significant proportion of the exhaustion of Nethermere may be related to the coal mines which, literally, undermine the valley. Though the effect upon humanity of mining and heavy industry is a greater presence in other, later works by Lawrence,

in particular in *Women in Love* (1920) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), a sense of industry's mechanical erosion of the landscape is communicated in *The White Peacock* through its occasional comment on the mines. The novel's final chapter, 'A Prospect Among the Marshes of Lethe,' juxtaposes a distant, but ever-audible mining industry and an environmental decay close-at-hand:

I passed silently through the lanes [...] I heard the far-off hooting of the 'loose-all' at the pits, telling me it was half-past eleven, that the men and boys would be sitting in the narrow darkness of the mines eating their 'snap', while shadowy mice darted for the crumbs, and the boys laughed with red mouths rimmed with grime, as the bold little creatures peeped at them in the dim light of the lamps [...] I rode slowly on, the plants dying around me, the berries leaning their heavy ruddy mouths, and languishing for the birds, the men imprisoned underground below me, the brown birds dashing in haste along the hedges. (*WP* 318)

In the whole of *The White Peacock*, the association between industry and environmental degradation remains largely dim and unprocessed, as in this example. However, this loosely experienced connection may be said to reproduce a dim sense of fractional complicity in the ills of human industrial exploitation of the earth, as might be experienced by an individual not directly involved in industry.

For Lawrence, it is the ugliness of industry which represents the primary respect in which it provokes ill effects; prolonged or repeated exposure to the ugly is asserted to be disheartening and degrading in itself. In one of his last essays, 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside,' Lawrence reflects upon his own early life in the mining village of Eastwood. There he writes that 'the country is so lovely; the man-made England is so vile' and that 'it was ugliness which really betrayed the spirit of man.' In Lawrence's view, 'the human soul needs actual beauty even more than bread.' Though Cyril and his friends are not directly connected to the mines, their slow decline can be traced to them, in that it is the mines which are seen to be the root cause of the decline of the valley as a whole; the mines bring the sensation of ugliness to the valley.

In *The White Peacock*, harm to the environment from the mines is shown to the reader in only fleeting, partial glimpses, but given the continuous 'rhythmic hum' (*WP* 51) the mines are

said to emit, they can be assumed to be substantial, if seldom consciously acknowledged, components in the sense of place of the inhabitants of Nethermere. Through the wearing, wearying effect the mines have on the environment of Nethermere, they may be seen as a chief root cause of the apathy which characterizes the human drama of *The White Peacock*. This understanding is not entirely shared by Roger Ebbatson, however. While he feels that 'Cyril's journey through the autumnal lanes [...] movingly encapsulates the heuristic movement of the novel away from a vivifying Nature towards an imprisoning industrialism,' it does not seem to be the case that Ebbatson identifies a direct causal relationship between the action of industry and the decline in the primary human actors in *The White Peacock*. Instead, he contends that the 'slow decline' experienced by the primary figures in the novel may be characterized as 'the inability of the human to find a purpose in Nature or society leading the characters into mental dissolution.' In effect, this vision, which also characterizes *The White Peacock* as 'pulsating with a sense of universal life,' sees Nethermere as remaining vital in spite of the action of the mines beneath it. Thus, a connection between the disheartening mines and the disheartened characters is not traced.

Jeff Wallace's consideration of *The White Peacock* can help in understanding how this connection might operate. Though he does not address the impact of the mining industry upon Nethermere, he nevertheless sees the interface between humankind and wider nature as bearing a structure resembling a form of social intercourse. In *D.H. Lawrence, Science and the Posthuman*, Wallace suggests that 'human and non-human are locked into systems of [...] necessary engagement and relationship' in *The White Peacock*: the need to earn a living from the land enforces particular interactions between humans and their surroundings – relations of a kind which makes comprehensible how the abstract ugliness of the mines might be transmissible through nature. Working the land is a form of interaction which requires the environment to be used, rather than merely viewed decoratively. This means, as Wallace explains, that 'nature in *The White Peacock* is [...] an always-already 'managed' condition, informed by human interests and priorities.' He highlights as an example the fact that 'the Saxtons lay their rabbit traps for reasons of economy, not blood-lust.' There thus exists a mutual dependency, one apt to be destabilized by an unbidden force acting upon either side – and the mines represent just such a

force, changing the composition of the environment. This mutual dependency can be felt to be the basis for the respective parties to shape one another's development – the most meaningful form of communication with respect to guiding evolution.

IV

The Trespasser, in that it is set partly in London, partly on the Isle of Wight, is distant in its focus from the part of England marked by the mining industry. However, while each location is substantially different from Nethermere, there are considerable similarities in the way in which these environments impact upon the human action played out within them; in both *The White Peacock* and *The Trespasser* meaningful effects pass from both the wider environment to humankind, and the reverse.

The Trespasser opens in the confines of a 'sitting room of a mean house standing in line with hundreds of others of the same kind, along a wide road in South London' (T 41). Even in this urbanized environment, it is still through sound that the surroundings most potently communicate their nature, albeit in this case the noise of people and of machines which informs the character of the place; 'now and again the trams hummed by,' it is explained, while 'the sound of the London traffic' is also mentioned (T 41). Although Lawrence's suggestion that the 'room was foreign' (T 41) to this noise makes the role sound plays in contributing to the sense of place problematic to usefully define, the fact that these external noises are mentioned makes it plain that the flat, though ostensibly closed to the city, is not impervious to it.

London, for all the respects in which it is unlike Nethermere, shares the fact that it is wearying and abrasive to inhabit; it is defined as 'very tiring' (T 67) and, more idiosyncratically, as 'warm and exhausted' (T 168). Moreover, the rhythm of life it induces is mechanical. Early in the novel, Siegmund boards a train home 'mechanically,' (T 49) and eats in precisely the same manner once at home (T 51). This mechanization appears to be a large part of what Siegmund hopes to escape from in undertaking his trip to the Isle of Wight with Helena. To be away from

the city, it is possible to assume, is expected to mean escape from the mechanical.

Nature, Siegmund hopes, can provide answers to the problems he perceives in himself, though this does not succeed. During his troubled train journey back to London from the Isle of Wight, Siegmund looks 'through the country and the sky, asking of everything, "Am I right? Am I right?"' (*T* 165). However, instead of seeking a reconnection with a lost past, Siegmund's apparent desire is liberation from a past which he feels residual within his present self:

Slowly the body of his past, the womb which had nourished him in one fashion for so many years, was casting him forth. He was trembling in all his being, though he knew not with what. All he could do now was to watch the lights go by, and to let the translation of himself continue. (*T* 49)

Siegmund's experience of time is markedly possessive: it is *his* past he experiences the effects of, and also *his* future with which he concerns himself. Through his passionate tryst with Helena, Siegmund wishes 'to blaze up all his past and future in a passion worth years of living' (*T* 59). Time is implicitly part of the mechanicality which Siegmund perceives as an inorganic presence in himself, and therefore wishes to expunge by leaving London for the Isle of Wight.

To a certain extent, the Isle of Wight, as represented in *The Trespasser*, does stand beyond regular time. The island is a hazy, dream-like presence in *The Trespasser*: on it, both Siegmund and Helena act by dreaming, or attempt to do so. It is said that Helena's 'dream of Siegmund was more to her than Siegmund himself' (*T* 64), and on the island Helena opts to dream of Siegmund rather than know him (*T* 64). Soon she feels she has created Siegmund anew through dreaming of him (*T* 70). Siegmund, however, only achieves the state of a 'half-dream' (*T* 79); perhaps through both dreaming, and being dreamed of, Siegmund does not master the process of dream-creation in the way he perceives Helena to, and which she believes herself to have done. Nonetheless, in this condition, resisting time and truth, Siegmund does consider himself to have found 'a new magic, [and] a wonderful, stately beauty' (*T* 105) in the island. For Roger Ebbatson this means that 'the deepest relationship into which Siegmund is initiated is not with Helena but with the effulgent natural world of the island, the earth seemingly replacing woman as the love-object.' However, beyond Helena in Siegmund's vision lies what may be felt

an artificial nature, just as much a distortion as those which Cyril Beardsall and Jude Fawley respectively generate:

"You have torn the labels off things, and they all are so different. This morning! It does seem absurd to talk about this morning. Why should I be parcelled up into mornings and evenings and nights? *I* am not made up of sections of time. Now, nights and days go racing over us like cloud-shadows and sunshine over the sea, and all the time we take no notice."
[...]

"You know," he said, repeating himself, "it is true. You seem to have knit all things in a piece for me. Things are not separate: they are all in a symphony. They go moving on and on. You are the motive, in everything."
(*T* 98-99, italicization Lawrence's)

The notion of the motive in everything perhaps, in part, recalls Haeckelian monism, but the change rendered here interfaces rather more with Henri Bergson's creative evolution than with biological struggle. The resistance to a sectioning of time associated with the mechanized world is also present in Bergson's work, wherein time is indivisible to the extent that the past is meaningfully carried into the present. As Bergson writes, 'evolution implies a real persistence of the past in the present, a duration which is as it were, a hyphen, a connecting link.'

It cannot be definitively concluded that Lawrence had read any given work by Henri Bergson, though it is possible to state that he was broadly familiar with Bergson's ideas. A letter to his former colleague from the Davidson Road School, Arthur McLeod, dated 23 April 1913 provides the foundation for the assertion. In it, Lawrence thanks McLeod for a selection of books he has sent. Among them was one by or about Bergson, though it is not possible to deduce which; Lawrence, in stating 'that the Bergson book was very dull,' employs an unfortunately ambiguous turn of phrase from the perspective of an outside reader.

The footnotes to the Cambridge collection of Lawrence's letters contend that 'if McLeod had sent an English translation of a work by Henri Bergson, two were currently available to him: *Laughter* (1911) and *The Philosophy of Change* (1912).' The footnote, though, is not accurate in two respects; *The Philosophy of Change* was not written by Bergson himself, while all of Bergson's major works were available in English translations by this time.

Written by Herbert Wildon Carr, whom Peter J. Bowler identifies as having been 'Bergson's leading defender in Britain,' *Henri Bergson: The Philosophy of Change* is a short introduction to Bergson's major ideas. It outlines Bergson's philosophical perspective, summarizing that 'one of its most important conclusions is that the universe is not a completed system of reality,' but is instead in the continuous process of 'becoming.' *The Philosophy of Change* further asserts that it is not 'sufficient to break up and dissociate into simpler elements the world that [has] been evolved in order to show its evolution.' It is plausible, given all of this, that as an accessible summary of Bergson's ideas, *The Philosophy of Change* was the book which McLeod had elected to send to Lawrence.

English translations of Bergson's major works had been available from major British publishers for two or three years prior to the time of Lawrence's letter to McLeod. An edition of *Time and Free Will* translated by F.L. Pogson had been published in London by Swan Sonnenschein in 1910; *Matter and Memory*, translated by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer was published in London by Sonnenschein in 1911; while *Creative Evolution*, translated by Arthur Mitchell, was also published in London in 1911, by Macmillan. This is in addition to the correctly recorded 1911 publication of *Laughter*, and a 1912 English translation of *The Introduction to a New Philosophy* published in the United States. Though the potential route by which the American edition of *The Introduction to a New Philosophy* might have come into Lawrence's possession – through McLeod or otherwise – is, almost inevitably, more difficult to reconstruct than that of a version published in the United Kingdom, it is not so unlikely as to be effectively impossible. Thus, it may have been any of Bergson's major works that McLeod sent to Lawrence – presuming he did indeed send a translated edition; the relatively minor *Laughter* is not the only possibility.

Perhaps more importantly, however, a detail in the letter from Lawrence to McLeod implies an existing familiarity with Henri Bergson and his ideas: Lawrence uses the present tense when describing his attitude to Bergson. Though, as mentioned, he states this particular book 'was very dull,' as one might when commenting on a single encounter with a single work, Lawrence then adds that 'Bergson bores me' and that 'he feels a bit thin' – generalized assertions

expressed in a form which suggests previous contact with Bergson's theories.

This tone of familiarity may, of course, incorporate an element of pretension on Lawrence's part. Certainly, his habit for quickly absorbing, internalising and responding to new ideas could see Lawrence writing with the rhetoric of an expert on material which was, essentially, new to him. Certainly across the many letters to McLeod in which Lawrence talks about his reading, it is a similar voice of definitive judgement which tends to be used in commenting upon what he has read. In October 1912, for instance, Lawrence asks McLeod if he has read August Strindberg, before stating – 'he's rotten – Garnett sent the [sic] *Miss Julia* and *There are Crimes and Crimes*. I hate them.' Similarly, in response to a copy of Thomas William H. Crossland's *Sonnets* (1912) which he has been sent, Lawrence writes that they 'are objectionable – he is a nasty person.' In the same letter, Hilaire Belloc is pronounced to be 'conceited, full of that French showing-off which goes down so well in England.'

Nevertheless, it may be summarized that Lawrence definitely read at least one work by or about Bergson – and though his language implies he had previously read more, the implication is not strong enough to stand by itself, in light of Lawrence's proclivity to obfuscate gaps in his knowledge. However, combined with the Bergsonian aspects of *The Trespasser*, there is enough to argue convincingly – albeit perhaps not conclusively – that Lawrence knew Bergson well from early in his career.

That Lawrence disclaims Bergson as 'boring' and even 'thin,' does not, of course, preclude him finding value in at least some of Bergson's ideas and utilizing them in his fiction. While fate would have it that Lawrence's only surviving comment on Bergson is negative, the absence of known praise for Bergson's theories is not sufficient to say they were not interpolated, consciously or otherwise, by Lawrence in the construction of his fiction.

Moreover, for all that the body of correspondence Lawrence left behind gives the impression of a voracious reader for whom discussion was a key part of processing a new work, it is worth being cautious in supposing that all concepts of interest to him were explored through

such dialogue. P.T. Whelan warns that Lawrence 'was by no means invariably open about what he read.' By way of example, Whelan states that Lawrence 'apparently never mentioned Edward Carpenter to anyone, yet, though some scholars disagree, [Émile] Delavenay's work seems to indicate that Lawrence read most of Carpenter's books and was profoundly influenced by them.' Though greater reason existed to be cautious in commenting on Carpenter's work, Lawrence's limited recorded discussion does not have to imply his response to Henri Bergson's work was a shallow one.

In the dreamy rendering of the Isle of Wight in *The Trespasser*, and in the failure of Siegmund's trip to the island to bring lasting happiness and stability to him, Siegmund's use of Bergsonian rhetoric can be seen to be part of a means of self-delusion; to sustain a partly Romantic distortion of nature generated without actual connection to nature. Helena, in actuality, is not as purely organic a being as Siegmund appears to suppose. There are four occasions in *The Trespasser* on which Helena is said to act mechanically (*T* 42, 132, 185, 215), three after she leaves the Isle of Wight. Though Helena, unlike Siegmund, is able to continue living after returning to London, it is only with the persistence of bodily mechanization that Siegmund had previously experienced and sought to quell.

That Siegmund exhibits belief in the reality of the transcendent experiences he has on the Isle of Wight, despite a weight of evidence to show his delusional state, can strongly suggest those ideas of his resembling Bergson's are to be taken as naïve fantasies. This could stand in support of seeing the criticism of Bergson in Lawrence's letter to McLeod as sincere: that the confused, misguided Siegmund employs rhetoric resembling that of Bergson might be felt to do much to imply that Bergson's ideas are in themselves to be found confused and fantastical.

Certainly, the fact that Bergsonian ideas may be part of a Romantic fantasy for Siegmund coincides with contemporary criticism of Bergson along similar lines. In two lectures given before the Philosophical Union of the University of California in September 1913 (a year after the publication of *The Trespasser*) philosopher and historian Arthur O. Lovejoy argues that

Bergson's ideas recapitulate certain elements of Romanticism, stating that 'the essential principle of creative evolutionism is abundantly emphasized and reiterated by nearly all the representative Romantic writers.' Lovejoy explicitly identifies German Romanticism as that in which Bergson's ideas are pre-empted, particularly suggesting roots in the *Naturphilosophie* of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling. In the emphasis on intuition in Bergson's philosophy, Lovejoy sees 'Romantic anti-intellectualism.' For Lovejoy, 'Bergson's chief significance [is that...] he has revived this hypothesis of Romantic, activistic, or radical evolutionism, as a serious philosophical doctrine' and that 'he has once more insisted that the notions of evolution and of mechanism are not natural allies.'

However, for Bergson himself, it is Spencer's evolutionary thought which is illusionary. He writes that 'the Spencerian method consists in reconstructing evolution with fragments of the evolved,' this felt to constitute an 'illusion' insomuch as:

He [Spencer] takes reality in its present form; he breaks it to pieces, he scatters it in fragments which he throws to the winds; then he "integrates" these fragments and "dissipates their movement." Having imitated the Whole by a work of mosaic, he imagines he has retraced the design of it, and made the genesis.

In *The Trespasser* it is fragmentation which is seen as a natural condition, and one particularly associated with humankind; fusion is here the illusion. Spencer's evolution as a motion of fragments is implicitly endorsed. Moreover, *The Trespasser* suggests that the clockwork operation of parts is something valuable for a human being in certain respects, insomuch as Siegmund plays his violin well when playing it with the precision of a timepiece.

In *Sons and Lovers*, mechanical action is again a concern, but its rendition in this novel is particular in the fact that it can have content. Paul Morel speaks mechanically (SL 257) in anger with Miriam, doing so without a composed script. There is creativity in his mechanism. Similarly, Paul is described in another passage as painting 'feverishly and mechanically' (SL 337). The adverbs selected are strange companions, unless it is again understood that there must be an element of creativity in this version of mechanical production.

While the mechanical and the organic are typically seen as antitheses, and would have been at the time *Sons and Lovers* was written, this opposition has not always existed. Raymond Williams explains that the Ancient Greek equivalent of the word organic, ὄργανον, 'first meant "tool" or "instrument" and ὄργανικός was equivalent to our "mechanical."' Tracing the progression of the words, he further explains that in sixteenth century English, 'mechanical' and 'organical' were still synonymous. Only in the eighteenth century, suggests Williams, did 'organical' develop a closer connection with the biological and 'mechanical' with the physical, while by the nineteenth century he finds that mechanical has consolidated 'association with [...] a sense of routine, unthinking activity – thus action without consciousness.'

In Thomas Carlyle's *Sign of the Times* – which Lawrence was familiar with by this point in his life – the problem of the mechanical is that it has come to preside over the organic self – 'not the external and physical alone is now managed by machinery, but the internal and the spiritual also.' The unthinking machine, for Carlyle, leads the natural being, without the capacity to reason over its direction. Lawrence's work can be seen as recognizing the complication in the ostensible opposition between the mechanical and the organic, particularly so in *Sons and Lovers*. Paul's mechanization is rendered as a quality of his own body, rather than as an external agent acting upon it. In *The Trespasser*, Siegmund's wish to purge the clockwork, the mechanical from himself is that which provokes his ill-fated trip, and the inevitable failure of the trip to remove the mechanical aspect from his being lies behind his suicidal despair.

With respect to placing these novels into a nature tradition, the engagement with the mechanical and the industrial complicates the picture of transcendence through interface with nature, but does not diminish its significance. In that the mechanical cannot be identified, in these novels, as existing in pure opposition to the organic, restorative interface with nature need not, and indeed cannot, be expected to quell the mechanical aspect of an individual. Just as Lawrence's early novels suggest an individual must engage with nature in a way informed by mystical and the scientific thought, he or she should accept in himself and in nature both the organic and the mechanical. In that human and non-human bodies possess a mechanical aspect, a reconnection with nature which does not recognize this must always be fallacious. Wish for an

existence of pure, creative organic succession, of a kind which might be associated with Henri Bergson is seen as naïve: rhythmic, structured repetition of a broadly Spencerian kind is a necessity. The human, with a beating heart, with the need to repeat basic processes, must, as Paul Morel learns, incorporate the mechanical as an aspect in his or her creative processes. Thus, beneficial interaction with a wider environment must admit the mechanical aspects both of the non-human world and of human beings themselves, and can see in this a means to connect. Just as the organic cannot be estranged from the mechanical, the mystical mode of interaction with nature cannot be entirely estranged from the scientific.

Creation and Destruction in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*

I

Midway through *The Rainbow* (1915), D.H. Lawrence's fourth novel, Will Brangwen takes up wood-carving, a pursuit at which he works 'swiftly and mechanically,' and through which it is said that 'he produced some beautiful things.' The first item that he makes is a butter-stamper bearing the image of a most non-evolutionary creature, a phoenix (*R* 108). The bird, described as 'strange' and 'uncouth' (*R* 109), is carved in an 'electric state of passion' (*R* 108). The act of carving is thus seen to constitute an unreasoned and automatic compulsion: Will's soul and life are 'intensively active' as he works, but his mind is 'obscured' by a 'tense, electric darkness' and it therefore provides neither 'aid' nor 'attention' to the creative process (*R* 108). As such, the phoenix cannot be suggested to represent consciously selected subject matter: the image, it may be argued, comes through Will, but does not come from him. In other words, Will may be the maker of this phoenix, but he is not its designer.

In that Will does not generate the phoenix in his own mind, his carving might be felt to constitute a new instantiation of a timeless archetype: the concept of the phoenix can be seen as an idea with inevitable existence, which does not need to be thought in order to exist. Certainly, the fact that Will is able to create the phoenix without individual volition implies that the image has no need to enter conscious thought in order to come into being; it exists, unthought, beyond Will's consciousness, and, by extension, beyond that of any other human individual.

However, the phoenix is also very much Lawrence's personal symbol – one which he identified as emblematic of an aspect of himself. Thus, through the ostensibly undefinable, unquantifiable domain of abstract thought Will can be said to channel Lawrence: through the means of the phoenix butter-stamper, an impression that is identifiably Lawrence's is made. The additional implication of this is that, in *The Rainbow*, the supposedly indefinite might be felt to be definite: at least something in the great unknown is potentially knowable.

The precise significance of the phoenix to Lawrence is, however, challenging to trace. Though Lawrence's own drawing of a phoenix has become a symbol of his work – it is stamped, for instance, on the cover of the self-published first edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) – Lawrence's writing contains little that addresses the phoenix explicitly. His later essays are perhaps most helpful. Though he does not mention the bird by name, in a fragment excised from the final version of *Apocalypse* (written 1929-1930, first published 1931), Lawrence's last major essay, phoenix-like rebirth is celebrated. In it Lawrence argues that a myth 'in which a man experienced death, and went through the dark horror of Hades, to rise again in a new body' developed approximately two and a half thousand years ago in all known countries. Lawrence contends that this 'death wish' is the result of a 'wish for pure knowledge;' death constitutes the ultimate experience, and it is in experience that Lawrence believes knowledge to be found.

By extension from this, in the same fragment a 'nostalgic wish for the death of the body' and for 'the complete passing away of the old self into a final state of complete being' are each hailed as elements of potential enlightenment achievable without complete death, whereby instead the mind achieves a state of higher consciousness by transcending the limitations of the body. Importantly, transcendence of this form, for Lawrence, is open to both the scientist and to the devout adherent of religion. He writes that 'the modern physicist is on the brink of the culminating ecstasy, when his search for *knowledge* will consummate itself in the final and inexplicable *experience*' and that 'what men are at last achieving by science' is what 'men achieved in the fifth century B.C., by ritual.' Both religion and science can be felt equivalent as routes to transcendence, for Lawrence, inasmuch as transcendence does not lie in the discovery of a particular, correct body of knowledge. Instead, the process of searching for knowledge, whether through religion or science, '*whatever the knowledge*' can lead to ecstatic, transcendent experience – what Lawrence calls 'the mystic experience of ecstasy in re-birth.'

Although it was written fifteen years earlier than *Apocalypse* and the related fragment, *The Rainbow* demonstrates a comparable degree of confidence, though perhaps not yet an absolute conviction, of an equivalence between potential scientific and religious transcendence. Will's exhilaration on visiting Lincoln Cathedral is not merely comparable to Ursula's 'triumph' (*R*

409) on seeing the action of miniscule organisms through a microscope, it is meaningfully equivalent. Will and Ursula each find a 'consummation' in their respective experiences and each experiences change in his or her soul (R 187-188, 409). Moreover, each moment of transcendence is similar in further respects. Both Will and Ursula experience a sense of oneness at the moment in question: in the cathedral Will feels "'before" and "after" were folded together, [and] all was contained in oneness' (R 187), while Ursula feels her consummation a 'being infinite' where 'self was a oneness with the infinite' (R 409). In each case, this means access to an alternative world – the cathedral, for Will, is 'a world within a world' (R 190), while Ursula's soul is 'busy [...] in the new world' (R 409). Each experience is also said to bring knowledge: through using the microscope Ursula feels herself to have 'passed away into an intensely-gleaming light of knowledge' (R 409), while Will, pushing open the doors of the cathedral, mentally passes through 'knowledge after knowledge and experience after experience, remembering the darkness of the womb, having prescience of the darkness after death' (R 187). Thus, *The Rainbow* suggests that the fact that different individuals may find apparent transcendence in different ways does not necessarily mean an illegitimacy or a falsity to a particular version of transcendence. Will's knowledge may be religious, and Ursula's scientific, but, as Lawrence writes in the *Apocalypse* fragment, 'all search for knowledge [...] leads to the same result.' This result is transcendence in knowledge of the infinite.

With the belief that religion and science alike may be routes to a functionally identical enlightenment, *The Rainbow* can run deeper than Lawrence's preceding novels were able in its exploration of the nature of transcendence in itself and its implications for successful living: in contrast to those works, it does not show doubt about which, if either, of religious or scientific transcendence should be possible. Because there is not, in *The Rainbow*, a single, true transcendence, that which is common in different cases can be celebrated, rather than the differences between ostensible experiences of transcendence facing investigation in order to determine which one should be considered legitimate.

Women in Love (1920), however, is a rather different novel. Its orientation is, in broad terms, towards destruction rather than creation: where Will's craftsmanship, and the more diffuse

creative impulses of the other members of the Brangwen family are at the heart of *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* is dominated by fatalism, and a will towards destruction: Rupert Birkin's fatalistic rhetoric, and Gerald Crich's conscious subjugation of the men working in his mine constitute the core of the novel. Additionally, where *The Rainbow* spans generations of the Brangwen family, allowing long patterns of development to be traced, *Women in Love* restricts its focus to a period of months. Nevertheless, the later novel suggests transcendence is possible in destruction – both in the abstract nihilism of ideas demonstrated by Birkin, and in the practical destruction implemented by Gerald at his mine. Its narrower time-scale is reflected in a narrower vision of transcendence: *Women in Love* offers 'inhuman transcendent death,' whereby it is apparently in death itself, rather than in rebirth from it, that the precise moment of transcendence is to be found. This narrowing of focus means that the form transcendence takes in *Women in Love* appears in one sense to be the inverse of that of *The Rainbow*, in that it is concerned with death rather than rebirth, but in another matches an aspect of that of *The Rainbow* – to be reborn an individual must first die.

However, both transcendence in destruction, and transcendence in phoenix-like rebirth appear significantly opposed to evolutionary thought: the will-to-death seems the antithesis of the will-to-survive, whether or not that death is to be followed by rebirth. Nonetheless it has been suggested, particularly by Roger Ebbatson, that elements of each novel are derived from the evolutionism of Herbert Spencer. The alternating waves of creation and destruction in evidence in both *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* certainly bear comparison to elements of Spencer's work. However, Henri Bergson's criticisms of Spencer's analytical method should inform the light in which the comparison is made between Lawrence's novels and Spencer's writing, given the knowledge Lawrence had of Bergson's ideas. The nature of creativity in itself in both novels is nuanced and nebulous, not unlike the creativity of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*.

II

The life-cycle of the non-evolutionary phoenix is particularly important to *The Rainbow*

in terms of the form of the novel. While the contribution to the structure of the novel made by the titular image of the rainbow is, understandably and justifiably, often emphasized, cycles of death and renewal, much like those which the phoenix undergoes, recur throughout *The Rainbow*. The novel layers life on top of life, as the successive generations of the Brangwen family experience phenomena deemed to constitute 'new birth' or rebirth (R 38, 39, 45, 176). Coexisting with the novel's widening circles, as generation succeeds generation, are therefore the shorter cycles from life to death and back again which are experienced by respective members of the Brangwen family.

The fact that it is a phoenix which Will crafts might be seen to imply that the cyclical alternation between death and rebirth in *The Rainbow* cannot and ought not to be characterized as evolutionary. In its cycles of death and rebirth, the phoenix does not fit into the pattern of continual advancement through differentiation which may be felt to be essential in an evolutionary narrative. Moreover, if the phoenix is considered as an archetype without physical manifestation, it is by implication entirely outside the purview of the physical sciences. However natural and however necessary the existence of the concept of the phoenix might be felt to be, if it exists only as an idea it is plainly beyond the scope of biological evolutionary theory to explain its life-cycle. Charles Darwin, in *The Origin of Species*, suggests that 'natural selection clearly leads towards [...] differentiation and specialisation:' a novel of rebirth seems by nature unsuited to exploring these patterns of development. Change through rebirth is instantaneous, rather than incremental.

However, *The Rainbow* begins with a family which appears entirely unchanging – either through increment or apocalypse – insomuch as its members initially appear undifferentiated from one another, and the characteristics of those family members are delivered as if immutable facts. The earliest generations of the Brangwen family remain unnamed and are not distinguished from one another, save in the sense that the Brangwen men are said to cohere to one template, and the women another. The men are oriented towards the earth: they have 'inert' brains, and feel the 'pulse and body of the soil,' within themselves, while their limbs are 'impregnated with the day, cattle and earth and vegetation and the sky' (R 10). The women, in contrast, '[look] out from the

heated, blind intercourse of farm-life, to the spoken world beyond' (R 10). Thus, as Mark Kinkead-Weekes writes, 'we begin, not with individual personalities but with archetypal Men and Women, in a timeless Nature.'

However, change does come. By the end of *The Rainbow*, Ursula – identified by Kinkead-Weekes as 'the most complex organism of all' – is seen to be aware of herself as a 'separate entity in the midst of undifferentiated obscurity' and is shown to feel a developing responsibility 'out of the nothingness and the undifferentiated mass, to make something of herself' (R 263). Therefore, it might be suggested that *The Rainbow* traces the progression from homogeneity to distinctiveness, from the generalized to the specialized, and in doing so might be felt to offer an especially rich and especially evolutionary narrative – not only employing the strategies and orientation of a mature process of natural selection, but reproducing the very emergence of these. Structurally, the organization of the Brangwen family becomes more sophisticated as its individual members develop, reflecting the growing diversity and complexity of life in general – and, as the structural intricacy of the family increases, the complexity of the behaviour of the respective family members also increases, as does the sophistication of each member's concept of himself or herself.

Certainly, for Roger Ebbatson, 'in *The Rainbow* the underlying principle is evolution, wrought through enrichment of consciousness.' He argues that the novel shows 'man evolving, making himself' as the 'early Brangwen instinct' is replaced through an unconscious process of identity-formation. Within this, 'recreation of the self' is said to occur as a means to adapt to new social conditions: Ebbatson therefore suggests that external circumstances represent the primary factor impelling the self-reconstructions he sees in *The Rainbow*.

There is not, though, a direct and unwavering passage from the undifferentiated early generations of the Brangwen family to Ursula's individuation. A much greater impulsion towards change and self-development is experienced by Ursula's grandfather, Tom Brangwen, than by her father and mother, Will and Anna. Tom Brangwen, when he begins courting Lydia, feels himself 'drifting, quiescent, in a state of metamorphosis' (R 38). The emotional change wrought by the relationship leads to unsuppressed physical sensation: 'in his breast, or in his bowels, somewhere

in his body, there had started another activity,' this activity felt to be 'a secret power' (R 38).

Though this change means 'suffering the loss of himself,' perhaps suggesting it challenges his identity as an individual, he nonetheless experiences the change in himself as being 'like a creature evolving to a new birth' (R 38).

By contrast, the consummation of Will and Anna's relationship sees them find 'a core of living eternity' which is 'motionless' in 'unflawed stillness' and is 'inexhaustible' and 'unchanging' (R 135). Thus, Ursula's grandfather is more obviously associated with evolutionary change than is either of her parents. While lying together, seemingly in the act of sexual intercourse, Will and Anna experience themselves as being 'complete and beyond the touch of time or change' (R 135). They feel themselves 'as if they were at the very centre of all the slow wheeling of space,' at 'the steady core of all movements' (R 135): a place which is also seen to constitute the centre of 'joy and gladness' (R 135).

Additionally, it does not seem the case that Ursula's development as a differentiated self ought to be considered a process which has to succeed: as part of her sense that she must 'grow up' and 'must become something,' Ursula comes to the decision that 'only the week-day world' should matter (R 263). However, she feels a 'puzzling, tormenting residue of the Sunday world within her' (R 264) which she makes an effort to deny. That such a residue remains, and that effort is needed to quell it, implies that Ursula's emergence is neither inevitable in itself, nor inevitably successful once it begins. Her adaptation might be seen as favourable to her chances of success in a changing, increasingly mechanized world, but it is not wholly Darwinian: Ursula is not ultimately pushed by outside forces to specialize, but is driven to do so by a will identified as internal to her. After all, the responsibility she feels herself to have inherited is 'of living an undiscovered life' (R 263): her wish to make something of herself has the quality of a pure reaction against this.

In addition to its significance in terms of the structure of *The Rainbow*, the phoenix as a symbol can be seen to be important with respect to the idea of survival. Its capacity for endless rebirth makes it a symbol of survival of a kind not directly associated with struggle or

competition. As such, *The Rainbow* appears to pit evolution against survival rather than pairing the two. Ursula's development may mean she is more evolved, but, if phoenix-like rebirth had been a possibility for her, this evolution can be suggested to impair her chance of survival: the phoenix does not die, though a creature which participates in the normal processes of the world – as Ursula chooses to – must die eventually. Additionally, though the rebirth of individual characters is entwined with generational succession and the development of the Brangwen line, the very possibility of an individual undergoing meaningful rebirth in himself or herself may seem to undermine the universality which is a necessary quality of biological evolution as it is usually conceived.

With this in mind, it is possible to anticipate that critics might see evolutionism in *The Rainbow* as undermined by the contestation it seems to face. Kate Flint is one critic who sees in *The Rainbow* a 'defiant challenge to that Victorian grand narrative of belief in evolutionary progress.' However Flint does not cite the possibility of rebirth as evidence in support of her view. Instead, for Flint, it is because the novel juxtaposes 'modern supposedly civilized existence and primitive life' that *The Rainbow* can be seen as 'suggesting that the distance between them may not be all that great.' She highlights the identification of members of the Brangwen family with animals: as a child, Anna is called a 'pole-cat,' by an adult guest, Marriott, a description she initially rejects, but which she swiftly comes to apply to herself (R 84), while Ursula, when a newborn child herself, is 'restless as a young eel' (R 179). Thus, though Flint does see a progression in the novel, in that, in her view, it enacts 'the emergence [...] of the modern,' Ursula's distinction from earlier generations of her family is not, according to this analysis, as complete as it might seem: the ostensible evolutionary development seen in her more developed self-concept is contradicted by her association with a creature thought of as belonging to a lower order of evolution.

