D. H. LAWRENCE
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SEXUALITY

(An MLitt THESIS)

by

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For My Dear Father and Brother

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D. H. LAWRENCE:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SEXUALITY

(M.Litt. Abstract - Trinity 1996)

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This thesis compares D. H. Lawrence's doctrines of sexuality with some similar concepts in classical Chinese philosophies. It examines the influence of Taoism on some modernist thinking to assess the elements of this tradition in the basic features of Lawrence's sexuality.

The comparative approach demonstrates Lawrence's belief in the maintenance of balance between man and woman in the context of his philosophical interests and identifies a similarity between Lawrence's male-female relationship and the Chinese *Yang-Yin* balance theory. The study proceeds to compare the utopian views of Lawrence and Taoism and further estimates the likelihood of Lawrence's access and indebtedness to some Taoist doctrines introduced and interpreted by his contemporary Western writers. Having argued that various anthropological and theosophical works influenced Lawrence's transformation of his puritan heritage into a 'religion' of sexuality, the study evaluates the influence of oriental symbolism on the complexity of Lawrence's sexual theories.

While reviewing Lawrence's physical, emotional and ideological crises in his fictional treatments of various sexual relationships, the study indicates that Lawrence's conflict with modern civilisation and humanity is conceptually advocated by Taoist Inaction and Nature. Modern concepts of sexuality are pervasive in his fiction works, but the influence on the making of his utopian ideals comes from his search for an intuitive phallic power of a natural leadership in alien, primitive and ancient cultures. The phallic power with natural tenderness and sexual harmony regenerates the sexual relationship in his modern utopian mythology, while sexual resurrection with symbolic and religious references expresses his wish for a spiritual renewal in the embrace of Nature.

The comparative study does not intend to discuss the connection of sexuality to the social issues of individual freedom and human rights, or the relativity of sexual balance to the survival of natural environments. But these highlighted problems in the existence and development of human beings have drawn the attention of the modern world. This thesis can only claim that some of these enlightenments and understandings could now trace their origins to the peculiar perceptions of sexuality experienced by D. H. Lawrence and classical Chinese philosophers.

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INTRODUCTION

Sexuality is the most important issue in D. H. Lawrence's works, but it was also made the most controversial issue in his life time, because his ideas challenged those of the traditional English society whose Christian puritanism was strongly opposed to sexual liberalism. During the twenty years of his literary creation, Lawrence struggled to make up his doctrines, but more often than not, he had to place himself on the side of defence, recruiting various, and sometimes exotic, ideas to help him.

Lawrence's confrontation with traditional puritan culture can be seen in his assertion that human beings should change their conventional conception of love and seek a balanced sexual union between man and woman reaching a natural consummation. The traditional Christian view of love is basically a love of mankind, or a friendship in the terms of agape[1], comparable to the benevolent love of Confucius[2] in China. Lawrence's idea of love cannot be found in this Christian tradition, and is also unique even in the Western culture of his time. Compared again with Chinese ideologies known to the West at his time, Lawrence's beliefs bear some similarity to Taoism which, compared with Confucianism, emphasises natural relationship between man and woman in the theory of *Yang-Yin* balance under the law of nature.

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[1] Cf. M. C. D'Arcy, *The Mind and Heart of Love: Lion and Unicorn, A Study in Eros and Agape* (London: Faber & Faber, 1946).

On the basis of the ancient distinction between the loves of concupiscence and benevolence, D'Arcy outlined and criticised the views of Denis de Rougemount in his *Passion and Society* and of Anders Nygren in his *Eros and Agape* in attempt to endow Christian love of Agape with the power of ending the conflict between the Lion and the Unicorn, and to extend the coverage of this spiritual quest of perfect love to compromise reason, wisdom, intellect and all loves in a self-centred nature.

[2] Cf. Arthur Waley, tr., *The Analects of Confucius* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1938). Hereafter *Analects*.

Benevolent love is called *Ren* in Chinese, which is the central doctrine of Confucian theories. In Arthur Waley's extended annotation of the term, the following may be the most relevant to our situation:

> *Jên* [*Ren*], in the *Analects*, means 'good' in an extremely wide and general sense. 'In its direction' lie unselfishness and an ability to measure other people's feelings by one's own. The good man is 'in private life, courteous; in public life, diligent; in relationships, loyal.' Goodness (on the part of a ruler) is complete submission to ritual. (*Analects*, p. 28.)

The reason why traditional Christians first rejected Lawrence is probably that his doctrine of love and sex contains such alien ideas, uncongenial to its convention. Some of his works were therefore banned throughout his life time and readers were even denied legal access to them for as long as thirty years after his death. His place in the English literary tradition was left in doubt until the value of his ideas was gradually recognised. At the time of Lawrence's death, F. R. Leavis 'threw out a hint on the affinities between Lawrence and Blake'[3], in trying to assess his contribution to the English tradition. But it was not until 1955, when Leavis's monumental book was published, that Lawrence's position in the tradition of the English novel was firmly established. In his chapter 'Lawrence and Tradition', Leavis argues that '*The Rainbow* shows us the transmission of the spiritual heritage in an actual society, and shows it in relation to the general development of civilization.' (Leavis, p. 145) Leavis's study signaled a broad recognition and acceptance of the alien ideas in Lawrence's works, and began to admit Lawrence's peculiar adoption of foreign ideas into 'the Great Tradition' along with other great English writers.

The publication of Leavis's pioneering study was immediately followed by Graham Hough's book, *The Dark Sun*[4], in 1956, written at the same time as Hough was reading Leavis's study in *Scrutiny* articles (Hough, p. viii). Hough admires and agrees with Leavis on the issue of admitting Lawrence into the English tradition, but also points out Lawrence's characteristics as an outsider to Christianity. Hough's study aims to reveal that Lawrence's 'religious impulse' breaks 'into new spiritual territory outside the Christian boundaries' (Hough, p. vii). This realisation indicates a critical willingness to accept and assimilate the foreign elements in Lawrence's work and thinking.

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[3] F. R. Leavis, *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1955), p. 12. Hereafter Leavis.

[4] Graham Hough, *The Dark Sun: A Study of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Duckworth, 1956). Hereafter Hough.

Since then, Lawrence's position in the English tradition and Western culture has been firmly established, along with a recognition of his wide adoption of foreign ideas which were assimilated and gradually digested by English critics and readers. Eighteen years after Leavis's book, Frank Kermode published in 1973 his small, but compact, study of Lawrence[5], in which he reviews widely the various Western, as well as Oriental, influences on Lawrence, referring to Lawrence's critical readings of Dostoievsky, Mann and Edward Carpenter as well as his contacts with occult symbolism, theosophy and yoga. In spite of the great mixture of influences and it is difficult to ascertain which had the most decisive effects on Lawrence, Kermode's study recognises Lawrence's successful assimilation of multi-cultural influences and also convincingly confirms Lawrence's prophetic role in Western culture (cf. Kermode, p. 57-60). Since the publication of Kermode's book, every aspect of Lawrence's works has been covered by native and foreign scholars. In a recent study of the English literary intelligentsia[6], John Carey defines Lawrence as Nietzsche's major English disciple (cf. Carey, pp. 10-11). By referring to Lawrence's insistence on privileged education (cf. Carey, p. 15), his disappointment that no nation or racial group met his standards of simplicity and primitivism (cf. Carey, p. 36), his views on the revolt of the masses (cf. Carey, p. 71), and his ideals of a natural aristocracy, discrediting logic and rationality (cf. Carey, p. 76), Carey classifies the ideas of this miner's son as a great representative of English literature in Western intellectual thinking.

These important critical works have helped to establish Lawrence's doctrine of sexuality as part of the English, as well as the Western, cultural tradition, and the sixty-five years since his death have also seen a growing appreciation of the influence of foreign ideas on Lawrence. Lawrence's

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[5] Frank Kermode, *Lawrence* (Fontana Press, 1973). Hereafter Kermode.

[6] John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (London: Faber & Faber, 1992). Hereafter Carey.

knowledge of Freudianism, his acceptance of Nietzsche's doctrine of the superman, the effects of his Italian and Australian trips both registered in novels, and his comments on and reviews of Russian writers all merge into his philosophy to reinforce his position in the Western tradition. In addition, his exposure to and great interest in Etruscan, Mexican and Egyptian cultures are also clearly shown in his works. He is known to have read anthropology, theosophy and endeavoured to make discoveries in Buddhism and oriental symbolism.