The same evidence can, however, support an opposite interpretation. Writing about *Women in Love*, Jeff Wallace also sees the comparison of humans to other animals as significant in that novel. However, Wallace's view is that such metaphors support a view of the novel as evolutionary. Wallace writes that, 'as in *The White Peacock*, the metaphorical likeness between

human and animals calls up the question of analogy, suggesting a kinship of unbroken continuity along the lines of a Darwinian evolutionary order.' This idea, equally applicable to *The Rainbow* as to its sequel, need not definitively be supported over Flint's to demonstrate that the animal metaphors of each novel, while often striking for the particularity of the animals mentioned, neither conclusively suggest support or antipathy towards evolutionary ideas. Human beings, for Lawrence, are close to non-human animals, but the comparisons made in the animal metaphors in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* are, in terms of evolutionary order, insufficiently systematic to suggest any greater collective meaning in this respect.

Nevertheless, it can be said that Flint's suggestion that *The Rainbow* is not an evolutionary novel does cohere with concerns that the cycles of rebirth in its structure challenge evolutionism. With respect to this, it is important to remember that the evolutionism that Roger Ebbatson identifies in *The Rainbow* is that of Herbert Spencer rather than that of Darwin. Ebbatson contends that 'the wave-like patterning of *The Rainbow* [is] derived from Spencer's *First Principles*.' In *First Principles* Spencer characterizes organic action as being constituted of a 'long wave of increase and decrease, complicated with several minor waves,' a pattern very much demonstrated in *The Rainbow*, wherein the movement from homogeneity to distinctiveness is not without reversals, between and within generations. Thus may be seen the minor regressions within Ursula's struggle to distinguish herself.

When Spencer refers to organic action, the concept appears intended to be applied to actions within a single living body, rather than the work of a greater life-force. For instance, in contrasting the differing frequency with which various organic actions need to be performed, Spencer cites as examples the different regularity with which a being needs to eat and to sleep. However, he does also see species collectively as exhibiting wave-like rhythms in the patterns of their evolutionary development. As such, for Spencer an individual creature generates multiple waves of organic motion within itself, but is also subject to the action of waves external to itself. If these are each to be characterized as possessing motion, as the image of the wave may imply, it may be supposed that there must therefore be times when internal and external waves are sympathetic in their motion, and times when the motions of each are in opposition. Balance

between internal and external waves might be viewed as stasis, while a 'wave of decrease' can be seen as making possible return.

Certainly, the image of an individual riding a wider wave of life occurs in *The Rainbow*. The celebrated passage in which Anna and Will Brangwen gather sheaves of corn, before forsaking the work to kiss one another provides a particular example, as the rhythm they enact in the work is seen to fuse with a deeper rhythm of life (R 114-116). During the episode, Anna feels the moon 'laying bare her bosom again, making her drift and ebb like a wave' (R 114). Thus, Anna is both carried by a wave, and is a wave in herself.

Spencer is referred to by name in the text of *The Rainbow* – as he was in Lawrence's preceding novel, *Sons and Lovers*. In *The Rainbow*, Alfred Brangwen, the brother of the elder Tom Brangwen, is mentioned to have been reading Spencer, as well as Robert Browning (R 86). However, this mention of Spencer occurs early in the novel's historical span, at a point in the time-frame of the novel when Spencer's writing and the biological evolutionary theory it drew upon would each have been current. In this context the name Spencer may partly, or even predominantly, be seen as a unit of history, an item which marks its surroundings as the past. John Macdonell, reviewing a biography of Spencer in 1917, suggests, for instance, that 'he was a product of his age, and his reputation sank when it passed away,' further contending that 'his books have become fossils.'

Nevertheless, John Orr also sees Spencer in the structure of *The Rainbow*. The novel, he suggests, fuses 'Spencer's progressive differentiation with pantheism,' whereas, by *Women in Love*, this has become 'an archaic utopia.' Orr does not, sadly, expand fully upon the nature of this suggested fusion, nor upon how and why it has become unworkable in *Women in Love*. He states only that 'in the face of new forms of mechanical warfare' the cosmology he understands *The Rainbow* to demonstrate has become impossible by the time of *Women in Love* – implying that either Spencer's philosophy and pantheism individually, or Lawrence's particular combination of them, is naïve in some respect, unable to interface with the brutality of humanity as exposed in the events which took place in the years between it and *Women in Love*.

In *The Rainbow*, Orr suggests, 'Lawrence tries to link the scheme of individuation within

unity to the growth of humanity within nature.' However, differentiation in *The Rainbow* is different from that *First Principles* in a significant respect: differentiation in *First Principles* concomitant with organization, in *The Rainbow* this is not the case. For Spencer, though an individual or a species may become more complicated, with greater definition to its parts, this differentiation must be accompanied by an organization, such that these increasingly specialized parts can operate together as part of the same system. However, the progressive differentiation of the members of the Brangwen family, culminating in Ursula's quest for individuation, is not obviously paired with an increase in organization, and, as such, the process of individuation traced in *The Rainbow* can be taken as movement away from Spencerian evolutionism, rather than as a Spencerian movement in itself. A rigid world of matter and structure can in part be said to be what Ursula seeks to escape from. Her attempt to fit into a defined role in society fails: her work at the Brinsley Road school proves to be a form of imprisonment (*R* 378), and she dreams of its walls melting away (*R* 391-392). Furthermore, at the very end of the novel, as Ursula recuperates from illness, her recovery is described in terms of escape from confinement. She emerges from within a 'decaying, fibrous husk' (*R* 456) into the 'undiscovered land' of a 'new creation' (*R* 457); this new world Ursula finds to represent 'the creation of the living God, instead of the old, hard barren form of bygone living' (*R* 458). The fluidity of the new world is seen to make it vital; in particular, the rainbow which forms 'quiver[s] to life' (*R* 459). Ursula therefore finds herself and achieves differentiation not through an artificial material fixity, or by identifying with a structured role in society, but by recognizing her part in a fluid, on-going process: the process of creation.

This vision of Ursula's development as liberation into newly created freedom also does not appear to be shared by Ebbatson. He suggests that 'the patterning of *The Rainbow*, tracing a movement from family to village to town to city, arose out of the novelist's social and writing experience: man, liberated from the determinism of nature, evolves into a victim/agent of the new determinism of culture.' Though Lawrence's own passage through life can be said to have been distinct, and may be felt to have been determined by his own character to a greater extent than the effect of his surroundings, it is possible to understand the comment in terms of those Lawrence

saw around him. Certainly, this understanding of Ebbatson's claim appears legitimate given that he continues by suggesting that 'the uniquely human phenomenon of culture is successfully achieved only through curtailment of spontaneity.' Ebbatson highlights by way of example 'the petrification of reality discerned in the mining community at Wiggiston' which he sees as a 'by-product of [the] willed repression' to be found within *The Rainbow*.

However, Wiggiston is a complicated presence within *The Rainbow*. It is described as 'unreal' (R 321) and is said to constitute 'a moment of chaos perpetuated, persisting, chaos fixed and rigid' (R 321). It is, in effect, matter made meaningless and uncanny by the absence of motion. Lacking the vitality which might be said to emerge from motion, Wiggiston is also said to have 'no organic formation' (R 320): where much of *The Rainbow* can be viewed in terms of organic development and organic motion, Wiggiston cannot – thereby implying that organic patterns are not universal. Its existence might thus stand as evidence that ostensibly all-pervasive Spencerian patterns cannot explain certain structures, albeit it does not stand as a positive alternative.

In Wiggiston, Ursula sees a group of men she passes as alien, as 'creatures' enclosed within 'a hard horny shell' (R 321), not dissimilar to the husk from which she escapes at the end of the novel. They are separate from Ursula, in part due to the fact that she is not as directly governed in her life by the effect of industrial forces. The town is also home to Ursula's uncle, Tom, and his partner Winifred. The colliery at Wiggiston is described as their 'great mistress' (R 324), and Tom and Winifred are seen to 'worship [...] the impure abstraction, the mechanisms of matter' (R 325). The devotion the pair show to the machine might broadly seem to anticipate Gerald's religious relationship with the mechanical in *Women in Love*. There are, however, significant differences between the two cases. Gerald, as owner of the colliery in the later novel, must, by virtue of his position, strive to retain control over the machine, whereas Tom and Winifred bear no such obligation. Gerald thus feels himself to have 'a fight to fight with matter,' (*WL* 227) whereas Tom, and particularly Winifred, instead identify with the material.

Additionally, for Winifred, there is ostensible transcendence to be realized through dedication to the machine: 'in the monstrous mechanism that held all matter, living or dead in its

service' Winifred is said to achieve 'her consummation and her perfect unison, her immortality' (R 325). Though deemed consummation, the experience differs from that of Will at Lincoln Cathedral and that of Ursula in the laboratory: where Will and Ursula see beyond the material in their respective moments of consummation, Winifred sees nothing but the material in hers. In service of the machine she is united with 'matter, living and dead' (R 325): the form of immortality she gains is thereby one which obliterates those qualities which distinguish the living from the unliving. Tom and Winifred, in their focus upon the material, are seen to be left 'cynical' and unfeeling, 'apathetic' and 'inert' (R 324, 325, 326, 327). Together, they are 'half-corrupt' (R 326) for Ursula, due to their service of the mechanical and the material.

Gerald, however, finds 'terror' rather than consummation to be the ultimate result of his mechanization of the colliery (WL 232); he feels 'his mystic reason [...] breaking' and is anxious that, without contact with the 'odd mobility and changeableness' he finds in Birkin, 'meaning [will] collapse out of him' (WL 232). Gerald shows consciousness that the material, forced into rigid structure, is alien to an important aspect of the human. He recognizes the quintessence of 'faith' (WL 232) in Birkin's aptitude to change. He understands a Lawrencian association between fluidity and vitality, even as he acts in opposition to this understanding. Thus, when Gerald Doherty contends that Gerald manifests 'harsh disintegrative violence' towards nature, in contrast to a 'holistic biocentrism' he associates with Birkin and Ursula, the contrast is not absolute. Gerald recognizes that the fixed is inhuman.

III

Creativity may be seen as an agency which works against fixity. In *The Rainbow*, an inclination to create unites the main Brangwen line, persisting even as later generations differentiate themselves, and is common to both the Brangwen men and women. The nature of creativity and creation is, also, a significant element in *Women in Love*, and can help to comprehend the relationship between the two novels. Where the former novel explores creation as a process, the latter addresses what it is to be created. The interest in what it means to create is a

significant aspect in each novel which appears removed from Spencerian evolutionism, and which instead has more in common with a Bergsonian vision of the evolutionary process.

The phoenix butter-stamper which Will carves is given to his wife, Anna, and her ultimate reaction is instructive. Though initially it is said that Anna 'thought nothing of the gift,' (R 109) when she uses it for the first time she finds herself powerfully attracted to it: both the process of stamping, and the phoenix design fixate her. She is attracted to the bird carved on the stamper, while it is also explained that 'she loved creating it over and over again' because 'every time she looked, it seemed a new thing come to life [and] every piece of butter became this strange, vital emblem' (R 109). In *The Rainbow*, each generation of the Brangwen family shares an urgent need to create: in the elder Tom, and in Ursula, this is primarily internally directed and experienced: the 'mystery of life and death and creation' felt by Tom is experienced as 'incommunicable' and therefore constitutes something 'of which the rest of the world knew nothing' (R 97), while Ursula's discomfort in her lack of distinction means a project to recreate herself, rather than to create something new external to herself. In Will, by contrast, the creative urge is predominantly outwardly expressed: though his carvings are intended to be 'utterances of himself,' (R 330) it is external material Will wishes to mould, rather than aiming to reform himself.

Both the carving of the stamper and its use can, perhaps, be connected to a Romantic ideal of the creative imagination. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, identifies a primary and a secondary imagination, the former of which he sees as both 'the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception,' and also as 'a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM.' The stamper, in that it allows for the creation and re-creation of the same, archetypal image, therefore uses both aspects of the primary imagination: on any given occasion it is used it gives form to a human will to create, but the creation is repetition of an eternal image. Coleridge's vision of the imagination, and the phoenix butter-stamper therefore each bring together abstract Creation – divine productive agency in the universe, and individual human creative acts.

With respect to the secondary imagination, Coleridge argues this ultimately to be 'an echo

of the former,' though he additionally suggests that it is 'identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency' but different in '*degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation.' The secondary imagination, Coleridge contends, 'dissolves, diffuses, [and] dissipates, in order to re-create,' or, should this prove impossible, 'it struggles to idealize and to unify.' It is, therefore, imagination which does not necessarily create identifiable products, unlike the primary imagination. The idea of a creative struggle without result is a significant aspect of *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* alike. The earliest Brangwen men have the 'teeming life of creation' inside themselves, but it pours 'unresolved into their veins' (*R* 11); without an external object yet discovered, the force diffuses. In *Women in Love*, by contrast, Birkin, wonders if the 'day of creative life [is] finished' and suspects that there remains 'only the strange, awful afterwards of the knowledge in dissolution' (*WL* 254). In effect, before or after productive creation, a force of imagination is nevertheless seen to struggle, with a creative power unable to resolve itself, able only to dissolve or diffuse.

The processes which Coleridge identifies as enacted by the secondary imagination – dissolution, diffusion and dissipation – are typically associated with destruction rather than creation. However, in that Coleridge's focus is on process rather than consequence it remains the case that the secondary imagination can be seen as 'essentially *vital*.' Imagination, primary or secondary, is therefore known, by Coleridge, through its activity, not through its material consequences. Thus, Coleridge distinguishes the imagination from physical objects, which he considers 'essentially fixed and dead.' While relevant in considering the emerging creative imagination in *The Rainbow*, this is particularly of value in considering *Women in Love*. When, in that novel, Birkin voices the notion that Gudrun and Gerald were 'born in the process of destructive creation' (*WL* 172), the apparent oxymoron might be dissolved by reference to ideas of the kind advanced by Coleridge. The view offered in *Biographia Literaria* implies that it is inaction, rather than destruction, which opposes creation: if destruction is in evidence, this must mean that a force is at work, and this force can be argued to be identical in kind with a force of creation.

In *The Rainbow*, Will's creation is also romantic in the sense that it is said to be a passion – indeed, it is explained that his chisel is lifted directly through the force of 'the passion of his

heart.' (R 112) In effect, the creative impulse is seen in Will to be an instinctive force which can find manifestation without mediation from the mind. Lawrence, in his *Study of Thomas Hardy* (1914) calls the 'craving to produce, to create, to be as God [...] an inherent passion.' A human being, informed by this passion, 'can at will reproduce the movement life made in its initial passage,' Lawrence suggests. In effect, in a universe structured by motions, a human being with creative passion can transcend, taking mastery over these movements though artificial reproduction of them. 'The motive of labour,' Lawrence continues, 'is only the overcoming of inertia;' through work, and especially we may suppose through creative work, a human being can escape the determinism of outside forces.

For John Ruskin (whose work Jessie Chambers suggests Lawrence had read a good deal of by as early as 1908), the creative mind behind the production of an item is a fit focus for the viewer. Ruskin writes that 'much of the value both of construction and decoration, in the edifices of men, depends upon our being led by the thing produced or adorned, to some contemplation of the powers of mind concerned in its creation or adornment.' Thus, a creative object may become a device through which the creative mind reminds an individual of its own existence, and its power. Through artistic manipulation physical items may come to speak of the power, and possibly the primacy, of the imagination.

Will's second and final work of carving mentioned in *The Rainbow* is a panel on the Creation of Eve. In it, Eve is 'a keen, unripe thing' and 'a stiff little figure, with sharp lines, in the throes and torture and ecstasy of her creation' (R 112-113). It is a creation about Creation, and, as such may be said to communicate the power of the imagination very explicitly. However, Will fails to ever complete the scene, or any of its figures. In that Will is said to want to carve utterances of himself, it might be surmised that the panel necessarily could never be completed: though Will and Anna experience momentary stillness in intercourse with one another, their respective natures as living beings see them unstable and unfixed. Will cannot create through an ornament something which is mutable and creative in itself, and thus the wood-panel must be left unfinished. Unlike the phoenix butter-stamper, it has no creative function itself. Only though the creation of an item which itself creates, and, indeed, creates repeatedly, can Will avoid creating

an item which communicates an uncreative fixity.

The creative urge manifest across the generations of the Brangwen family further complicates any view which contends that *The Rainbow* tracks a passage from one form of determinism to another. In that the need to create is seen to be common to all members of the Brangwen family, each can be said to possess a pronounced power to recreate either himself or herself, or to recreate aspects of his or her environment, and therefore may resist the influence of external circumstances. However, the creative compulsion does not only bear connection to traditional Romanticism, and can in many aspects be seen as involved with the evolutionary.

Henri Bergson, in *Creative Evolution*, apparently expanding upon the Romantic idea that a crafted object must express something of its crafter, contends that our very understanding of the human intellect is shaped by experiencing it through objects: the vision of material products of human creation informs our comprehension of the intellect which generated them, while, more widely, analogies to material structures are used to understand the immaterial mind. He writes that 'our concepts have been formed on the model of solids' and that accordingly, 'the human intellect feels at home among inanimate objects.' This he suggests distorts the usual understanding of evolution, since a logic of solids 'is incapable of presenting the true nature of life, [and] the full meaning of the evolutionary movement.'

This distortion Bergson does not see as inevitable, however, and might cease if focus were to be on the process of creation, rather than on that which is created. Bergson contends that 'in order that our consciousness shall coincide with something of principle, it must detach itself from the *already-made* and attach itself to the *being-made*.' This kind of creative thinking, for Bergson, is necessary to meaningfully comprehend evolution, inasmuch as 'the impetus of life' – the evolutionary movement – 'consists in a need of creation.' In effect, if evolution exists primarily in the process of creating, rather than in its creations, *The Rainbow*, through its attention to the modified creative and imaginative processes in each successive generation of the Brangwen family, can be said to trace the course of a Bergsonian vision of evolution. This does not so much mean that the rigid structures of Spencerian evolution are contradicted, but instead that they are

surpassed. The wave-like rhythms of *The Rainbow* can be explained by analogy with Spencerian evolutionism, but attention to Bergson better allows comprehension of other aspects of the novel: namely the creative processes by which the respective protagonists recreate themselves, and create the world itself anew. As Bergson further writes, 'a mind born to speculate or to dream [...] might remain outside reality, might deform or transform the real, perhaps even create it.' Tom and Lydia in particular are said to possess, and utilize, the power to create a new world, as Bergson suggests creative minds may be able. Approaching *The Rainbow* with Bergson in mind allows this power to be seen as meaningful, whereas a Spencerian understanding must either see this power as either incomprehensible or as purely rhetorical.

In the second chapter of *The Rainbow*, 'They Live at the Marsh', Tom Brangwen, possessed by a flood of passion for his wife, Lydia, is said to be filled with the feeling that 'he could snap off the trees as he passed and create the world afresh' (R 60). There, the sensation does not prove to be mere illusion; Tom and Lydia's existence is later summarized as 'a mystery of life and death and creation, strange, profound ecstasies and incommunicable satisfactions, of which the rest of the world knew nothing' (R 97). It is also the case that, through their relationship, Tom and Lydia each feels his or her respective self to be newly created. As their engagement to marry is agreed, it is explained that Lydia 'quivered, feeling herself created, will-less, lapsing into him, into a common will with him' (R 44). Similarly, Tom, during the same encounter feels himself 'newly created, as after a gestation, a new birth' (R 45).

It is valuable to highlight that in *Creative Evolution* Bergson directly criticises the Spencerian vision of evolution. There, Bergson writes that 'the usual device of the Spencerian method consists in reconstructing evolution with fragments of the evolved.' Spencer, in Bergson's view, 'takes reality in its present form; he breaks it into pieces, he scatters it in fragments which he throws to the winds; then he "integrates" these fragments and "dissipates their movement."' Here, Bergson refers to Spencer's definition of evolution, which contends that 'evolution under its most general aspect is the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion.' The idea that evolution should mean loss of motion appears particularly objectionable to Bergson, who styles evolution as a movement, and who sees our very perception of material objects determined

by our use of them, stating that 'what is visible and tangible in things represents our possible action on them.' This throughout *The Rainbow* is the Brangwen mode of knowing the world: the earliest Brangwen men know the soil by what they can do to it, while Ursula resolves to 'live by action' (R 264) – therefore understanding herself in terms of what she can do, rather than in terms of the material which surrounds her.

Further, it may be contended that where, in *The Trespasser*, Siegmund McNair's experience of creating a new world with Helena appears to be the product of delusion, the potential for productive interaction with the world is substantially greater and more genuine in *The Rainbow*: it is a novel in which the wider universe may be changed meaningfully and significantly by a single character's interaction with it. The Bergsonian notion that an imaginative mind can create a new world constitutes genuine reality in *The Rainbow*, rather than representing a mere rhetorical flourish: the universe of *The Rainbow* is one where movements, rather than matter, are the ultimate realities.

In apparent contrast, in *Women in Love* creation is often seen to be incomplete and fallible. In the opening chapter, Ursula and her sister, Gudrun, travel through Beldover, which has grown from the time of *The Rainbow* into a large mining village. The village is said, through a narrative voice which appears partly to speak itself, and partly to channel the thoughts of Gudrun, to be 'a dark, uncreated, hostile world' (WL 12), as well as 'utterly formless and sordid' (WL 11). This uncreation does not necessarily oppose the fixity and rigidity seen in the ostensibly similar Wiggiston (which is not visited in *Women in Love*), but it is a very different rendering of the threat of an industrial settlement: Wiggiston is apparently too formed, Beldover not enough.

A different vision of creation is seen later in the chapter. At the wedding of Laura Crich and 'Tibs' Lupton, to which Ursula and Gudrun had been walking, the assembly of figures is understood by Gudrun in opposing terms. It is explained that 'she saw each one as a complete figure, like a character in a book, or a subject in a picture, or a marionette in a theatre, a finished creation' (WL 14). Though, in this case, it is the individuals at the wedding in themselves who are seen as complete creations, as opposed to Beldover, which as an environment is felt to be

incomplete, a comprehensible attitude seems to emerge. For Gudrun, the supposedly superior individual, it may be inferred, is not determined by his or her surroundings – and is able to create himself or herself as desired – while Beldover determines the form of its less potent inhabitants. That this self-creation is the more complete may seem to imply that in *Women in Love*, able minds retain transformative potential. However, the notion of being a finished creation suggests the absence of change. The revelation that change is a vital necessity, and fixity an unreality – as experienced in different forms by successive generations of the Brangwen family in *The Rainbow* – is ostensibly contradicted.

Further, Gudrun suggests Ursula herself to be 'a masterpiece of humanity,' because she is 'not the person in the street actually, but the artistic creation of her' (*WL* 51). Thus, Gudrun voices enthusiasm for a version of creation which is simulation: where in *The Rainbow* recreation of the self was a transcendent act, triumphant as a process in itself, Gudrun's notion of recreation of the self is one of parody, and one of artifice which obfuscates the true being underneath. It is, it seems, the recreation occasioned by a creative imagination shorn of the power to transform the real.

This concern with artifice, absent from *The Rainbow*, is one of a number of facets of *Women in Love* which make challenging D.H. Lawrence's claim that the two novels together represent 'an organic artistic whole.' Nevertheless, Lawrence is not without support from critics in suggesting that the novels are deeply paired. William E. Lenz builds upon Lawrence's assertion, arguing that 'the elemental nature of *Women in Love* is directly a result of an evolutionary process which can be traced through the three central relationships of the earlier novel.' Lenz sees stability in *Women in Love* which he feels is founded upon the process of evolutionary development of *The Rainbow*. As Lenz writes, 'a process of discovery and evolution begins with Tom Brangwen in *The Rainbow* that is brought to a point of stabilization with Ursula and Rupert Birkin in *Women in Love*.' Lenz's view that *Women in Love* stabilizes *The Rainbow* is counter-intuitive in many respects. While the concept of finished creation might be taken to coincide with stabilization, it is, however, the case that crisis is felt ever-imminent in *Women in Love*: fatalism is particularly demonstrated by Birkin, who, Ursula suggests, feels himself a 'fleur du mal' born of the end of

days (*WL* 173), a vision hardly suggestive of stability.

Nonetheless, if we do follow Lawrence's stated view, as Lenz does, and take *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow* as organic sisters, we implicitly have to accept that they share not only characters and location, but that the cosmos is common to the two. To whatever extent it may appear that the two occupy different universes, with two different models of creation, if the novels are to be seen as meaningfully paired, it becomes necessary to consider that the material universe of *Women in Love* is a continuation of that of *The Rainbow*.

Despite Gudrun's interest in creation as artifice, genuine, meaningful creation does also appear to remain part of the universe of *Women in Love*, and as such constitutes evidence to support the idea that the novel is indeed the organic successor of *The Rainbow*. During a covert night-time visit to see Gudrun at the Brangwen family home, Gerald presses his head between Gudrun's breasts, and in doing so feels a 'lovely creative warmth flood through him' which is likened to 'a sleep of fecundity within the womb' (*WL* 345). Meanwhile, the night before her marriage to Birkin, Ursula is said to have 'had the perfect candour of creation, something translucent and simple, like a radiant, shining flower that moment unfolded in primal blessedness' (*WL* 368). However, while a contrast with pseudo-creative artifice, this is a vision of creative force which appears to be tied to women as potential mothers, in contrast to the all-pervasive creative power possessed by men and women alike in *The Rainbow*.

Ursula, felt by Birkin to be 'the perfect womb,' is seen as tyrannical for her supposed need 'to absorb, or melt, or merge' (*WL* 309). The contrast, for Birkin, is with the rather different vision of spirituality he identifies as his, one that is ostensibly anti-creation – a spirituality 'concomitant of a process of depravity, a sort of pleasure in self-destruction' (*WL* 309). Destruction, it may be supposed, does not mandate connection, unlike a model of creation founded upon sexual intercourse, and therefore can be felt to constitute a fitter mode of change for a time of dissolution.

Very broadly, destruction tends to eclipse creation in *Women in Love*. Birkin suggests the 'stream of synthetic creation' to have lapsed, giving way to 'the inverse process, the blood of

destructive creation' (*WL* 172). Birkin's perspective can, in many respects, be identified with a turn in a Spencerian cycle, whereby dissolution, as the opposite of evolution, has come to succeed it. Evolution is not limitless in the opinion of Herbert Spencer, and therefore it is inevitable, in his view, that a point should be reached at which evolutionary processes must reverse. Dissolution, which Spencer defines as 'a disintegration of matter caused by the reception of additional motion from without,' is the second side of the evolutionary wave and must therefore replace evolution at some point.

For Roger Ebbatson, a Spencerian transition to dissolution is particularly in evidence at the end of *Women in Love*. He argues that 'the snow-bound scenes of *Women in Love* grow out of Lawrence's involvement with evolution as expressed in Spencer's theory of devolution' and that 'the final pages of *First Principles* adumbrate the closing scenes of the novel.' The idea that *Women in Love* is shaped by the transition to a new stage in the Spencerian evolutionary cycle might appear to give primacy to Spencer over Bergson, inasmuch as a switch to devolution does not constitute an element of Bergson's evolutionary theory. However understanding creation as process, and physical destruction as possible result of creative processes, Birkin's self-willed self-destruction, if it is argued that it must enact creative or imaginative processes, can be taken to be functionally equivalent to productively expressed creation.

Though Bergson writes little about either destruction or dissolution, he does suggest that the 'organic destruction' which represents part of the ageing process may indeed be seen as the result of a vital process. For Bergson, 'what is properly vital in growing old is the insensible, infinitely graduated, continuance of the change of form.' Bergson further contends that as an individual ages, behind the 'visible effects an inner cause lies hidden,' this cause being 'the evolution of the living being,' which, in Bergson's view, 'implies a continual recording of duration, a persistence of the past into the present, and so an appearance, at least, of organic memory.' Thus, for Bergson, destruction does not oppose the vital, nor is it necessarily the antithesis of evolution. The concept of 'destructive creation' manifest in *Women in Love*, though it appears designed to be taken on first inspection as oxymoronic, though it seems designed to challenge, does not need to be felt to present an irresolvable contradiction: the focus must,

however, be on the process rather than the result for the contradiction to dissolve. The same action, performed in different circumstances, or simply seen from a different perspective, may be either creative or destructive. Gerald's mine is 'satisfying in its very destructiveness,' (*WL* 231) but nevertheless, he has 'created a richly-paying industry' (*WL* 418). The process is the same, a process of change, of evolution; in this case, it destroys men and material, but creates an industry. Thus, when Ebbatson contends that '*Women in Love* deconstructs, in paradox and self-contradiction, the procedures of *The Rainbow*,' the claim does not feel entirely justified: assessed in terms of results, much of *Women in Love* stands in opposition to *The Rainbow*, but in terms of process the opposition dissolves. Gerald provokes change, and changes in himself – ultimately moving from obliterator to obliterated. Where Ebbatson argues with respect to Gerald that his failing is that he 'is unable radically to evolve,' this is therefore debatable: though changes in Gerald represent a dissolution of will and ultimately bring about his death, demonstrating his is not Darwinian or even Spencerian adaptation, it misrepresents the meaning of evolution for Lawrence if the process of change Gerald undergoes is viewed in terms of its results alone.

Additionally, the focus on destruction in *Women in Love* does not necessarily mean that life can no longer succeed death: thus, by extension, Gerald's physical death need not be seen to stand in absolute opposition to survival. Prior to Gerald's death, Birkin advances support for life beyond death, suggesting that 'there are many stages of pure degradation to go through' and therefore that 'we live on long after our death, and progressively, [through] aeons of progressive devolution' (*WL* 204). While Gerald feels something break in his soul at the moment of his death (*WL* 474), and while Birkin feels that had Gerald 'kept true' to the 'grip of final love' between the two 'death would not have mattered' (*WL* 480), it can nevertheless be felt that Gerald meets a demand of Lawrencian evolution in embracing the most dramatic of changes in practice, while Birkin remains only theoretically oriented towards death.

Though Birkin sees a form of transcendence in death, its relation to creativity is complicated. It is declaredly the case that for Birkin, humankind is explicitly opposed to creation. He asserts that the human being 'is anti-creation, like monkeys and baboons' and that 'humanity

never gets beyond the caterpillar stage – it rots in the chrysalis, it never will have wings. (*WL* 128). Humankind, for Birkin, is 'but just one expression of the incomprehensible' (*WL* 59) and therefore he contends that if humankind should be removed from the world 'creative utterances will not cease, they will only be there' (*WL* 59). Thus, though creativity might ordinarily be associated with the imagination of an individual, for Birkin, this vision is mistaken. As Will Brangwen's phoenix carving implies in *The Rainbow*, for Birkin it appears that imagination originates beyond the individual, who may merely hint at greater, eternal ideas in his or her creative acts.

In the closing pages of the novel, Birkin's views are more fully articulated, largely unchanged – the broad form of his convictions apparently unmodified through the span of time covered by *Women in Love*. He reasons:

'God cannot do without man.'

It was a saying of some great French religious teacher. But surely this is false. God can do without man.

God could do without the ichthyosauri and the mastodon. These monsters failed creatively to develop, so God, the creative mystery, dispensed with them. In the same way the mystery could dispense with man, should he too fail creatively to change and develop. The eternal creative mystery could dispose of man, and replace him with a finer created being. Just as the horse has taken the place of the mastodon.

It was very consoling to Birkin, to think this. If humanity ran into a cul de sac and expended itself, the timeless creative mystery would bring forth some other being, finer, more wonderful, some new, more lovely race, to carry on the embodiment of creation. The game was never up. The mystery of creation was fathomless, infallible, inexhaustible, forever. Races came and went, species passed away, but ever new species arose, more lovely, or equally lovely, always surpassing wonder. The fountain-head was incorruptible and unsearchable. It had no limits. It could bring forth miracles, create utter new races and new species, in its own hour, new forms of consciousness, new forms of body, new units of being. To be man was as nothing compared to the possibilities of the creative mystery. To have one's pulse beating direct from the mystery, this was perfection, unutterable satisfaction. Human or inhuman mattered nothing. The perfect pulse throbbed with indescribable being, miraculous unborn species. (*WL* 478-479)

The implied equivalence of evolutionary competition and creative development is profoundly Bergsonian: a creature's survival is directly linked to its ability to create. There is also a Spencerian element to this picture, one whereby pulses or waves of development, of advance

and decline, are inevitabilities. *Women in Love*, in focusing on a wave of creative destruction, suggests existence during such a period complicates but does not remove the value of individual imagination. Certainly, Gudrun, in her final fraught days with Gerald, realizes that it is a lack of imagination which prevents her from escaping the 'eternal tick-tack' and 'mechanical twitching forward' of the clock (*WL* 465). That 'clock time' has widely been argued to stand in opposition to Bergson's *durée*, particularly in the novels of Virginia Woolf, makes this competition between freedom through imagination and the determined rhythm of the clock rather striking.

For Birkin, humankind appears to be opposed to creation in the sense of being destructive, rather than entirely uncreative: Gudrun's hope that her imagination could bring liberation is therefore legitimate. According to Birkin, and to *Women in Love* itself, the human being may still enact processes of change associated with the creative imagination, even if those processes manifest destruction rather than production, and through doing so achieve transcendent experiences. As Birkin suggests, 'in the great retrogression, the reducing back of the created body of life, we get knowledge, and beyond knowledge, the phosphorescent ecstasy of acute sensation' (*WL* 383). Death, as the ultimate change, still brings ultimate knowledge.

Thus, as in *The Rainbow*, transcendence through knowledge remains a potentially realizable product of a creative, transformational process in *Women in Love*. Through the shift of a Spencerian cycle, destruction is the result of these processes in the novel – but the physical result remains secondary to the creative process itself. *Women in Love*, in this much, can therefore be accepted to be the organic sister of *The Rainbow*, insomuch as it shares a common understanding of creation as a transcendent and evolutionary process.

Survival, Growth and Migration in *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's Rod* and *Mr Noon*

I

Though initially published only weeks apart, *The Lost Girl* (1920) and *Women in Love* conceive of death very differently— a fact which has considerable implications in terms of understanding the wider differences in structure between the two novels. When, in *The Lost Girl*, Alvina Houghton loses her mother, her governess and her father within a short period, there is no sense of consummation associated with any of these cases, and no sense that a life-force might transcend the end of the mortal body. This is in marked contrast to *Women in Love*, in which 'death is a great consummation,' and in which death marks 'a development from life.' Death in *The Lost Girl* is more than anything associated with folly: Clariss Houghton, Alvina's mother, suffers 'sorrow and a slow death, because a man married her,' while Miss Frost, her governess, suffers a contrary decline, of 'sorrow and slow death, because a man had *not* married her' (LG 44).

The respective fates of Alvina's mother and governess are significant in terms of contextualizing the course of Alvina's development throughout the novel, a course most obviously displayed through the respective romantic relationships she enters into at different stages of her life. In courting a range of suitors before she eventually marries the Italian musician Ciccio, Alvina can be seen to test potential means to establish a relationship distinct in kind from that which her mother entered into with her father. Alvina, to survive, seemingly comprehends that she must avoid both the mistake made by her mother in entering into marriage and the mistake made by her governess in not doing so, despite the apparent impossibility of resisting both eventualities. The result is her confused, tense, ambiguous marital relationship with Ciccio – a marriage, but not of the same kind as her mother's. Ciccio, whose foreignness by itself is seen to prove the fundamental difference in his nature from that of Alvina and her compatriots (LG 291), represents a very different kind of husband to Alvina from the kind her father is to her mother. Alvina therefore 'clings' to Ciccio's 'dark, despised foreign nature' (LG 215). Though her

connection to Ciccio makes Alvina feel 'something of an outcast,' she finds herself 'glad to be an outcast' (*LG* 215). Through her association with the different, disliked Ciccio, Alvina can be certain that her life is taking a course unlike that taken by either her mother or her governess, Miss Pinnegar. In this much, her relationship with Ciccio can be seen as giving Alvina the chance to avoid the conditions which led to the decline of her mother and governess: being with Ciccio means, in short, a chance of survival.

Together with *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's Rod* (1922) and the unfinished *Mr Noon* (which Lawrence worked on between May 1920, and the middle of 1921, and which was first published in 1984) also emphasise the development of an individual, and the implications of that development with respect to survival. *Mr Noon* presents a protagonist unresolved to human mortality. He dreams of immortality for his wife, Johanna: Noon, it is explained, 'wanted a lily with her roots deep down in the muck, fast, gripped, triumphant rooted in the muck' because 'then she could wither and grow old, and yet not die.' Aaron Sisson in *Aaron's Rod* is, however, a rather different figure – and does not obviously crave extended life for himself or for others. Sisson claims to be unworried by the prospect of death (*AR* 92), and asserts simply that 'we live till we die' (*AR* 67), without greater consequence to life itself or to its ending. Sisson is, however, guided by Rawdon Lilly, a mentor of sorts, who emphasises the need for individual development. Lilly explains to Sisson that development is a quality which is innate to him, stating that the soul 'develops your actions within you as a tree develops its own new cells' (*AR* 296). Similarly, Lilly finds development to be a fundamental and inevitable aspect of human consciousness (*AR* 296). Following the guidance of Lilly, Sisson decides that he must submit to the will of his soul (*AR* 299), and, by implication, to follow the path of development it impels.

Following from the fact that death is not entirely accepted in these novels, they are structurally unlike *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. There are not cycles of rebirth, but instead narratives of less rigid structure whereby events do not fit into an easily defined overarching pattern – a fact which has often led to claims that these novels are structurally deficient, particularly *Aaron's Rod*.

However, the notion that rebirth is potentially achievable is not entirely excluded from

these works, but is instead rendered as insignificant. A moment of apparent sexual revitalization in *Aaron's Rod* initially draws upon the lexicon of new life so much employed in *The Rainbow*, but this new life is immediately extinguished. Sisson, awakening to his attraction to the Marchesa del Torre, an American woman married into Italian nobility, feels his maleness '[rise] powerfully in him,' (*AR* 257) a sensation which is said to mean that 'the phoenix had risen in fire again, out of the ashes' (*AR* 258). However, the Marchesa does not appreciate the music Aaron plays on his flute, which, for Aaron, suggests that 'she was in some mysterious way withstanding him' and that she thereby is 'throwing cold water over his phoenix' (*AR* 259). Phoenix-like rebirth, therefore is in principle possible in *Aaron's Rod*, but only fragilely so, and does not represent a dependable occurrence of structural significance, or even necessarily an occurrence of great significance in its own right.

However, it can be suggested that it is a misapprehension to conclude that the novels of this period lack structure. Instead, their form can be seen as replicating the growth through bifurcation which is manifested by plants. The growth of plants – whether the roots of a lily or the branches of a tree – is achieved through the repeated splitting of strands into ever-smaller sub-strands. Therefore the plant as a whole is able to follow multiple paths simultaneously, and need never commit to a single direction. Such multiplicity, including the attempt to follow two or more directions of development simultaneously, is seen in *The Lost Girl*, *Mr Noon* and *Aaron's Rod* alike. However, an added difficulty, a supreme awkwardness in these awkward works, is that a key split is between a model of development fashioned after the growth of plants, and a co-existing model of development through migration: in other words, while structurally these novels develop like forking plants, their protagonists simultaneously seek development through both plant-like growth and migration of a form ordinarily impossible for plants.

The Lost Girl was intentionally conceived as a lighter, more accessible novel than its close contemporary, *Women in Love*. For D.H. Lawrence *The Lost Girl* meant possible respectability and commercial success. In a letter to Cynthia Asquith, he expresses the hope that 'my Lost Girl will be Treasure Trove to me.' Meanwhile, in a letter to his publisher, Martin

Secker, Lawrence expresses his conviction that the novel is '[not] at all improper: quite fit for Mudie's.' However, H.M. Daleski contends in 'The Encoding of *The Lost Girl*' that the novel possesses 'explosive potentiality,' though Lawrence 'carefully camouflag[es]' what he has to say.' For Daleski, this purported camouflaging allowed Lawrence to continue 'his daring exploration of sexual relations,' albeit the challenging ideas once overt are here found in undertones and occasional double entendre. To extend from Daleski's insight, it need not be felt that only challenging ideas concerning sex are carried within the novel in this way: *The Lost Girl*, though by means different from his preceding work, also maintains Lawrence's challenge to stable, materialized identity.

The metaphor of camouflage is also an apt one in the sense that *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's Rod* and *Mr Noon* not only maintain Lawrence's attention to evolution as a broad abstract notion, but each also takes an interest in the strategies of survival and self-development which individual creatures employ. Each concerns a character participating in a test of fitness to survive: a character who attempts to shape his or her own destiny, rather than succumbing to waves of evolution and dissolution considered to be beyond his or her individual control. While Daleski suggests that Lawrence employs camouflage as something of a Darwinian means to survive as a writer, Darwinian survival strategies are reproduced within the novels of this period in themselves.

Where *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* explore development within a universe cycling between evolution and dissolution – the structure which defines Herbert Spencer's *First Principles* – in *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's Rod* and *Mr Noon*, the universe owes more debt to Darwin, in that development in individuals is not obviously guided by a greater cosmological order. Though in these later works individual development – and, indeed, evolution – is implicitly or explicitly suggested to be necessary, there is no universal direction to which the development of individuals should cohere. In that Henri Bergson's *Creative Evolution* is more directly a corrective to Herbert Spencer's evolution of fragmentation than to Darwin's unconscious selection, this might seem to suggest it should be a diminished presence in the novels of this period, by contrast with *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. However, in *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's*

Rod and Mr Noon, a Bergsonian emphasis on creative process can be seen as giving meaning to the unguided, motiveless evolutionary process Darwin recognized, while the very interest in plant-like growth manifest in these novels can very much be linked to the work of Bergson.

The argument that the pursuit of development in these works is Darwinian in its nature is also made, though rather differently, by Ronald Granofsky. In *D.H. Lawrence and Survival*, Granofsky suggests that Lawrence had come, by the middle of his career, 'to see his own individual works in terms of evolutionary process.' In Granofsky's view, when Lawrence wrote *The Lost Girl* (1920) and *Aaron's Rod* (1922), in each case he worked by creating a main protagonist with a distinct quality – a mutation, perhaps, in one sense or another – whom he would then challenge to survive in a testing fictional world. In Granofsky's view, in writing both *The Lost Girl* and *Aaron's Rod*, 'Lawrence became his own "beast in the jungle," culling the weakest members of his conceptual herd in order to strengthen the whole and setting up characters who are sent through the alembic of a narratological survival-of-the-fittest test in order to distil the character traits he approved of.' Thus, for Granofsky, these novels present characters conceived without a strong structural necessity to the fictional environments in which they exist: they are not created deliberately to represent an advancement over a previous generation, or to fill a precise need in a structurally determinate story.

This test of the ability to survive is employed not only with respect to individual characters, Granofsky contends, but also with respect to ideas. Granofsky suggests that both *The Lost Girl* and *Aaron's Rod* make use of an 'exploratory setting up of contrasting ideas' whereby the co-existence of ostensibly opposed ideas in the same work represents a competition, in which only one idea may be found fit to survive. This purported test, in Granofsky's view, is employed by Lawrence with a view to improving himself: Granofsky argues that Lawrence's fiction by this period had come to offer him 'an arena in which the very things that threatened his survival would be opposed and defeated.' Thus, characters in these works, by this account, are impelled to attempt to develop along different paths at once, in order to establish which path is the more successful. This reasoning credibly explains why ostensibly incompatible *modi vivendi* may simultaneously appear to be held true by given characters, or even simultaneously appear to be

supported by the novel in itself: more than one idea has to be allowed to develop for the contrast between ideas to be meaningful. However, it implies that the structural impact upon the novels in themselves is largely unconsidered: Lawrence, for Granofsky, is thinking only of himself.

Attention to the image of plant-growth prominent in each of these works suggests more consideration for the form of these works than Granofsky allows. When Rawdon Lilly tells Aaron Sisson that his 'cells push on into buds and boughs and flowers' (*AR* 296), and when Alvina Houghton feels flowers have 'bewitched' her and 'stole[n] her own soul away' (*LG* 335), each moment can be seen to be connected to the greater structure of the respective novel at large.

Additionally, in terms of the content of these novels, the evolutionary writing strategy which Granofsky suggests does not entail that the ideas of Darwin and Spencer, and those of Huxley and Haeckel must be explored in themselves within Lawrence's work of this period. Indeed, according to Granofsky's account, they are not: neither *The Lost Girl* nor *Aaron's Rod* is, by his understanding, *about* evolution (Granofsky does not address *Mr Noon*). Instead, Granofsky suggests that because evolutionary concepts are utilized as part of the creative process, this leaves its mark upon the works created, but this mark must be considered effectively an incidental one. Put another way, Granofsky suggests that natural selection is used by Lawrence as a writing strategy, rather than discussed through these works; using his fiction, Lawrence's primary aim is to test models of characterization and broader ideas both for their viability as fictional devices, and for their applicability to reality. There is a test of ideas in these works, by this view, but no discussion.

However, this interest in the process of literary creation and in its utility for the creator which Granofsky identifies in Lawrence very much bears connection to Henri Bergson's understanding of evolution as a creative process – a connection which Granofsky does not make. If Lawrence, as Granofsky suggests, is focused in this period upon his own working method as a creator, then it may be valuable to seek Bergsonian traces in the work produced at this time, given the Bergsonian aspects of Lawrence's preceding work.

Granofsky does mention Henri Bergson, but only once, in passing, suggesting that 'Lawrence did not share the modernist obsession with time,' a source for which, for modernists at

large, Granofsky regards as 'Henri Bergson's influential assertion that our habitual thinking in spatial terms is the cause of our speciously attributing materialist explanations to human consciousness.' In making this argument, Granofsky highlights *The Study of Thomas Hardy*, in which he draws attention to the fact that Lawrence 'insists that spatial constructs are at least as crucial to understanding the world around us as temporal ones.' However, in his own words, Lawrence's assertion in *The Study of Thomas Hardy* is that 'there is not one principle, there are two,' referring to space and time, these 'travelling always to meet.' Lawrence therefore suggests that the motion of one cannot be fully appreciated without attention to the related motion of the other: if it is to be understood that Granofsky suggests Lawrence's obsession was with space rather than time, this cannot represent a complete truth, in that, for Lawrence, consideration of one is incomplete from consideration of the other.

When, therefore, Granofsky argues that Lawrence's 'portrayal of the attempt to reconfigure and strengthen the sense of selfhood in *Aaron's Rod* depends not on the temporal deepening of memory (as in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*) but on the spatial widening of a feeling of connectedness between the self and the world around it,' this is only partly true. Relocation in space is important in *Aaron's Rod*, but it is very much connected to relocation in time. In both *Aaron's Rod* and *The Lost Girl* movement in space at the very least gives the sensation of movement in time. In *Aaron's Rod*, Florence is said to be 'the end of the old world and the beginning of the new' (AR 212), while Alvina in *The Lost Girl*, passing through southern France on her journey to Italy, feels that 'the Past was greater, more magnificent in these regions' (LG 297). Thus, Aaron and Alvina may each in actuality make a spatial journey, but the respective journeys undertaken by the two are each conceived of in terms which render the movement akin to travelling back in time.

Moreover, there is considerable evidence in the novels of this period that an interest in the process of creation is not only self-directed in this period of Lawrence's work: the nature and meaning of creativity remains central as a thematic concern in each of *The Lost Girl* and *Aaron's Rod*. In *The Lost Girl*, musical performance is prominent as a vision of creativity. Speaking to the leader of the Natcha-Kee-Tawara performing troupe, Madame Rochard, Alvina asks if she

believes there to be an innate meaning to sounds, a 'goodness or badness to them.' Madame Rochard's response is that 'Some sounds are good, they are for life, for creating, and some sounds are bad, they are for destroying' (LG 183), implying that she considers that a given sound in itself, rather than the intent behind it, is to be defined as either creative or destructive. The creator of the sound is irrelevant, by this view – the creative force identified exists in the sound in itself.

This interest in musical creation bleeds into Alvina's interaction with the wider environment. Once she has moved to Italy with Ciccio, in her new surroundings she becomes conscious of 'a strange, high, rapid, yelling music, the very voice of the mountains' (LG 322). The notion that nature's expression of itself can be musical is particular, and carries certain implications. It suggests that the voice of the mountains is capable of producing different notes, with sufficient structural relationship one to another as to be called music. Though the voice is not, for Alvina, 'beautiful, in our musical sense of the word,' it evokes 'the magic, the nostalgia of the untamed, heathen past' (LG 322). In effect, nature does not communicate its present self to Alvina, but instead recaptures something of its own, wilder past. Just as, in *The White Peacock*, Cyril finds a mill-pond and its surroundings 'gathered in the musings of old age,' Alvina perceives nature communicating its own past. However, in this case the purported musicality of that communication means that where Cyril, seemingly falsely, finds comprehensible ideas expressed the sounds of nature, Alvina finds emotion.

This can instructively be related to Bergson's consideration of the difference between music and natural sounds in *Time and Free Will*. Bergson argues that 'if musical sounds affect us more powerfully than the sounds of nature, the reason is that nature confines itself to expressing feelings, whereas music suggests them to us.' Thus, for Bergson, non-human nature can express emotion: therefore, by this reasoning, we need not see Alvina as distorting her surroundings in this respect. The particularity of music for Bergson lies in the fact that through music 'our soul is lulled into self-forgetfulness, and, as in a dream, thinks and sees with the poet. Natural music, by implication, might both produce emotion and make an individual forget himself or herself: he or she might lose his or her sense of being distinct from wider nature.

In *Aaron's Rod* to engage in life is cast as a form of creative play. Life itself is conceived

of by Aaron as 'a delicate fountain playing creatively' (*AR* 166), while Lady Artemis, whom Aaron plays a private show for while living in London, suggests that Aaron himself lives for playing (*AR* 129). Though, on the surface, Lady Artemis is referring to Aaron's music, the fact that her comment is unspecific and can therefore be taken more widely is suggestive. This suggestion is subsequently supported, in that it is later shown that Aaron plays with ideas rather than engaging in structured thought. Both Aaron's developing soul and his mind are defined as musical. It is explained that:

The inaudible music of his conscious soul conveyed his meaning in him quite as clearly as I convey it in words: probably much more clearly. But in his own mode only: and it was in his own mode only he realised what I [the narrator] must put into words. These words are my own affair. His mind was music. (*AR* 164)

For Bergson the action of the intelligence in non-human animals can be seen as a process of play. He writes that 'animal intelligence, although it does not form concepts properly so called, already moves in a conceptual atmosphere' and that 'it no doubt plays rather than thinks its ideas; this play none the less already corresponds, in the main, to the general plan of human intelligence.' Thus, Aaron, who is viewed as less developed by his mentor, Lilly, can be seen as not quite human in terms of his mental processes. Closer, therefore, to wider nature than most of the human race, Aaron is well-positioned to be a character through whom non-human models of development can be explored.

Thus, creativity remains a key concern within these works, as does the relationship between the creator and his or her creation. Creative play, instantiated in musical performance, as in both *The Lost Girl* and *Aaron's Rod*, is, by its nature, creation where process trumps product: musical performance has no direct physical result. As such it is a form of creation which must be understood as valuable as a process, rather than in terms of its product. The attention to music in the works of this period is therefore a strong sign that there is more nuance, more richness to their

concern than in simply tracing the survival of individuals. By extension, it may also render it unsurprising that the concept of survival appears to be played with in itself.

II

Though Granofsky acknowledges that Lawrence was familiar with the ideas of a number of evolutionary theorists (albeit Bergson is not mentioned among them) his interpretation of the evolutionism in Lawrence's writing process is as pre-dominantly Darwinian as the sub-title of *D.H. Lawrence and Survival: Darwinism in the Fiction of the Transitional Period* suggests. He argues that Lawrence worked through a process of unconscious selection, allowing his characters' environments to shape – and, in principle, improve them – broadly matching the fundamental process of natural selection as outlined in *The Origin of Species*, where Darwin claims that:

It may metaphorically be said that natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinising, throughout the world, the slightest variations; rejecting those that are bad, preserving and adding up all that are good; silently and insensibly working, *whenever and wherever opportunity offers*, at the improvement of each organic being.

Survival, while it may have been instantiated in the writing process which led to these novels, as Granofsky suggests, is also addressed as a concept in the novels in themselves. Although not an extended concern in any of these novels, in this period of Lawrence's work survival as an idea has a resonance of Bergson's duration, or the persistence of the past into the present. Bergson, in *Creative Evolution*, defines his concept of duration as 'the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances.' The past, therefore, not only survives, for Bergson, but grows with the passage of time. Bergson develops this idea, suggesting that 'from this survival of the past it follows that consciousness cannot go through the same state twice.' This he explains through the suggestion that 'the circumstances may still be the same, but they will act no longer on the same person, since they find him at a new moment of his history.' Thus, for Bergson, 'our personality, which is being built up each instant

with its accumulated experience, changes without ceasing' and 'by changing, it prevents any state, although superficially identical with another, from ever repeating it in its very depth.' In effect, just as for Lawrence travel in space can equate to travel in time, for Bergson, the passage of time brings distance – in that return to the same state is never true return, by virtue, if nothing else, of the fact that a return is considered fundamentally different from an initial encounter. However, estrangement through the passage of time occurs, perversely perhaps, because of the meaningful survival of the past into the present: it is as a result of the fact that something of the past lingers that revisiting the same state can never be precisely achieved. It is what has been collected on a previous occasion which changes any return.

Such potential for the past to persist is witnessed in *The Lost Girl*, though it is not the past of an individual which survives, but the past of a location. In her new home in the Italian mountains, Alvina comes to feel that 'the terror, the agony, the nostalgia of the heathen past was a constant torture to her mediumistic soul' (*LG* 315). The sensation is complicated, however, in that Alvina experiences it as 'a kind of neuralgia in the very soul, never to be located in the human body, and yet physical' (*LG* 315). The past, it appears, can have a direct effect, without thought as an intermediary: the power of the past is not a power of memory, ordinarily understood.

Similarly in *Mr Noon*, the past persists but with complication. Gilbert Noon finds himself daunted by Patty Goddard, one of the women he courts in the first part of the novel, because she has 'all the darkness of a finished past in her eyes' (*MN* 38). Thus, though the past is reportedly completed, it is nevertheless manifest: its enduring presence does not necessarily constitute survival, if to be finished means to no longer be vital. There is, then, the sense that Goddard carries with her the residue of a former self from which she is effectively disconnected.

For Bergson, a dynamic relationship with the surviving past is distinctively human. Bergson contends that 'in the dog, the recollection remains the captive of perception; it is brought back to consciousness only when an analogous perception recalls it by reproducing the same spectacle, and then it is manifested by the recognition, acted rather than thought, of the present perception much more than by an actual reappearance of the recollection itself.' Humankind, by contrast, Bergson suggests 'is capable of calling up the recollection at will, at any moment,

independently of the present perception.' The human being, for Bergson, 'is not limited to playing his past life again; he represents and dreams it.'

That in *Aaron's Rod*, Aaron Sisson plays more than thinks, in kind with Bergson's suggestion regarding the dog, implies his relationship with the past should be different from that of Alvina Houghton or Gilbert Noon. In the major sense that he is able to walk out on his wife and family 'for no reason,' feeling only a desire to 'have some free room' (*AR* 66), with no express regret, Sisson's relationship with the past is demonstrably different: Sisson has the inhuman ability not to call to mind a past which may constrain him. Having removed himself from his wife and family, thereby removing them from perception, Sisson, like a dog, does not bring this part of his past to consciousness, significant though it may be.

Broadly, however, it may be summarized that in the respective quests for survival undertaken by Alvina and Aaron, each of which Granofsky perceives as Darwinian, improvement of the self – with the goal of bettering the chance of survival – appears to involve finding distance, literal or metaphorical from the past. Each moves to Italy to remove himself or herself from an environment felt as constrictive because of its past.

In the case of *The Lost Girl*, Granofsky suggests that Lawrence utilizes this process of self-redevelopment as manifest in Alvina Houghton as 'a symbolic means of purging from himself his own unwanted weaker traits in the project of survival.' If Granofsky is correct, that this purge is achieved through a female character provides certain difficulties. When the fitness of a human being is considered in Darwinian evolutionary terms, then it is likely that sexual selection impacts upon the traits it is desirable for a male or female individual to possess; thus implying that – if Lawrence is indeed looking to promote his own survival through the creation of Alvina Houghton – his understanding of the strategies required to improve his fitness as a male must be, at best, idiosyncratic, and, at worst, faulty. Weakness in a human male, in evolutionary terms at least, likely ought to be defined differently from weakness in a female.

In terms of addressing this issue directly, Granofsky writes only that 'the narrative strategy of using a female perceiving consciousness whose own survival depends upon the sexual selection of a mate clearly also serves the compelling psychological needs of the author.' He does

not provide a full explanation of the benefit he perceives for Lawrence in enacting his quest for survival through a female character. If Lawrence does use Alvina in the sense Granofsky suggests, the need served by doing so is not entirely obvious. Particularly inasmuch as composition of *The Lost Girl* took place in two bursts separated by seven years (its composition began in late 1912 or early 1913 with a draft which ran to 100 pages, but the novel was then set aside and only completed in 1920), it is hard to feel that these circumstances can have resulted in a protagonist created with a single dominant purpose for her author. Indeed, Cornelia Nixon identifies the period between 1915 and 1919 as the time when Lawrence 'turns against' women. She suggests that, during this time, Lawrence becomes preoccupied with a series of 'dangerous errors committed by modern women' including 'sexual assertion, presumption to mentality, [and] demands for love from sons,' and therefore that Lawrence begins to set his male characters 'marching away' from women, seeking communion with one another rather than with women.

Nevertheless, whatever her value to her creator, Alvina's development – from a 'dainty little girl' (*LG* 6) to the sexually experienced, confident woman she is by the time she moves to Italy with Ciccio – is achieved through the loss, intended or otherwise, of characteristics which are seen to have inhibited her. For instance, when Alvina realizes she can no longer find fault with Ciccio, it is because 'she had lost the power to care about his faults' (*LG* 288). Similarly – though it shows that Alvina's control over her own development is incomplete – when, during her time working as a nurse in Lancashire, she thinks about her childhood home of Manchester House we find Alvina disappointed to feel 'unaccountably uneasy and wistful, [and to be] yearning into the distance again,' as this is 'a trick she thought she had happily lost' (*LG* 263). In short, whether or not we accept that Lawrence learns about his own personal development through her, Alvina does explicitly analyse her own character, and does seek to modify it. Correctly or not, she defines certain behaviours as weaknesses and consciously seeks to purge them from herself. She seeks to recreate herself.

However, in that Alvina adapts herself to suit Ciccio and Italy, the reader sees that she is, in many respects, degraded. Distance, physical and emotional, from her old self is not sufficient. We find, for instance, that even at an early stage in their relationship, Ciccio's love 'did not

stimulate or excite her [but] extinguished her' (*LG* 288), while the effect Italy has upon her is viewed in very similar terms. Though when she first arrives in the country, it is said that Alvina 'loved being in Italy,' (*LG* 299) by her first evening in Ciccio's home village, a detrimental effect is apparent:

Everything seemed electric with horror. She felt she would die instantly, everything was so terrible around her. She could not move. She felt that everything around her was horrific, extinguishing her, putting her out. Her very being was threatened. In another instant she would be transfixed. (*LG* 313)

However, it may not be that Alvina in herself has changed for the worse, but that her new home within Italy constitutes the wrong environment for her. The narration of *The Lost Girl* contends that 'there are places which resist us, which have the power to overthrow our psychic being' and that 'every country has its potent negative centres, localities which savagely and triumphantly refuse our living culture' (*LG* 314). Alvina, it is said, had struck one of them, here on the edge of the Abruzzi' (*LG* 314). This corrosive interaction with the earth appears in large part to be due in this case to its 'remoteness from the world's actuality' (*LG* 320): evidence again that for Lawrence migration does not represent simply movement in space.

In contrast to *The Lost Girl*, Granofsky argues that *Aaron's Rod* offers a 'fight against the perceived priority of woman' – a struggle for the vitality of the male self, which Granofsky claims 'in this text is equatable for the most part with individuality.' According to this reasoning, a man may be said to be mollified by marriage, inasmuch as it sees him in large part defined by his relationship to a woman, and in that it renders him less free to act as an individual due to the commitments marriage should entail. Instead of enjoying a close connection to his wife, for Granofsky, Sisson is deeply linked to his writer friend Rawdon Lilly, by virtue of the fact that each, to a certain extent and in a certain respect, is seen to represent something of Lawrence himself. Granofsky writes that, 'countless readers have recognized that Lilly and Aaron represent two aspects of Lawrence himself or at least a splitting of the perceiving consciousness in the novel.' Granofsky argues that this implies 'a central paradox in the work' in that 'the theme of

singleness is developed through a central figure who is divided in two.' However, the notion that Sisson and Lilly struggle together is not strongly supported by the novel: though Lilly appears to guide Sisson to the extent that he suggests a number of ideas which Sisson quickly interpolates, Lilly himself takes little from Sisson in return. As Bridget Chalk notes, Sisson has a 'growing need for Lilly:' the reverse is not true. Moreover, much in the struggle Sisson undertakes leads him in directions which exclude Lilly: his growth is at once towards and away from Lilly.

III

In addition to survival, the idea of growth in Lawrence's fiction of this period can be approached as an evolutionary device. However, the concept of growth in evidence in *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's Rod*, and, indeed, *Mr Noon*, does not correlate very strongly with that which is to be found in Darwin's work. In *The Origin of Species*, economy of growth is a common facet of the development of both individual animals and plants – in the form that superfluous developments in any members of a species will be reduced over time, and new attributes will develop only to the extent required for full utility, and not considerably beyond. By contrast, in Lawrence's novels of the early 1920s, limitless and largely undirected growth is frequently craved by the protagonists, and, if the narration is taken at its word, seen as potentially achievable. Once again, consideration of the ideas of Henri Bergson may be more promising than engagement with Darwin in understanding the meaning and function of this notion of growth: through attention to Bergson it is possible to see a systematic coherence to Lawrence's rendering of growth in these novels, and to see a structural significance to the device. For Bergson, persistence of the past includes growth: he writes that 'the past grows without ceasing,' meaning 'there is no limit to its preservation,' while life itself is also described as 'a continually growing action.' Development, then, by this view means growth.

Interest in unbound growth in Lawrence's work in this period is perhaps most strikingly seen in a passage from the unfinished *Mr Noon*, in which the titular protagonist is in the wood

yard outside his home on a Sunday morning. The trees in the yard fixate him, with the fascination largely due to the nature and direction of their growth:

Near a chopping-block was a pile of split faggots, while huge trunks of trees, oak and elm, stripped of branches, lay aside like swathed corpses. Gilbert noticed the star-shaped cracks that ran from the centres of the trunk-bottoms, thought of the plant-histology, and in a dim sort of way calculated the combination of forces that had brought about the fissures. He ran his finger over a heavy-grained oak surface, and to him it was an exquisite pleasure, vibrating in his veins like music, to realise the flexible but grandly-based rhythm in the morphological structure of the tree, right from the root-tip though the sound trunk, right out to a leaf-tip: wonderful concatenation and association of cells, incalculable and yet so genetic in their rhythm, unfolding the vast unsymmetrical symmetry of the tree. What he loved so much in plant morphology was, that given a fixed mathematical basis, the final evolution was so incalculable. It pleased him to trace inherent individual qualities in each separate organic growth, qualities which were over and above the fixed qualities belonging to the genus and the species, and which could not really be derived by a chain of evolutionary cause-and-effect. Could they? (*MN* 34)

The passage unites an interest in musicality and rhythm with a vision of growth as evolutionary. The version of evolution it most closely coheres to appears to be that of Henri Bergson. In *Creative Evolution*, Bergson uses a model resembling that of the growth of a plant as structuring the progression of life on Earth. He suggests that 'life is tendency, and the essence of a tendency is to develop in the form of a sheaf, creating, by its very growth, divergent directions among which its impetus is divided.' Moreover, for Bergson, this model is also applicable to the development of a human being. He writes that 'this we observe in ourselves, in the evolution of that special tendency which we call our character. Both forces of life internal and external to a given human being, therefore, can be seen as bifurcating, impelling development in multiple directions. As Bergson puts it, 'our personality shoots, grows and ripens without ceasing' and that 'each of its moments is something new added to what was before' and 'something unforeseeable.'

The association of this plant-like model of growth with the human being is explicitly made in *Mr Noon*, though it is the human soul rather than human mentality which is seen as developing according to this model:

What is the soul, gentle reader? What is your soul, what is my soul? It is not some evaporated spirit. Ah no. It is that deep core of individual unity where life itself, the very God, throbs incalculably, whose throbbing unfolds the leaves and stem of the body, and brings forth the flower of the mind and the spirit. But the spirit is not the soul. Ah no. The soul has its deep fibrilled foliage in the damp earth, has its dark leaves in the air, it tosses the flower of the spirit like a bauble, a lovely plaything on the winds of time. Man can live without spirit or ideal, as dark pine-trees live without flowers: dark and sap-powerful. But without the deep sensual soul man is even inconceivable (*MN* 189)

However, for Lawrence, the potential to develop in multiple directions can be subject to constraint. He suggests that 'our era has landed in the *cul de sac* of the spirit and the ideal' (*MN* 189), implying that no meaningful directions for development exist. Though Lawrence employs both metaphors of boughs and roots, significantly, the latter are the more prominent in the novels of this period. While, in principle a branch may become blocked, if a tree grows too close to an obstacle, it is the roots which typically face the greater resistance in their growth: in the wrong ground, roots can face numerous dead ends. This blockage is possible for a given human being, and for humankind as whole, within Lawrence's conceptual system because he argues that both a 'tree of me' and a 'tree of life' exist (*MN* 190). Humankind can be seen as occupying a constrained position on the tree of life, restricting the impulse to develop in all directions which an individual is seen to feel.

In *Aaron's Rod* growth of plants is similarly central and similarly conceived. In short succession, two strikingly similar passages occur in which the rod of the novel's title – ostensibly Aaron's flute, but equally his phallus – is said to blossom gloriously. Firstly, after listening to his desired Marchesa sing, Aaron feels his 'black rod of power, blossoming again with red Florentine lilies and fierce thorns' (*AR* 258). Then, the morning after, when 'playing over from memory the tunes she loved' it is said that 'his flute, his Aaron's rod, would blossom once again with splendid scarlet flowers, the red Florentine lilies' (*AR* 268-269).

However, in *Aaron's Rod*, different directions of development become mutually antagonistic, unable eventually to co-exist. Aaron is both compelled to establish roots, as a plant, and to move, as an animal. Though it is considered valuable to Aaron that he is 'a thing which has its root deep in life' (*AR* 166), during a bout of sickness, the problem with Aaron is that 'his soul

seemed stuck, as if it would not move' (*AR* 96). He wishes to have roots, but at the same time hopes to break the connection 'between himself and anything on earth' (*AR* 178). He is at once impelled to move across the earth, and to cling to a specific part.

For Bergson, the result of the fact that 'interwoven personalities become incompatible in course of growth' is that 'the route we pursue in time is strewn with the remains of all that we began to be, of all that we might have become.' However, Bergson suggests that while these unsustained directions of development might appear to have constituted wasted or misdirected effort on the level of the individual, they are valuable to wider nature. He writes that 'nature, which has at command an incalculable number of lives, is in no wise bound to make such sacrifices. She preserves the different tendencies that have bifurcated with their growth.'

For Bergson, this bifurcation is caused by the fact that more than one power acts in an individual. He writes of there being powers 'immanent in life and originally intermingled, which were bound to part company in course of growth.' Bergson identifies these powers as 'vegetative torpor, instinct, and intelligence.' These, he suggests once 'coincided in the vital impulsion common to plants and animals,' but 'in the course of a development in which they were made manifest in the most unforeseen forms, have been dissociated by the very fact of their growth.'

This need to separate in order to grow is very much the centre of *Aaron's Rod*. Aaron, confusedly, without a clear notion as to why, is driven to break 'the bonds and ligatures which bound him to the life that had formed him' (*AR* 178). Moreover, a deep bifurcation in *Aaron's Rod*, as well as in Aaron, emerges through the fact that the initially predominant model of development through plant-like growth comes into competition with a model founded on a notion of animal development – with the soul to be nurtured like an egg in the womb:

There inside you lies your own very self, like a germinating egg, your precious Easter egg of your own soul. There it is, developing bit by bit, from one single egg-cell which you were at your conception in your mother's womb, on and on to the strange and peculiar complication in unity which never stops till you die – if then. You've got an innermost, integral unique self, and since it's the only thing you have got or ever will have, don't go trying to lose it. You've got to develop it, from the egg into the chicken, and from the chicken into the one-and-only phoenix, of which there can only be one at a time in the universe. There can only be one of

you at a time in the universe--and one of me. So don't forget it. Your own single oneness is your destiny. Your destiny comes from within, from your own self-form. And you can't know it beforehand, neither your destiny nor your self-form. You can only develop it. (*AR* 295-296)

Ronald Granofsky suggests that 'Lawrence's identification with the process of entelechy and growth in the (immortal) vegetable world was, especially in the mid to late fiction, part of his mechanism for coping with his death anxiety, his impaired sexuality, his shrinking body mass, in short, his own decay.' It may, however, be seen as much more than this. For Bergson, growth is very much connected with creativity. In *Creative Evolution*, the two often appear to be held as equivalent to one another as descriptors of reality. Thus, Bergson writes that 'reality is a perpetual growth, a creation pursued without end.' Additionally, for Bergson, 'the idea of creation becomes more clear, for it is merged in that of growth. To grow is for Lawrence as for Bergson, to be creative. Exploring alternative directions at once, in that it most closely matches an innate impulsion, is by this reasoning, the model of artistic creation which most coheres with the creativity of the universe: the novel which attempts multiple directions, though recognizing some will fail, is the most organic, most evolutionary of novels, by a Bergsonian understanding.