My intention is to add to this long list of foreign influences some Chinese elements which I believe influenced Lawrence in formulating his sexual doctrine. Witter Bynner in his reminiscences of 1953 was the first to compare Lawrence's ideas with those of Taoism. This approach was followed by Hough, who argued that Lawrence's dualism was identical with the principles of the Chinese *Yang-Yin* School and Taoism. Bynner's study will receive the extended treatment it requires in Chapter Six, but here I should like to quote Hough as an introduction to my examination of Chinese elements which influenced Lawrence:

> ... Lawrence's naturalism is radically dualistic. Reality exists only as a pair of opposites. ... Here is a selection of them.
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Light | Dark |
> | Sun | Moon |
> | Intellect | Blood |
> | Will | Flesh |
> | Male | Female |
> | Love | Law |
> | Spirit | Soul |
> | Mind | Senses |
> | Consciousness | Feelings |
> | Moon | Sun |
> | Knowledge | Nature |
> | Motion | Inertia |
> | The Son | The Father |
>
> This will serve as a preliminary diagram. The parallel to the Yin and the Yang of Chinese philosophy at once suggests itself - the masculine, active, conscious principle opposed to the feminine, passive, unconscious principle.

> (Hough, pp. 224-225)
>
> There is a parallel in the Tao, the way, of Chinese thought, by which the universe is governed and the individual is fulfilled. Lawrence's aim in the writings that have just been discussed is undoubtedly to become a teacher of wisdom. (Hough, p. 230)

As far as the substance of Lawrence's philosophy is concerned, Taoism could have influenced him, and had the opportunity to do so. But in fact, Lawrence never mentions Taoism even once in his novels, essays or letters[7]. Without knowing Chinese, Lawrence's knowledge of Taoism could only have been second-hand. My study, therefore, will try to look more broadly for possible connections between Lawrence and Chinese culture in general, an encounter which may have brought Lawrence some ideas of a Taoist nature, if not precisely orthodox Taoism. Lawrence mentioned China and Chinese culture many times in his various writings, mostly with admiration, but none of these references is substantial or systematic. Nevertheless, I have attempted to trace all of them to indicate the nature of Lawrence's exposure to Chinese culture, sometimes by comparing his more general thinking with the interpretations of Chinese culture and philosophy made by his contemporaries. My attempt is to find out the extent of his knowledge about China and assess how much of it merged into his own ideas. In some cases, such influences can only be inferred, but I attempt a parallel comparison to show how closely Lawrence's ideas can be related to some Chinese philosophies available to him in contemporary scholarship. My purpose is to prove that we cannot entirely ignore a Chinese influence on Lawrence, if we wish to fathom some of his ideas. To undertake this task, I study Lawrence's ideas of sexuality in seven chapters arranged in a roughly chronological order.

Chapter One starts with *Sons and Lovers*, which is to be read along with

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[7] While writing to Earl Brewster on 17 May 1926, Lawrence in the letter quotes: 'The way is not mine, or thine, but it lies between us.' Although the source of the quotation is unidentified, the editor feels that 'the sentiment appears Taoist'. See James T. Boulton & Lindeth Vasey, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol. 5 [March 1924 - March 1927] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 456. Hereafter *Letters 5*.

Lawrence's philosophical essays of the same period. I shall compare Lawrence's philosophy of sexual balance with the Chinese philosophy of universal balance, and discuss Lawrence's demonstration of women's emancipation in *The Rainbow* with his philosophical assertion on the balance of union.

Chapter Two compares Western and Chinese utopian visions of social reform and discusses Lawrence's possible access to these ideas. It argues that Lawrence may have been influenced by some Oriental philosophies, especially Taoism, which may have led to his search for a utopia called 'Rananim'.

Chapter Three goes back to Aestheticism and studies Oscar Wilde's review of a Chinese sage in *Chuang Tzu* in order to estimate the influence of Taoism on the Western modernist ideology. It discusses the concept of Nature in Taoism, examines Wilde's adoption of the Taoist idea of Inaction, and compares them with Lawrence's struggles against modern civilisation and humanity. Through a close examination of *Women in Love*, I argue that this novel marks Lawrence's initial utopian search, which subsequently lasted for the rest of his life and reappeared in all his later fiction.

Chapter Four continues the investigation of Oriental influences in Lawrence's contemporary writers. It reviews Edward Carpenter's influence on Lawrence and argues that some elements of Chinese influence may possibly have derived from Carpenter. Lawrence's mid-term essays on the symbolism of sexual consummation, as well as on the Unconscious, are discussed in conjunction with the symbolic meanings of sexual relationships in *Women in Love*. I point out that, notwithstanding Lawrence's male chauvinist crisis, his symbolism contains rich characteristics of different cultures.

Chapter Five moves on to Lawrence's leadership novels, written when he was fully involved in a utopian search abroad. His Italian and Australian experiences failed to fulfil his ideal, and I suggest that, haunted by Oriental

symbols of dynamic life, he was desperately searching for a phallic power in a natural aristocratic male leader.

Chapter Six further discusses Lawrence's search for leadership in his mystic novel, *The Plumed Serpent*. The accumulated Chinese influence, it is argued, now combines with Mexican symbolism. Dressed in the clothes of Mexican ritual ceremonies, but embracing the mystic potentiality of various primitive and ancient cultures, his characters are trying to locate the soul of man in order to return it to the embrace of Nature.

Chapter Seven studies the three different versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the novel which marks Lawrence's return to a homeland utopia after his failed search abroad. The highly idealised utopia is dedicated to an intuitive Nature, which regenerates phallic power in the union between man and woman with natural tenderness and sexual harmony. The chapter concludes with Lawrence's last long story, *The Escaped Cock*, and the posthumously published essay, *Apocalypse*, both of which employ emphatic religious references. The doctrine of sexual resurrection, drawing upon symbols and philosophies from various cultures, is Lawrence's final answer to his future society.

CHAPTER ONE

SEXUAL BALANCE IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF CREATION

§1.1 *Sons and Lovers*: Anti-Autobiography

It is widely recognised that most of Lawrence's fictions are more or less autobiographical. In his early novels, *The White Peacock* (1911) and *The Trespasser* (1912), he was already dealing with the sexual relationships of his contemporaries. But it was not until in *Sons and Lovers* (1913)[1] that his family crisis was more prominently shown. As a slightly disguised autobiography, *Sons and Lovers* contains its author's interpretation of the problematic relationship in his family. This view is strongly supported by various memoirs of Lawrence's acquaintances, which have revealed that many incidents grow directly out of the author's personal experiences. For example, many events recalled by Jessie Chambers[2] appear in *Sons and Lovers* with very little alteration. A similar relationship of art to life is probably true of most of Lawrence's fiction. Autobiographical elements can often be traced in his fictional characters and events.

My preliminary concern in this chapter is not with a detailed examination of these autobiographical facts, but with Lawrence's presentation of his theme through intentional alteration of them. I wish to reveal that Lawrence actually laboured and struggled in an attempt to avoid entanglement with facts, and finally produced his own version of the story with controversial ideas. The problems and conflicts presented in the story

[1] D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*, ed. Helen Baron and Carl Baron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Hereafter *Sons*.

[2] E. T., *D. H. Lawrence: A Personal Record* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Hereafter Chambers. This book was first published by Jonathan Cape Limited in 1935.

of *Sons and Lovers* are summarised by Lawrence in a letter to Edward Garnett on 19 November 1912:

> It follows this idea: a woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class, and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow up she selects them as lovers - first the eldest, then the second. These sons are *urged* into life by their reciprocal love of their mother - urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them. ... As soon as the young men come into contact with women, there's a split. William gives his sex to a fribble, and his mother holds his soul. But the split kills him, because he doesn't know where he is. The next son gets a woman who fights for his soul - fights his mother. The son loves the mother - all the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and the girls, with the son as object. The mother gradually proves stronger, because of the tie of blood. The son decides to leave his soul in his mother's hands, and, like his elder brother, go for passion. He gets passion. Then the split begins to tell again. But, almost unconsciously, the mother realises what is the matter, and begins to die. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the end naked of everything, with the drift towards death.
>
> It is a great tragedy, and I tell you I've written a great book. It's the tragedy of thousands of young men in England...[3]

According to Jessie Chambers, this is largely based on the story of the Lawrences: the tragedy of the elder son's death and the predicament of the younger son - the author himself. On one hand, the novel is undoubtedly the story of Lawrence's family. But on the other, as some of the biographical notes reveal, Lawrence made critical changes to the true story in order to highlight his ideas, and emphasise the problems of numerous young men in the contemporary English families. In the new Cambridge biography of young Lawrence, John Worthen points out that Lawrence's mother was also born into a non-specialist worker's family, so she had not really married 'into the lower class' as Mrs. Morel does in the novel[4]. To mark the mother's insistence on her sons' climbing up the social ladder,

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[3] James T. Boulton, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol. 1 [September 1901 - May 1913] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 476-477. Hereafter *Letters 1*.

[4] John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years, 1885-1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). The father of Lydia Lawrence (née Beardsall) was a 'machine fitter' when she was born (cf. p. 13). On his daughter's marriage certificate, he attempted to upgrade his status as an 'engineer' (cf. p. 512).