However, it is not only in *Aaron's Rod* that plant-like growth competes for room with an ostensibly incompatible notion of personal development – that of migration as enriching. In each of *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's Rod*, and *Mr Noon*, a journey is undertaken from the East Midlands of England to Italy: a country Lawrence describes as 'old,' 'man-gripped' and 'withered.' This migration in each case is permanent, or at least indefinite: Noon, Sisson and Houghton alike travel to Italy with no immediate intention to leave.

However, Italy, for Lawrence, is a place in which discovery of the self is especially possible. In *Sea and Sardinia*, Lawrence suggests that 'for us to go to Italy and to *penetrate* into Italy is like a most fascinating act of self-discovery.' This, he suggests, is because travel to Italy, means travelling 'back, back down the old ways of time' where 'strange and wonderful chords awake in us, and vibrate in us after many hundreds of years of complete forgetfulness.'

Michael Ross, addressing Alvina Houghton of *The Lost Girl*, suggests that 'foreignness is something with which she becomes passionately actively engaged.' This he sees as provoked by a

sense of disconnection from her homeland, however, rather than by an attraction in itself to Italy: as Ross writes, 'what lies behind her engagement is her disengagement from her native country.' Thus, by implication, it is suggested that Alvina moves to develop, in the sense that England is felt to give her nothing. This impression is reinforced by a passage Ross highlights from Lawrence's school textbook, *Movements in European History* (1921). In the passage in question, Lawrence writes that 'once the living idea, the forward-reaching consciousness of any race dies and goes hard and dry, the vast branch of that race dies upon the tree of mankind, withers, goes dry rotten, and at length falls and disappears.' Thus, migration, though alien to the rooted plant, is a means by which a human being might find better terrain in which to develop.

It is not, therefore, the case for Lawrence that the human being, by virtue of his or her mobility, exists without meaningful connection to the earth. The human being needs roots in the earth to survive as does a plant. A human only has the modest advantage that, through movement, it is able if necessary to relocate in order to find a fit part of the earth in which to establish its roots – any notion that human rootedness is unnecessary appears illusory.

IV

The idea of the fictional character as a tool, created for the author's self-revelation is – for all that Ronald Granofsky sees Lawrence's evolutionism as purely self-reflexive in the works of this period – potentially interfaced with in the discussions concerning instrumentality which feature in Lawrence's novels of this time. In *Aaron's Rod* in particular, a repeated metaphor presents men as akin to instruments in the hands of women. In one case, Sisson states that a woman 'look[s] on a man as if he was nothing but an instrument to get and rear children' (*AR* 100), while, in a similar vein, Rawdon Lilly claims that 'a woman is like a violinist: any fiddle, any instrument rather than empty hands and no tune going' (*AR* 107).

This might appear simple misogyny – a product, perhaps, of the turn against women Cornelia Nixon identifies. However, the idea for Lilly, at least, is broader – not only are men used or played with by women, but human beings as a whole can be characterized as instruments:

People, for Lilly, 'are not men: they are insects and instruments, and their destiny is slavery' (*AR* 281, italicization Lawrence's).

Setting aside the unsavoury aspects of Lilly's ideas, this is important with respect to the operator of the instrument. When it is humankind as a whole which is seen as instrumental, then for any one human or group of humans to utilize others becomes contingent and spuriously justifiable: if it is to be supposed that Lilly's proposed slavery should see the greater part of humankind enslaved to an elite, as is probable, it should be expected that the enslavers, by virtue of common human nature, possess within them the same instrumentality which is seen in their species as a whole. If, in short, Lilly is justified in seeing humanity as instrumental, it is curious to look within the human race itself for the appropriate operators of these instruments.

Broadly, one possibility for identifying the operator is to extrapolate from Granofsky, and consider the relationship of instrument and operator in these works as one which functions more significantly between writer and text: Lawrence, as writer, is the operator of characters whom, for Granofsky, he manipulates for his own benefit – a fact Granofsky contends is vitally important to the nature of the novels in question. However, Lawrence's suggested creation of a character as a device to understand himself is significantly complicated by the fact that his characters, especially Lilly and Sisson, show a certain degree of self-awareness regarding their own instrumentality. In that Rawdon Lilly is certain that he exists as an instrument it becomes a degree more awkward to comprehend him as a device Lawrence, as his author, uses to achieve self-understanding. In other words, a character, such as Lilly, who is certain of his or her own utility relates challengingly to a creator, in Lawrence, who struggles in vain for certainty as to the nature and meaning of his own creation.

However, Lawrence can also be said to utilize characters deliberately as instruments, as devices to manipulate the reader. The conspicuous createdness of characters is often central to interpretations of *Mr Noon*. For instance, in the course of advancing the argument that *Mr Noon* can be understood as a post-modern text, Earl G. Ingersoll proposes that while 'the Gilbert Noon of Part I is clearly based upon Lawrence's friend from childhood, George Henry Neville,' the

Noon of Part II 'awaken[s] in Munich as a thinly-disguised D.H. Lawrence.' This shift, for Ingersoll, constitutes a deliberate jarring of the reader's expectations, and a deliberate belying of Noon's artificiality.

In '*Mr Noon: The Reader in the Text*,' Maria Aline Ferreira includes the reader's contribution to the creative process as part of her consideration. She writes that 'although in *Mr Noon* Lawrence is vividly aware of his readers and of their potential contribution to the construction of the narrative, he is not willing to concede that the major part of the responsibility lies with them.' This she establishes on the basis that Lawrence uses a number of rhetorical tools which appear to invite the participation of the reader, particularly the narrator's numerous direct appeals to the 'gentle reader,' but that the reader's interpretation is expressly disregarded. An example, not one selected by Ferreira, comes at a point by which the narrator has seemingly tired of pleasantries. Addressing the 'sniffing mongrel bitch of a reader,' the narrator explains that 'you can't sniff out any specific why or any specific wherefore, with your carrion-smelling psycho-analysing nose, because there *is* no why and wherefore' (*MN* 205, italicization Lawrence's).

Ferreira's article is just one from a special edition of the *D.H. Lawrence Review* dedicated entirely to *Mr Noon*, in which a number of articles focus upon the characters as tools, and the collaboration, whether felt to be admitted by Lawrence or not, between reader and writer in using the characters. Among them, Michael Black's 'Gilbert Noon, D.H. Lawrence and the Gentle Reader,' is particularly pertinent to consider here, developing the idea of *Mr Noon* as semi-autobiographical with the neatly expressed suggestion that 'Lawrence re-creates himself as one of his characters' – the hyphen seemingly allowing both the usual sense of 'recreation' as replication and yet simultaneously admitting an idea of creating again, in a new way.

Another highlight, the similarly titled 'D.H. Lawrence and His "Gentle Reader": The New Audience of *Mr Noon*' by Lydia Blanchard, contends that '*Mr Noon* is Lawrence's analysis of the fictionality of his own fiction,' and is 'more self-conscious about the creative process than [...] any of his earlier works.' In sum, critics have tended to be interested in the relationship between the creator and created in *Mr Noon*, but while many have noted the constructedness of Noon, there is little firm agreement *why* Noon's fictionality should be foregrounded. Moreover, the novel

has tended to be viewed as something of an exception among Lawrence's work in this respect.

Joyce Wexler, however, does see techniques of this kind in all of Lawrence's novels of this period. She writes that '*The Lost Girl, Aaron's Rod, Mr Noon and Kangaroo* anticipate post-modernism formally by employing self-conscious and self-referential narrators and inconsistent styles and tones.' Wexler contends that the reason Lawrence's novels of this period have certain post-modern traits is 'because he was in the rhetorical position of post-modernists – isolated and exhausted, both physically and artistically,' and therefore he 'abandoned his audience.' In short, Wexler and Granofsky appear to agree that, at this time, Lawrence's characters are tools, and were created more for himself than for his readers.

In terms of an evolutionary understanding of the instrument, in *Creative Evolution* Henri Bergson offers a valuable consideration of the part played in the process of evolution by the development of tools and implements. For Bergson, the human being, capable of the flexible use of a variety of tools to accomplish assorted tasks, and the insect, adapted almost perfectly to perform a particular action, each represents the most complete existing realization of two particular directions of evolution, that progressing towards perfect intelligence and that progressing towards perfect instinct respectively. The specialized insect is, in effect, a tool in itself, highly adapted to a particular task. Thus, for Rawdon Lilly to suggest the larger part of humanity are instruments and insects at once is coherent according to Bergson's evolutionary system: the human being pushed into highly specialized labour – pushed into instrumentality – is, effectively, pushed into insecthood.

However, in Bergson's view the instrument is not passively used by its possessor; instead, it is functionally reactive, it re-organizes its user, driving him or her into new desires. In Bergson's words, the instrument 'reacts on the nature of the being that constructs it; for in calling on him to exercise a new function, it confers on him, so to speak, a richer organization, being an artificial organ by which the natural organ is extended.' Thus, that elite which operates the remainder of humankind as tools is changed by doing so. This consequence is not obviously recognized by Lilly, but is perhaps understood by his interlocutor at this time, Levison, who

imagines that 'prison or the lunatic asylum' would be the result for Lilly were he able to realize his ideas (*AR* 282).

A similar vision of the human being as insect is briefly witnessed in *The Lost Girl*. There, Alvina finds 'the mechanical, overbearing way' of plumber Arthur Witham and his brother, Albert, a former school-teacher belatedly studying for a degree at Oxford, to be 'like the jaws of a pair of insentient iron pincers' (*LG* 66). Rather than bearing a direct connection to the ideas of Bergson, however, it is possible that the interest in insects in evidence in each novel might simply be the reflection of a wider interest manifest at the time. In 'Waspish Segments: Lewis, Prosthesis, Fascism,' Jessica Burstein contends that a taste for insects developed during this period. She writes that 'the militarization of British society was concurrent with the fascination for culture's carapaces, for things with "the works on the outside:" French locomotives, insects, soldiers.'

Moreover, through Burstein the relationship between insectkind and its environment can be seen as an instructive counterpoint to the notion of rootedness. She writes that 'insectkind suffers from a "real temptation by space" in that it offers multiple instances of the reorientation of the insect body in such strict accordance with its environment that the insect body is itself not merely drawn to that which resembles it, but finally freezes into place as a conclusion of the environment.' Where the plant draws vitality from its attachment to the earth, the insect, for Burstein, loses it. That in *The Lost Girl* the insect is identified with the mechanical fits with this picture.

That instrumentality as an idea is being played with in the novels of this period also assists in explaining the centrality of music and musicians in both *The Lost Girl* and *Aaron's Rod*. The musical instrument, as a tool, has certain features which make its deployment as a metaphorical device resonant. Unlike other implements, it creates nothing substantial, while use of it is termed playing, rather than working – in contrast, say, to the craft at which Will Brangwen in *The Rainbow* 'work[s] swiftly and mechanically (*R* 108). Thus, as a device, the creation and playing of music suits these novels in which the reader is played with so teasingly, and in which multiple directions of development are woven together, sometimes harmoniously, sometimes discordantly.

The Interaction between Humankind and the Australian Environment in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*

I

D.H. Lawrence spent just over four months in Australia, from 4 April 1922, until 10 August of the same year. However, the short stay was fertile in terms of his work, insomuch as he wrote the first draft of *Kangaroo* (1923) while there – taking only six weeks to do so – and also met Mollie Skinner, who would eventually co-author his following work. More than a year after Lawrence left Western Australia, Skinner – at whose family guest-house Lawrence had stayed during his first weeks in Australia – sent him a draft of a novel entitled *The House of Ellis*. This Lawrence extensively revised, and the piece was ultimately published as *The Boy in the Bush* (1924).

Lawrence's response to Australia itself is intensely important in each of the two novels resulting from his visit; *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* are both set almost wholly in the country, and Australia's distinctive terrain and its vast spaces empty of human life are regularly visible throughout the two. What is more, this distinctiveness appears to engender a modification of the evolutionarily derived concepts which were central in Lawrence's preceding work. Though the interest in rootedness and plant-like growth at the core of *Aaron's Rod* and *Mr Noon* remains in evidence in Lawrence's Australian novels, it is much modified. Following, in large part, from the inhospitableness of the Australian land, the nature and consequences of connection to it are each significantly different from the nature and consequences of connection to the earth in evidence in Lawrence's earlier work. In *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*, the Australian earth is seen as fractured and fragmented, and this fragmentation is reproduced both in the human figures these works centre upon, and in the form and structure of the novels in themselves. In various respects, Lawrence's Australian novels each constitute collaged, composite constructions, in which distinct, separate voices interact: while *The Boy in the Bush* mixes Lawrence's voice with Skinner's, *Kangaroo* incorporates genuine extracts from newspapers which Lawrence read while in Australia. Meanwhile, characters in each novel experience themselves as 'disintegrating' (K 182) and fragmentary. Thus, the description of *Kangaroo* as an 'oddly uneven novel,' as

advanced by Nancy L. Paxton, might do the novel a certain injustice: *Kangaroo*, in a sense, can be considered consistent in its inconsistency, in that the fragmentary qualities of form and structure support one another. The novel employs matter from a variety of sources, minimally processed, and by doing so creates a rough texture which connects it to Lawrence's understanding of the Australian terrain.

The harsh conditions provided by Australia can additionally be seen as testing the exploratory, emergent, Bergsonian patterning of Lawrence's preceding works – faith in a notion of creativity related to that of *Creative Evolution* is still in evidence in these novels, though that creative force has to react to the challenging physical conditions with which Australia is associated: potentially limitless plant-like growth does not seem to provide a fit model for individual flourishing in conditions in which resources are limited. More broadly, Lawrence's Australian works can be related to prior cultural constructions of the continent and its inhabitants, including those views advanced by the nineteenth-century biologists responsible for developing the theory of evolution. Lawrence's Australian novels relate psychology to the land in a way which reflects the writing of many early settlers and explorers, inasmuch as the emptiness of Australia is identified as the cause for a psychological sensation of an absence. However, the notion of a link between Australia's physical environment and the psychological development of its inhabitants is notably, and perhaps surprisingly, absent from the work of evolutionary biologists interested in the continent – a fact which should influence how Lawrence's rendering of Australia is interpreted.

A few words must, however, first be offered regarding *The Boy in the Bush*, and the implications of its collaborative production with respect to understanding its relationship to wider patterns in Lawrence's work. Harriet Gay, primarily referring to the surprise that Lawrence came to work with Skinner, a middle-aged Quaker, identifies 'Mollie [as] eternally a tease in Zion when it comes to Lawrencian literature.' Skinner, though, challenges not only the biographer, but also the critic, in the sense that her contribution to *The Boy in the Bush* cannot definitively be untangled from Lawrence's. The temptation, perhaps, to which some have succumbed, is to feel

that conclusively identifying the respective contributions of each is necessary for comment on the novel to have value.

Mollie Skinner's claim is that 'about three-fourths' of *The Boy in the Bush* as published is her work. However, after Lawrence made his significant amendments to Skinner's original draft of the novel, Skinner had no opportunity to accept or decline those changes prior to publication: thus, any element of *The Boy in the Bush* in its published state can be said to have been approved by Lawrence in at least some sense – either he composed it himself, or had had the opportunity to adjust it, but did not. Moreover, the last two chapters in their entirety are known to be Lawrence's alone. Nevertheless, it is not clear to what extent Lawrence felt possession over the completed work – whether he felt *The Boy in the Bush* had come to carry his ideas, or if he instead felt he had supported Skinner in enhancing a work which remained broadly hers in its form, character and values. Certainly, it is understandable that critics might wish to avoid making strong claims about Lawrence's work based upon evidence from *The Boy in the Bush*, since the chance would exist that material employed in making the argument might ultimately be Skinner's rather than Lawrence's. Indeed, critics have, to a greater or lesser degree, tended to ignore *The Boy in the Bush*. C.R.A. Goonetilleke, for instance, in *Developing Countries in British Fiction*, refers to 'his [Lawrence's] Australian novel, *Kangaroo*' – implying a uniqueness only true if *The Boy in the Bush* is discounted. Meanwhile, Paul Eggert, in an article entitled 'Lawrence, the Secret Army and the West Australian Connexion: Molly Skinner,' uses a practically identical phrase, referring to 'Lawrence's Australian novel, *Kangaroo*.' The article, despite its title, affords *The Boy in the Bush* minimal attention, focusing almost entirely upon *Kangaroo*.

Beyond this, the apparently unplanned nature of the collaboration might similarly affect the value placed on *The Boy in the Bush*. Though Lawrence had encouraged Skinner to write about her life in Western Australia while staying at her family guest-house near Perth, it appears that he was somewhat surprised to receive the manuscript of *The House of Ellis* from her in July 1923. Accordingly, the novel, it might be supposed, does not contain ideas that Lawrence had of his own accord felt the need to express.

However, the fact that contributing to *The Boy in the Bush* was not a planned project for

Lawrence, and the fact that it was co-authored, do not together constitute sufficient reason to presume that the novel bears no value in advancing the broader project of Lawrence's fiction. Considered in partnership with *Kangaroo*, it can be seen that *The Boy in the Bush* reproduces many of that novel's more difficult elements of composition – even if it seldom extends them: like *Kangaroo*, it addresses the difficulty of development in challenging conditions. As in *Kangaroo*, characters in *The Boy in the Bush* face a fragmentation of themselves, directly related to their difficult physical environment – change which on the surface appears to represent degeneration rather than advancement.

That Lawrence should have taken it upon himself to rework Skinner's novel so considerably need not necessarily be surprising given the meaning Australia as a land held in his estimation. His correspondence from the country makes it clear that Australia represented more to him than simply an extended stopping point on the way to New Mexico – to which he and Frieda Lawrence had been invited by ranch owner and arts patron Mabel Dodge Stern. In a number of letters to friends in Europe and the United States written from Australia he reflects upon the emotional impact which the country has had upon him during his stay. His letter to Catherine Carswell of 22 June 1922 provides a particularly striking example:

If you want to know what it is to feel the 'correct' social world fizzle to nothing, you should come to Australia. It *is* a weird place. In the *established* sense, it is socially nil. Happy-go-lucky dont-you-bother we're-in-Australia. But also there seems to be no inside life of any sort: just a long lapse and drift. A rather fascinating indifference, a *physical* indifference to what we call soul or spirit. It's really a weird show. The country has an extraordinary hoary weird attraction. As you get used to it, it seems so *old*, as if it has missed all this Semite-Egyptian-Indo-European vast era of history, and was coal age, the age of great ferns and mosses. It hasn't got a consciousness – just none – too far back. A strange effect it has on one. Often I hate it like poison, then again it fascinates me, and the spell of its indifference gets me. I cannot quite explain it: as if one resolved back almost to the plant kingdom, before souls, spirits and minds were grown at all: only quite a live, energetic body with a weird face.

The fascination with Australia as a physically strange environment is reflected in both *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in The Bush*. In particular, the sense which Lawrence expresses in this letter that Australia lacks consciousness also enters into his Australian fiction. In *Kangaroo*, Jack

Callcott is said to be 'always aware of the big empty spaces of his own consciousness; like his country, a vast empty "desert" at the centre of him.' Comparably, in *The Boy in the Bush*, the 'wild bush' is said to possess a 'strange depth in the air' which 'life had not yet tapped' (BB 228). This, it emerges, amounts to a power beyond consciousness, in that for Jack Grant, the bush possesses 'great wells of reserve vitality, strange unknown wells of secret life-source, dusky, of a strange, dim, aromatic sap which had never stirred in the veins of man, to consciousness and effect' (BB 228). An apparently identical 'dusky' potency is also said to be found 'in the Australian blood' (BB 228), meaning that in each novel, Australia as a land is outwardly resistant to connection with its human inhabitants, at the same time as its character is mirrored in them. Both Australia and its occupants are seen to lack a certain level of consciousness, but nonetheless to possess a potency beyond reason.

The idea of a link between the barrenness of the Australian interior and a psychological sensation of absence experienced in the country belongs to a long tradition in thought. This may be traced to the fact that the bleakness of the greater part of the continent had not been anticipated when it was first discovered by Europeans. Roslynn D. Haynes explains that a persistent idea among eighteenth and nineteenth century settlers and explorers regarding Australia was to believe that, for reason of its sheer size, there had to be water at the centre of the continent, either in the form of large rivers or an inland sea. Haynes highlights T.J. Maslen's speculative 1827 map of Australia, which features a sea at the centre of the continent comparable in size to what is now the state of Victoria, and a great river flowing north-westwards from it. Additionally she quotes Sir Joseph Banks, who stated in 1778 that 'it is impossible to conceive that such a body of land as large as all Europe does not produce vast rivers capable of being navigated into the heart of the interior.' The belief in either an inland sea, or a navigable river system, was soon found to contradict available evidence; the survival of this kind of belief in spite of this – into, roughly, the middle of the nineteenth century – indicates for Haynes that the possible existence of usable waterways in Australia 'was more than just an economic advantage; it was an ideological necessity, reminiscent of the long-term European belief that a great southern continent must exist because it was "needed" to balance the northern continents.' It can be summarized, then, that it

was felt that there had, for there to be balance in Australia, to be means for human habitation of the continent's interior to be feasible. That the interior of Australia was barren meant the continent disobeyed a 'belief in balance and order as an innate quality of nature.'

In *Kangaroo*, the imbalance of Australia is seen to destabilize its human residents. In its 'uncreatedness' (K 191) and 'manlessness' (K 354), Australia is said to cause in its human inhabitants 'a relief from tension, from pressure' (K 27) which is experienced as the 'absence of control or will or form' (K 27). This ultimately results in a 'hollowness' to the human residents of the continent (K 131). For Somers, however, this is appealing in at least one respect: it offers, he feels, a chance 'to lose oneself and have done with this side of life' (K 69). However, Somers also recognises that the 'profound Australian indifference' can be understood to lead to 'the disintegration of the social mankind back to its elements,' as 'rudimentary individuals with no desire of communication' herd 'together like dumb cattle' (K 345). This is the consequence of Australia's imbalance most in evidence in the novel, in that the human inhabitants of the continent are said to 'lack reserve and manner' (K 36) and to exist in an unthinking 'mob-state' (K 300). In *Kangaroo*, then, Australia appears to wear down its inhabitants – disintegration of social mankind seemingly equates to a degradation presented as physical. The barren land resists being processed by its inhabitants, and thereby provokes an estrangement which is reproduced in the relationship between respective human beings. In effect, though connection to Australia as a land is difficult to achieve, the absence of connection in itself allows Australia to influence its inhabitants. In both *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* at least some part of the human species is seen as fragmentary. In *Kangaroo*, Somers reasons that 'the bulk of mankind haven't got any central selves' and that, therefore 'they're all bits' (K 280). In *The Boy in the Bush*, by contrast, Jack Grant feels that women, as 'creatures of earth' are 'fragments, all of them' (BB 332), with the novel elsewhere suggesting that women are 'more *creatures* than men are' and 'not separated out of the earth' (BB 328, italicization from original). As such, *The Boy in the Bush* implies that connection to Australia is possible, in a way it does not appear to be in *Kangaroo*, but the result of establishing a connection is fragmentation nevertheless.

Disintegration – whether provoked by connection to the earth, or the failure to establish connection – appears to stand against evolution. Certainly, for Herbert Spencer, dissolution – an aspect of which he sees as the disintegration of matter – constitutes the opposite of evolution. Where, for Spencer, evolution is 'the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion,' dissolution is the reverse: 'the absorption of motion and concomitant disintegration of matter.' On the evidence of *Kangaroo*, Lawrence's Australia, in provoking disintegration, appears to induce an anti-evolutionary regression in its inhabitants, insomuch as entering the mob-state is equated to degeneration (*K* 300).

However, for Henri Bergson, no such opposition between disintegration and evolution exists. Disintegration and separation are instead seen as components of the process of evolution. For Bergson, evolution 'proceeds rather like a shell, which suddenly bursts into fragments, which fragments, being themselves shells, burst in their turn into fragments destined to burst again, and so on for a time incommensurably long.' Fragmentation and disintegration are, by Bergson's account, necessary for new species to become distinct from their progenitors, while, in an equivalent way, individual offspring must separate from their parents. This process of fragmentation, Bergson contends, depends on two causes: 'the resistance life meets from inert matter, and the explosive force — due to an unstable balance of tendencies — which life bears within itself.' Australia, as it is presented in Lawrence's fiction, very much gives the appearance of being inert. If taken as such, the fragmentation the human inhabitants of Australia undergo in Lawrence's work of this period can potentially be seen to be part of a process which is ultimately evolutionary rather than degenerative.

Certainly, in terms of Bergson's evolutionary fragmentation it is notable that the protagonists in each of Lawrence's Australian novels harbour explosive forces within themselves – the second pre-requisite Bergson identifies for the process to take place. In *Kangaroo*, Somers feels himself to be 'a sort of human bomb, all black inside, waiting to explode' (*K* 165). For Somers, this potential to blow up can have valuable consequences, in that constrictive structures might be destroyed by the explosion. He reasons that '*some* men have to be bombs, to explode and make breaches in the walls that shut life in' (*K* 165, italicization Lawrence's).

Somers additionally links 'the shock to his blood and system' (*K* 261) caused by being in Australia to a surge of sensation characterized as an eruption of fire in his stomach, and from this concludes 'that if the fire had suddenly erupted in his own belly, it would erupt one day in the bellies of all men' (*K* 261). The depiction of the internal potential to explode as volcanic is also encountered in *The Boy in the Bush*. In that novel, Jack Grant is said to feel as if 'he had a volcano inside him' (*BB* 120) and to host 'a strange volcano of anger' (*BB* 193). This volcano, it is said, has thrown up 'jets of sliver rage, which hardened rapidly into a black, rocky indifference' (*BB* 193). It, in effect, has a product identical in nature to the Australian land. The volcano renders Grant harsh himself, in accord with his harsh environment.

In *Kangaroo*, it becomes clear that in Somers's view the volcanic stage represents an inevitable transition in the development of people at large. For Somers, human beings, once part of the mass of terrestrial life, have isolated themselves and become separated particles, like dust:

The people of this terrestrial sphere are all bits. Isolate one of them, and he is still only a bit [...] He's only a bit, and he's only got a minute share of the collective soul. Soul of his own he has none: and never will have. Just a share in the collective soul, no more. Never a thing by himself [...]

This is the innermost symbol of man: alone in the darkness of the cavern of himself, listening to soundlessness of inflowing fate, inflowing doom, what does it matter? The man by himself – that is the absolute – listening – that is the relativity – for the influx of his fate, or doom.

The man by himself. The listener.

But most men can't listen any more. The fissure is closed up. There is no soundless voice. They are deaf and dumb, ants, scurrying ants.

That is their doom. It is a new kind of absolute. Like ruffraff, which has fallen out of living relativity, on to the teeming absolute of the dust-heap, or the ant-heap. Sometimes the dust-heap becomes huge, huge, huge, and covers nearly all the world. Then it turns into a volcano, and all starts again. (*K* 281-282)

Thus, Somers' individual volcano is implicitly also part of a collective volcanic process.

Sufficient fragmentary human beings together take on the collective quality of dust, of inert matter. Thus, where Bergson's evolutionary process entails ever-greater fragmentation, as each fragment breaks into further fragments, the process described here is circular. Individuated fragments reach a point at which they resume an identity as a component in a wider mass.

Therefore, though an individual might possess explosive force in himself or herself, and might

appear capable of advancing an evolutionary process through bursting apart in himself or herself, it is not inevitable that this potential be fulfilled, even with all necessary elements seemingly in place.

The most striking and most particular engagement with volcanism in either of Lawrence's Australian novels is constituted by the interpolation in *Kangaroo* of a lengthy, speculative newspaper report on the subject of seismic activity in Australia. Entitled 'Earthquakes: Is Australia Safe?', the report comprises a genuine extract from an article by A. Meston published in the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* on 11 May 1922, and is reproduced with only very slight omissions. The article, which essentially fails to answer its own question, identifies vast expanses of basalt as evidence of past volcanic activity in Australia, but eventually reasons that 'we know nothing whatever of the awful forces at work beneath the crust of the earth' (K 168). Nevertheless, inconclusive though the article is in itself, within *Kangaroo*, the report provides another respect in which Australia as a land may resemble its inhabitants: it, like its human residents, may possess a potential explosive force. Thus, both Australia and its residents appear to have within themselves all that is necessary, in principle at least, to bring about Bergson's evolutionary movement: each contains both a hard, inert aspect, and an explosive potential.

It may be, of course, that it was reading the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* article which directly provoked Lawrence's engagement with the concept of volcanism. Certainly, to have inserted a passage of roughly 1,300 words into *Kangaroo* virtually unmodified speaks strongly for the significance of the piece to Lawrence, and implies that it contains at least some element which Lawrence felt had more than ephemeral value. However, for Lawrence to expand his use of volcanism far beyond the interpolation of this one article makes evident it did not convey all Lawrence felt was necessary regarding volcanism.

Considering what Lawrence excludes can help to explain both the intended function of this extract within *Kangaroo*, and can contribute to understanding how the idea of the volcano plays an important role in Lawrence's conception of Australia's distinctiveness. Bruce Steele notes that Lawrence's one substantial change to the article was the removal of two sentences from the original piece. These sentences, consecutive in the original article, were:

Every amateur geologist is loaded to the muzzle with them [theories], and the less he knows, the more positive he is of their correctness. But we require some facts to support a theory before it is worth a cent. (K 388)

That Lawrence excludes these sentences cannot realistically be imagined to be for reasons of length – cutting 38 words from so long a passage represents an exercise of highly doubtful value from this perspective. Instead, it is more feasible that Lawrence disagreed with these particular claims. Lawrence's modification leaves a paragraph which finishes with the claim that 'there is a lot of room for theories' (K 166) – the opposite of Meston's original conclusion.

Just as Lawrence's fiction can be seen as testing the durability of given ideas in an effective survival-of-the-fittest contest, many of Lawrence's essays are also dominated by unsupported theories. Additionally, in the introduction to his school history textbook *Movements in European History*, Lawrence criticises an 'old bad history' which 'consisted of a register of facts' for the reason that it could not 're-create the *personal* reality of a bygone age.' For Lawrence, it may be said that facts are not able to convey the experiential truth of a situation: lived experience cannot be reduced to knowable units. With reference to his engagement with Meston's article, it might be summarized that for Lawrence the unexplained possibility of volcanic activity is powerful, in part, because it is unexplained.

Later in the introduction to *Movements in European History*, Lawrence also happens to address the mysterious activity of the earth, describing the occurrence of earthquakes through the subjective rhetoric of personal reality he has just advocated. Lawrence terms earthquakes as 'disasters from without.' before suggesting that 'the mysterious and untellable motion within the hearts of men is in some way related to the motion within the earth, so that even earthquakes are unaccountably related to man's psychic being, and dependent upon it.' If human beings experience volcanoes inside themselves in Australia, on this evidence, it likely means that the Australian land should, in some respect, reproduce this volcanic quality.

Lawrence's vision of volcanism is in many respects deeply and intentionally unscientific.

However, scientific knowledge of volcanoes at the time Lawrence was working was not only partial, but those facts which were known appeared to imply a contradiction: thus, scientific understanding of volcanic phenomena could only be viewed as incomplete. In his *History of Ideas on Volcanic Eruptions*, Haraldur Sigurdsson explains that 'the progress made in understanding melting and the internal constitution of the Earth by the first part of the twentieth century was truly profound, but had created a paradox,' for the reason that 'all the evidence was in favour of a solid interior – or an exceedingly thick crust at any rate – yet there was a need to account for the magmas erupted from volcanoes.' In effect, for Lawrence to depict Australia as simultaneously inert and volcanic only reproduces a contradiction which then existed in the scientific understanding of volcanism.

Fragmentation makes its mark more widely on the form and structure of both *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*: in addition to the extract from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* quoted in almost its entirety in the chapter 'Volcanic Evidence,' the chapter 'Bits' begins with a series of extracts from a section of the *Sydney Bulletin* given to brief news articles and miscellaneous other items. Each extract is unimportant in itself, and bears no obvious logical connection either to the other items Lawrence has chosen to quote, or to the novel in which it is included. Among the items Lawrence quotes, which are supposedly read by Somers, is one about how the behaviour of birds can provide an indication of the amount of water in the vicinity; another which suggests a means to treat mangy horses using a kerosene mixture; and an anecdote about a motorcyclist who suffered an accident due to running over a snake, but who escaped death due to the unlikely way in which he hit the snake in mid-air during the incident. In total, nine such items are quoted.

For Somers, and presumably for Lawrence, these 'bits, bits, bits' are 'not mere anecdotage' but are instead 'the sheer momentaneous life of the continent' (*K* 272). The fact that 'there was no consecutive thread' and 'only the laconic courage of experience' (*K* 272), means these items, small in themselves, are better able in their accumulation to reproduce the nature of Australia. Thus, though a vast continent, with expansive wildernesses, it is in fragments, inconsequential in themselves, and unrelated to one another, that Lawrence feels the life of Australia is most

accurately reproduced. When, then, John B. Humma suggests that the narrative of *Kangaroo* 'fragmented as it is, reflects and reinforces Somers's condition,' this is true, but only part of a greater truth. The narrative also seeks to reflect and reinforce the condition of Australia in itself.

In terms of the relationship between Australia and the psychological condition of its inhabitants, where Isabel F.O. Brandão argues that Somers exhibits a loneliness which 'is transferred to Australia in general,' this appears to constitute a reversal. Though the Australian land is blank in a certain sense, this does not imply that Somers and others fill this blankness by inscribing their own feelings upon it. Instead this blankness inscribes itself upon them and creates feelings which reflect its nature. The land is more powerful than its human inhabitants. Feelings of impotence and insignificance in *Kangaroo* are, after all, by no means exclusive to Somers. As Jack Callcott argues within the novel, 'the bulk of Australians don't care about Australia' and, indeed, 'care about nothing at all,' living 'blankly' in 'a sort of slovenly defiance of care of any sort, human or inhuman, good or bad' (*K* 63).

This perceived indifference seems to stand in opposition to the political fervour Somers encounters in the revolutionary leader, Benjamin Cooley. However, Somers reasons that the energy Cooley shows exists as a reaction against Australian indifference:

It seemed strange to Somers that Labour should be so insistent in Australia – or that Kangaroo should have been so burning. But then he realised that these men were all the time yoked to some work, they were all the time in the collar. And the work kept them going a good deal more than they kept the work going. Nothing but the absolute drive of the world's work kept them going. Without it they would have lapsed into the old bushranging recklessness, lapsed into the profound indifference which was basic in them. (*K* 345-346)

The fact that Cooley's authoritarianism emerges from a reaction against the Australian environment might suggest a certain unhealthy aspect to it – if it is taken as reasonable to assume that harmony with the environment is conducive to well-being. That Cooley dies at the end of *Kangaroo*, feeling unable to 'relax into death' (*K* 336) supports this assumption. More broadly, it stands as evidence to support Barbara Mensch's argument that, though 'Lawrence's work shows

very clearly that he recognised the authoritarian personality,' this recognition 'does not constitute an endorsement.' For Mensch, 'the men attracted to Kangaroo's movement,' Jack Callcott among them, 'have tacitly agreed that they will act, but that Kangaroo will think for them.' Thus, in a sense, it is a fragmentation which affords Kangaroo his power, at least by this account: that action and thought are instantiated in different beings is what allows Kangaroo to exert control, in that his orders are not questioned by those charged with putting them into action.

Meanwhile, *The Boy in the Bush* is composed of bits in a rather different sense – not an insignificant one – in that the two voices which contributed to its creation mix inconsistently. Passages which might, in the main, confidently be attributed to one or other of the novel's authors often contain a single word or phrase which appears incongruous, which appears part of the rhetoric of the novel's other creator. By way of example, one paragraph, describing the recuperation of Monica Ellis after the birth of twins, sees a metaphor of plant-like blossoming very much in Lawrence's style combined with a trite simile, and an accumulation of incomplete clauses, presumably intended to convey dramatic momentum, which appear to have either been left from Skinner's original draft, or manufactured to resemble her style:

And she, with her rare vitality, soon began to bloom once more. And as her strength came back she was very much taken up with her babies. These were the first she had enjoyed. The other two she had never really enjoyed. But with these she was as fussy as a young cat with her kittens. She almost forgot Jack entirely. Left him to be busy with Tom and Lennie and his mine. Even the gold failed to excite her. (*BB* 310)

The interaction of separate, distinct voices creates a novel in which character and environment can hardly avoid possessing inconsistencies. To use Lawrence's word from *Kangaroo*, character and context in *The Boy in the Bush* are each, in a significant respect 'momentaneous,' defined in one moment by one system, and in another by another. Just as Monica can at once bloom vitally and yet also be fussily disengaged from her wider environment, so can an individual know himself or herself in terms of different systems at different times. Fragmentation, too, might, then, be an aspect of a potential evolutionary movement at the same time as a form of degradation. Context, in the form of possible connection to the earth, might

suggest at times a positive aspect to fragmentation, but with the earth itself shifting and unstable, the meaning of connection to it cannot be felt constant.

II

In Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, consciousness is also described in terms with connotations of volcanism – though an explicit connection is not made. Consciousness, which Bergson sees as 'at the origin of life,' is posited to be 'the name for the rocket whose extinguished fragments fall back as matter.' Further, though, for Bergson consciousness is 'that which subsists of the rocket itself, passing through the fragments and lighting them up into organisms.' In effect, the evolutionary process of explosion and fragmentation is reproduced by the motion of consciousness. Both the collective which preceded fragmentation and its remnants have certain like qualities, and are each identifiable as consciousness.

Lawrence, in *The Boy in the Bush*, can be seen to employ a related notion of consciousness. In *The Boy in the Bush* it is suggested that a human being 'has various levels of consciousness' (BB 162), and furthermore, it is contended that 'man's divinity, and his ultimate power, is in [the] super-consciousness of the whole soul' (BB 162). Consciousness here too, then, is both a part of a collective, and, on another level, represents the collective as a whole. An individual human being in his or her consciousness might be considered an eruption of the super-consciousness.

Nevertheless, this vision of consciousness should be related to the suggestion that Australia's untamed quality places it beyond the reach of human consciousness, which is found in *The Boy in the Bush* as well as in *Kangaroo*. In a passage from *The Boy in the Bush* which, briefly, peculiarly, uses the second-person (it is the protagonist Jack Grant with whom the reader is temporarily identified), Australia is said to be unchangeably external to human consciousness:

You have moved outside the pale, the pale of civilisation, the pale of the general human consciousness. The human consciousness is a definitely limited thing, even on the face of the earth. You can move into regions

outside of it. As in Australia. The broadcasting of the vast human consciousness can't get you. You are beyond. And since the call can't get you, the answer begins to die down inside yourself, you don't respond any more. You don't respond, and you don't correspond.

As the novel progresses this apparent lack of connection between the land and human consciousness is increasingly shown as negative and potentially dangerous:

In the Never-Never, one by one the ties break, the emotional connections snap, memory gives out, and you come undone. Then, when you have come undone from the great past, you drift in an unkempt nonchalance here and there, great distances across the great hinterland country, and there is nothing but the moment, the instantaneous moment. If you are working your guts out, you are working your guts out. If you are rolling across for a drink, you are rolling across for a drink. (*BB* 229-230)

As such, *The Boy in the Bush* ultimately follows *Kangaroo*, in that once again the impossibility of mental connection to Australia as a land engenders a hopelessness and a lack of ambition. An individual, as an eruption of consciousness, can, it seems, become disconnected from the wider consciousness which produced the eruption. Belonging to a wider entity does not imply continual connection to it. The quelling of creativity in evidence here – the action without deeper meaning – can be seen to parallel Bergson's understanding of consciousness in a certain respect. For Bergson, consciousness is also volcanic in the sense it may lie 'dormant' for extended periods: these occur, Bergson suggests, when creation is not possible, when 'life is condemned to automatism.' Inhabiting the barren Australia does not, then, extinguish the potential to erupt necessary to propagate consciousness, and continue the evolutionarily movement: it merely leaves it dormant.

With reference to *Kangaroo*, making a distinction between extinction and dormancy offers a means to understand the hopeful notes the narration offers in spite of the apathy and purposelessness witnessed in Australia. It is contended that 'there is always the unstable *creative* element in life' (*K* 295, italicization Lawrence's) both in the individual and in a group: a suggestion only meaningful if a dormant creative capacity is regarded as a creative capacity nevertheless. This element of life, however, it is asserted 'science can never tackle' (*K* 295), a line

of reasoning which is developed thus:

Before we can begin any of the so-called human sciences we must take on trust a purely unscientific fact: namely that every living creature has an individual soul, however trivial or rudimentary, which connects it individually with the source of all life, as man, in the religious terminology, is connected with God, and inseparable from God. So is every creature, even an ant or a louse, individually in contact with the great life-urge which we call God. To call this connexion the will-to-live is not quite sufficient. It is more than a will-to-persist. It is a will-to-live in the further sense, a will-to-change, a will-to-evolve, a will towards further creation of the self. The urge towards evolution if you like. But it is more than evolution. There is no simple cause-and-effect sequence [...] Science can wriggle as hard as it likes, but the change from caterpillar to butterfly is utterly unscientific, illogical, and *unnatural*, if we take science's definition of nature. It is an answer to the strange creative urge, the God-whisper, which is the one and only everlasting motive for everything. (K 295, italicization Lawrence's)

Lawrence, then, is arguing here for a creative evolution, and one strongly related to that found in the work of Bergson. That a will-to-evolve is defined as the quality which connects humankind to wider nature is certainly an assertion Bergson could support. The objection to science as missing an enduring aspect of nature is also comparable to the Bergsonian perspective. Bergson writes that 'all our operations on the systems that science isolates, rest in fact on the idea that time does not bite into them.' Though he concedes that 'the operation by which science isolates and closes a system is not altogether artificial,' he nevertheless suggests that the 'systems science works with are, in fact, in an instantaneous present that is always being renewed' and that 'such systems are never in that real, concrete duration in which the past remains bound up with the present.'

Lawrence's idea that science cannot recognise a persistent drive to evolve seems to rest upon understanding the failings of science in like manner to Bergson. When Lawrence demurs a cause-and-effect understanding of evolutionary change as lacking, as missing a lasting, underlying urge, his criticism shares much with Bergson's criticism that science fails to apprehend duration.

Despite this, though, a scientifically inflected explanation for the effect of Australia upon human beings is offered in both *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*. In *Kangaroo*, it is said that 'the very blood is of different thicknesses on different continents, and with the difference in blood, [there is] the inevitable psychic difference' (K 148). The blood of outsiders is described as

thinning in Australia, though gradually. During a train journey, Somers and Victoria speak to a Welshman, Evans, who has lived in Australia for 16 years. He explains that 'it takes about four or five years for your blood to properly thin down' (*K* 145) after arriving in Australia. Though Somers shows apparent cynicism with respect to the notion that 'the Australians seemed to accept this as a scientific fact,' he nevertheless feels that 'in the night, in his sleep, the metabolic change was taking place fast and furious' (*K* 145).

Meanwhile, in *The Boy in the Bush*, a 'deep well of potency' is found both in Australia and in the blood of Australians (*BB* 228). Possible transformation of the blood of new arrivals is not addressed in this novel, but a process must be understood to have occurred at a certain point to make the blood of European settlers, or at least that of their children, definably Australian. Thus, in *Kangaroo* explicitly, and in *The Boy in the Bush* implicitly, the emphasis on the blood suggests the effect of place to be irresistible. A human being, according to the perspective seen in *Kangaroo*, could not hope to come to Australia and not be changed by it. Science might distort the nature of the human being by failing to account properly for the aspects of his or her nature which exist collectively with the rest of the species and wider nature, and by missing persistent underlying urges, but this does not mean that the physical phenomena it has the capacity to record are to be felt entirely fallacious or inconsequential. A physical connection with wider nature is a real presence in each of Lawrence's Australian novels.

III

In *Seeking the Centre*, Roslynn D. Haynes comments briefly on Lawrence's Australian writing, arguing that his work addressing the continent largely conforms with traditional patterns of thought regarding Australia. She contends that 'for Lawrence, as for most writers, the spirit of the land [Australia] demanded too great a sacrifice, the subsuming of the individual in to a pre-human consciousness.' Broadly, this is fair. However, it may be felt to miss the idea which the discussion of the mob-consciousness in *Kangaroo* implies, that there is an alternative to losing one's humanity in Australia's void – to remain resolutely physically grounded: to stay with the

physical as the mental dissipates. In *Kangaroo*, while the Australian bush is 'lost' (K 76), phantom-like (K 14), and 'hoarily waiting' (K 14), harbouring a secret impenetrable to humans (K 14), its ultimate effect on Australia's human inhabitants is to propel them into greater accord with their baser nature, not to estrange them from themselves as physical beings. The mob-consciousness the imbalanced Australia generates is in a sense *too* human, rather than not human enough.

Evolutionists of the late nineteenth century, however, approached Australia and its people rather differently from the explorers and settlers quoted by Haynes who found Australia incomprehensible for its lack of balance. Though clearly biological evolutionism depends for its meaning upon a link between a species and its surroundings – in the sense that, through time, species either come to adapt to their conditions, migrate, or face extinction – the writings of T.H. Huxley regarding the native human inhabitants of Australia do not directly link their social structures and the particularities of their patterns of thought to their environment. In his 'Methods and Results of Ethnology,' Huxley juxtaposes – in consecutive paragraphs – observations regarding the typical features of the skull of a native Australian person, with a description of the simple nature of the society of any given group of native Australians:

The skulls of these people are always long and narrow, with a smaller development of the frontal sinuses than usually corresponds with such largely developed brow ridges. An Australian skull of a round form, or one the transverse diameter of which exceeds eight-tenths of its length, has never been seen [...]

No Australian tribe has ever been known to cultivate the ground, to use metals, pottery, or any kind of textile fabric. They rarely construct huts. Their means of navigation are limited to rafts or canoes, made of sheets of bark.

Though Huxley does not make a connection explicit, the implication is that, more than immediate environmental factors, it is cranial development which is behind the fact that native Australian societies had been found to lack certain innovations common to most other societies across the world. On the other hand, Charles Darwin highlights an ability seen to be possessed by native Australians but not by other peoples – a talent for precise imitation and description of physical

movement. However, while it is a capability of native Australians which Darwin highlights, rather than a perceived deficiency, he does not link the ability to the Australian environment. Indeed, though phrasing his idea as a question, Darwin suggests that any human group 'in a savage state' might develop a similar capability:

The Australians [...] have long been notorious for being able to imitate and describe the gait of any man, so that he may be recognised. How can this faculty be explained? is it a consequence of the more practised habits of perception and keener senses, common to all men in a savage state, as compared with those long civilised?

Thus, the sense in which native Australians are an element in Lawrence's Australian fiction is important, in that the nature of any possible relationship to the Australian land can cast light on the extent to which recent immigrants might develop a meaningful connection to Australia, or not. However, in one sense, native Australians can be said not to be included in both *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*. Lawrence's Australian fiction is absent of native Australians as active participants; indeed, native Australians do not even feature as background figures in scenes with a focus elsewhere. However, as a device for explaining the Australian landscape, a notional image of the aborigine is frequently called upon in *Kangaroo*. Hence, the tree-trunks of the bush are 'like naked pale aborigines among the dark-soaked foliage' (K 14), while a series of low cliffs, opposite the harbour at Mosman Bay in Sydney look 'as silent and as aboriginal as if white men had never come' (K 60). Most often, the aboriginal aspect Lawrence attributes to the Australian landscape is intended to convey a dark, mysterious and unformed quality:

For the landscape is so unimpressive, like a face with little or no features, a dark face. It is so aboriginal, out of our ken, and it hangs back so aloof. Somers always felt he looked at it through a cleft in the atmosphere; as one looks at one of the ugly-faced, distorted aborigines with his wonderful dark eyes that have such an incomprehensible ancient shine in them, across gulfs of unbridged centuries. And yet, when you don't have the feeling of ugliness or monotony, in landscape or in nigger, you get a sense of subtle, remote, *formless* beauty more poignant than anything ever experienced before. (K 77, italicization Lawrence's)

Thus, for Lawrence, the native Australian and the Australian land are wholly identified with one

another. In this much, Lawrence deviates from those nineteenth century evolutionary biologists for whom the association is superficial.

Later in *Kangaroo*, the Aboriginal spirit is seen as able to act upon Richard Lovat Somers. When considering why he does not sleep well in Australia, Somers identifies the feeling he has as being 'as if the aboriginal daimon entered his body as he slept, to destroy its old constitution' (K 143). By contrast, when an aboriginal aspect is said to enter Victoria Callcott, the wife of Jack, it is experienced as energizing. It is explained that the 'strange and aboriginal indifference that was bottommost' in Jack 'seemed like a dynamo in her' (K 182). While it is said that Victoria 'fluttered in the air like a loose live nerve,' Jack 'sat there apathetic, nothing but body and solid, steady, physical indifference' (K 182). Therefore, when David Game argues that *Kangaroo* explores 'fear over the possibility of white racial decline, this is only partly true when considered with respect to the impact of the aboriginal aspect of Australia. To be entered by the quality of the Australian land Lawrence identifies as aboriginal is sometimes experienced as distressing, and degenerative – as it is by Somers – but it can also provide vitality.

Additionally, Game contends that in *Kangaroo*, 'race is depicted in biomedical terms, hierarchically, with differentiation between races characterised in terms of blood.' This is more difficult to see an element of truth in. Though blood *is* important in *Kangaroo*, and similarly in *The Boy in the Bush*, its constitution is linked to the environment rather than being racially determined. A long-term resident of Australia of any race, it seems, will experience thinning of the blood.

In both *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*, Australia – in its isolation and its accordant geological, ecological and cultural distinctiveness – can be said to operate as an extreme test case, serving to confirm certain of the universal claims regarding the Earth, its nature, and its power over its inhabitants advanced in Lawrence's preceding work, and to disprove other of those claims. Given the general inhospitableness of the continent, Australia challenges the notion that a connection to the land should be nourishing for a person, and makes contentious both the possibility and utility of a person becoming rooted in it – the device so important in *Aaron's Rod* and *Mr Noon*. Though the bush supports numerous trees in spite of its aridity, a fact of

significance in itself to a biologist, that they manage to survive on such earth nonetheless fails to meaningfully enrich it. As such, the tree as life-giving is not a comfortable image for Australia.

In this respect, Australia can be said to be utilized for a similar purpose to that it enjoys in the work of Darwin. In *The Origin of Species*, the particularity of Australian plant and animal life, especially its difference from that of parts of South America and South Africa similar in temperature and latitude, is seen as key evidence against the idea that species were created in their present forms by a deity. It is taken to render invalid the view that the discovery of similar, or identical, species in geographically separate locations represents evidence that they were intentionally created alike to fit alike conditions. Put another way, the distinctiveness of Australian animal and plant life suggests the absence of a world-wide plan guiding the nature of species.

Plants are important in Lawrence's Australian fiction, in that they demonstrate the unique nature of Australia. Though *Kangaroo* has a title exemplar of the particularity of Australian fauna, both it and *The Boy in the Bush* each make more of flora, especially in the respect in which each novel builds its structure. Following Lawrence's preceding novels, particularly *Aaron's Rod* and *Mr Noon*, there is again a marked interest in trees and flowers in Lawrence's Australian fiction. Early in the first chapter of *Kangaroo*, when Somers first arrives at the bungalow he is to rent in Sydney, he is unexcited by the property itself, but feels 'wonder' at the 'fine Australian tree' (K 12) established to be a coral tree, which stands at the end of the garden. Somers finds it captivating for its pale bark, its complete lack of leaves, and its tufts of 'queer burning red,' spiky flowers which look 'handsome against the blue sky: but again, extraneous' (K 12). The coral tree, entirely unlike a European tree, evidently also caught Lawrence's imagination. It is described again later in the novel, though by now its flowers have become male animal genitals. At another bungalow near the edge of the bush, it is said that 'the branching coral trees [were] still flowering flame from their dark, strong-thrusting, up-curving buds' (K 343). The tree is thus seen as potent, but that potency is also seen to be localized – the flowers contrasting with the barrenness of the tree at large. The potency seen in the coral tree is, however, also seen as sustained. Towards the end of the novel, the earth is experienced by Somers as 'winter-numb,' and it is said that 'the few

deciduous trees were bare' but nevertheless 'the uncanny coral tree flared its flowers of red-hot iron' (K 260). The coral tree, then, is a survivor. In spite of the limited nourishment provided by Australian earth, in spite of the winter, it remains potent, but only, it seems by focusing its potency into a small part of itself.

In these novels, however, the subterranean portion of the plant remains key, with the concept of rootedness emphasized, as it was in both *Aaron's Rod* and *Mr Noon*. In *Kangaroo*, Lawrence writes that:

A man must strive onwards, but from the root of marriage, marriage with God, with wife, with mankind. Like a tree that is rooted, always growing and flowering away from its root, so is a vitally active man. But let him take some false direction, and there is torture through the whole organism, roots and all. The woman suffers blindly from the man's mistaken direction, and reacts blindly. (K 164)

The suggestion that a man must be like a tree always growing and flowering implies the coral tree is a particularly fit model; its flowers are a dominant feature, and it does not endure the annual abscission of a deciduous tree. The tree's flowers, after all, are presented as manly. Nevertheless, the involvement of animal sexuality in this plant-derived image is problematic. The tree may provide a model for a man to develop, but it is not obvious how or if a woman's development is accommodated by this picture. A tree, or other plant, containing both male and female sexual organs (though not, in many cases, the ability to self-fertilize), does not have an 'opposite' sex to which to relate itself. Growth in all directions seems impossible for a human being or other animal wishing to exist in meaningful contact with a partner, wishing to support and be supported.

In spite of this significant area of distinction, for Henri Bergson, a common drive towards sexual generation is nonetheless shared by animals and plants. He writes that:

Certain deep-seated analogies between the animal and the vegetable have probably no other cause: sexual generation is perhaps only a luxury for the plant, but to the animal it was a necessity, and the plant must have been driven to it by the same impetus which impelled the animal thereto, a primitive, original impetus, anterior to the separation of the two kingdoms.

A plant such as the coral tree might be felt close to this original impetus, if the apparently animalistic character of its flowers is seen as meaningful. To imitate it as a human being, to whatever extent possible, might complicate connection with a single partner, but appears able to enhance connection with wider nature, and the original common impulse which purportedly drives life forwards. Certainly, to find means to grow unrestrainedly and to flower continually, as the coral tree, is identified as a compulsion in Somers. He feels that a 'black poisonous bud will burst into a lovely new, unknown flower in me' (K 165). That this might hinder immediate contact is also, seemingly, perceived. He contends that '*some* men have to be bombs, to explode and make breaches in the walls that shut life in' (K165, italicization Lawrence's), demonstrating an understanding that his growth will be damaging to those close to him. Somers even ponders whether this flowering might occur 'if Harriet let me alone' (K 165).

In addition, for Bergson, a key distinction between the plant and the animal is the localization of reproductive capacity within sexual cells. He contends that 'in the more complex animals, nature localizes in the almost independent sexual cells the power of producing the whole anew.' In this sense too, the coral tree, with its perceived localized potency, is animal-like, a model, perhaps, for how an animal such a human being might relate to the earth. However, the localization Bergson attributes to animals is not necessarily complete. He suggests that 'something of this power may remain diffused in the rest of the organism, as the facts of regeneration prove, and it is conceivable that in certain privileged cases the faculty may persist integrally in a latent condition and manifest itself on the first opportunity.' Learning from a plant might be seen as a means to channel sexual power throughout the human organism.

The concept of rootedness is ostensibly similar in *The Boy in the Bush*, in that it remains sexualized, with man the plant which must be rooted. There, however, it is made explicit that woman's place is as the earth in which man establishes roots:

It was nonsense to pretend that Monica was the beginning and end of his marriage with woman. Woman was the matrix, the red earth, and he wanted his roots in this earth. More than one root, to keep him steady and complete. Mary instinctively belonged to him. Then why not belong to him completely? Why not? And why not make a marriage with her too? (BB

330)

This plurality of roots, and plurality of women in whom Jack aspires to be rooted, can be related to the fragmentation of the Australian earth. Multiple foundations are potentially necessary to build upon earth which is fractured, and fails to connect to itself. Thus, the conflict witnessed in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* between the ideal of the rooted man, connected to the earth, and the fractured, broken quality seen in that earth might be limited, if not resolved entirely. Multiple roots might only achieve temporary stability, for as long as parts of the earth avoid moving too far relative to one another. In each novel it is also seen to be possible for the energy possessed by the earth to produce explosions, volcanic eruptions, which would entirely destroy anything rooted in the earth. To grow, develop, and evolve in a land like Australia might require a more fluid, looser relationship with the earth, a more abstract identification like that Lawrence draws between native Australians and their land.

The Relationship Between Human Beings and Other Species in Terms of Evolutionary Systems in *St Mawr* and *The Plumed Serpent*

I

In the second chapter of *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), a comment is made by the novel's protagonist, Kate Leslie, which attracts little interest from her companion at the time, Owen Rhys, to whom the remark is directed. However, Rhys's lack of interest should not prejudice the reader; Leslie's words are far from insignificant. Remarking on a bull-fight she and Rhys attended in Mexico City, Leslie identifies the toreadors as 'dirty little boys maiming flies.' However, she continues, 'only grown-up, they are bastards, not boys' (PS 26).

The comment resembles, and may perhaps draw upon, the lines in *King Lear* in which the Earl of Gloucester, regretting human vulnerability, mourns that 'as flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods; they kill us for their sport.' However, Leslie's comment also plays with very similar imagery to that used in the opening chapter of D.H. Lawrence's first novel, *The White Peacock*. In it, George Saxton breaks the wings of a young bee for mindless amusement; Saxton, however, being in late adolescence at the time, is still, perhaps, more boy than bastard. The similarity between the two passages speaks of Lawrence's sustained interest in the relationship between humankind and wider nature; however, it would be a misapprehension to feel that Lawrence's understanding of the form and significance of the relationship is unchanged between his first novel and his penultimate one. In *The White Peacock* damage inflicted on other species by human beings is typically seen as unnecessary and avoidable, whereas in *The Plumed Serpent* it is ostensibly the case that a human being striving for realization of himself or herself may not be able to avoid harming other creatures, both human and non-human. Exploring the idiosyncratic developmental theories of the Mexican revolutionaries General Cipriano and Ramón Carrasco, *The Plumed Serpent* tests evolutionary ideas which perceive the human being as radically different from other species.

In *The Plumed Serpent* Cipriano and Carrasco each appear to play God in a very particular way; they do not merely simulate, but instead appear to become gods at the same time as human beings. Cipriano and Carrasco transform, not only metaphorically, into non-human creatures – the part-serpent, part-human god Quetzalcoatl, and the part-salamander, part-human god Huitzilopochtli respectively. Through the force of will, the change each desires is, it seems, meaningfully achieved. As Cipriano states, 'when Ramón dares to be the living Quetzalcoatl, I dare to be the living Huitzilopochtli. I *am* he' (*PS* 323 italicization Lawrence's). The way in which Carrasco and Cipriano apparently become divine can be connected to evolutionary theory in numerous respects.

Firstly, there is a broad evolutionary sense to the description of Carrasco's personal development: change in him is described as the product of 'a slow, blind imperative, urging him to cast his emotional and spiritual and mental self into the slow furnace, and smelt them into a new, whole being' (*PS* 206). Furthermore, though, the detail of Carrasco's own view of himself and his development appears to owe a significant debt to the evolutionary ideas of Helena Blavatsky. His contention is that he is a 'Natural Aristocrat,' and a flower of his race, uniquely capable of being 'international, or cosmopolitan, or cosmic' (*PS* 248). Through allowing his soul to open 'in the final blossoming,' constituted by becoming Quetzalcoatl, he believes himself, as the leader of his race, to be capable of something 'beyond the knowledge of any stems and leaves and roots: something transcendent' (*PS* 249). Carrasco is, at least by his own understanding of himself, something beyond a regular human – an advanced being, a superman with 'super-consciousness' (*PS* 294). He has, it seems, already evolved beyond human.

The idea that super beings have evolved, and are evolving, from human beings is found in a great deal of occult and theosophical writing of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including that of Helena Blavatsky and P.D. Ouspensky. An idea of spiritual development as constituting a form of evolution was also common among theosophists, for whom the evolution of the spirit variously represents either a successor or parallel to the evolution of the physical being. A further belief held by some but not all theosophists is that humankind has evolved from gods, and is separate and distinct from other creatures by virtue of this. Among the most prominent of

the theosophists, and among those whose work was read by D.H. Lawrence, Helena Blavatsky, in *The Secret Doctrine*, contends that, in contrast to other species, 'the evolution of the internal or real MAN is purely spiritual,' and that the human being is 'a god in the animal form.' In more detail, Blavatsky claims that humankind 'arrived on our Earth at the commencement of the Fourth in the present series of life-cycles' and 'will be ever tending to reassume its primeval form, that of a Dhyani Chohan Host.' These very particular details cannot be said to be reproduced entirely in *The Plumed Serpent*. However, in their broader nature, the evolutionary aspects of Blavatsky's theories do find certain reflection in the novel. When Blavatsky suggests that 'Man tends to become a God and then – GOD, like every other atom in the Universe,' this does describe a progression which Carrasco understands himself to be undergoing in *The Plumed Serpent*. More fully, the novel as a whole explores the degree to which humankind might be felt to occupy a position between animals and deities.

Carrasco's sense that 'beyond me, at the middle, is the God' (*PS* 74), implies a stratification of levels of being whereby, from centre to exterior, are found God, the human, and wider nature. Carrasco fails, however, to give meaningful acknowledgement to the widest of these levels in either his personal action throughout the novel, or in the philosophy which informs the revolt he leads. This can be related to the overly great power of his consciousness, obscuring and inhibiting that which lies beyond it. Leslie feels in Carrasco 'an effluence so powerful, that it seemed to hamper her consciousness, to bind down her limbs' (*PS* 184) the force driving him is said to be 'slow' and 'blind' (*PS* 206). Thus, in Carrasco is seen a powerful force, though one unguided by perception of the outside world.

Carrasco and Cipriano can both be seen to be attempting a reversal – to direct their respective growth inwards, rather than outwards. In trying to establish connection with gods, and in identifying these gods as being within themselves, Carrasco and Cipriano can, however, be felt to embark upon a fundamentally faulty exercise – one which assumes that the spirit contains elements not already connected to the individual with whom the spirit in question is linked. Certainly, for Kate Leslie, Carrasco and Cipriano want 'false, horrible connections' (*PS* 167) in place of vital, dynamic connections with wider life. The links which they suppose themselves to

establish with the gods induce in them transformations which initially appear transcendent, but which ultimately harm themselves, Mexican society, and indeed Mexico as a land. *The Plumed Serpent* appears to consider the revolutionary changes they lead to provoke a degradation in the people of Mexico, rather than the reverse. Thus, while it is suggested that due to the revolutionary programme of Carrasco and Cipriano 'the whole country was thrilling with a new thing, with a release of new energy', there is, however, said to be 'a sense of violence and crudity in it all, a touch of horror' (PS 420). Leslie moves from optimism towards Carrasco's movement, from feeling energized by 'an air of excitement and mystery' (PS 275), to foreboding towards its consequences once it gains momentum: she finds that 'this terrible Mexico that frightened her with a sense of doom' (PS 419).

The human being is, in the system of belief of Carrasco and Cipriano, uniquely positioned between the physical and spiritual. This feeling of human estrangement does not appear to be shared by Leslie, whose response to the developmental ideas of Carrasco and Cipriano fluctuates, providing an uneven commentary upon the theories they advance. Though unsure, it seems, of which ideas to which to adhere, in her response to the bullfight which opens *The Plumed Serpent*, Leslie demonstrates a strong sense of connection with other species which distinguishes her from the revolutionary leaders, and from those theosophists who regard the human as radically unlike other species. Confronted with human cruelty at the bullfight, Leslie expresses an identification with the non-human victim, declaring: 'Oh, *I* wish I could be a bull, just for five minutes' (PS 26, italicization Lawrence's). Leslie, in manifesting this belief in the value of wider nature, constitutes a figure with sympathies comparable to Lawrence's, though she lacks a developed system of beliefs into which to channel these sympathies. One result of this is a certain challenge to the reader of *The Plumed Serpent*, who, in seeing most action through Leslie, is not presented with a consistent frame through which to appreciate the ideas of Carrasco and Cipriano – the ideas which lead to the greater part of the novel's action as they find implementation in their revolutionary programme.

Leslie's identification with the ill-fated bull is important in terms of establishing her fundamental goodness. However, enriching interaction between species is seldom encountered in

The Plumed Serpent, given the lead Carrasco and Cipriano take in directing the action of the novel. As Leslie experiences it, a vision of the possibility of connection between human beings and other species represents a shadow, fated not to last:

Sometimes, in America, the shadow of that old pre-Flood world was so strong, that the day of historic humanity would melt out of Kate's consciousness, and she would begin to approximate to the old mode of consciousness, the old, dark will, the unconcern for death, the subtle, dark consciousness, non-cerebral, but vertebrate. When the mind and the power of man was in his blood and his backbone, and there was the strange, dark inter-communication and man and man and man and beast, from the powerful spine. (PS 415)

To a certain extent, Lawrence's work at large can be seen as attempting to tackle, in some respect, a largely lost ability for human beings to comprehend other species and wider nature. A number of critics argue that in his work Lawrence does not use other species as symbolic or rhetorical devices alone. As John Haegert writes in 'D.H. Lawrence and the Aesthetics of Transgression,' 'in Lawrencian terms, the sheer "otherness" of natural things sturdily resists their transposition to a symbolic or transcendental realm.' For Haegert, Lawrence's desire is 'to rescue "flesh and blood" reality from the tyranny of stereotype and the mystifications of metaphor by reminding us of symbolism's inevitable "artifice" and "illusion."' However, for Haegert, Lawrence's purported attempt to narrate the natural as natural is fundamentally problematic. He argues that 'while the representation of reality requires the creative intervention of the structuring imagination, the structuring imagination must also yield to the mutinous demands of nonnarratable reality.' The creative imagination can, however, be seen to be emphasised as an aspect of reality in Lawrence's work at this time. In *The Plumed Serpent* a conflation of knowledge, imagination and action lies behind the self-concept of Leslie, who feels herself cursed with 'the itching, prurient, *knowing*, imagining eye' (PS 184, italicization Lawrence's). Creation, in effect, is realized to be an aspect of Leslie's interaction with the outer world; she understands there can be no perception without intervention.

Meanwhile in *St Mawr*, the novella Lawrence wrote while in the United States, the eponymous stallion is said to be 'one of the kings of creation in the order below man,' (SM 83) a

fact meaningful in that *St Mawr* depicts 'life itself, [as] creatively destroying as it goes' (*SM* 80).

For Lawrence, such is the relationship between reality and creativity that one cannot be separated from the other; Lawrence's North American fiction suggests this is true for human beings and other species alike, inasmuch as creative power is presented as a defining quality in both Leslie and *St Mawr*. Achieving comprehension of a species in itself, in its own nature, means understanding its creative capacity.

Joyce Carol Oates offers an assessment of Lawrence's representations of non-human animals comparable to that offered by Haegert, though she focuses upon the appearance of non-human animals in his poetry rather than his fiction. Using 'Fish' from *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* as exemplar, she argues that, through the poem, 'Lawrence is not assessing his own relationship to the fish, or converting them into symbols of human emotions.' Instead, Oates contends, Lawrence 'is trying, trying very hard to get into the suchness of fish.' Though Oates is rather fulsome in her praise of the poem, describing it as 'an extraordinary feat of magic [in which] the poet and his reader are transformed partly into fish,' her main contention regarding the purpose of the pieces is plausible: the poem – at least in its first section – largely restricts itself to descriptions of the form and action of the fish under consideration. The interest is in what makes a fish a fish, rather than in what could make it symbolically resonant to humankind. With respect to Kate Leslie in *The Plumed Serpent*, this wish is in evidence. However, for Cipriano and Carrasco inwardly directed consciousness so predominates that the animal becomes only an aspect of consciousness.