Lawrence tried to promote her social status to produce a contrast between his parents. On the other hand, Mr. Morel is portrayed like this:

> Walter Morel was, at this time, exceedingly irritable. His work seemed to exhaust him. When he came home, he did not speak civilly to anybody. If the fire were rather low, he bullied about that; he grumbled about his dinner; if the children made a chatter, he shouted at them in a way that made their mother's blood boil, and made them hate him. (*Sons*, p. 51)

As far as the novel shows, Walter Morel is always such an irritating and offending character. His frequent drunkenness makes him a bad worker and alienates him from all the family members. His behaviour is usually very perverse and disagreeable. But in Jessie Chambers's reminiscences, Arthur Lawrence was a reasonably good father and breadwinner:

> On the one occasion when I saw Lawrence's father in those early days I had a momentary impression of richness and warmth, both of colouring and voice. He seemed to be a man of medium height with ruddy cheeks and black hair and whiskers. I have been told that as a young man he was fine looking, and wore a handsome black beard. He was also a first-rate workman, and was invariably called upon when there was a particularly difficult job to be done in the pit. (Chambers, pp. 19-20)

But in *Sons and Lovers*, we rarely find Mr. Morel in such an amiable guise or possessing such an efficient capability. He is virtually responsible for all the rows in the family. Chambers's view is further confirmed by reminiscences of a number of other people who used to know Arthur Lawrence. In a new biography of Lawrence, Jeffrey Meyers notes:

> George Neville, Lawrence's closest childhood friend, insisted that Arthur 'was no drunken reprobate' and agreed with Willie Hopkin and Jonathan Chambers that 'he was quite a bit above the average collier of that district in those days.'[5]

This important alteration in the father character is Lawrence's attempt to articulate his theme, which is to disclose how a collapsing parental relationship affects the emotional upbringing of the children. He meant to portray the father as a drunkard husband to emphasise the mother's functioning in the domestic education. In the real life, Lawrence may not

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[5] Jeffrey Meyers, *D. H. Lawrence: A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 17-18.

have hated his father so much, but this alteration is necessary in the fictional presentation of his theme.

This distorted presentation of the father character is an exceptional case, because most of the events Chambers records in her memoir are truly described in the novel. But what signifies here is not Lawrence's occasional distortion of the facts, but his subjective approach to the theme. To see the effect of Lawrence's intentional untruthfulness, we should examine what Chambers thinks of the novel as a whole. While writing and revising the novel, Lawrence asked her to read the manuscripts to help him recall the past events. She noticed that he had purposefully altered the facts and forced them into what she considered a perverted story:

> Now, in the novel, he had taken up the same position, and appointed himself judge and executioner. He held over me a doom of negation and futility. It pressed upon me like a weight, making the nights and days a torture. I dreaded lest I should come to fulfil it, as he seemed convinced I must. (Chambers, p. 213)

So, *Sons and Lovers* on the whole is actually a biased version of the true story, only making use of the original events. It is biased because the author has adopted some very subjective opinions and intended to modify the facts to fit them into his unconventional theme. He does not let the facts regulate his literary creations. It is his ideas that trim the facts rather than *vice versa*.

Sons and Lovers emphatically demonstrates Lawrence's ideas about the problem of sexual maturity, but it does not clearly indicate what kind of woman, or love, or sex could solve his problems of growth as a youth. Paul's mother and Miriam fight for his soul, while Clara offers him only an ephemeral partnership. 'He gets passion', as Lawrence says, but he needs a sexual attachment which can lead him to a permanent relationship. Jessie Chambers recalls what Lawrence said about his expectations from woman:

> An ounce of justice is worth a ton of generosity. Any woman will give a man a ton of generosity, but is there a woman who will give him an ounce of justice. (Chambers, p. 221)

To interpret what Lawrence means, I should like to quote a Chinese writer, Lu Xun (1881-1936), who had a similar observation:

> Mr. Lu Xun once said: 'A woman sometimes has the nature of a mother, sometimes the nature of a daughter, but never has she the nature of a wife, because the nature of a wife doesn't come out naturally.'[6]

Taking these two quotations as a cross-cultural masculine perception of women, we might understand them as suggesting that the nature of a mother equates to generosity, the nature of a daughter to dependence, and the nature of a wife to justice. Generosity, as it comes from the mother, has nourished generations of men, but in a new era this generosity cannot encourage them to pursue a more vigorous career. With the coming of a new age of women's emancipation, more justice is required in the relationship between woman and man. Writers at the beginning of this century felt this demand for a new relationship. They understood that if they remained under the protection of this motherly love, they would have lost their own vitality and the ability to launch a career. They were ready to accept the justice of a new relationship between man and woman, a new relationship in which a woman could become a wife equal to her husband. She should no longer be a mock mother whose generosity would spoil her man-child. In *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence fails to find this justice. His spiritual attachment to his mother made him feel that he owed an obligation fully and unreservedly to her. He had to surrender his hero to the mother, so the story ends equivocally, with Paul confused between sexual passion and spiritual re-creation.

The dominant theme in *Sons and Lovers* was immediately seized upon by Lawrence's women as the Oedipus complex, a prevailing Freudian theory of sexuality at that time. From Jessie Chambers's point of view, *Sons*

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[6] Xu Guangping, *Xinwei de Jinian [Gratifying Memory]* (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Press, 1952), p. 150.

and Lovers clearly demonstrates Lawrence's defeat by the possessive love his mother enforced on him. He had handed the laurels of victory to his mother, so he had no love to give to anyone else (cf. Chambers, p. 202). This conclusion clearly psychoanalysed Lawrence and treated him, with regret, as a victim of the Oedipus complex. Chambers admitted her own defeat in her battle to win Lawrence from his mother, but seems to have neglected the fact that the creation of *Sons and Lovers* involved not only the competition between Lydia Lawrence and herself, but also Lawrence's experimental love with other women in his youth. Apart from his rejection of Jessie Chambers who could only have replaced his mother, the pessimistic tone at the end of the story also connotes Lawrence's disappointment over his engagement with Louie Burrows and over his sexual relationship with Alice Dax, who is portrayed as Clara in the novel. Because Lawrence finally found his ideal love in Frieda Weekley, and believed that he had therefore become a stronger and mature man, he decided he would give up his young hero to his mother as a gesture of ending his adolescent search for love. What Lawrence achieved from writing the novel does not perhaps lie in a confession of Oedipal defeat, as Chambers maintains, but in his sublimation of a crisis of love. He finally shook off the obsession of his mother and found in Frieda the justice he had been pursuing. Frieda recalls his struggle:

> He was then rewriting his 'Sons and Lovers,' the first book he wrote with me, and I lived and suffered that book, and wrote bits of it when he would ask me: 'What do you think my mother felt like then?' I had to go deeply into the character of Miriam and all the others; when he wrote his mother's death he was ill and his grief made me ill too, and he said: 'If my mother had lived I could never have loved you, she wouldn't have let me go.' But I think he got over it; only, this fierce and overpowerful love had harmed the boy who was not strong enough to bear it. In after years he said: 'I would write a different "Sons and Lovers" now; my mother was wrong, and I thought she was absolutely right.'
>
> I think a man is born twice; first his mother bears him, then he has to be reborn from the woman he loves.[7]

[7] Frieda Lawrence, *'Not I, But the Wind...'* (London: Granada, 1983), p. 50.

As the above comment shows, *Sons and Lovers* led Lawrence to progress from impetuous and sensitive youth to emotional and intellectual maturity. At the same time, he was relieved from his oedipal obsession by finding his love in Frieda.

Nevertheless, Frieda's assertion that Lawrence gained sublimation through his creation of the novel did not rescue Lawrence from its oedipal implications. Even Frieda suggested that Lawrence was influenced by the theory of the Oedipus complex, to which she first introduced him. She did not claim that Lawrence started the novel with this Freudian theory in mind, but she believed that at the stage of its completion in 1912, Lawrence had more or less adopted some of her arguments on Freudianism[8]. Frieda herself was an admirer of Freud, and her relationship with Lawrence gives her some authority to comment on this issue. But Hoffman, to whom Frieda wrote in 1942, trusted the tale more than her claim and dismissed her Oedipus criticism:

> In May, 1913, when *Sons and Lovers* was published by Duckworth of London, Lawrence was pointed out as a novelist with exceptional insight into such psychoanalytic problems as incest-horror and the oedipus complex. Yet that novel was written before Lawrence had any real acquaintance with Freud, and before he mentions Freud in any of his letters. Such Freudian criticisms of *Sons and Lovers* were at best exaggerated. *Sons and Lovers* demonstrates that Lawrence needed no theory except his own to aid him in his analysis of character. Most important, *all* of Lawrence's work bears ultimate reference to his own experience, no matter how many suggestions of 'alien theory' it may contain. (Hoffman, p. 106)

A recent criticism by Michael Black[9] also agrees with Hoffman. In his study of Lawrence's philosophical essays, Black admits that Lawrence did have emotional crises in *Sons and Lovers* and in his later writing as well, but also points out that Lawrence's philosophies, as shown in his essays,

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[8] Frederick J. Hoffman, 'Lawrence's Quarrel with Freud', in *The Achievement of D. H. Lawrence* (pp. 106-127), ed. Frederick J. Hoffman & Harry T. Moore (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), p. 109. Hereafter Hoffman. This is a revised chapter from his *Freudianism and the Literary Mind* (1945).