Interactions between human beings and other species in both *The Plumed Serpent* and *St Mawr* are often violent, and frequently imply significant mutual misunderstanding. The bullfight in *The Plumed Serpent* represents an especially striking manifestation of outwardly unmotivated violence between human beings and other animals – its significance underlined by a small reprisal of its fundamental elements in the mistreatment of a bull-calf Leslie witnesses after moving to Sayula with Carrasco (*PS* 238). In *St Mawr*, by contrast, the most striking violence is directed towards human beings. The stallion, *St Mawr*, has seriously hurt – even killed – humans who have been in close contact with him. When Lady Carrington buys him, she is told that he has crushed a groom against the side of the stall, which 'injured him fatally,' and also that the son of

his previous owner 'had his skull smashed in against a low oak bough' (*SM* 29). St Mawr appears to share with Carrasco and Cipriano an inward orientation, and a sense of his superiority in creation:

And as he stood there a few yards away from her, his head lifted and wary, his body full of power and tension, his face slightly averted from her, she felt a great animal sadness come from him. A strange animal atmosphere of sadness, that was vague and disseminated through the air, and made her feel as though she breathed grief. She breathed it into her breast, as if it were a great sigh down the ages, that passed into her breast. And she felt a great woe: the woe of human unworthiness. The race of men judged in the consciousness of the animals they have subdued, and there found unworthy, ignoble. (*SM* 83)

St Mawr, then, suggests that a human perspective from which other species are seen as less developed is not necessarily justified. The potency of *St Mawr*'s consciousness, like that of Carrasco or Cipriano, apparently cannot help but result in violence to other beings, and especially species. Lawrence does not offer meaningful explanation or justification for *St Mawr*'s aggression – perhaps because an attempt to record it in language would inevitably distort. Nevertheless, the result implies a survival-of-the-fittest competition of consciousnesses, whereby physical damage to other species constitutes an unavoidable consequence of the development and realization of the consciousness of another. In light of this, it is possible to understand the meaning of the fact that Lou, after first meeting *St Mawr*, continues to feel him 'looking at her without really seeing her, yet gleaming a question at her, from his wide, terrible eyes' and deems him a 'master of doom' (*SM* 31). Though *St Mawr* has also been the victim of violence inflicted by humans – his owners before Lady Carrington 'gave him a beating once or twice' and 'he doesn't forget' (*SM* 35) – *St Mawr* is seen the more intensely conscious, and inflicts the greater damage.

The Plumed Serpent and *St Mawr* each mix a perspective which sees human beings as impossibly estranged from other animals – those misunderstandings which arise from this resulting in violence – with another perspective whereby humankind is deeply and necessarily linked to other species. This tension reproduces, in a certain respect, the greatest conflict within biological evolutionism's account of the human being; the evolutionist must address to what

extent the human being is merely qualitatively different from other species, and to what extent he or she is quantitatively distinct.

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century there remained no consensus among evolutionists on whether or not the origin of humankind followed the general pattern for the evolution of new species seen among other animals. Indeed, Peter J. Bowler argues that theories proposing a distinct origin for humanity were at their most prevalent between the 1890s and the 1930s. Among writers Bowler highlights, Robert Broom, in 'The Coming of Man: Was it Accident or Design?' professes that 'much of evolution looks as if it had been planned to result in man,' and that 'we seem forced to the further conclusion that the aim had not been mainly the production of a large-brained erect walking ape, but that the aim has been the production of human personalities, and the personality is evidently a new spiritual being that will probably survive the death of the body.' The implication that only human beings possess spirits which outlive the mortal body represents an aspect in which Broom's ostensibly biological evolutionism coincides with the theosophical view that human distinctiveness lies in the possession of a spirit.

Comparably, Alfred Russel Wallace argues that the development of the human being is significantly different from that of other species, due to divine intervention. In his essay 'The Limits of Natural Selection as Applied to Man,' he asserts that 'a superior intelligence has guided the development of man in a definite direction, and for special purpose, just as man guides the development of many animal and vegetable forms.' Wallace sees the size of the brain of 'savage' peoples as the most powerful evidence for this view, feeling that 'in his large and well-developed brain [the savage] possesses an organ quite disproportionate to his actual requirements' and therefore this brain 'seems prepared in advance, only to be fully utilized as he progresses in civilization.' The role of divine agency in guiding evolution which Wallace endorses is explicitly and zealously praised by H.P. Blavatsky. With reference to the concept of a higher force controlling humankind's evolution, she writes that 'it should be noted that one of the luminaries of the modern Evolutionist School, Mr. A. R. Wallace, when discussing the inadequacy of "natural selection" as the sole factor in the development of physical man, practically concedes the whole point here discussed.'

In contrast to Broom and Wallace, Charles Darwin does not consider the evolution of humankind to be distinct from that of other animals. In *The Descent of Man*, he contends that 'we can understand how it has come to pass that man and all other vertebrate animals have been constructed on the same general model' and that 'consequently we ought frankly to admit their community of descent.' Ernst Haeckel, in *The Riddle of the Universe*, advances a similar view: that 'sufficient for us, as an incontestable historical fact, is the important thesis that man descends immediately from the ape, and secondarily from a long series of lower vertebrates.' Haeckel identifies a chain of primates which 'stretches unbroken from the lowest catarrhinae to the highest-developed man,' implying that the human being is quantitatively rather than qualitatively distinct. This consequence of his argument Haeckel later makes explicit himself, stating that:

Man has no single mental faculty which is his exclusive prerogative. His whole psychic life differs from that of the nearest related mammals only in degree, and not in kind; quantitatively, not qualitatively.

For some theosophists and esotericists the development of the spirit is seen to belong to a different order of evolution from that of the body, and therefore cannot be explained in the same terms. Among them P.D. Ouspensky (whose *Tertium Organum* was read by Lawrence around the time he wrote the *Quetzalcoatl* draft of *The Plumed Serpent*) directly addresses what he regards as the misconception of Darwinists that consciousness is a product of bodily evolution. In *Tertium Organum*, he writes that:

Evolutionists, followers of Darwin, say that the struggle for existence and the selection of the fittest created the mind and feeling of contemporary man – that mind and feeling SERVE LIFE, preserve the life of separate individuals and of the species, and that *beyond this* they have no meaning in themselves. But it is possible to answer this with the same arguments before advanced against the *mechanicality* of the universe; namely, that if consciousness exists, then nothing exists except consciousness. The struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, if they truly play such a role in the creation of life are also not merely accidents, but products of consciousness, OF WHICH – WE DO NOT KNOW; and they also conduce, like everything else, TO KNOWLEDGE.

If consciousness is all, and survival-of-the-fittest conflict between species can be said to

be a product of consciousness, then evolutionary competition might be felt to collapse into a battle of wills. The action of the will, in its creative and destructive possibilities, is one of D.H. Lawrence's major concerns. However, the will of one species does not, for Lawrence, correlate simply with the will of another in constitution or operation. In *St Mawr*, Lou wishes, through contact with St Mawr, to escape 'an unspoken, unconscious battle of wills' taking place between her, her mother and Rico. The different nature of St Mawr's will is what makes this contact potentially restorative. Lou feels 'only St Mawr gave her some hint of the possibility' of escape, because he possesses 'another sort of wisdom' and 'echoes of another darker, more spacious, more dangerous, more splendid world than ours' (*SM* 41).

The biological question of human distinctiveness stands in a complicated relationship to literature depicting both human beings and other species. In its representations of human beings, non-human animals, and the relation between them, literature need not, and perhaps should not, be seen as passively reflecting an argument external to it. The human and the humane, as well as a number of derivative concepts, can be seen to extract at least some of their layers of meaning from their literary deployment. In *Animal Characters*, for instance, Bruce Thomas Boehrer asserts that 'the notion of character develops in English writing [...] as a means of manufacturing and perpetuating the distinction between people and animals.' Boehrer further contends that 'it is this distinction [...] that makes the modern novel possible.' Boehrer is by no means a unique voice in making such a case: others also suggest that literature has been responsible in itself for generating many of the qualities which distinguish the human. Harold Bloom's *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* contains the argument that 'personality, in our sense is a Shakespearian invention,' and that Shakespeare 'may not have been "imitating life" but creating it, in most of his finest work.' In light of this, the approach to the relationship between human characters and other species taken by D.H. Lawrence must be considered with an awareness of this instability - whether those issues were consciously considered in Lawrence's time or not, by Lawrence or by others.

In *The Plumed Serpent* and *St Mawr*, Lawrence can be said not only to address the question which biological evolution opened regarding humankind's place in nature, but can also

be seen as anticipating the categorical contestations which recent scientific and culture investigation have resulted in. By exploring the ways in which humankind relates to other animals – and the ways in which it fails to – Lawrence also tests the subjecthood of other species. In the bull-fight which opens *The Plumed Serpent*, in that novel as a whole, and in *St Mawr*, the limitations and possibilities of relationships between human beings, other animals and wider nature are central.

With respect to St Mawr as subject or symbol, John Haegert suggests that there 'would seem to be contradiction or confusion in Lawrence's unsteady use of the stallion.' This instability exists both in the sense that St Mawr sometimes appears to be a symbolic presence, sometimes not, and that, as a symbol, he seems to symbolize both good and evil, sometimes alternately, sometimes simultaneously. While St Mawr may be 'one of the kings of creation,' (*SM* 83), it is also asserted that 'the devil was in him' (*SM* 49). However, this instability to St Mawr can be seen both as intentional, and as a virtue, in that it might be felt to bring Lawrence closer to the suchness of the horse. Considering the suggestions Ouspensky makes regarding the consciousness of the horse, and Lawrence's response, can help. For Ouspensky, the horse exists in fewer dimensions than does a human being. He writes that 'the higher animals – the dog, cat, and horse – are two-dimensional beings,' and that 'the horse feels the plane as space' and 'feels the rest of the world as time.' Responding to these precise remarks, Lawrence suggests that it is 'true the horse probably sees an angle in terms of motion.' However, this motion Lawrence understands in terms of depth rather than surface, and thereby contends that for the horse most objects have 'an animistic reality – neither form nor time, but apparition.' This is in evidence when St Mawr is spooked by a whistle, and kicks Carrington. Once he has been brought under control, it is said that he 'seemed to be seeing legions of ghosts, down the dark avenues of all the centuries that have lapsed since the horse became subject to man' (*SM* 77). The consciousness of the horse sees it suggested to see connections a human being never could, leading to confusing, seemingly contradictory character, considered from a human perspective. Put another way, the horse for Ouspensky, and perhaps for Lawrence, belongs to a different evolution from that of human beings. If Lawrence is attempting reproduce the suchness of the horse, it cannot be

expected to fit comfortably within the structure of a narrative of human development.

For Jeff Wallace, it is significant that the horse stands in a very particular relationship to the human, by virtue of its domestication. As Wallace writes, 'while all horses belong to a 'prehistoric' time before the evolution of human, their post-human history varies according to their status in and treatment by different cultures.' Because of this, for Wallace, D.H. Lawrence's 'restless discourse' in *St Mawr* 'embodies the difficulty of finding a perspective from which to know St Mawr.' This appears true, as an additional level of difficulty in fixing St Mawr as a character.

II

In terms of better understanding evolution in Lawrence's work of this period, it may be beneficial to explore the areas of commonality between theosophical evolutionary ideas and those of Henri Bergson. A significant structural element is shared by Bergson and Ouspensky's vision of evolution; the evolutionary theory of each can be described as an evolutionism of multiple evolutions. In *Creative Evolution*, Bergson writes that 'the more we fix our attention on this continuity of life, the more we see that organic evolution resembles the evolution of a consciousness,' implying that the two are comparable, but distinct – the evolution of the organism and the evolution of the consciousness are, it seems, two separate evolutions. Ouspensky, meanwhile, in *Tertium Organum*, proposes multiple evolutions very explicitly. He contends that 'the evolutions of animal-vegetables, of animals and of men are different, go by different routes, and do not impinge upon one another.'

For Bergson, the evolution of consciousness emerges through a process whereby 'the past presses against the present and causes the upspringing of a new form of consciousness, incommensurable with its antecedents.' A comparable notion of the development of consciousness is offered by D.H. Lawrence, applied to non-human animals – and is given in the notes he made in response to Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum*. Addressing Ouspensky's claim that 'the animal lives *in a world of two dimensions*' and that 'its universe has for it the properties and

appearance of *a surface*,' Lawrence writes that 'the animal sees the world as a kind of *deep* from which things emerge' and that 'it sees the *flux*, not surface.'" In effect, it seems that, for Lawrence, the non-human animal perceives a pressure of past on present of the form Bergson suggests, though the animal does not have the faculty to understand the nature of the flux it witnesses. Instead, Lawrence contends that 'the animal *sees* emotionally – sees only ghosts and presences – animism – but it sees in strange emotional complexes.' The non-human animal, for Lawrence, detects and responds to change, even if it cannot position itself or other items within that process.

Certain of the claims Bergson advances regarding consciousness do, however, bear resemblance to those of Ouspensky. For Bergson plants and animals alike possess forms of consciousness; a view also held by Ouspensky. Bergson argues that 'we should define the animal by sensibility and awakened consciousness, the vegetable by consciousness asleep and by insensibility,' while Ouspensky grants to the vegetable 'dull enjoyment of self,' and to non-human animals intelligence and consciousness 'at first very weak, and only after many intermediate stages attaining its last great development in man, whose intellect is nature's crowning point.' Thus, each offers a very broad vision of consciousness, one which encompasses plants as well as animals. However, for Ouspensky, extending from Kant, consciousness is everything, such that 'space and time, defining everything that we cognize by sensuous means, are in themselves just forms of consciousness.' By contrast, for Bergson, consciousness is asserted to be 'the light that plays around the zone of possible actions or potential activity which surrounds the action really performed by the living being.' In terms of *The Plumed Serpent*, Carrasco and Cipriano, in privileging consciousness and will – in apparently regarding consciousness in itself as a domain of meaningful action – can be seen to side with the Ouspenskian understanding of consciousness over the Bergsonian.

In that Ouspensky collapses physical and spiritual alike into a very broad vision of consciousness, there can be felt an implication that the evolution of each is fundamentally similar. If the physical cannot meaningfully be delimited from the spiritual, neither can its evolution. However, this represents only one of many means of relating physical evolution to a possible higher evolution. Though there can broadly be said to be agreement among theosophists,

occultists and esotericists regarding the importance of spiritual evolution, there is no clear consensus regarding its precise relationship to physical evolution. A number of occult accounts of evolution, physical and spiritual, are found in the *Occult Review*, a journal Lawrence knew very well. In a November 1922 article, Percy Harrison Fawcett contends that 'exultation of the latent "spiritual" faculties' depends upon 'the suppression of the animal;' suggesting an antagonistic relationship between bodily evolution and spiritual evolution: the two are not only implied to be distinct, but to pull in different directions. Simultaneous fulfilment as a physical being and a spiritual being is not a realistic possibility. By contrast, in the July 1922 edition of the same journal, H.W. Stevens advances a theory of evolution through rebirth, whereby a spirit develops through living multiple physical lives. Stevens argues that 'a steady undeviating evolution necessitating the repeated birth of the soul into the physical world affords a vast, coherent cosmic scheme that satisfies all intellectual demands.' This rebirth can, in Stevens' view, be known with certainty 'by developing the "sixth" sense which lies latent in all.' Moreover, development of this sense means, for Stevens, that 'the finer astral body of the ego can function consciously and at will in the invisible world.'

The Plumed Serpent can be felt to contain elements comparable to each of these visions, especially that of Stevens. Within the claim Carrasco makes that 'the spirit of the world can fly from flower to flower, like a humming-bird, and slowly fertilize the great trees in their blossoms' (PS 248), there lies the image of a spirit using physical forms as vehicles for the advancement of a greater development. Here, however, a single, universal spirit is apparently evoked, in contrast to Steven's individuated spirits, and the flowering of each individual flower appears to contribute to a collective transcendence. A comparable duality – of spirits seeking physical bodies suitable for their advancement – is also seen in *St Mawr*. First, Mrs. Witt experiences a disconnection between spirit and body: while looking out the window of her house, it is said that she 'felt, strangely, as if already her soul had gone away from her actual surroundings' and that 'she was there, in Oxfordshire, in the body, but her spirit had departed elsewhere' (SM 119). Subsequently, Lou, once in America, experiences a sense of union with a spirit which will work through her. There, she claims that she is 'where I want to be: with the spirit that wants me' (SM 155).

Lawrence's extensive travels in 1922 render it uncertain whether he might have seen these particular editions of the *Occult Review*, though much suggests it to be possible. It is known that while in Sicily he was posted the January 1922 edition by S. S. Koteliansky; further, Michael Ballin, in 'Lewis Spence and the Myth of Quetzalcoatl in D.H. Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent*,' argues that articles by Lewis Spence published in the February and June issues of the *Occult Review* offer a 'source for the Quetzalcoatl myth in *The Plumed Serpent*.' Ballin highlights the fact that both 'The Story of Atlantis: New Light on the Sunken Continent' and 'The Influence of Atlantis on Egypt and Mexico' concern themselves with Quetzalcoatl, each containing the suggestion that the figure of Quetzalcoatl may have an Atlantean source. For Ballin, 'though Lawrence found his own significance in his experience of Mexican-Indian civilization, he may have been led in the direction of Mexican tradition by Spence's writings.' Ballin highlights mention in *The Plumed Serpent* of a time 'when great plains stretched away to the oceans, like Atlantis,' suggesting that this represents a further potential link between the novel and these articles; a possibility, but not necessarily a strong one, given that Ballin also cites mention of Atlantis in the introduction to *Fantasia of the Unconscious* as evidence for a possible link, though this introduction is known to have been written in the autumn of 1921, before the publication of the articles in question.

Nevertheless, the patron of the Taos artist colony at which Lawrence stayed in New Mexico, Mabel Dodge Luhan, had a considerable interest in theosophical, esoteric and occult ideas, providing the possibility that the *Occult Review* may have been available to him in this period through her. In *Lorenzo in Taos*, in which Luhan collects letters she sent to Lawrence, and which he sent to her, a number of letters discuss the theosophical ideas of George Gurdjieff and his foundation. Luhan writes favourably, explaining that: 'I do wish you'd go and see Gurdjieff if you're in Paris,' a suggest Lawrence bluntly refuses to consider. Similarly, in her autobiography, *Intimate Memories*, Luhan writes about her experience of reading 'books about Atlantis, Rosicrucianism, [and] the Seven Worlds of Theosophy.' Given all of this, the chance that Lawrence read the *Occult Review* while in Taos is not a remote one.

It was also during his time living in New Mexico that Lawrence read P.D. Ouspensky's

Tertium Organum. Lawrence's reaction to *Tertium Organum* was intense, though not often expressly positive. He extensively annotated his copy, often to add impassioned criticism of Ouspensky's claims. So thorough were his notes that on the title page of the copy he read he added '& D.H.L.' after Ouspensky's name. An impassioned 'no no!!' is found in the margin alongside Ouspensky's claim that non-human animals have two-dimensional consciousness, while Lawrence offers the response 'pah' to Ouspensky's assertion that man is 'in substance, an automaton, unconscious or conscious of his actions.' Other points, though, are conceded, and even extended. Where Ouspensky suggests non-human animals perceive the third-dimension as motion, Lawrence responds: 'yes, and the fourth dimension too – and the fifth.'

More broadly, Lawrence's response to occult and esoteric ideas is nuanced, and complicated to the point that Lawrence's expressed attitudes appear to contain contradictions. By the middle of the 1920s, his interest in this area had long been expressed. In April 1918, for instance, he wrote to Mark Gertler, explaining that he had 'been reading another book on Occultism.' In his letter, Lawrence claims that magic and astrology are 'very interesting, and important – though antipathetic to me.' However, perhaps confusingly, in the very next sentence of this letter, Lawrence asserts that 'certainly magic is a reality.' Even before this, in August 1917, he writes to David Eder asking if he had read Helena Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, which he describes as 'in many ways a bore and not quite real,' before, with similar conflict of feeling manifest, suggesting that 'one can glean a marvellous lot from it, [and] enlarge the understanding immensely.'

Lawrence borrowed the copy of *The Secret Doctrine* which he read: had he not done so, it is possible that he might have provided a marginal commentary comparable to that he added to *Tertium Organum*. In other words, the existence of marginal notes in Lawrence's copy of *Tertium Organum* does not, in itself, imply that Ouspensky's theories provoked a singularly strong reaction from Lawrence. Nevertheless, there is much in Ouspensky's work which Lawrence might be felt to bring to the centre of his fiction. Among the elements in question is Ouspensky's claim that, in addition to the existence of different evolutions in different species, in a single species there can be multiple evolutions. Ouspensky writes that:

To declare that manifest differences determine the “evolutionary grade,” that animals of one type are “higher” or “lower” than another, would be entirely false. The dog and the monkey by their *intellect*, their aptness to imitate, and by reason of the dog's fidelity to man, are as it were higher than the cat, but the cat is infinitely superior to them in intuition, esthetic sense, independence, and force of will. The dog and the monkey manifest themselves *in toto*: all that they have is seen. The cat, on the other hand, is not without reason regarded as a magical and occult animal. In her there is much hidden of which she herself does not know. If one speaks in terms of evolution, it is more correct to say that the cat and the dog are animals of different evolutions, just as in all probability, not one, but several evolutions are simultaneously going forward in humanity.

The paragraph in question is found at the close of Chapter VIII of *Tertium Organum*, and represents Ouspensky's most direct comment on the notion of evolution. An additional short paragraph completes the chapter. This, in the second edition of *Tertium Organum*, Ouspensky extends slightly, but significantly. Below, that paragraph is quoted with the extension underlined:

The recognition of several independent and (mechanically) equivalent evolutions, developing entirely different properties would lead us out of a labyrinth of endless contradictions in our understanding of *man* and would show us the path to the only real and important evolution for us – the evolution into superman.

Thus, for Ouspensky, it is the interaction of separate evolutionary forces which has created the present state of humankind. Where, then, he suggests that the evolutions of different species do not impede one another, the evolutions within a single species seemingly do: if only one evolutionary process in humankind leads to super-humanity, others might be assumed to lead nowhere, or to lead in unfavourable directions. Moreover, it appears to be implied that a human being, or humankind as a whole, might consciously select its evolutionary direction: if attention to the purported existence of multiple evolutions is felt to show the path to super-humanity, it is possible to suppose Ouspensky also feels that a willed decision can be made to favour development along this path.

Though Lawrence is likely to have read only the first edition of *Tertium Organum*, without the explicit statement that humankind might direct its evolution towards super-humanity, the idea of a willed choice towards a particular path of development is at the centre of *The*

Plumed Serpent. In particular, Ouspensky's notion of a choice between evolutions coheres with the initially unusual understanding of free will which Carrasco advances. For Carrasco, 'there is no such thing as liberty' and that 'you only change one sort of domination for another.' From this, he draws the conclusion that 'all we can do is to choose our master' (*PS* 72). Different evolutionary forces might be understood to be those masters. Moreover, when Carrasco does make a choice, it is the choice to be super-human:

Once a man gathers his whole soul together and arrives at a conclusion, the time of alternatives has gone. I must. No more than that. I am the First Man of Quetzalcoatl. I am Quetzalcoatl himself, if you like. A manifestation, as well as a man. I accept myself entire, and proceed to make destiny. (*PS* 316)

For Ouspensky, however, there can be understood to be free will in a certain sense, in that it is asserted that the power of thought is potentially infinite. Ouspensky states that 'thought, which is free, cannot be bound by any limits' and that 'it must regard nothing as *solved*, and nothing as *impossible*.' For Ouspensky, this power can exert itself not only within the realm of the mental, but can also alter physical bodies. As Ouspensky writes, phenomena of consciousness can 'transform themselves into physical phenomena and into manifestations of life.' In short, for Ouspensky, '*the idea is more powerful than a geological cataclysm*.' Thus, a highly developed, highly evolved consciousness could, according to this conception, use its power to transform the living body to which it adheres, or to transcend it. As Ouspensky's translator, Claude Bragdon, summarizes in his introduction to *Tertium Organum*, for the Ouspenskian super-human 'bodies are as tools which they may take up or lay aside at will.'

In *The Plumed Serpent*, power originating from the consciousness is seen as capable of producing major physical effects. This is seen in one of the ritualistic dances Cipriano and Carrasco encourage. It is explained that as the dance progresses Cipriano's 'own dark consciousness seemed to radiate through their flesh and their bones; they were conscious, not through themselves but through him' (*PS* 365). This model of transcendence, whereby consciousness leads physical transformation, appears to answer a desire expressed by Kate Leslie

– for a soul empowered to control the physical. She wishes that 'if only the people were souls, and their bodies were gestures from the soul!' (PS 304). However, the physical is also seen to be able to impact upon the spiritual. In the attention *The Plumed Serpent* pays to the earth in itself, and the power it is seen to possess, Lawrence's understanding of evolutionary development and transcendence can be distinguished from that of Carrasco and Cipriano. In the Mexico of *The Plumed Serpent* much points to the action of the land being able to harm its residents spiritually: thus, the consciousness does not definitively lead the physical – the two exist in antagonism. Precisely, it is said in *The Plumed Serpent* that 'there was a ponderous, down-pressing weight upon the spirit' in Mexico, and that 'the spirit of place was cruel, down-dragging, destructive' (PS 50). Furthermore, the continent of America as a whole is suggested to be 'the great continent of the undoing,' which has been 'plucking at the created soul in a man, till at last it plucked out the growing germ, and left him a creature of mechanism and automatic reaction' (PS 77). To Leslie, Mexico is 'so heavy, so oppressive, like the folds of some huge serpent that seemed as if it could hardly raise itself' (PS 24).

Granting importance to the power of the land, Leslie feels that the flaws she identifies in the Mexican character could be improved by a change in the Mexican environment. She concludes that 'if only there could be a softening of the water in the air, and a haze above trees, the unspoken and unspeakable malevolence would die out of the human hearts' (PS 405). However, the people of Mexico are also seen to harm the land. On one occasion, Leslie hears 'two men in the crescent begin to sing' with 'trained and amazing voices, the powerful Mexican tenor that seemed to tear the earth open' (PS 281). Owen Rhys, meanwhile, states that 'the half-breed or mixed blood Mexicans who are all the time on top shall continue to destroy the country' (PS 64). Rhys may intend to refer to political and social structures, rather than the physical environment, but, given the interaction between Mexican people and the land itself in evidence elsewhere in the novel, to see an additional meaning in his words does not appear unreasonable.

In this much, *The Plumed Serpent* offers a situation at odds with the mutually sustaining dependency between different creatures, and between creature and physical environment which is often seen in biological evolutionism. For instance, in *The Various Contrivances by Which*

Orchids are Fertilized by Insects, Charles Darwin describes the mutually dependent relationship between orchids and other flowers, and the insects which carry their pollen. He explains that 'there cannot be the least doubt that the fertilization of the flower absolutely depends on insects,' while, of course, these insects depend on the flowers' nectar for nourishment. Writing about an intricate method the *peristylus veridis* has for luring insects to take its pollen, Darwin concludes that 'if this double relation is accidental, it is a fortunate accident for the plants; but I cannot believe it to be so, and it appears to me one of the most wonderful cases of adaptation which has ever been recorded.'

Among critics of Lawrence, Jad Smith has also noted that the Mexican people's 'organic connection to the landscape actually hinders their development as humans.' He highlights Lawrence's assertion that the 'potent elements of the American continent [...] give men powerful bodies, but [...] weigh the soul down and prevent its rising into birth' (*PS* 135). Nevertheless, the particular conditions encountered in Mexico are also seen to have benefits in *The Plumed Serpent*, which perhaps means that ultimately Lawrence's Mexico need not be seen to oppose the fundamentals of Darwinian evolutionism. As Lawrence presents it, the Mexican environment is particularly, and perhaps uniquely, suited to make possible physical and spiritual transformation of individuals. The drag Mexico exerts upon its inhabitants wears down and wearies the residents of the country, but this abrasion eventually makes possible a deeper relationship with the earth than might be realized elsewhere. This is seen in a moment in which Leslie reflects on a discussion with Carrasco about Mexico and its people. Leslie recalls words which appear to have been Carrasco's. According to the statement remembered, being taken by the pull of the earth is potentially a necessary precursor to establishing nourishing roots. It is suggested that an individual may 'need to be drawn down, down, till you send roots into the deep places again,' such that thereafter 'then you can send up the sap and the leaves back to the sky, later' (*PS* 80). In this much, the notion of rootedness remains important in *The Plumed Serpent*. To have roots, to grow downwards, is still an important precursor to further potential upwards growth. Leslie, still channelling, and perhaps modifying Carrasco's words, suggests that:

The men in Mexico are like trees, forests that the white men felled in their coming. But the roots of the trees are deep and alive and forever sending up new shoots.

And each new shoot that comes up overthrows a Spanish church or an American factory. And soon the dark forest will rise again, and shake the Spanish buildings from the face of America.

All that matters to me are the roots that reach down beyond all destruction. The roots and the life are there. What else it needs is the word, for the forest to begin to rise again. And some man among men must speak the word. (PS 80)

In *The Plumed Serpent*, connection with the Mexican earth does ultimately provoke both physical and spiritual change for Leslie herself. In the closing stages of the novel, Leslie realizes that both her body and spirit are undergoing change in Mexico. She comes to understand that 'it was not her spirit alone which was changing, it was her body, and the constitution of her very blood.' Attributing these changes to her transposition to the new world, it is said that Leslie 'could feel it, the terrible katabolism and metabolism in her blood changing her even as a creature, changing her to another creature' (PS 421).

Katabolism is a concept found in The Book of Revelation. Lawrence's understanding of it appears to follow that of James M. Pryse, whose *Apocalypse Unsealed* he had read (Lawrence also mentions this work to David Eder in the same letter as that in which he recommends *The Secret Doctrine* by Blavatsky). Pryse, interpreting Revelation, writes that 'the word *katabolê*, here translated "evolution," is said by Origen to mean the descent of the souls into material conditions.' In using the term katabolism to refer to the change in Leslie, Lawrence does apparently wish to connote downward oriented, earthwards change.

For expansion into the earth to have association with katabolism, it seems it must be shorn of the opportunity for upwards development to emerge as a reaction, just as the upward growth of the trees constituted by Mexican people is seen to have been prevented by Europeans. The plant, its roots unaffected, continues to grow, but without the benefit of light and air from expansion above ground. The orientation of its development, it seems, becomes purely downwards. This, it seems, translates into a negative for both body and spirit. The downward oriented Mexicans, for Lawrence 'tr[y] brutally to return to the older, previous levels of evolution' doing so 'in the spirit of cruelty and misery (PS 140).

The tectonic constitution of the Mexican earth makes it particularly corrosive. The concepts of volcanism and fragmentation which became prominent in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* are also in great evidence in *The Plumed Serpent*. Given the geography of Mexico, this need not be felt surprising. Mexico has active volcanoes, in contrast to Australia, though only two of them. One of these, Popocatepétl, is referenced by name on two occasions in *The Plumed Serpent*. The definite knowledge of volcanic activity in Mexico makes importance of volcanism differ in *The Plumed Serpent* from that in Lawrence's Australian work. Where, in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*, the possibility of volcanism constituted a source of anxiety, the known volcanoes in Mexico are a source of genuine aggravation. Lawrence finds the Mexican people

Blacked under a too-strong sun, surcharged with the heavy sundering electricity of the Mexican air, and tormented by the bubbling of volcanoes away below the feet [...] If a man arrives with a soul, the maleficent elements gradually break it, gradually, till he decomposes into ideas and mechanistic activities, in a body full of mechanical energy, but with his blood-soul dead and putrescent. (*PS* 135)

The power of Cipriano is also seen to be 'heavy' and 'inert,' 'limited as a snake or a lizard is limited' (*PS* 310). In this, and not only in this, he bears a resemblance to his land which he fails to recognize. In him is a volcanic 'black fume of power which he emitted' (*PS* 310), while there is a 'dark, heavy vibration' to his blood (*PS* 310). If, it seems, Cipriano and Carrasco were to consider the external significant, the resemblance between themselves and their land would offer a means to better understand, and better utilize their power.

The combination *The Plumed Serpent* offers of violence between species and geological instability does not appear accidental. It locates its action in a world in which deep communication between species is possible, but miscommunication between them is significantly more prevalent. This failure to communicate is not only detrimental to the individual, who is unable to realize his or her full potential as a being, but this miscommunication is behind the deterioration of the world at large. Villiers, the American friend whom Leslie leaves behind when she journeys into the Mexican countryside with Carrasco and Cipriano, is particularly associated with faulty interaction with the natural world. He, it is explained, 'was widdershins, unwinding

the sensations of disintegration and anti-life' (*PS* 103). Moreover, Leslie feels that 'everything he said, everything he did reversed her real life-flow, made her go against the sun' (*PS* 104). That Villiers can occupy the same environments as Leslie, and yet not experience any of the potent sensations she does carries a significant implication: nature, though potent, will not transform those who are blind to its power, or who wilfully ignore it.

This bears comparison with the evolutionary theory advanced by Percy Harrison Fawcett in 'Spiritual Evolution.' For Fawcett, all individuals share the potential for transcendence through the agency of a great life-force, but many individuals will fail to realize their evolutionary potential, through their own spiritual error. Fawcett writes that 'many nurse the belief that every human monad must eventually reach the ultimate goal of evolution at the close of the great Manvantaric Cycle, under a merciful dispensation indifferent to the action of our free will' but that 'unfortunately, it is not correct.' Instead, for Fawcett, 'there are many slips off the path' and 'millions of monads, as well as countless millions of those already passed on and yet to incarnate, are or will be members of a vast army of the unfit, destined to be the flotsam and jetsam of our evolutionary stream.'

The sense that spiritual failure is possible is clear in *The Plumed Serpent*, and can explain both the urgency of Leslie's search for revelation, and the fervency of Cipriano and Carrasco's devotion to their path. Both the downward pull that Mexico exerts, and the reversed direction Villiers manifests in his motion separately represent forms of movement which do not lead, in isolation at least, towards transcendence or spiritual development. However, where Fawcett suggests that spiritual evolution must proceed at the expense of physical evolution, *The Plumed Serpent*, by contrast, contends that both body and spirit must be participant in full and meaningful transcendence: Carrasco and Cipriano are blinded by too much attention to the spirit, while most of the people of Mexico are seen to be grounded by too little attention to it – either because Europeans have denied them the possibility, or because they in themselves privilege the physical. Evolutions may be multiple, but it seems that no single evolution, spiritual or physical, can or should be favoured above others: to deny any given evolution is to deny an aspect of nature.

For Ouspensky, it is also possible for the individual to fail to evolve. This failure is

particularly to be associated with human beings, due to human self-consciousness. He writes that:

The self-conscious mind has far more power over itself; it can assist in its own evolution greatly, and can also easily *impede* it. We are confronted with the general question: can unconscious evolution proceed with the appearance of self-consciousness? It is far more correct to suggest that the appearance of self-consciousness annihilates the possibility of unconscious evolution. Power over evolution passes from the group-soul (or from nature) to the individual itself.

Additionally, for Ouspensky, '*man*, not striving toward evolution, not conscious of its possibility, not helping it, will not evolve' and 'the individual who is not evolving does not remain in a static condition, but goes down, *degenerates*.' In *The Plumed Serpent*, degeneration is indeed the alternative to evolution. However, striving too consciously to evolve towards the super-human does not appear to be supported by Lawrence. Though Cipriano and Carrasco achieve transformations, those transformations lack meaning due to the singular focus each has upon the spiritual and the concomitant lack of attention each pays to the physical. The inability of Cipriano and Carrasco to see their respective positions in society and wider nature results in the failure to attain the meaningful understanding of other species and wider nature necessary before spiritual evolution might be considered enlightening rather than blinding. Their evolutions do not, in other words, suit their environments, and therefore enrich neither themselves nor their surroundings. As Leslie realises about Cipriano, 'nothing came forth from him to meet with one outside;' he is 'all oblivious of the outside, all for himself' (*PS* 201).

In suggesting that it is necessary to 'see people as one sees the trees in the landscape' (*PS* 251) Carrasco may wish to argue for viewing human beings as insignificant background – an idea uncomfortable in itself. However, his evocation of plant-life perverts a Bergsonian vision of possible human development. Arguing that 'one must disentangle oneself from persons and personalities,' Carrasco implicitly suggests an erasure of the self, to the extent the individual develops through the contact he or she makes with others. Though a tree might struggle to find nourishment in the hostile Mexican earth, the human being withdrawing his or her roots refuses the possibility to draw even slight benefit from his or her surroundings, and further loses support

and stability. Suggesting, moreover, that 'you must hate people and humanity' and 'turn beyond them, to the greater life' (PS 251), Carrasco shows a failure to understand that it is a system of relationships with other beings which gives life its form.

Illness, Injury, and Natural Selection in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *The Virgin and the Gipsy*

I

Sickness, particularly, but not exclusively, physical sickness, is a feature of D.H. Lawrence's fiction throughout his career, but it is especially significant in his last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (the third and final version of which was first published in 1928), and in the 1926 novella *The Virgin and the Gipsy*. Lawrence's own health troubles do much to explain *why* illness and injury are involved in much of his fiction, but cannot explain in more than a superficial way *how* these items operate as fictional devices in his work. It is true that Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers* is 'rather a delicate boy, subject to bronchitis' (*SL* 90), and that Richard Lovat Somers in *Kangaroo* has 'had pneumonia three times and been threatened with consumption' (*K* 253), each in common with Lawrence himself, but the presentation of these biographically anchored details operates as part of – rather than conflicting with – a rich, nuanced metaphorical system.

Sickness, when addressed in fiction and other discourse, as Susan Sontag suggests, almost inevitably has the quality of metaphor – typically standing 'for mortality, for human frailty and vulnerability.' In addition, Sontag contends that 'illnesses have always been used as metaphors to enliven charges that a society was corrupt or unjust.' In Lawrence's fiction, the two metaphorical registers not only coexist, but deeply interact with one another. The metaphor of illness in Lawrence's fiction speaks to personal and social concerns at once, addressing them as two aspects of a single malaise. Indeed, the sickness metaphor in Lawrence's fiction reaches even further than this, extending not only to the ills of society, but also to those of wider nature.

Aspects of Lawrence's essays, emphasizing a life-force which transcends individual creatures, might suggest that the health of any given individual is of limited importance, secondary to the persistence of life as a whole. In *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*, Lawrence rationalizes the fact of one creature devouring another as an 'essential part of all

existence and being,' a necessity for the continuation of life at large. In *Apocalypse*, meanwhile, Lawrence contends that the individual should sacrifice his or her well-being for the greatness of humanity as a whole:

We must be willing to submit, upon necessity, to the death of our individual splendour and might, [and] as individuals we must upon occasion be willing to be weakened insignificant, humble, meek, mournful, poor in spirit, in order that a greater, a completer glory may come among men.

Lawrence's novels in many respects appear to contradict this. In them the health of an individual is seen to be important to Lawrence for its own value, with an individual's fight for health justified in itself, even when the repercussions of that fight for wider nature are not considered. In many respects, the core of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is constituted by the quest Constance Chatterley undertakes to preserve her own health. It is, after all, the diagnosis from a doctor that her 'vitality is much too low' and that she is 'spending [her] life without renewing it, [...] spending [her] vitality without making any,' which validates and deepens her desire to distance herself from her husband. Though the doctor also contends that there is 'nothing organically wrong' (*LCL* 78) with Constance, this is arguably contradicted by the fact that he also finds in her 'the nerves of the heart a bit queer already.' Thus, though Constance's malaise remains ambiguous and ill-defined, it is in a significant sense medically confirmed. The doctor himself does not suggest that Constance must remove herself from Clifford, but does see that Constance lacks amusement in her relationship with him (*LCL* 78). As such, her eventual resolution to definitively estrange herself from her husband has the ostensibly solid foundation of a medical justification.

The search for restoration through separation represents a primary characteristic of a number of Lawrence's other works, though this is not always overtly medicalized. In *Aaron's Rod*, the fact that Aaron Sisson abandons his family is implicitly presented as justified in part because it allows Sisson to seek restoration in isolation. 'To be alone,' it is explained, 'was his greatest need' (*AR* 265). Similarly, Kate Leslie in *The Plumed Serpent* ultimately understands the power of

being by herself. While, earlier in the novel, she seeks to participate in mass dances and rituals, and feels 'at once attracted and repelled' (*PS* 122), by them, she ultimately realizes that she can feel greater power and greater value in isolation. She finds that 'when she spread the wings of her own ego, and sent forth her own spirit, the world could look very wonderful to her, when she was alone' (*PS* 439). This pleasure in aloneness produces in her 'a lustful feline ratification to break [...] contact, and roam alone in a sense of power' (*PS* 438). Indeed, then, it is not only aloneness in itself which is considered valuable, but also the act of separation.

However, other essays by Lawrence suggest that the ostensible contradiction might be dissolved, or at least complicated. The wider life-force Lawrence so often writes of does not, it seems, act through an individual human being ignorant of his or her individuality, in part because the composition of the human, and the composition of the wider life-force to some extent resemble one another. While the wider life-force is a composite contributed to by individual creatures, Lawrence recognizes that the human being is also a composite consisting of individuated parts, distinct in nature, which are alive in themselves. In 'Why the Novel Matters,' he writes that:

Whatever is alive is me. Every tiny bit of my hands is alive, every little freckle and hair and fold of skin. And whatever is me alive is me.

Injury to any given part of a human being can be significant, therefore, by extension from this understanding, in that it can be seen to represent a change both in the nature of that individual, but also in the wider life-force to which his or her nature contributes. Though the parts of a human being are themselves alive, this only possible due to the relationship they stand in to other parts. By analogy, the constituent parts of wider nature need also to stand in a particular relationship to one another for transcendent forces to be generated and develop as they should – for there to be a broad health to the system. This interface between the health of the individual and the health of the wider system is suggested in 'Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine.' In it, Lawrence argues that 'no man, or creature, or race can have vivid vitality unless it is moving towards a blossoming' and that 'blossoming means the establishing of a pure, *new*, relationship

with all the cosmos.' Effectively, human well-being can be seen to require not only the correct relationship between the parts of the human being, but that the human being as a part of a wider system should stand in a correct relationship to other parts of that system. It may be possible for wider nature to flourish while a given individual does not, but an individual must attend to his or her relationship to wider nature to achieve full realization as an individual.

These two aspects of well-being might be usefully distinguished. For Lawrence, it seems, physical health depends on the correct relationship of the constituent parts of a person to one another, while spiritual health depends on that person's correct relationship to other creatures and wider nature. One product of this line of reasoning, for Lawrence, is that it is possible to declare that the novelist is 'superior to the saint, the scientist, the philosopher, and the poet, who are all great masters of different bits of man alive, but never get the whole hog.' The novel, by addressing the human being in his or her relationships with others and with wider nature, is seen as the best form through which to understand the greater health of an individual – his or her spiritual health. In addition, the novel, for Lawrence, is itself 'a tremulation' and 'can make the whole man-alive tremble.' The novel is seen to provide something which science and medicine are seen not to – treatment for the human being as part of a system, rather than treatment for parts of the human being. Its purported spur to move implicitly pushes the human being to position himself or herself differently within wider nature, and, indeed, to continue repositioning himself or herself. With this in mind, it can be felt that the individuals in Lawrence's novels who seek separation are not in truth isolating themselves, in the sense that wider nature cannot be escaped. The separation may be better thought of as just such a process of repositioning.

While removal from nature may not be possible, the evolutionism in evidence in Lawrence's work is rendered as an individualizing force. In his *Study of Thomas Hardy*, Lawrence contends that as life 'proceeds to evolve out of the mass ever more distinct and definite forms,' it thereby works 'always to the production of the infinite number of perfect individuals, the individual so thorough that he should have nothing in common with any other individual.' Taken to its limit, this view of evolution implies that advancement at the highest stages of evolution –

those it seems that the likes of Tom and Lydia Brangwen and Ramón Carrasco reach, or at least approach – must be a solitary process, as it broadly is for these figures. In *The Rainbow*, Tom and Lydia develop as 'two very separate beings' (R 15). Though 'vitaly connected,' they live 'in their separate ways from one root,' (R 15) evolving into greater distinctiveness. In *The Plumed Serpent*, meanwhile, Carrasco has 'an inexplicable star' within which is said to lie his 'individuality and his supremacy, his godhead' (PS 417).

This thereby suggests that the spiritual aspect of Lawrence's evolutionism, for all it may require correct positioning in a cosmic context, does not pull together separate beings: it is not collaborative in this sense. Valuable interaction between beings, for Lawrence, does not have to imply anything which ought to be termed a substantive connection between them. Though, in Lawrence's work, transformations termed evolutionary are often provoked by love or sex, they are not typically experienced mutually. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, sex between Constance Chatterley and Oliver Mellors is experienced as estranging for Constance:

And when he came into her, with an intensification of relief and consummation that was pure peace to him, still she was waiting. She felt herself a little left out. And she knew, partly it was her own fault. She willed herself into this separateness. Now perhaps she was condemned to it. She lay still, feeling his motion within her, his deep-sunk intentness, the sudden quiver of him at the springing of his seed, then the slow-subsiding thrust. (LCL 125-126)

This changes, to the extent that Constance comes to find more enrichment in her sexual intercourse with Mellors, and comes to feel a connection to him in her 'inner consciousness' (LCL 256). Mellors, by this point, is said to 'give her an exquisite pleasure and a sense of freedom and life; and to release 'her warm, natural sexual flow' (LCL 265). He, then, like the inspiring novelist Lawrence envisions in the *Study of Thomas Hardy*, inspires in Constance a motion which gives her the sensation of greater understanding of her involvement with life at large. The novel, then, offers a vision of sex as providing knowledge – including knowledge of the connection between beings – but sex in itself is not responsible for generating this connection. Shared sexual experience does not directly tie Constance and Mellors together. Indeed, sex gives Constance a

greater understanding of herself as a free individual – connected to other beings and wider nature, but able to adjust her position with respect to each.

II

A relationship between illness and injury and the notion of an evolution progressing through the agency of individuals feeds into the complicated metaphorical register of illness in Lawrence's fiction, especially in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Neither illness nor injury could commonly be conceived of as evolutionarily desirable, but they can each isolate and individualize – as does Lawrencian evolutionary development. For Lawrence this similarity does not appear to be unrecognised, or to be regarded as trivial. Clifford Chatterley – made distinct, and remote, by his injuries – appears to perceive, or perhaps misperceive, the mental consequence of his condition as a form of evolutionary progression, feeling the diminishing of his physical condition the necessary corollary to a spiritual improvement (*LCL* 233). However, it is not Clifford alone who flirts with such feelings. Constance, during one sexual encounter with Mellors, feels 'his body [...] a foolish, impudent, imperfect thing, a little disgusting in its unfinished clumsiness,' and contends to herself that 'surely a complete evolution would eliminate this performance, this "function"' (*LCL* 172).

These sentiments Constance quickly shows only half-felt, dissonant, at odds with other established convictions (*LCL* 172). However, it is not automatically perverse to see the decline of the body as potentially positive in certain respects – and this conclusion is in evidence elsewhere in Lawrence's fiction. Thus, in *The Rainbow*, when Anna Brangwen visits Baron Skrebensky and sees him 'wizened and wrinkled' and 'whittled down by age to an essentiality and a directness' (*R* 184), she finds that his condition has made him 'something separate and interesting,' and directly because of this she finds herself drawn to him. Indeed, she wonders if she herself would rather have 'his cool, hard, separate fire,' rather than her husband's 'blind, hot youth' (*R* 184) and implicitly she appears to favour the former.

Relatedly, towards the climax of *Women in Love*, when Gudrun has contributed to a

sickness in Gerald through her corrosive relationship with him, she demonstrates a realization that good health is not without problems. Sickness, she perceives, can be an escape into singularity:

Perhaps she was healthy. Perhaps it was only her unabateable health that left her so exposed to the truth. If she were sickly she would have her illusions, imaginations. As it was, there was no escape. She must always see and know and never escape. She could never escape (*WL* 465).

It is instructive to note that similar sentiments are to be found in Virginia Woolf's essay, 'On Being Ill' – first published in *The Criterion* in January 1926, and republished in a shortened form in *The Forum* in April of that year, under the title, 'Illness: An Unexploited Mine.' It is a credible possibility that Lawrence read this essay (though obviously long after writing *Women in Love*), most likely in its original form, insomuch as his short story, 'The Woman Who Rode Away,' appeared in *The Criterion* in two parts – the first in the July 1925 edition, the second in the January 1926 edition, the very same as 'On Being Ill.'

In her essay, Woolf characterizes illness as bringing 'tremendous [...] spiritual changes,' and as disclosing 'astonishing [...] undiscovered countries.' For Woolf, this makes it 'strange indeed that illness has not taken its place with love, battle, and jealousy among the prime themes of literature.' With respect to Lawrence, these sentiments can be said to demand an element that is already central in his work – as in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. However, illness does not so much sit alongside love and conflict in Lawrence's fiction as sit as the physical manifestation of experiences of this kind. For Lawrence, to fully write of love or jealousy would demand, in part, writing of illness – or, at least, changes in physical constitution. Certainly, in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Lawrence professes the view that emotional imbalances, including excesses of love, are often the source of identifiable physical illnesses:

Any excess in the sympathetic mode from the upper centres tends to burn the lungs with oxygen, weaken them with stress, and cause consumption. So it is just criminal to make a child too loving. No child should be induced to love too much. It means derangement and death at last.

'On Being Ill' advances to contend that illness should supersede those other sensations and passions typically central to literature. Woolf writes that we need 'a new hierarchy of the passions; love must be deposed in favour of a temperature of 104 degrees; jealousy give place to the pangs of sciatica; sleeplessness play the part of villain, and the hero become a white liquid with a sweet taste, that might prince with the moth's eyes and the feathered feet, one of whose names is Chloral.' In this, there is a key difference between Woolf and Lawrence. Illness, for Lawrence could not replace these conditions as it exists as an aspect of them. To write of love is already, to an extent, to write of a physical ailment.

Nevertheless, Woolf's suggestion that it is the unwell who best comprehend nature stands as more likely to be accepted by Lawrence. Woolf argues that 'it is only the recumbent who know what, after all, nature is at no pains to conceal – that she in the end will conquer.' In this much, Woolf shares with Lawrence the idea of illness as a partner to enlightenment. In *The Rainbow* it is, after all, 'a sickness of new birth' (*R* 39) which passes over Lydia Lensky when she meets Tom Brangwen, and understands that she is compelled to forge a relationship with him, while Sigmund McNair in *The Trespasser* – exhilarated by his affair with Helena – suffers a 'case of splendour and sickness' (*TT* 106) at once. Thus, in these instances, and elsewhere in Lawrence's work, it is knowledge which provokes sickness, rather than the reverse.

In 'On Being Ill,' Woolf argues that 'incomprehensibility has an enormous power over us;' that 'in health, meaning has encroached upon sound' and that 'our intelligence domineers over our senses.' When ill, for Woolf, a person's appreciation of literature, particularly poetry, may be deeper, as the sensational experience of the work can precede the appreciation of its meaning. This phenomenon of enriched sensational experience in sickness is reflected on a number of occasions in Lawrence's work, for instance, by Hermione in *Women in Love*, who, in a dazed condition, suffering from 'strange, sick convulsions, finds that, 'with her mind she was unable to attend to [Birkin's] words, [and therefore] he caught her, as it were, beneath all her defences, and destroyed her with some insidious occult potency' (*WL* 89).

However, Lawrence's understanding of illness sees it in dialogue – sometimes consequence of experiences of this kind, and sometimes cause. For Lawrence, disconnection from

nature and society may provoke sickness in some cases, as well as being the result of sickness in others. When, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Constance Chatterley feels herself increasingly estranged from her husband, though a liberation in many respects, it effects the beginning of a transformation in her which causes her to feel unwell in new respects, physically and mentally. 'Out of her disconnection,' it is explained, 'a restlessness was taking possession of her like madness,' and this 'twitched her limbs when she didn't want to twitch them, it jerked her spine when she didn't want to jerk upright [... and] it thrilled inside her body' (*LCL* 20).

However, Lawrence's approach to illness and injury is not unchanging across his career. When a character in an earlier work is presented as physically weak, the emotional consequences of the condition are typically presented as being of the greatest interest. By the time of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, this has changed somewhat: Clifford's physical condition is his defining feature in itself. His mentality is linked to his war injuries, but never obscures his physical form as the essential aspect of his presence in the novel. Relatedly, Constance's feeling of aversion towards Clifford is presented as stronger and more irrefutable, because it takes the form of 'a profound physical dislike.' (*LCL* 70)

With respect to the particular illnesses from which Lawrence's characters suffer, Judith Ruderman argues, in 'D.H. Lawrence's Dis-Ease,' that 'Lawrence's works throughout his career are in effect diagnoses of illness and prescriptions for treatment,' and that 'like Lawrence, the sensitive people in his fiction, those who are not fit for such a war and such a world, tend toward a wasting kind of illness, often in the form of lung disease.' Whether or not Ruderman intends the fitness she writes of to connote, if only in part, an evolutionary fitness like that of Herbert Spencer, those characters who do indeed suffer from bronchial ailments, Paul Morel and Richard Lovat Somers, each prove to be survivors. Contrary, perhaps, to Ruderman's suggestion, they *are* fit to persist in the world, as is Morel's revelation at the conclusion of *Sons and Lovers*, whereby he resolves 'not to take that direction, to the darkness' (*SL* 464) and follow his mother into death.

The novella *The Virgin and the Gipsy*, written in 1926, shortly before Lawrence produced the first version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, also seems to present experience of pneumonia as

strengthening to overcome – though this is not an example Ruderman highlights. The gipsy (Joe Boswell, though his unpoetic name is only revealed in a letter at the conclusion of the novella), has suffered from the condition in the past, and 'nearly died' from it. Having survived, however, he is considered 'a resurrected man' (*VG* 58). The consequences of this bout of sickness are not explained directly, but it seems credible that the power the gipsy has over Yvette, might, in part, have its root in this transformational encounter with death.

The more nebulously sickly Rupert Birkin, however, provides a rather different case. Though he is not at any point identified as suffering from any specific condition, and is even introduced as 'narrow and nicely made,' (*WL* 20) he is nevertheless 'pale and ill-looking,' (*WL* 20) as well as 'gaunt and sick,' (*WL* 80) and 'frail in health and body.' (*WL* 295) Birkin, who is therefore ill in appearance rather than identifiably unwell, does, in contrast to Paul Morel, crave annihilation; does claim to want the world 'destroyed' and 'empty of people.' (*WL* 127) Thus, of the characters Ruderman contends to be ill-adapted to this world, it is the least physically unwell who appears the least resolved to existence in this world. This implies that, for Lawrence, physical and spiritual health, though related, do not necessarily correlate.

III

A perspective on illness informed by biology can be enlightening with respect to Lawrence's work – *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in particular. By the 1920s, the developing science of genetics had added much detail to the understanding of disease. A version of germ theory, whereby it was thought that the extermination of a disease-carrying organism would be enough to halt the disease had been discredited by this point. Lawrence, it can be said with confidence, is likely to have been conscious of the development of ideas regarding disease, in part through his acquaintance with the biologist Julian Huxley, whom he met as a consequence of his friendship with Aldous Huxley, Julian's brother. At the beginning of 1928, D.H. Lawrence and Frieda spent an extended period in the company of both Aldous and Julian Huxley and their respective wives and children, when they were guests of the Huxleys at their chalet in Les Diablerets in

Switzerland. Lawrence spent six weeks there, making it hard to imagine that Julian Huxley did not speak to him about his work during that time.

The view held by Julian Huxley – and many of his contemporaries – it is the interface between a disease-carrying organism and the affected body which meaningfully constitutes infectious disease. He writes that 'as it takes two to make a quarrel, so it takes two to make a disease,' and that 'the reaction of the human organism is as important as the nature of the parasitic "germ."' In other words, a germ in and of itself does not constitute a disease. A disease exists as the interaction between a germ and an affected body.

A consequence of the emergence of such views is the idea that preventing or combatting a disease may be achieved through increasing an individual's resistance, rather than by directly fighting the germ itself which triggered the illness. For Huxley, this means that 'we are released from the false optimism of the germ theory period, and reminded that healthy living, like all living worth the name, is an art.'

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the art of healthy living is seen to be a lost one, or at least a dying one, though in a sense which appears a reaction to a utilitarian, biological understanding of good living. For Lawrence, to be physically healthy is not in itself an achievement of particular worth: instead, to live a rich, creative, artistic life, while also staying healthy, is the more meaningful way of understanding good living. Clifford Chatterley, though 'healthy, considering' experiences the sensation that a 'terrible hollow seemed to menace him somewhere, somehow' (*LCL* 140). Constance also experiences similar, during her time in Venice. There, it is said:

She lived in the stupor of the light of the lagoon, the lapping saltiness of the water, the space, the emptiness, the nothingness: but health, health, complete stupor of health. It was gratifying, and she was lulled away in it, not caring for anything. Besides, she was pregnant. She knew now. So the stupor of sunlight and lagoon salt and sea-bathing and lying on shingle and finding shells and drifting away, away in a gondola, was completed by the pregnancy inside her, another fullness of health, satisfying and stupefying.

She had been at Venice a fortnight, and she was to stay another ten days or a fortnight. The sunshine blazed over any count of time, and the fullness of physical health made forgetfulness complete. She was in a sort of stupor of well-being (*LCL* 261).

Wellness of the body alone is, for Lawrence, empty without sensuality. Prior to meeting Mellors, Constance fears that the sensuality is lost among men, and with it, the meaning of the life of the body. She recalls the German lover of her youth as a 'healthy boy with his fresh, clumsy sensuality,' but feels that this quality has 'gone out of men' (*LCL* 171). In her view, in most men there is 'no healthy human sensuality, that warms the blood and freshens the whole being' (*LCL* 71). Sterile, clean living is to be met with suspicion.

However, an extension of the biological idea that disease might be best treated by improving the patient is constituted by a focus on the physical improvement of the still healthy body before any bout of illness, or, potentially, before birth – an idea which finds its extreme instantiation in eugenics. Such ideas are advanced by Julian Huxley, who writes of a 'rational eugenics' which will constitute 'a new step in human history;' a step, it might be said, towards a form of the super-humanity so much a concern of theosophists and esotericists.

Huxley further writes, in rhetoric which has a flavour not unlike Lawrence's:

We can do something [...] only by running counter to some of the most cherished sentiments of our democratic age. We have got to stop pretending that mediocrity is our ideal, and that the average man is the god to whom the rest of the world must bring their sacrifices.

More widely, eugenic ideas tend to be traced to Francis Galton's 1865 article, 'Hereditary Talent and Character,' which proposes that 'a highly-bred human race' might be produced if 'talented men were mated with talented women, of the same mental and physical characters as themselves, generation after generation' – in effect defining eugenics without (initially) naming it. Later figures, meanwhile, such as Charles Davenport would write more vigorously in favour of the practical implementation of eugenic ideas. Where Galton contends only that the less talented should be dissuaded from marrying and having children, for Davenport eugenics mandates that 'the country owes it to itself as a matter of self-preservation that every imbecile of reproductive age should be held in such restraint that reproduction is out of the question' and that 'if this proves to be impracticable then sterilization is necessary.' By such means, for Davenport, eugenics might produce a society in which 'crime, disease and degeneracy' no longer need exist.

D.H. Lawrence, for his part, is often seen as condoning eugenic practice of broadly this kind. Thus, it might be expected that its possible power to alter the individual and society should figure in his conception of the meaning of sickness and disease, in both his fiction and other writing. A remark in a 1908 letter to Blanche Jennings, the socialist suffragist to whom Lawrence had then been recently introduced, is cited by Donald J. Childs, Alex Murray, and John Carey, among a number of others, as demonstrating Lawrence's desire to see a form of population control employed on a large scale:

If I had my way, I would build a lethal chamber as big as the Crystal Palace, with a military band playing softly, and a Cinematograph working brightly; then I'd go out in the back streets and main streets and bring them in, all the sick, the halt, and the maimed; I would lead them gently, and they would smile me a weary thanks and the band would softly bubble out the 'Hallelujah Chorus.'

However, the evidence is not unambiguous, even if the quoted passage is bold and ostensibly unequivocal. Even at twenty-three, Lawrence's age when he wrote this, depending on definitions used, he might be counted among the sick who would be subject to the lethal procedure suggested here, given his history of ill-health. Moreover, it is hard to imagine that there is not a black humour in the suggestions (though Childs, Murray, and Carey all give no indication that they take the suggestion as anything other than serious). The joke may not be especially funny, but Lawrence's letters to Jennings are, without exception, filled with something of a forced levity; as John Worthen contends, Lawrence is trying hard, often too hard, to impress an older woman with some social status. Lawrence's first letter to Jennings demonstrates this especially well. There, Lawrence asks Jennings that she 'continue to call me David – since it suits me so well – and since it puts you in the position of a safe, wise elder who will smile with an experienced woman's lenity at my absurdities.' Given this, it is entirely possible that Lawrence's rhetoric does little to reflect his true beliefs.

In *D.H. Lawrence, Science and the Posthuman*, though, Jeff Wallace argues that both 'Education of the People' and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* 'can without difficulty be assimilated to the discourse of eugenics.' That the system of education proposed in 'Education of the People'

will, for Lawrence, 'inevitably produce distinct classes of society,' can be seen to support this perspective. However, the intended goal of the system in question is to create conditions whereby 'a child should grow up true to his own essential self' and 'his own fullness of being.' In this much, there is no sense of a threshold for opportunity to be granted – no sense that an elite, however defined, will be deliberately given greater opportunities to achieve fulfilment. Further, for Lawrence, according to 'Education of the People,' there is nothing at all to be gained from disunion' as 'from an organic system of human life we shall produce the real blossoms of life and being.' This too, as an idea, is distant from eugenic principles.

Meanwhile, in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Lawrence directly states that eugenics is 'something [...] absurd.' Eugenics, Lawrence continues, represents 'trying to clamber up into the clouds' when 'the promised land, if it be anywhere, lies away beneath our feet.' As such, eugenics is explicitly argued to represent a misguided project. Though both *Fantasia of the Unconscious* and 'Education of the People' are complicated, and apparently unworried by ostensible contradiction, and though each aims towards improvement of the population through education, to reckon either eugenic in its discourse is either to use the term very broadly indeed, or to privilege one aspect of these works among many.

Wallace, it seems, does adopt this encompassing understanding, in that he also suggests that Lawrence's 'broad eugenic dispensation [...] gave [him] the conviction that the "human" comprises no discrete, inviolable state or essence, but is subject to change.' In effect, the transformational, individuating possibilities witnessed in so much of Lawrence's fiction can, for Wallace, be connected to a view of the human as a material suitable to be moulded through scientific intervention. Though occultist and esotericist works, with no meaningful eugenic element, also propose a changeable vision of the human, it is entirely credible that eugenic theory does contribute to this aspect of Lawrence's work. Further, the technological and scientific realizability of eugenic alteration of humankind may have made addressing potential transformation beyond the human feel more urgent and relevant.

Wallace also argues that 'eugenics provide a framework within which a writer such as Lawrence could move easily from the dynamics of individual human bodies to the dynamics of

different cultures,' and that, for Lawrence, eugenics showed that 'the "human" might be other than what it was; such alterability [making] the human being simultaneously a political, and a posthuman subject.' Broadly, the notion that eugenics can conceptually tie together the individual and social is a valuable one. Eugenics allows that a transformation may take place in one individual according to a process developed by wider society, a means by which to understand the connection between transformation in an individual and the society and wider nature of which he or she a part. In this light Clifford Chatterley's exterior hardening can be understood as process which belies the character of the individual, but also communicates an aspect of society to which he belongs. That he is described as becoming 'one of the amazing crabs and lobsters of the modern, industrial and financial world' (*LCL* 110) is suggestive that social forces ought to be seen as capable of enacting change in the individual.

However, eugenic practice may also involve the isolation of aspects of a human being. Francis Galton's vision of controlled breeding depends, for its supposed value, upon the delimitation and identification of desirable physical and mental traits within a being. It thereby includes a level of individuation beyond distinguishing one human being from another: component parts of each human being should be identified as distinct, and as a better or worse than possible alternatives. For Charles Davenport, similarly, it is vital to eugenics that 'the qualities or characteristics of organisms are, or may be analyzed into, distinct units that are inherited independently.' Julian Huxley, meanwhile, writes that 'it now seems certain that by far the most important part of the living substance which is handed on from parent to offspring consists of a whole series of tiny *units* – microscopic or more probably ultra-microscopic – each of which has something particular to do in the business of heredity.'

Much of Lawrence's work, however, suggests that attention to individual aspects of a living being is apt to destroy the value of that being – which, his fiction suggests, should be seen as emerging from the combination of those aspects rather than from these aspects in themselves. In *Kangaroo*, Richard Lovat Somers, 'hazy scientifically,' ponders 'how many thousand facets [...] make the eye of a fly,' from which he advances to the thought that 'people are just facets: just bits, that fitted together make a whole' (*K* 280). For Somers, however, bodily, no individual

element of a human being, or of any other animal, is special in itself – no one microscopic part can, in itself, define a human being, or provide that which gives his or her life value. As Somers concludes, 'you can fit the bits together time after time, yet it won't bring the bug to life' (K 280): in effect, the life-force is not divisible – the parts which compose a human being or other creature might be recognisable as separable, but the life-force of that being may not survive any significant separation.

Famously, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Clifford Chatterley is introduced as a regenerated composite: wounded in the Great War, he is 'shipped over to England [...] more or less in bits,' though, somehow, due to his 'marvellous' hold on life, 'the bits seemed to grow together again.' (LCL 5) That he survives recombination in a way *Kangaroo's* Somers might doubt possible could reflect a progression in Lawrence's understanding. However, the spiritual absence seen in Clifford suggests any discontinuity is not radical. Once more, the healthy coherence of the parts of a human being is not seen as sufficient for spiritual health, to the extent, perhaps, that this depends more upon the coherence of the human being in question with wider nature.

In *The Plumed Serpent*, however, there appears to be a significant contrast. There, the cell, or more specifically, its nucleus, is rendered as the core of life in general:

The boatman, rowing away, was glancing back at the man who stood in the water, and his face, too, had the abstracted, transfigured look of a man perfectly suspended between the world's two strenuous wings of energy. A look of extraordinary, arresting beauty, the silent, vulnerable centre of all life's quivering, like the nucleus gleaming in tranquil suspense, within a cell. (PS 91-92)

Thus, the parts of a being do, for Lawrence, possess something vital in themselves. The active, potent cell Lawrence depicts provides a valuable order of explanation for the possibility of physical transformation witnessed in this work. While Richard Lovat Somers appears to be correct in recognising that a cell requires combination with others to sustain its power, the cells of a being could, potentially, be combined differently: new and differently potent combinations might be generated through the intervention of science or some other powerful force.

This capacity to find new potency in a transformed condition, implied by the vision of the

human as a composite, includes conditions attained through both illness and injury. Damage to cells, be it through sickness or a wound, may not in most senses be desirable, but does avail new experiences. Lawrence writes, in *Introduction to Pictures*, of the potential for sensational experience as a consequence of the destruction of cells:

Drinks, drugs, jazz, speed, “petting,” all modern forms of thrill, are just the production of sensation by the katabolism of the finest conscious cells of our living body. We explode our own cells and release a certain energy and living sensation. It is, naturally, a process of suicide.

For Lawrence then, in contrast to Virginia Woolf, there can be seen to be a chemical explanation for the flush of sensations experienced in physical impairment. That living sensation can be released by the destruction of cells very much suggests, however, that while living power may be sustained only when the elements of a being are suitably combined, the power is not generated exclusively in this combination. The cell has power in itself – released, explosively, if the cell is destroyed.

Physical, rather than mental qualities were felt by some to be more apt to be controlled by eugenics, likely because the physical structure of the body and the division of its tasks between its constituent parts is more evident than the division of mental tasks within the brain. Given the supposed distinction between a body composed of individuated parts, and an indivisible mind, it allows that the ideas on human transformation advanced by eugenicists and those advanced by occultists, esotericists and theosophists could, perhaps, co-exist, confined respectively, to the physical and the conscious or spiritual.

Such a distinction is seen in a number of contributions to *The Theosophical Quarterly*, a journal Lawrence might realistically have known. An anonymous biologist, who provided a series of articles in the early 1920s, represents one voice arguing that the possibilities of eugenics are limited to the physical improvement of the average human being, and that this has implications for humankind's potential mental evolution. Reviewing *The Direction of Human Evolution* by Edward Grant Conklin, the biologist writes that:

In brief our author [Conklin] shows with considerable clarity and force that physical evolution has virtually ceased, that eugenics can only theoretically raise the average level of physical excellence, that there is no evidence that a higher type of mind than Man can or will be evolved, and that the intellectual evolution of the individual has apparently ceased.

For this biologist, the spiritual directs the physical. 'The soul,' he argues, 'journeys downward into matter and manifestation, turns homeward through the mental plane, gains self-consciousness and the knowledge of its destiny.' Put another way, it seems to be suggested that the spiritual aspect interacts with the body in order to advance itself alone. The spiritual is dominant, as made clear in another article by the same author, in which it is contended that 'Nature and the divine power behind it are not primarily interested in the physical and intellectual development of man.' Instead, because 'a man is his soul,' a human being should be oriented towards spiritual development.