[9] Michael Black, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Philosophical Works* (London: Macmillan, 1991). Hereafter Black.

went far beyond the understanding of Freudian psychoanalysis. Lawrence's genius in literary creation must have come from other sources of influence, and Black suggests that we can find at least some of these by studying the philosophical essays:

> As for the personal problems that these recurrences might also reveal: Lawrence had profound psychic difficulties; they do find their origin in his parentage, find a continuation in his marriage, and so on. I make some incidental comment on this as I go along; it would be absurd not to. Inevitably his problems are one source of his art; they are among the pressures (not the only ones) which spark his writing and provide his topics. These things do not make him a 'case'; or only if we admit we are all cases. He is in no sense explained as an instance of the Oedipus complex; what has to be explained is why a circumstance which might have crippled or inhibited him, as it does so many, did not prevent and may have actually facilitated his prodigious creativity. We all have problems; very few of us are geniuses. (Black, p. 4)

My major concern in this chapter is to follow the question Michael Black raises, and by studying Lawrence's philosophical essays to try to find out what influenced Lawrence and sparked his genius in writing his next novels. My study begins with the first essay Lawrence wrote, which he intended to use as a foreword to his *Sons and Lovers*. Thereafter, I move on to a number of his essays written between 1913 and 1915.

§1.2 'Foreword to *Sons and Lovers*': The Story of Creation

Immediately after finishing *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence started writing 'Foreword to *Sons and Lovers*' (1913)[10], which turns out to be a philosophical essay rather than a lucid exposition of the novel. Lawrence originally intended to publish it with the novel. But it was turned down by the publisher and was never printed in Lawrence's life time, as its contents are less related to the interpretation of the novel than to the manifestation of Lawrence's new approach to his understanding of creation in the universe.

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[10] D. H. Lawrence, 'Foreword to *Sons and Lovers*', in *Sons and Lovers* (pp. 465-473), ed. Helen Baron and Carl Baron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Hereafter 'Foreword'.

Lawrence's philosophy of creation, as far as his education is concerned, inevitably employed Christian symbolism. In the 'Foreword', he first re-defined the Word as Christ, the Son and the Flesh as God, the Father. His re-definition is opposed to St. John's gospel in the New Testament, which says 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' (John i. 1) Then, he challenges John's explanation of Christ's incarnation, 'The Word was made Flesh' (John i. 14). John's reinterpretation of the creation story comes from this explanation: 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared *him*.' (John i. 18) Lawrence disagrees with John's replacing God with Christ, because he insists on taking Christ as a symbol of human civilisation and retaining God as the creative power of nature. His insistence on the creation story is not because he maintains the religious concepts in the Old Testament, but because he has seen the danger in the worldly life that man-made civilisation, exemplified by modern industry, is overpowering the intrinsic nature of love and emotion. He is worried that human beings are being taught to follow what becomes dominatingly powerful and gradually led astray from the law of nature. Countering human efforts to alter Nature with charitable ideas of Christianity, Lawrence warns human beings of their limited ability to love:

> For the Word hath neither passion nor pain, but lives and moves in equity. It has charity, which we call love. But only the Flesh has love, for that is the Father, and in love he begets us all, of love are we begotten. ('Foreword', p. 469)

Lawrence wants to restore the intrinsic nature of human emotions, so he proclaims his belief that 'The Flesh was made Word' ('Foreword', p. 467) to clearly indicate the Flesh as the source of creation. This story of Christian creation revised by Lawrence is somehow similar to the Taoist primordial

creation of Heaven and Earth, in which Nature[11] is the source of creation and the Word of holy men is simply artificial civilisations produced by human beings. This similarity can be seen by comparing Lawrence's Christian symbolisms with those of Taoism in this quotation from *Lao Zi*[12], written by the pioneering master of Taoism:

> There is an Infinite Being which was before Heaven and Earth. How calm it is, how free! It lives alone and changes not. It moves everywhere, but is not affected. We may regard it as the universal Mother. I know not its name. I call it Tao.[13]

Had Lawrence read this translation, which was certainly available at that time, how would he have reacted to it? A possible connection between Taoist Nature and Christian creation has already been noted by a sinologist's study, which comments: 'Tao made flesh.'[14] But instead of making a hasty conclusion by appropriating this later insight, I should like to see what was said by a contemporary sinologist about the possible influence of Taoism on someone like Lawrence:

> A foreigner, imbued with Christian ideas, naturally feels inclined to substitute for Tao the term by which he is accustomed to denote the Supreme Being - God. But this is only admissible if he is prepared to use the term 'God' in a much broader sense than we find in either the Old or the New Testament. That which chiefly impresses the Taoist in the operations of Nature is their absolute impersonality. The inexorable law of cause and effect seems to him equally removed from active goodness

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[11] This word has many different meanings, defined by various thinkers throughout the world history. But as a Taoist, as well as a Lawrentian, concept of philosophy, Nature alludes to the underlying primordial unity, whose supreme power is perpetual. It is also believed that Nature operates spontaneously with two polarising forces - Yang and Yin, or Male and Female - to retain its original balance and purity. Here and later in the thesis, Nature in such a specific sense will be referred to in comparison between Taoism and Lawrence, to reveal that they both regarded civilisation as a degradation of the natural order of the universe and regretted for the interference of Nature by human exertions.

[12] The book is also called *The Book of Morality*, often known by the name of its author Lao Zi. But since the historic records from that age have always been obscure, Lao Zi is sometimes believed as a legendary character by historians. He is generally known as an ancient philosopher, senior to his contemporary, Confucius (551-479 B. C.). The survived version of *Lao Zi* is actually his analects collected by his followers probably during the Warring States (475-221 B. C.). From then on, the texts have remained as one of the most important Taoist classics.

[13] Walter Gorn Old, tr., *The Simple Way: Laotze* (London: Philip Wellby, 1905), p. 9. Hereafter Old.

[14] Holmes Welch & Anna Seidel, ed., *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 136.

> or benevolence on the one hand, and from active evil or malevolence on the other. This is a fact which will hardly be disputed by any intelligent observer. It is when he begins to draw inferences from it that the Taoist parts company from the average Christian. Believing, as he does, that the visible Universe is but a manifestation of the invisible Power behind it, he feels justified in arguing from the known to the unknown, and concluding that, whatever Tao may be in itself (which is unknowable), it is certainly not what we understand by a personal God - not a God endowed with the specific attributes of humanity, not even (and here we find a remarkable anticipation of Hegel) a *conscious* God. In other words, Tao transcends the illusory and unreal distinctions on which all human systems of morality depend, for in it all virtues and vices coalesce into One.[15]

Like Taoism, which maintains that Nature is the primordial source of creation with its profound depth and quietness, Lawrence believes that the Flesh is also infinite and endless, forever remaining unquestioned and unanswerable. Had he had any contact with this Chinese philosophy, he could have easily related the concept of Taoist Nature to the symbol of the Flesh, and human ideas of distorting Nature to the symbol of the Word. The relationship between the Flesh and the Word re-defined by Lawrence is also similar to the theory of union between Nature and man maintained by Taoism. According to the sexual school of Taoism, man's communication with Nature goes through the body of woman. So woman is regarded as an unconscious medium accessible to Nature. Lawrence is even more straightforward in giving this innate privilege to woman, when he first acknowledges 'The woman is the Flesh.' ('Foreword', p. 470) and then ascribes to her an irrevocable path for man in his contact with the Unknown:

> And God the Father, the Inscrutable, the Unknowable, we know in the Flesh, in Woman. She is the door for our in-going and our out-coming. In her we go back to the Father: but like the witnesses of the Transfiguration, blind and unconscious. ('Foreword', p. 471)

There are also some viewpoints shared by Lawrence and Taoism about the creation of human beings. Firstly, Nature or the Flesh is the creator of the universe. It created the male and the female, who will follow

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[15] Lionel Giles, tr., *Taoist Teachings from the Book of Lieh Tzu*, in *The Wisdom of the East Series*, ed. L. Cranmer-Byng (London: John Murray, 1912), pp. 10-11.

the natural law to reach their mutual completion. The creator is unknowable and unquestionable, and its law is undefinable and irrevocable. But the sage or the holy man, who is the Word, tries in vain to replace Nature's authority by reinterpreting its law and usurping its power. So both Lawrence and Taoism agree that human beings should be guided by the law of nature, rather than by the Word, which represents the pretentious knowledge and civilised inventions of the self-appointed human leaders. Secondly, woman is closer to Nature than man. So when man is lost in his fight for success and survival, he needs to come back to woman to find his right access to Nature. Love and marriage provide man with such a chance of rebirth to resume his essential connection with Nature. But the conventional society requires woman to submit to man, and man to Christ. Lawrence recognises this requirement as a barrier between man and nature. He distrusts the Word, the teachings of Christ, as an unnecessary intervention of the natural law. He wants man to find his way to Nature through his marriage to woman. In his new philosophy, woman is no longer a rib attached to man, but his gateway to Nature and his revelation to completion. This is Lawrence's ideal sexual relationship and ideal type of marriage:

> And in the woman is the eternal continuance, and from the man, in the human race, comes the exclamation of joy and astonishment at new self-revelation, revelation of that which is Woman to a man.
>
> Now every woman, according to her kind, demands that a man shall come home to her with joy and weariness of the work he has done during the day: that he shall then while he is with her, be re-born of her; that in the morning he shall go forth with his new strength. ('Foreword', p. 472)

This concept could be easily taken as a conventional idea of marriage - that a woman's role is to back her husband, the master of a house, and take care of his children. But by referring to the concept of 're-born', Lawrence differentiates his concept from the conventional custom of marriage, which emphasises integrity of social life, and often neglects the effect of rebirth through sexual relationship. Lawrence uses this theory to explain the

oedipal crisis of Paul Morel and points out that Paul's failure in contacting Nature for a successful rebirth is because his relationship with his mother is not sexual but spiritual. Her possessiveness is not only incapable of renewal, but also prevents him from renewal through any other sexual relationship:

> But the man who is the go-between from Woman to Production is the lover of that woman. And if that Woman be his mother, then is he her lover in part only: he carries for her, but is never received unto her for his confirmation and renewal, and so wastes himself away in the flesh. The old son-lover was Oedipus. The name of the new one is legion. And if a son-lover take a wife, then is she not his wife, she is only his bed. And his life will be torn in twain, and his wife in her despair shall hope for sons, that she may have her lover in her hour. ('Foreword', p. 473)

But when he describes how the strong possessive desire of a mother could do harm to her son, Lawrence is not solely blaming his mother for it. He first of all accuses the coal mining industry for destroying the dignity of man such as his miner father, who then fails to satisfy his mother in her sexual life. In the 'Foreword', Lawrence reiterates his philosophy, more emphatically, that without sexual relationship the renewal of man is impossible. So Paul's problem in the crisis of sexual maturity is basically because a devastating industry has violated the function of Nature. The harm is not only done to the workman father, but also to the relationships in his family. In the novel, Lawrence does not succeed in solving this problem. But in the 'Foreword', he is trying to theorise that the relationships, either between husband and wife or between mother and son, need to be readjusted according to the law of nature that governs the creation of human beings.

Lawrence's concept of philosophy in the source of creation tells us three things about sexual relationship. Firstly, man is not the natural source of Creation, an idea which Lawrence supports by asserting that Christ is unable to love sexually with his charitable mercy, and also by the belief that woman is not made of man's rib, but both are simultaneously created by the

Unknown. Since woman is created as a door-way to Nature, man cannot assume the role of a natural leader, unless he follows the law of nature through woman to pursue his creation of life. Secondly, going to woman for love and marriage will enable man to re-connect with Nature. This connection through tenderness will renew man's natural power, and counter his hatred of others, lust of money, desire of industrial success, and destruction of the natural environment. Thirdly, although woman is recognised as being close to the source of creation, she is not given a superior or even equal role in sexual relationships. Her innate resourcefulness resembles Nature, being responsible for man's rebirth rather than taking over man's task to contact Nature for his completion. It is man who absorbs her potential energy and creates his own production. She is only needed so that he may come back to her for renewal and confirmation, and refer his activities to the source of Nature for his further re-creation. This concept of Nature in woman leads Lawrence's fiction to two controversial positions.

On the one hand, as feminist critics have commented, Lawrence is adopting a male-chauvinist attitude towards woman, because he does not treat woman on equal terms with man[16]. The female, though rich as an unconscious source, does not consciously participate in creation. She is revered as a potential nature, but has to wait for man to awaken her potentiality. It could be said that Lawrence's theory, though endowing woman with crucial importance in life through his perception of Nature, is still reluctant to allow woman to participate in his creation. Feminist critics have good reason to believe that Lawrence's man simply makes use of woman in his power-seeking activities[17].

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[16] Cf. Lydia Blanchard, 'Love and Power: A Reconsideration of Sexual Politics in D. H. Lawrence', *Modern Fiction Studies* 21 (1975), p. 431.

[17] Cf. Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (London: Virago Press Ltd., 1977), p. 247. Hereafter Millett. The book was first published in Great Britain by Rupert Hart-Davis Ltd. in 1971.

On the other hand, as woman's superior connection with Nature is confirmed, Lawrence makes great efforts to observe and describe this connection. Were it not for his close observation and vivid description of modern women, his stories might well correspond to the feminists' accusation. His contribution is his recognition of the changes which the development of modern industry, and later the consequences of the War, have produced in modern woman. Although he sometimes regrets these changes, he appreciates the freedom they have brought for a sexual revolution. His efforts are not to simply confirm the traditional view that marriage exists for the wife to recharge the husband's battery, but, as later in *The Rainbow*, to describe the nature of emancipated female desire and confirm its continuance in the new era. His man, like Birkin in *Women in Love*, accordingly adjusts himself to the union with this modern woman to assure the mutual, as well as his own, benefits by still following Nature's way.

Because of the similarity between Lawrence's philosophy and that of Taoism, it is worth discovering what books Lawrence actually read about this ancient Chinese philosophy. Lawrence uses Christian symbols in his essays, simply because they are the most familiar and convenient for him. But as he often rebels against teachings of Christianity, it is possible that his anti-Christian ideas come from some other sources. Lawrence was fond of reading various kinds of books[18]. Some of them may have encouraged him to question the orthodox system. Jessie Chambers mentions in her memoir a number of books she read with Lawrence, but these were by no means all

[18] Cf. Rose Marie Burwell, 'A Checklist of Lawrence's Reading', in *A D. H. Lawrence Handbook*, (pp. 59-126), ed. Keith Sagar (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982). Hereafter Sagar. The index of the list includes the following subject matter categories: American Authors, Anthropology, Apocalypse, Art: Theory and Criticism, Australian Authors, Bullfighting, Children's Literature, Egypt, English Romantics, Etruscans, French Authors, Futurism, German Authors, Greek Tragedy, History, Italian Authors, India, Mexico, Natural History, Occult, Oriental Thought and Religion, Philosophy, Psychology, Russian Authors, Scandinavian Authors, Spanish Authors, Theology, etc.

the books he read as a youth. She would have naturally recorded the books which impressed her most, excluding those that triggered only Lawrence's peculiar imagination. As we know, Lawrence in the end broke with Chambers both emotionally and ideologically, so we have reason to suppose that Lawrence was influenced by books that Chambers did not know, or, in writing her memoir, thought not worth mentioning. In particular, it is worth speculating whether Lawrence had come across the oriental ideas which were being discovered by a number of prominent British sinologists of that time in their books about ancient Chinese philosophy.

Lawrence was a close friend of William Hopkin, a local shopkeeper in Eastwood, who was an important social character of the community as well as a poet with some publications. He had a very good family library which Lawrence was privileged to use frequently. Their friendship continued after Lawrence left Eastwood and travelled around the world. He continued to send Hopkin his new books, signed and dedicated to him, and these are part of the Hopkin Collection in the Eastwood Library today. Unfortunately for my research, only those books signed and dedicated by Lawrence have survived. The books Hopkin previously possessed are not preserved as a whole collection. Hopkin's first wife, Sallie, died before him, and Hopkin married again. After his death in 1951, his second wife, Olive, kept his house and possessions until 1987, when she became ill and had to move into a nursing home. She then ordered the contents of the house to be auctioned, because there were no children to inherit the property. She died soon after the auction in 1989[19]. The list of the auction record[20] is eight pages long, containing 199 lots, of which Lots 151-176 are books. This includes five shelves of books, eleven packs of books ranging from seven to

[19] I collected this information orally from a local auctioneer, Mr. Bird, who at that time worked for Beardsley Theobalds Auctions in Eastwood, which conducted the auction.
[20] As a pamphlet, the auction list is now kept in Hallward Library, Nottingham University.

twelve books per pack, some individual titles and also a quantity of books relating to the work of D. H. Lawrence. According to Mr. Bird, the auctioneer of Eastwood, the records of the purchasers of these items were destroyed within the next two or three years and then Beardsley Theobalds Auctions itself went out of business. Consequently it is hardly possible to find out who now possesses these books, and even more impossible to trace their titles. Having tried Nottingham University, Eastwood Library, Nottingham Local Studies Library and the Archive Office in Nottingham, I was told none of them had bought the auctioned books. I am therefore unable to show any factual proof of Chinese influences on Lawrence, but I can at least attempt a comparative analysis to reveal the similarity between Lawrence's philosophies in his early essays and those of some ancient Chinese philosophers available to Lawrence in his youth.

§1.3 'The Crown': Philosophy of Balance in Sexuality

As a philosophical essay, 'Foreword' marks Lawrence's attempt to locate the primary source of human life and existence. Subsequently his interest in the philosophy of creation continued. While he was writing *The Rainbow*, he was also working on an essay which was later called *Study of Thomas Hardy*[21]. This essay, never published in Lawrence's life time, is not so much a literary criticism of Hardy's novels as an independent work expressing Lawrence's own peculiar philosophical beliefs[22]. In this essay, Lawrence further develops his theory of creation and confirms the principle of the natural law as a compromise between two opposing forces. He

[21] D. H. Lawrence, *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). Hereafter *Hardy*.

[22] Cf. George J. Zytaruk & James T. Boulton, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol. 2 [June 1913 - October 1916] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Hereafter *Letters 2*. Lawrence admits that the essay is 'mostly philosophicalish, slightly about Hardy' (p. 292).

ratifies a two-in-one relationship for man and woman to fulfil the natural law of reconciliation, equality and completion:

> It needs that a man shall know the natural law of his own being, then that he shall seek out the law of the female, with which to join himself as complement. He must know that he is half, and the woman is the other half: that they are two, but that they are two-in-one. (*Hardy*, pp. 127-128)

The idea of harmony and reconciliation in Lawrence's theory of sexual balance is further and thoroughly developed in his next philosophical essay, 'The Crown'[23], the most important work on this issue. Written in 1915, 'The Crown' demonstrated an abundant use of pagan and oriental symbols, the force of which was to undermine the Christian view of the origin of the universe and the genesis of human existence. Lawrence had gained from his exotic readings a theory of dialectic balance, which he applied in his interpretation of the world of existence. He adhered to the belief that this balance relied on the inevitable co-existence of two relative and opposing forces. To represent the profound mystery of the balanced tensions, he adopted the lion and the unicorn of the British Royal Arms as two relevant symbols. As this idea began to take an increasingly central place in his philosophy, he extended his symbolism to other opposing pairs. Eventually, his theory led to his complete rejection of the doctrine of Christian creation. In his view, creation was not divine, but relative and supernatural:

> Destruction and Creation are the two relative absolutes between the opposing infinities. Life is in both. Life may even, for a while be almost entirely in one, or almost entirely in the other. The end of either oneness is death. For life is really in the two, the absolute is the pure relation, which is both. ('Crown', p. 294)

'The Crown' was not originally published in its entirety. Only three of its six sections were printed at that time, in the short-lived magazine *The Signature*, run by Lawrence and his friends. But the complete manuscript

[23] D. H. Lawrence, 'The Crown' & 'The Crown: 1915 Variants', in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays* (pp. 251-306 & pp. 469-479), ed. Michael Herbert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Hereafter 'Crown'.

has survived, which enables us to compare the 1915 version with what was finally included in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*, published in 1925. In general, 'The Crown' is a powerful and mysterious essay, full of religious images, some of which are obscure in meaning. From the beginning, it was regarded as nonsense by Richard Aldington and David Garnett. Even Michael Black, writing his commentary in 1991, thinks their opinions are justified and does not claim fully to have understood it (Black, p. 331).

In 'The Crown', Lawrence first applies the mythological story of the lion and the unicorn to present his basic idea that the world is fundamentally formed by two opposing forces. He extends this symbol of duality to a number of other metaphorical binaries, such as spirit and flesh, fire and water, light and darkness, tiger and phoenix, womb and sepulchre, death and vulture, etc., to further his argument on the necessity of a universal balance. As the Lion and the Unicorn are fighting for the Crown, they try to destroy or expel each other. But Lawrence's philosophy asserts that there is no point of doing so, because their existence depends on each other:

> For we are two opposites which exist by virtue of our inter-opposition. Remove the opposition and there is collapse, a sudden crumbling into universal nothingness. ('Crown', p. 256)

Lawrence advocates a compromise of the two opposites. Their ideal relationship should be maintained as a co-existence or integration, rather than fighting or conflict. The same rule applies to other pairs of metaphors, such as light and darkness. So the fundamental problem does not lie in which one of the two forces will become a winner or a loser in competing for the Crown, but in how they can manage to reach a compromise, that in Lawrence's philosophical terminology is called 'consummation':

> And then there is the consummation of each in the other, the consummation of light in darkness and darkness in light... ('Crown', p. 259)

Lawrence refers consummation to a natural law of the universe and applies it as a destination for all developments and existences. So there is no victory achieved by either of the two fighting parties. The Crown won is at the same time the Crown lost, because no one is able to achieve the Absolute without facing its own collapse. In order to survive, the two opposites should keep a 'supreme relation'. Their direct opposition will never result in triumph or defeat, because

> Anything that *triumphs*, perishes. The consummation comes from perfect relatedness. To this a man may *win*. But he who triumphs, perishes. ('Crown', pp. 261-262)

In the 1915 version, Lawrence focuses this theory on the situation of war, which he observes as a human crisis. He wishes to find in the universal law of balance a reason for compromise to criticise the devastating combat and any sanctioned violence.

In his commentary to 'The Crown', Black regards this essay as Lawrence's 'attempt to reach and persuade a public that something must be done.' and points out that the 'something' Lawrence wished to do was not political, but a transformation of consciousness (Black, p. 330). This view can be supported by the fact that Lawrence and his friends at that time had just launched a new magazine and were trying to do something during the War which 'had gone pretty deep.'('Crown', p. 249) It is probable that 'The Crown' was the 'something' that Lawrence wanted to do in order to sort out some of his bewildered ideas in 1915. But the task of transforming consciousness was so impossible and hopeless that Lawrence himself became confused in his application of multiple symbolisms. As a result he produced a number of mysterious and obscure symbols which, failing to clarify what he wished to say, only concealed his disappointment. But in 1925 when all the six sections of 'The Crown' were finally published

together as a whole essay, Lawrence added a 'Note' to it, giving a different message contradicting his original intention:

> I can't believe in 'doing things' like that. In a great issue like the war, there was nothing to be 'done' in Murry's sense. There is still nothing to be 'done.'...
>
> ... it is no use trying to do anything - I speak only for myself - publicly. It is no use trying merely to modify present forms. ('Crown', p. 249)

This is an important change in Lawrence's attitude towards possible social reform. As Black suggests, the 1915 version mainly concentrates on Lawrence's two crises: the War and his sexual life. But when Lawrence revised some sections of the 1915 text in 1925, he found that some passages referring to the War had become incoherent because his crisis in opposing the War was basically over[24]. He was confronted with new ideas of social reform, which gradually became an escapist view. He no longer tried to do something to put things right, but was seeking for a utopian view that a selected group of natural aristocrats should move away from a corrupted civilisation. So in the 1925 version, Lawrence concentrates more emphatically on a new crisis of sexuality, which concerns man and woman in their balanced relationship for power.

To find a philosophical link between the universal balance and balance in sexuality, which guided Lawrence from the war crisis to theories of sexual relationship, I shall look into some influences that nurtured Lawrence's dislike of Christianity. The strength of these influences seems

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[24] Lawrence had not quite overcome the crisis in his own sexual life though he was satisfied with his theory that a balanced sexual relationship could give the male a natural power. As Black argues:

> Lawrence was by then well past the two crises of 1915-17 (the crisis of the War, and what I take to be a crisis in his sexual life) and he revised the text drastically. He left what of the old text he still held to as central core of his philosophy; but, as well as no-longer-topical references to the War, now long over, he deleted or modified substantial passages which bear on his own troubled sexuality - as if *that* crisis too had passed, and he now felt more secure in himself. He also wrote-in a new layer of material, to do with his current preoccupation, power. (Black, p. 109)

to grow the more Lawrence recognises balance as the law of nature. Taoism is one of the possible philosophies that links universal duality with human sexuality. During the ten years between 1915 and 1925, Lawrence experienced many defeats in his plans for social reform. In his disappointment at modern civilisation and his adoption of a utopian view, he would have whole-heartedly endorsed Taoist denunciations against social disturbance and infructuous behaviour of human beings. Although there were some translations and critical works on Taoism available in Lawrence's time, it is very difficult to identify which of these Lawrence actually read. But similarities between Taoism and Lawrence can still be detected in a comparison of their philosophical ideas. If he had come across works about Taoism, the following observations by his contemporary sinologists would have interested him:

> Tao is eternally inactive, and yet it leaves nothing undone. if kings and princes could but hold fast to this principle, all things would work out their own reformation. If having reformed, they still desired to act, I would have them restrained by the simplicity of the Nameless Tao. The simplicity of the Nameless Tao brings about an absence of desire. The absence of desire gives tranquillity. And thus the Empire will rectify itself.[25]