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover* the transcendence witnessed is predominantly physical, as instantiated in the physical relationships of Constance Chatterley and, indeed, of her sister, Hilda. In the opening pages of the novel, while the young Constance and Hilda are in Dresden, they each find a lover, and their respective sexual experiences are transforming. It is 'obvious in them that love had gone through them' making 'a subtle but unmistakable transmutation' (*LCL* 9). The result is that each 'woman [is] more blooming, more subtly rounded, her young angularities softened, and her expression either anxious or triumphant' (*LCL* 9). Sex is a similarly, physically transforming force when Constance begins her relationship with Mellors. Spending a night at Mellor's cottage, Constance finds that 'the reckless, shameless sensuality' of their intercourse 'shook her to her foundations, stripped her to the very last, and made a different woman of her' (*LCL* 246). Sex with Mellors removes from Constance 'the old, old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots' (*LCL* 247). A physical act removes a physical fear, and apparently transforms Constance's physical body.

IV

Towards the end of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Clifford reads aloud from 'one of the latest scientific religious books' (*LCL* 233), the name of which neither he nor Lawrence provides, but which is shown by its content to be *Religion in the Making*, a 1926 work by Alfred North Whitehead. From there, Clifford quotes a passage which contends that 'the universe shows us two aspects: on one side it is physically wasting, on the other it is spiritually ascending.' While Clifford is of the opinion that there is 'something in the idea' (*LCL* 234), Constance is apparently dubious of the claim and the perceived binary behind it. She describes Whitehead's ideas as 'hocus-pocus' and suggests that for them to have been advanced, Whitehead must be 'a physical failure on the earth,' and must thus want 'to make the whole universe a physical failure' (*LCL* 234). She, following the thrust of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as a whole, sides with the physical, suggesting that the spiritual can be left to ascend, 'so long as it leaves me safely and solidly physically here below' (*LCL* 234).

In a passage not quoted by Clifford Chatterley, Whitehead further asserts that 'God is the essence of the aesthetic consistency of the world' while evil 'in its own nature is unstable.' In that change, for Lawrence, is vital in all senses, this implies that Whitehead's philosophy can be seen as misrepresenting the nature of life, as seen by Lawrence. Transcendence entails transformation, and stability denies this.

Elsewhere, it is notable that Clifford's reasoning with respect to the relationship between the spiritual and the physical supports an argument for eugenic practice. Clifford suggests that 'sufficient civilization ought to eliminate a lot of physical disabilities,' continuing by contending that 'all the love-business [...] might just as well go' and that it 'would if we could breed babies in bottles' (*LCL* 74). That Clifford is the voice for these views may, perhaps, be evidence enough to say that they are intended to be seen as ridiculous given his own physical condition. However, the product of this thinking, and of that which Clifford draws from Whitehead, requires even less self-awareness. Clifford suggests that 'whatever God there is is slowly eliminating the guts and alimentary system from the human being, to evolve a higher, more spiritual being' (*LCL* 235) and

that 'the life of the body [...] is just the life of the animals' (*LCL* 234). In this, he shows ignorance of the spiritual degradation his ownership of a mine wreaks in him, and of his own developing animality. Clifford is described as a 'crab' and as a 'lobster' (*LCL* 110) – thereby becoming less human, but also less spiritual.

It is not insignificant in connection with this that Clifford's physical condition is the result of injury rather than illness. While injury can be said to be akin to illness in the sense that both an individual who is ill and one who is sick suffer from their respective ailments, there may be a significant difference between the two with respect to the relationship between the mental, the physical and the spiritual. Where Lawrence suggests that a sickness like consumption may be caused by an excess of sympathy, injury must often be accepted to be a chance event, not necessarily provoked by apparent faults in an individual's psychological make-up. Certain injury may be the result of folly or misadventure, and thereby attributable to a flaw of character, but there is no reason to suggest that this is the case with Clifford Chatterley's war wounds.

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Clifford's injuries are connected with transformation, and an inhuman model of growth. Undergoing a remarkable regeneration following his war injuries, Clifford is seen to be creating a new form for himself. He grows 'a hard efficient shell of an exterior and a pulpy interior,' becoming 'one of the amazing crabs and lobsters of the modern, industrial and financial world' (*LCL* 110).

That Clifford develops this shell might suggest a wish to shield himself from the world. Enconced within Wragby Hall – which has 'no communication' even with Tevershall, the nearest village – this may be somewhat true. However, Clifford's development in this manner is more striking in terms of its consequences than in terms of its causes. For Henri Bergson, the development of the carapace of the crustacean is linked to a diminishing of the consciousness of the animal, and a similar process may be identified in Clifford. Bergson writes that while 'the carapace of the crustacean and the ganoid breast-plate of the ancient fishes probably all originated in a common effort of the animal species to protect themselves against hostile species [...] this breast-plate, behind which the animal took shelter, constrained it in its movements and sometimes fixed it in one place.' Ultimately, for Bergson, 'if the vegetable renounced

consciousness in wrapping itself in a cellulose membrane, the animal that shut itself up in a citadel or in armor condemned itself to a partial slumber.'

Chatterley, secure within Wragby Hall and secure within his own shell, becomes pre-occupied with himself, 'extremely shy and self-conscious' (*LCL* 15), with an 'endless treadmill obsession with himself' (*LCL* 93). Moreover, as Bergson would anticipate, Clifford, it is said, has 'great desert tracts in his consciousness' (*LCL* 97). However, as Clifford's nature becomes more crustacean, there is growth as well as decline. Within him, it is said that there is 'a bruise of fear and horror' which Constance feels 'coming up, and spreading in him.' (*LCL* 49) Described as a 'paralysis' (*LCL* 49), the bruise is notable for the fact that Constance detects it spreading both in Clifford and in herself, implying that it has a contagious aspect; it is a form of fear capable of spreading itself like a virus. The bruise is also said to periodically change in its character. It sometimes feels 'so deep as to be numb, as it were, non-existent,' (*LCL* 49) before it 'asserts itself once more 'in a spread of fear' (*LCL* 49). The changes in the nature of the wound may be felt to resemble the seasonal changes of a plant – still for a period, flourishing for a period. This impression is supported by the fact that, shortly after the bruise is described as changing as it does, Clifford himself is implied to be a tree, insomuch as his words are likened to 'dead leaves,' superficially 'brilliant' but 'meaning really nothing, blown away on any gust of wind' (*LCL* 50). Thus, a number of apparently separate metaphors from nature are employed to describe Clifford – that of the plant, that of the crustacean, and, to the extent that the bruise is Clifford himself, that of a form of transmissible infection.

An additional complication comes in the fact that the metaphor of the tree is not applied to Clifford alone. Constance Chatterley too is seen as a tree. As a plant, though, she is connected to Clifford, in that her 'tree of life' has 'the fine flower of their intimacy' as 'a bulb stuck parasitic upon it' (*LCL* 83). Nevertheless, the experience Constance has of Clifford as parasitic is anticipated by Bergson's contentions regarding the nature of the crustacean. Bergson explains that 'in crustaceans such as the rhizocephala, which must formerly have shown a more differentiated structure, fixity and parasitism accompany the degeneration and almost complete disappearance of the nervous system.' Clifford, enclosing himself, inevitably makes himself dependent on those

around him for nourishment and stimulation.

The quietening of the consciousness in the crustacean, and its increasing fixity, are however each incomplete, as long as the crustacean remains living. As Bergson writes, 'it is of no use to try to restrict finality to the individuality of the living being' because 'each individual may be said to remain united with the totality of living beings by invisible bonds.' As an extension of this, Bergson concludes that 'if there is finality in the world of life, it includes the whole of life in a single indivisible embrace.' This, broadly, is the vision of fixity associated with Clifford Chatterley which is offered by *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Clifford does not only limit his own consciousness as he hardens, but also those of the people to whom he is connected, especially Constance. She feels that 'it was as if thousands and thousands of little roots and threads of consciousness in him and her had grown together into a tangled mass, till they could crowd no more, and the plant was dying' (*LCL* 83). Her mission, she feels, is to unravel 'the tangle of his consciousness and hers, breaking the threads gently, one by one, with patience and impatience to get clear' (*LCL* 83).

Thus, the apparent confusion of different metaphors of growth in association with Clifford Chatterley, that of the plant, that of the crustacean, and that of the virus, can be felt ultimately to work together. Clifford's increasing physical fixity, which can reasonably be likened to both plant and crustacean, makes him dependent on others, like a parasitic disease. The case of Clifford Chatterley is therefore distinctly unlike that of Aaron Sisson of *Aaron's Rod*, who is also described through overtly incompatible metaphors of plant and animal. Sisson, possessing great imagination, is able to explore multiple modes of evolutionary development at once. Chatterley, less imaginative, less well, is not so much experimenting with different forms, and becoming increasingly fixed in one, physically inhuman, state.

V

That Clifford Chatterley is a mine owner does little to act against his enclosure within himself. Clifford is said to see his employees 'as objects rather than men, parts of the pit rather

than parts of life, crude raw phenomena rather than human beings along with him' (*LCL* 40-41).

In kind with Gerald Crich in *Women in Love*, Clifford interacts with those men who work for him without regard for their humanity. Contrast might be expected to be provided by Mellors.

However, he too sees the human being in industrial society as detrimentally altered by it. For Jeff Wallace, Mellors communicates a vision of 'an evolution actively distorted by industrial capitalism.' Wallace highlights Mellors' exclamation that:

Every generation breeds a more rabbity generation, with indiarubber tubing for guts and tin legs and tin faces. Tin people! It's all a steady sort of bolshevism – just killing off the human thing, and the worshipping of the mechanical thing. (*LCL* 217)

The notion that the human being is distorted in his or her evolution by industrialism, as opposed to suffering a less fundamental pain or sickness, might appear to imply that evolutionary processes are of suitable nature to be corrupted: that an undesirable external force might encourage a species towards development in an ultimately undesirable direction. This seems to be possible with respect to biological evolution, inasmuch as an intermediary may step in and make nature's unconscious selection conscious. The image of a domesticated species selectively bred into a pastiche of its natural self is evidence that, when guided, change across generations can be rapid, but can also be unfavourable to a creature's independent survival. *The Origin of Species* by Darwin uses the selective breeding of domesticated pigeons as its starting point, detailing the exaggerated characteristics born by certain varieties, such as the dramatic tail plumage of the fantail, and the 'greatly elongated eyelids' of the carrier. With this exaggeration in mind, Darwin asserts that 'domestic races often have a somewhat monstrous character.' In the case of the distorted human evolution Lawrence offers in *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the industrial machine is presumably to be cast into the role of the breeder, bending human beings into similarly absurd, unnatural forms.

Evidence that Mellors' view is to be taken as accurate may seem to come through corroboration. Constance holds that 'the human existence is a good deal controlled by the machine of external circumstance' (*LCL* 237) – rendering the machine a different order of

metaphor than that which it is for Mellors, but structurally her view is in accord with his.

Additionally, Charlie May, one of the clutch of friends of the Chatterleys who appears only in the early part of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, also sees the human being as running according to a mechanistic programme, asserting that: 'We drive ourselves with a formula, like a machine' (*LCL* 39).

However, for Henri Bergson, the india-rubber being is not unnatural or monstrous, but is instead the exemplar instantiation of higher evolution, in that a creature made of it might adapt itself to any function. Bergson writes that:

Thus, the progress of the nervous system assures to the act increasing precision, increasing variety, increasing efficiency and independence. The organism behaves more and more like a machine for action, which reconstructs itself entirely for every new act, as if it were made of india-rubber and could, at any moment, change the shape of all its parts.

Thus, a super-human and a super-machine, each capable of complete reconstruction of itself for any new task, might, by this reasoning, be entirely externally alike. However, this super-human will be internally entirely different from a machine in its possession of consciousness. Nevertheless, wariness towards the machine could stymie the full development of the human being, if that which resembles the machine is always distrusted and avoided.

It may be that just such distrust is responsible for a mental distortion in evidence in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. This, though, is not the view of Jae-Kyung Koh, for whom psychic distortion in evidence in the novel is an apparently undifferentiated aspect of the general industrial distortion of the human being encountered in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Koh contends that in the novel, industrialism is seen to have made workers 'more instrumental and functional on the physical level, while on the psychic level, it has encouraged (or forced) people to submit to a life-denying code, resulting in the repression and deformation of their instincts.' Koh sees this instantiated in Constance Chatterley, whose 'desires on the subconscious level are [...] suppressed by the dead, mechanistic world of the new industrial order.' This, for Koh, means that Wragby Hall, as the home of a leader of this order, represents 'a kind of cocoon of "mechanical

cleanliness” and “mechanical order” [in which] everything is dominated by the mechanical or by its psychic equivalent: the conscious exertion of the intellect.'

However, this understanding of Wragby Hall as sterile and unfeeling accounts for neither the sickness it contributes to creating, nor for the quantity of powerful emotion experienced by its inhabitants. It is while there, of course, that Constance begins to suffer from the mysterious malaise around which the novel rotates. Hate, meanwhile, is vigorously felt and expressed by both Clifford and Constance Chatterley – a tendency towards hatred representing one of the few qualities they share, though partly this hate is directed towards one another. Constance is said to hate Clifford 'as if he ought to be obliterated' and finds it makes her feel 'free and full of life [...] to hate him and to admit it fully to herself' (*LCL* 185). Clifford, on the other hand, worships Constance, though 'with a queer idolatry, like a savage: a worship based on enormous fear, and even hate, of the powers of the idol, the dread idol' (*LCL* 111). Finally, on learning of Constance's intention to marry Mellors, Clifford is filled with a 'sheer, unspeakable, impotent hate' (*LCL* 296).

Certainly, the impression of industrialism as producing a distorting effect on the well-being and evolutionary development of the individual does not correspond with the understanding demonstrated by Clifford Chatterley, for whom industry is considered to bring health and energy. It is easy to suppose that Clifford's view is intended to be read as farce, that Chatterley's war wounds should undermine his claim to feel healthy, especially insomuch as he requires the assistance of a nurse, Mrs. Bolton, to perform a range of basic tasks. However, Clifford's physical condition does improve through the course of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Though he does not regain the ability to walk in the final version of the novel, as he does in the first two, he nevertheless becomes 'well and ruddy in the face,' and 'put[s] on flesh.' (*LCL* 140) This renewed vigour he attributes to industry, in that sense that his application to it is associated with his restoration, albeit a causal relationship is not clearly supported. Clifford, it is said, 'really felt, when he had his periods of energy and worked so hard at the question of the mines, as if his sexual potency were returning' (*LCL* 147).

However, for John B. Humma, the process of resurgence Chatterley feels in himself must

be seen as 'bogus.' Humma argues that it cannot be genuine 'because its source is not the loving world but the decayed, coming "out of the coal, out of the pit."' For Humma, it is inconceivable that 'life could flow from death.' Elsewhere in Lawrence's work, though, it is made plain that it is, in his view, very much possible for life to emerge from death. An immortal state can only be achieved through the death of the mortal consciousness. As Lawrence writes in *Apocalypse*, 'to enter into that higher power wherein man has his immortality, a man must die an even deeper death, a death of consciousness, and emerge with a new consciousness.' The possibility, it seems, depends upon the existence of a form of negative energy, a power which drives creation through destruction. This power may be recognised as hate – a force which is serious and substantial in Lawrence's fiction from *Women in Love* onwards, especially so in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. It brings sickness and death, but may also, ultimately, lead towards resurrection.

Hate is a focus in itself in a number of Lawrence's late essays. In the 1929 essay 'Men Must Work and Women as Well,' Lawrence argues that hate has irreversibly poisoned a large portion of society. He claims that 'a great part of society is irreparably lost: abstracted into non-physical, mechanical entities whose motive power is still recoil, revulsion, repulsion, hate, and ultimately, blind destruction.' Hate, as a power, is further identified as 'the driving force *underneath* our society' and is identified as universal, found in both the working classes and the well-to-do.

Shortly, afterwards, in 'Introduction to These Paintings,' written in 1929 to accompany a limited edition portfolio of his paintings, Lawrence examines further the source of the hate he perceives as so potent and so prevalent. Reaching the subject through a familiar critique of humankind's enslavement to industrialism, Lawrence proceeds to argue that modern civilization is built upon hate; that 'the very pivot of [modern civilization] let us never forget, [is] fear and hate, the most intimate fear and hate, fear and hate of one's own instinctive, intuitive body, and fear and hate of every other man's and every other woman's warm, procreative body and imagination.' Again in this essay, hate is viewed as a phenomenon of mass consciousness, acting against the individual. Here though, it becomes clear that hatred is, for Lawrence, ultimately hatred of the human body and, it seems, of human consciousness – human instinct, human

intuition and human imagination. Thus, while industrialism may be a root cause of negative emotion, Lawrence suggests that the great object of human hate is humanity itself. For Lawrence, the extension of this is that 'modern morality has its roots in hatred.' This hatred of the body in part focuses upon its fallibility, as exposed by illness and injury. Lawrence suggests that the hatred of humankind 'is made more virulent by fear, and an extra poison is added to the fear by unconscious horror of syphilis.'

Given this perspective on hate, the relationship between a sick individual and his or her body comes to approach the paradoxical. Empowering hatred is given fuel by the repulsiveness of the body's sickened condition, where, in principle, the individual in question should be weakened by that same sickness.

This kind of troublesome understanding of hate is especially manifest in *The Virgin and the Gipsy*. There, hate is prevalent and associated with internal sickness. Yvette, the protagonist, experiences the kind of self-agitating loop caused by a hatred which hates its own results. She senses that 'deep inside her worked an intolerable irritation, which she thought she *ought* not to feel, and which she hated feeling, thereby making it worse' (*VG* 11, italicization Lawrence's). Yvette is not alone in feeling hatred of this kind. Her Aunt Cissie is blighted by 'a helpless tumour of rage,' (*VG* 28) which exerts itself continuously within her, outwardly directed towards Yvette.

As her relationship with the gipsy develops, Yvette comes to process her hatred differently, however, no longer suppressing it. After her family learn that Yvette has spent money intended as a contribution towards a stained glass window for the village church, Yvette feels herself liberated, inasmuch as her capacity for negative action can no longer be considered secret. From this time, her hatred becomes associated with a sensation of empowerment. It is now explained that 'hate kindled her heart,' (*VG* 30) and the feeling has become 'so clear that while she was feeling strong, she enjoyed it' (*VG* 63). In effect, hatred, in *The Virgin and the Gipsy*, appears only to be painful and cancerous when it is not accepted by its possessor.

While experiencing this potent, energizing sensation of hatred, the emotion remains focused and directed in Yvette. She continues to orient it towards her grandmother. Where,

however, Yvette had previously felt guilty at finding her ninety-year-old grandmother exasperating, by the end of the novella the hatred, now unsuppressed, has become all-consuming. It is explained that:

It was Granny whom she came to detest with all her soul. That obese old woman, sitting there in her blindness like some great red-blotched fungus, her neck swallowed between her heaped-up shoulder and her rolling, ancient chins, so that she was neckless as a double potato, her Yvette really hated, with that pure, sheer hatred which is almost a joy. (*VG* 63)

That Yvette's grandmother is ultimately washed away by a flood suggests a relationship between the power of hatred and the power of the environment. A broadly related connection is in evidence in the essay 'Introduction to These Paintings.' In it, Lawrence contends that the natural environment can act as a means for a human being to distance himself or herself from his or her body. Writing about the depiction of natural environment in painting, Lawrence contends that 'the English have delighted in landscape, and have succeeded in it as well' because 'it is a form of escape for them, from the actual human body they so hate and fear.'

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the land is sought as an outlet by both Constance and Clifford Chatterley, but through different means. For Constance, the woodland around Wragby Hall is deemed valuable, as a sedative of sorts. There, she finds 'all was utterly inert and motionless,' (*LCL* 65), with the implication that everything beyond can be felt 'as a kind of painful dream.' (*LCL* 114) The woodland, for Constance, is anaesthetising. However, this anaesthetic quality can be felt to be falsely perceived. For Mellors, 'the seclusion of the wood [is] illusory,' inasmuch as 'industrial noises broke the solitude, the sharp lights, though unseen, mocked it.' (*LCL* 119) Stasis, it seems, is an impossibility. The mechanical churn of the earth into new forms is irresistible.

For Clifford, by contrast, it is the land in a more earthly sense which constitutes the object of his interest. In the earth, Clifford can be said to attempt to bury his hatred. However, the filth emitted by the mine cycles back to infect Wragby Hall, permeating it as a smell, with the result that 'the house was full of the stench of this sulphurous combustion of the earth's

excrement' (*LCL* 13). Thus, in a sense, it can be felt that Clifford's own hatred returns, polluting the only superficially sterile Wragby Hall, further sickening him and infecting his spiritual development.

Conclusion

Through fiction, and through art in general, D.H. Lawrence sees a means to understand human connection to wider nature. In ‘Why the Novel Matters,’ Lawrence argues that ‘the novel is supremely important, as a tremulation on the ether,’ while in the first version of the essay ‘Art and the Individual,’ Lawrence contends that the mission of art is ‘to bring us into a sympathy with as many men, as many objects, as many phenomena as possible,’ because ‘to be in sympathy with things is to some extent to recognise, to acquiesce in their purpose, to help on that purpose.’ This purpose Lawrence identifies, in part, as evolution. He writes that ‘we want, we are forever trying to unite ourselves with the whole universe to carry out some ultimate purpose – evolution we call one phase of that carrying out.’

An acknowledgement of the prominence of a sense of connection in Lawrence’s work is a note which unites much criticism of it, and, as such, can serve as a bridge between an analysis of evolutionism in his work and a wider discussion. Michael Bell identifies the ‘fundamental Lawrencean vision’ as one of ‘otherness and connectedness,’ while Michael Squires and Keith Cushman characterize Lawrence’s work as ‘ask[ing] us to consider what it is to be part of the darkly mysterious universe.’ They propose, however, that ‘the search itself is more important than the provisional answers’ Lawrence is regarded as offering. However, while Lawrence’s answers to the nature of involvement with the universe may be contingent and contextual – within his fiction different characters connect to the wider universe through different modes – this does not necessarily make respective answers unimportant in themselves. That different characters find different means to connect with wider nature does not mean certain of those modes of connection should be seen as flawed or false. More than one potential means of true and uplifting connection can be felt to be available, particularly when different individuals are employing those different means.

Additionally, with respect to connectedness, in *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, Kirsty Martin contends that for Lawrence ‘sympathy matters because our connection with others

is fundamental to our lives.’ Martin further suggests that Lawrence’s work ‘intertwines the life of our bodies and our connections with each other with the shape of the novel and the shaping of the reader’s attention.’ The attention to the novel in itself as a device to connect is significant. The evolutionary process, for Lawrence, is linked to creativity and creative output, as manifest in the spiritual development Will Brangwen experiences through his woodwork, or the enrichment Paul Morel feels through painting. For Lawrence himself to write might be seen in broadly similar terms. The considerably different modes of connection with wider nature offered in Lawrence’s novels, then, can be understood as emerging partly from a need for self-expression. A means of connection must be created, and each individual creates differently, in reflection of himself or herself.

This creative compulsion is often seen as the individual instantiation of a fundamental urge to develop. This understanding of creativity as evolutionary can, in one sense, be felt to be transparently linked to Henri Bergson’s creative evolution. The ‘need of creation’ which Bergson identifies as the ‘impetus of life’ is very much comparable to the godhead Sisson is told he has inside himself and which drives him to develop himself into new forms, or comparable to the drive to create which Will Brangwen experiences and which pushes him towards transformative, transcendent rebirth. Further, the division of humanity into those driven by instinct and those driven by intellect which is seen in much of Lawrence’s work can also be traced to Henri Bergson’s vision of the two primary directions of animal evolution – which precisely are towards action guided by pure instinct and towards action guided by pure intellect. Beyond this, however, Lawrence and Bergson share the sense that there can be felt to be meaningful connection between ostensibly separate beings. For Bergson ‘each individual may be said to remain united with the totality of living beings by individual bonds.’ The instantiation of the *élan vital* in an individual cannot, he feels, be the manifestation of something possessed by or confined within that individual alone. For Bergson, because the *élan vital* of a given individual creature is seen to be inherited from its ancestors, the individual must be understood as connected to its ancestors through this. As Bergson writes, ‘the individual itself is not sufficiently independent, not sufficiently cut off from other things, for us to allow it a “vital principle” of its

own.' The acquiescence in common purpose which Lawrence suggests connects living beings can be felt to closely resemble this. Where, then, other modernist writers are felt to demonstrate interest in Bergson's understanding of time, Lawrence's greater interest appears to be in this implication of it.

However, the potential for connection does not have to imply significant commonality between one being and another. Lawrence also writes in 'Art and the Individual' that 'in Art is revealed the individual character,' and suggests that 'the part of a man's nature which is roughly common to all his fellows is only a small part of his nature.' Thus, for an individual to understand his or her role in the wider process of evolution, he or she must not merely recognize a pattern to which he or she coheres and conform to it, acting in a fashion already moulded by other, supposedly similar, human beings; instead, he or she must come to understand the uniqueness of his or her nature, and the unique mode of being it mandates. To work together productively, individuals must recognise the distinct qualities they possess and the distinct mode of living to which those qualities are suited. The novel as a form may be felt particularly suited to exposing internal character and its relation to external action. For Lawrence, a human being must relate himself or herself to both other human beings and to wider nature in order to achieve a full understanding of himself or herself and thus of the mode of being to which he or she is suited. The distinct individual must be ready to change to achieve compatibility with others. As Amit Chaudhuri notes in *D.H. Lawrence and 'Difference,'* 'many of Lawrence's "individuals" – human figures, animals, places – [... are] divisible, dismemberable, rearrangeable, and graftable.' The mutability, it can be said, is necessary to achieve and sustain connection when common qualities between beings of the same species are not felt to have necessary existence.

That Lawrence holds this view of the function of the novel informs the nature and the content of his own work in the medium. The need to find connection and to pursue evolutionary development is a major element of Lawrence's novels in themselves, reflected in both their respective plots and their respective structures. An artwork need not in itself be about connection with wider nature to engender it, but Lawrence's works do address the possibility of such connections and their possible nature. His novels address the process of self-discovery, and

explore its implications with respect to interactions with wider nature. In Lawrence's novels a fixed evolutionary process does not select the survivors in given conditions – his novels do not constitute the Darwinian trials Ronald Granofsky suggests – but instead a survivor, in Lawrence's work, is an individual able select a fit process of evolving himself or herself. When Roger Ebbatson argues that Darwinism 'may be seen as a myth which helps to generate the Lawrencean novel,' the evolutionism manifest in Lawrence's novels might instead be seen as a creative process generating new myths.

The great difference between the forms of self-discovery in evidence in each of Lawrence's novels does not in itself imply one or other is more concerned with an evolutionary process. Though, to date, only Lawrence's earlier work has received any notable consideration as evolutionary, evolutionism, broadly understood, remains an element of Lawrence's work throughout his entire life. In part, the evolutionary aspects of Lawrence's novels change as he is exposed to new evolutionary ideas through his reading and broader interaction with the ideas of others: *The Trespasser*, though written only a year after *The White Peacock*, is distinct from its predecessor in possessing a Bergsonian quality – likely through new acquaintance with Bergson's ideas, while concerns similar to those of P.D. Ouspensky appear in the work Lawrence wrote immediately after reading *Tertium Organum*. The immediate relevance of evolutionary biology to Lawrence's work can be said to diminish as increasingly unscientific ideas enter his work, but, in reflection of the fact that Bergson, Blavatsky and Ouspensky all accept certain ideas advanced by Darwin, alternative visions of evolution remain offset within Lawrence's work against those of evolutionary biology.

However, the changes in the evolutionary aspect of Lawrence's work from novel to novel need not be seen purely as the result of unconsidered, of-the-moment responses to his recent reading. Lawrence's willingness to incorporate multiple evolutionary ideas into his work, and, in certain cases, into a single work, can be felt a means to reproduce the distinctness of individuals, and their distinct modes of being: the significant particularity of individuals for which Lawrence argues can be considered to encompass particularity to the mode of development each employs. Bergson and Ouspensky share a readiness to accept that multiple, distinct evolutionary processes

exist (though each conceives the multiplicity of evolutions rather differently): this appears to constitute an idea to which Lawrence also adheres. As 'Art and the Individual Character' implies, selves are distinct, and the respective modes of development required by each is distinct too, for Lawrence. The uncertain wandering of Aaron Sisson in *Aaron's Rod*, and the decisive, directed quest for knowledge undertaken by Ursula Brangwen in *The Rainbow* respectively constitute the most suitable mode of living for the characters in question to develop. Where Aaron Sisson is in himself free from constriction, and needs to branch in multiple directions to realize his potential, Ursula Brangwen experiences herself as enclosed and inhibited, and therefore she needs a more inward focus to overcome this.

The concept of evolution in Lawrence's novels is, in short, neither stable nor singular. Instead of speaking of evolution and the novels of D.H. Lawrence, it may be better to speak of evolutions. Roger Ebbatson describes a combination of Darwinian, Spencerian and Haeckelian evolutionary devices in Lawrence's work, but to this list must be added ideas from Henri Bergson, Helena Blavatsky, P.D. Ouspensky and others. Given Lawrence's conflicted attitude towards science, it is clear why visions of evolution which synthesize religious and scientific modes of understanding the world held such appeal to him. There is evidence that Lawrence doubted the respective ideas of Bergson, Blavatsky and Ouspensky, or at least wished to be seen to do so. Nonetheless, by allowing layers of their respective evolutions to coexist with other evolutions in his work, by allowing for local truth to competing evolutionary systems, Lawrence could use evolutionism in support of individualism, rather than against it. Where Roger Ebbatson argues that 'Lawrence's early work is insistently concerned with man's place in Nature,' and that his 'sense of connexion between man and his environment grows first out of [his] sensuous and scientific awareness of Nature,' he can be said to articulate a partial truth, but one which may be felt misleading. Lawrence's sense of the possible connection between humankind and wider nature may have roots in biological theory, but grows very remote from science.

In *Women in Love*, Ursula recognizes human beings as 'multifarious little gods (*WL* 193), an idea which captures both the potency Lawrence apparently sees in humanity, but also the diverse manifestations he sees in that power. Underneath a common humanity, for Lawrence, the

difference between individuals may be great. The creative power which drives evolution, for Lawrence, is not best understood as a single power external to any given being, but as a force manifest as an internal quality distinct in all creatures. As Lilly suggests to Sisson in *Aaron's Rod*, 'your soul inside you is your only Godhead,' and it develops your actions within you as a tree develops its own new cells' (AR 296). These cells, for Lilly, in turn 'push on into buds and boughs and flowers' which are 'your passion and your acts and your thoughts and expressions, your developing consciousness' (AR 296).

Lawrence's engagement with occultism, and with the evolutionary ideas of occultists, can also be understood as connected with a creative aspect to the evolutionary process. P.D. Ouspensky locates the core of life within a *noumenon* he considers only perceptible to the artist. In his own words, Ouspensky writes that:

The mystery of life dwells in the fact that the *noumenon*, i.e. the hidden meaning and the hidden function of a thing, is reflected in its *phenomenon*. [...] Only that fine apparatus which is called *the soul of an artist* can understand and feel the reflection of the noumenon in the phenomenon. In art it is necessary to study "occultism" – the hidden side of life. The artist must be a clairvoyant; he must see that which others do not see; he must be a magician, must possess the power to make others see that which they do not themselves see, but which he does see.

The perception of the artistic soul Ouspensky intimates in large part reflects ideas Lawrence had himself earlier expressed. The tremulation of the ether Lawrence suggested the novel could capture in 'Why the Novel Matters' comparably implies that art makes possible perception not ordinarily achievable. As Leon Surette writes in *The Birth of Modernism*, 'the modern occult makes a claim for itself that overlaps in many places with the claims of the Romantic and modern artist,' primary among which, for Surette, is the sense of prophetic vision. Lawrence can be seen to find this visionary possibility in the creative process in itself, rather than as a pre-existing faculty of the individual with artistic talent. It is creation in itself, in its full, evolutionary aspect, which makes the mysterious knowable, through processes of transformation which create new connections.

The coexistence of scientific and unscientific evolutions in Lawrence's work is not unintentional, is not an artistic weakness, but is instead a device through which it is made possible for meaningful individual development to take significantly different forms in different cases. The overlapping of scientific and unscientific thought within a single work, centred around the same core concepts, and certain of the same rhetoric – evolution, dissolution, fragmentation – might seem idiosyncratic and flawed, but it does not have to be taken to be so. Introducing a special edition of the *Victorian Review* dedicated to 'Weird Science,' Martin Willis argues that in general the creative deployment of scientific subjects in literary language 'implies a collection, or heteroglossia, of codes of writing and of language that is essentially Bakhtinian,' and that 'the work of Bakhtin is an important touchstone as it allows for a web of variant discourses that still engage with the historical moment.' With respect to Lawrence's utilization of the concept of evolution, such multiplicity is seen in Lawrence's sources, as well as in Lawrence's own work. The overlap of scientific pretension, and the mythical and mystical in the work of Ouspensky and Blavatsky adds further to this heteroglossia: not only can Lawrence be said to mix and fuse codes, but so can the voices which echo within his work. In addition, in 'Versions of History, Versions of Chronology,' Michael Whitworth contends that 'Literature and Science has tended to favour the scientific mainstream,' preferring 'Darwin and Einstein rather than lesser known contemporaries.' Whitworth, choosing a single example, raises the question 'whether ether theory, the theory of gravitation overthrown by the Michelson-Morley experiment and then by Einstein, might have made an impact upon the literary consciousness.' Certainly, for Lawrence, with respect to evolution, the directions science did not follow could be imaginatively significant. An obsolete understanding of gravity might provide a better grounding from which a work of fiction might explore the concept of weightedness (whether the author of the work subscribed to the theory of gravity in question or not). Likewise, utilizing a model of progression supported by an alternative, unscientific vision of evolution might be felt to liberate a novel to take direction otherwise impossible. If a novel exists to raise questions, to test modes of being, alternatives to scientific orthodoxy can provide powerful positions from which to pose certain of those questions. That scientific law might be violated does not have to be felt to render questions asked from such

perspectives faulty in themselves, to the extent that a question cannot possess truth or validity in the way an answer might. Moreover, an idea ostensibly in contradiction to the findings of the physical sciences, can yet have truth of a certain order. A scientific structure apparently proven valid with respect to physical phenomena need not also accurately describe non-physical *noumena* (should such be felt to exist).

Collectively, Lawrence's novels have among their questions a central, defining enquiry which requires both scientific and unscientific models of the universe to interact. It is the question of how possible it is for individuals to adhere to idiosyncratic models of development as reflections of their individuality. To do this, Lawrence's novels often contrast that individualism, that idiosyncrasy, with an increasingly homogenizing, mechanized world. They explore the extent to which an individual developing in a fashion apparently true to his or her own nature can be seen to maintain connection to the wider world while undergoing the changes that development implies. Entangling scientific evolutionary theory with models of development whereby individual creativity is vital, Lawrence suggests that no human being is so particular as to have yet evolved into true separation.

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