> Totally unlike the doctrine of Confucius based upon Charity and Duty to one's neighbour, the Taotze recommends the natural expression of inherent virtue, which, as the attribute of Tao, will flow through the mind and develop the qualities of the Soul in their original integrity if its action be unimpeded by the weed-growth of vicious habits or the veneer of worldly consequence. For all personal effort, forcing of faculty, striving after a semblance of that which is already possessed by man through Nature, all Egoism in short, is regarded by the apostles of the Tao as so much waste of energy, leading finally to competition, strife, self-assertion, dogmatism, interference, tyranny, diplomacy, and deceit. (Old, p. 9)

Lawrence may not have read the above translations, but he was definitely influenced by ideas from non-Christian sources, so that his original symbols found new references. In the 1915 version of 'The Crown', all the symbols are under the guidance of God and they only signify in His principles. The

[25] Lionel Giles, tr., *The Sayings of Lao Tzu*, in *The Wisdom of the East Series*, ed. L. Cranmer-Byng & S. A. Kapadia (London: John Murray, 1905), p. 30.

balance of two opponents in their various symbolic forms is still a principle of God even in Lawrence's revised Christian story. He was not satisfied with some aspects of the charitable Christ, as the 'Foreword to *Sons and Lovers*' had already shown, but he was still trying to keep his confidence in a Christian God, who obviously dominated his philosophy:

> Without God, without immortality, without the absolute, we are nothing. [Textual Apparatus 300:23] ('Crown', p. 478)

As this sentence in the 1915 version shows, God represents immortality and the absolute and is the only source of his revelation. In the 1925 version, the sentence was expanded to accommodate more sources of revelation:

> Without God, without some sort of immortality, not necessarily life-everlasting, but without *something* absolute, we are nothing. ('Crown', p. 300)

As can be seen from the changes in the sentence, 'some sort' and '*something*' (Lawrence's italics) are actually suggesting they might not be related to the Christian God and could come from the deity of other religions. The most substantial cut which reveals his disloyalty to God is the following passage:

> I matter nothing at all to God. To the two eternities I matter, because I partake of both. But I do not partake of God. I am within God, God is not within me. The Perfect Relation is not within me. I am within the Perfect Relation. I may achieve the Perfect Relation within me. That is my immortality. That is the revelation of Absolute God in my life. But God is absolute without revelation. Only I am not absolute till God is established in me. [Textual Apparatus 300:35] ('Crown', p. 478)

The above quotation is from the last section of the essay in the 1915 version. The original title of this section was 'The Knowledge of God'. In 1925, when the complete version of 'The Crown' appeared in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*, Lawrence found that God was not the only source of his revelation. So he altered the title into 'To Be, and to Be Different' and deleted the above passage in praise of God. In the meanwhile, he added the following passage:

> My immortality is not from the beginning, in my endless ancestry. Nor is it on ahead in life everlasting. My life comes to me from the great Creator, the Beginner. And my spirit runs towards the Comforter, the Goal far ahead. But I, what am I between?
>
> These two halves I always am. But I am never *myself* until they are consummated into a spark of oneness, the gleam of the Holy Ghost. And in this spark is my immortality, my non-mortal being, that which is not swept away down either direction of time. ('Crown', pp. 300-301)

In this added passage, Lawrence attempts to reach consummation of two eternities, the Creator and the Comforter, by the gleam of the Holy Ghost, which overwrites a long passage in the old version about 'the Revealed God' and 'the Perfect Relation'. Lawrence's unorthodox view of consummation gradually takes shape in his later novels, such as *The Plumed Serpent* and *The Escaped Cock*, in which symbols of other religions and mythologies supersede the sacredness of Christianity.

§1.4 Freedom of Love in the Law of Nature

While he asserts that the universe maintains its integrity in the balance of the two forces and that society should avoid destruction in a war of two fighting parties, Lawrence in the 1915 version also gives some attention to the balance in love and marriage. He was fully aware of the impact of the women's emancipation movement during the First World War, especially since he had experienced domination by women. He disliked the idea of a formal, political female liberation because of its attempt to obtain female freedom and independence, which would threaten the balance between man and woman in their union. Lawrence, therefore, insisted that relationship between man and woman should also respond to the consummation of the universe:

> When a man seeks a woman in love, or in positive desire, he seeks a union, he seeks a consummation of himself with that which is not himself, light with dark, dark with light. ('Crown', p. 283)

The importance of maintaining a balance in Nature as well as in love and marriage exemplifies Lawrence's assertion of a union in compromise and

harmony between the male and the female. He tries to argue in his essay that the union is the Crown, the Absolute, but 'the ego crowned with the crown is the monster and the tyrant' ('Crown', p. 270). When either the male or the female wins, the true crown disappears. What remains is only 'the crown of sterile egoism' ('Crown', p. 269). Egoism either of man or of woman is the enemy of the union, as Lawrence added in the 1925 version: 'Ego reacts upon ego only in friction.' ('Crown', p. 283) To keep the union alive is the consistent effort for the succession of generations. This view is best presented in *The Rainbow*[26], a novel of war and sexuality that caused controversy on its publication in 1915.

Written immediately before 'The Crown', *The Rainbow* had already demonstrated Lawrence's philosophy of sexual balance in the symbolism of its title as well as in its characters. Not having completely lost his confidence in Christianity, Lawrence in 'The Crown' annotated the rainbow as a symbol of balance that not only embodies God's promise of compromise with man, but also stands for a union in the way that Nature reigns:

> ... the rainbow, iridescence which is darkness at once and light, the two-in-one; the crown that binds them both. ('Crown', p. 261)

The Rainbow was Lawrence's reaction to social development and the emergence of modern women. To maintain a balance in patriarchal society, which was then already very different from its conventional Victorian and puritan form, he tried to introduce a new balance between the sexes, examining the issue of sexuality in the love and marriage of three generations. For each generation, the nature of sexuality changes significantly: as time goes by, it intensifies noticeably. With the increasing awareness of sexuality in their physical and psychological beings, the

[26] D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, ed. Mark Kinkead-Weekes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Hereafter *Rainbow*.

sequence of generations experience an increasingly strong expression of their sensual life in their enduring struggles for independence.

To give a profound analysis of women's emancipation, to identify its fundamental and historical sources, both social and mental, and to reveal its superficial development as well as its undercurrent achievements, Lawrence created this history of three generations of Brangwen women. A pioneer in this line of emancipation, the representative of the first generation starts to question her situation:

> Why were her own children marked below those others? (*Rainbow*, p. 12)

And the answer enlightens her:

> It was not money, nor even class. It was education and experience, she decided. (*Rainbow*, p. 12)

This consciousness in pursuit of knowledge is inherited by the woman of the second generation, Anna Brangwen, who is fascinated by some mystic qualities in Will and marries him for them. She strives to be equal with him by understanding the power of the unknown in his devotion to the church. Will's affection for the church irritates her. Lincoln Cathedral stands for him as a mystery of darkness in which he can undermine her freedom and place her under his physical power. Anna realises that her freedom is sinking under the silent grip of his physical will. The symbolic dance at the late stage of her pregnancy gives her a victory in the physical battle for power. As she assimilates the essence of the church and digests its human quality and earthy nature, she feels:

> she would never consent to the knitting of all the leaping stone in a great roof that closed her in, and beyond which was nothing, nothing, it was the ultimate confine. (*Rainbow*, p. 188)

She therefore:

> claimed the right to freedom above her, higher than the roof. (*Rainbow*, p. 189)

Although Lawrence asserts that sexuality is very important in love and marriage, he is also fully aware of the negative side of sexuality. He points out in 'The Crown' that sexuality can also be degraded to mere sensation, which produces not a consummation in union that he ratifies as the positive achievement of sexual love, but a frictional reduction to which he is vigorously opposed:

> This reduction within the self is sensationalism.
> .....
> Sensationalism progresses in the individual. This is the doom of it. This is the doom of egoistic sex. Egoistic sex-excitement means the reacting of the sexes against one another in a purely reducing activity. ('Crown', p. 287)

A sample of this sexual friction can be found in *The Rainbow*: the marriage of Tom and Lydia at first seems physical and sensual. When Lydia is pregnant, Tom's equilibrium is at risk of being destroyed and himself reduced to mere selfish egoism. To survive this threat to his relationship with Lydia, he fills the emotional gap by turning his love to his step-daughter Anna. This saves the marriage of the first generation from failure. Although sexuality plays a less important part at that time in their lives, it is sublimated by Tom's transferring his attention to a substitute, his emotional attachment to Anna. So although the couple are not sexually satisfied, the union survives. The marriage of Tom and Lydia reaches the ideal form of perfect union in the end. Lawrence perceptively observes the sexual inadequacies of the older generation, but shows us not the triumph of one or the defeat of the other, rather a fulfilment, achieved by a balance of the opposite sexes.

In the first generation, it is the child that provides an opportunity for an emotional attachment which reassures the balance of the union. In the second generation, the child, though still being able to serve as a connection, is found inadequate because of an increasing demand for a fuller sexual consummation. Anna's pregnancy not only represents the

couple's success in sexual relation, but also produces problems of their sensual friction in the union. Although the birth of Ursula makes Will and Anna feel further emotionally attached, the couple need more sexual fulfilment between themselves. They have to undergo a consistent struggle to reach a consummation, and learn to compromise their conflict and self orientation. Lawrence also annotated this relationship in his essay:

> This is the desire and the consummation, this is the war. But at length, we shall be satisfied, at length we shall have consummation. Then the war will end. And what then?
>
> It is not really a question of victories or defeats. It is a question of fulfilment, and release from the old prison-house of a dead form. ('Crown', p. 290)

There exists a development in the first two generations. Lydia's ambition is more or less for the emancipation of her children and is concerned mainly with their chances of education and experience. Anna's effort is for herself, but her struggle for freedom is still confined within the family. She wins equality with her husband but there remains another equality in social position which is to be fought for by the third generation's woman - Ursula Brangwen.

As far as *The Rainbow* is concerned, the third generation represents the culmination of all three generations' efforts - the awakening of the female consciousness in their own social positions, sexual demands and emotional attachments. This awakened consciousness responded to the increasing achievement of the progressive liberal ideas on sexuality which were initiated in the turmoil of the War. So, this movement impressed Lawrence as a mixture of a fresh progress and a dangerous threat. Ursula in *The Rainbow* marks a new attitude towards love in the third generation of the family. The first generation can bear their sexual love to be crippled. The second can have theirs adjusted. Ursula cannot do either. The sexual

love she pursues is physical, passionate, and spiritual as well, and should finally be liberated.

Ursula's first awareness of sexuality comes by seeing the two wedding rings worn by her grandmother (cf. *Rainbow*, pp. 237-242). She instinctively realises a woman's destined life is inevitably attached to a man's. That life is still a mysterious world to her and she has not yet known that she is going to be the generation which is born to alter this attachment. Ursula undertakes the burden of her foremothers' attachment to man, but her life is set to achieve female independence. Ursula is a vulnerable figure only because society does not give a girl an equal opportunity for realising her desires. She feels happy when she is sent to the Grammar School at the age of twelve, which not only widens the circle of her life, but also releases her from household drudgery and the burdensome responsibility of looking after her younger sisters. She always craves for privacy and individuality, which she hopes will bring her 'some spirituality and stateliness.' (cf. *Rainbow*, p. 246)

Ursula has her own problems in choosing her way to emancipation, in which her association with social change is of less prominence than with individuals. In her first adolescent love, with Anton Skrebensky, Ursula feels no sense of freedom and independence. She hates machinery and war which give men power over women. Caught in a much more complicated situation, Ursula needs both social and sexual emancipation, but she still cannot avoid being attached to a man both physically and emotionally. When she falls in love with Skrebensky, she is really in love with her own illusion:

> She laid hold on him at once for her dreams. Here was one such as those Sons of God who saw the daughters of men, that they were fair. He was no son of Adam. Adam was servile. (*Rainbow*, p. 271)

Although she seems to be fascinated by Skrebensky, she has actually turned her love into a life of imagination. The contrast between Ursula's illusionary love and Skrebensky's physical desire is vividly conveyed in the scene of their walking together one evening in the darkness:

> He walked near to her, and with the same silent, intent approach, put his arm round her waist, and softly, very softly, insidiously, drew her to him, till his arm was hard and pressed in upon her; she seemed to be carried along, floating, her feet scarce touching the ground, borne upon the firm, moving surface of his body, upon whose side she seemed to lie, in a delicious swoon of motion. And whilst she swooned, his face bent nearer to her, her head was leaned on his shoulder, she felt his warm breath on her face. Then softly, oh softly, so softly that she seemed to faint away, his lips touched her cheek, and she drifted through strands of heat and darkness. (*Rainbow*, pp. 277-278)

Before Ursula realises the danger of her illusions, Anton has to leave for South Africa to fight in the Boer War, so her love changes direction. The illusions are temporarily written off, but to be replaced by a new adventure in her sexual liberation: a lesbian relationship springs up between her and her school mistress, Winifred Inger. As it is observed by Lawrence, war provides women with the opportunity of becoming lovers between themselves. Ursula is passionately attached to Winifred Inger, who certainly possesses some masculine qualities:

> Then, with the beloved, subtly-intimate teacher present, the girl sat as within the rays of some enrichening sun, whose intoxicating heat poured straight into her veins. (*Rainbow*, p. 312)

> She [Miss Inger] was proud and free as a man, yet exquisite as a woman. (*Rainbow*, p. 312)

In her mistress, Ursula has found the protection which she feels missing in the absence of Skrebensky. But she does not feel any sense of independence in this lesbian relationship. She relies on Miss Inger in the same humble way that she does with Skrebensky. Only the company of Miss Inger makes her feel assured of her safety:

> If the lamb might lie down with the lion, it would be a great honor to the lamb, but the lion's powerful heart would suffer no diminishing. She loved the dignity and self-possession of lions. (*Rainbow*, pp. 317-318)

In the female consciousness, the lesbian relationship is a situation in which women are supposed to feel equality. But Lawrence denies the possibility of such an equality. As he demonstrates in his stories, there is always one of the two female lovers acting as a mock man in the lesbian relationships they have established. Through his presentation, Lawrence suggests that lesbian relationships can only produce a mock husband and a mock wife - an unproductive relationship perversely copied from an ordinary rivalling couple. It cannot produce equality at all, but merely preserve the inequality on new terms which contradicts the natural balance of sexual relations.

Ursula does feel a sort of pleasure and freedom in her lesbian relationship, but this emotional immaturity does not encourage her to be independent. Instead, she makes use of the lesbian relationship to fill the gap temporarily left by Skrebensky. So, it is bound to be an ephemeral substitute rather than a permanent orientation. The balance cannot be achieved without sexual attachment between man and woman. In this predicament of fighting and searching for freedom, Ursula still has not overcome her illusory love. So, when Skrebensky writes to her again, she is brought back to the alluring prospect through which she expects to obtain freedom through a man and succeed in her love with him. She dreams of his competence in love:

> He could open to her the gates of succeeding freedom and delight. Nay, if he had remained true to her, he would have been the doorway to her, into the boundless sky of happiness and plunging, inexhaustible freedom which was the paradise of her soul. Ah the great range he would have opened to her, the illimitable, endless space for self-realisation and delight for ever. (*Rainbow*, p. 406)

But ironically, it is this illusory love, which Ursula hopes will promote her intellect and widen her view of life, that disrupts her examinations and causes her to fail in obtaining the bachelor's degree.

Ursula seeks in Skrebensky for a new type of love which can give her both spiritual freedom and sexual satisfaction. But Skrebensky wants to

marry her as a practical wife who can accompany him on his mission abroad. The conflict between them lies in their different attitudes towards love and sexuality. Skrebensky has a conventional idea of marriage, believing that woman should be submissive to his values of life and profession. What he most wants is not the spiritual and physical fulfilment that Ursula pursues in love, but his own success to become the protector of a traditional family. Ursula, however, rejects this traditional Christian idealism and denounces the virtues of Skrebensky's mission. She is awakened by her female sexuality and is fighting for her own spiritual emancipation.

As a service-man disciplined to obey orders, Skrebensky is a character without individuality. His sense of social responsibility is certainly loftier than his personal inclination. If he had been born in a heroic era, he might have been a positive character, devoting himself to a great cause. But Lawrence did not recognise there was such a cause for the declining modern era. The so-called greatest events of his time, for example industrial development and war, produced no willing responsibility in action, but only nursed a disabling hatred in man's heart. So a conventional character like Skrebensky, who attaches himself earnestly to his duty at the cost of his individualism, inevitably wears a clown face in Lawrence's characterisation. He requires Ursula to help him with his self-sacrificing mission, which means she has to sacrifice the freedom and emancipation she has been pursuing, and give them up again to the cause of her man. Although Ursula has not found a way for her own liberation, she decides not to surrender. She refuses to go to India with Skrebensky as his wife and they split apart. There is no difficulty for Skrebensky to fill the gap left by Ursula. He makes a hasty, loveless marriage and sails with his new wife to

India. His problem can be easily solved in such a conventional way, but Ursula's problem is new and more complex.

The awakening of female sexuality brings about freedom in female life, but it also brings about woman's illusions in her emancipation. In her choice of love, she may unwisely use the sexual freedom she has newly obtained and trust too much her own sensation. At the time she is broadening her circle of life as well as selection of love, she is often bewildered by the new way of life and the new way of love, which do not necessarily guarantee her full emancipation. The ideal marriage of the first generation no longer exists. The emotional consummation of the second generation, symbolised by the cathedral, is much too confined. Ursula now in the third generation cannot find her position in the new social life, which is to change the old sexual and psychological balance. The lesbian relationship brings her to no progress in self fulfilment. In her passional relationship with Skrebensky, she becomes pregnant. This almost makes her surrender to convention by marrying him. Ursula's liberation involves breaking away from the tradition which sometimes still provides a soothing stability; while in the tide of sexual liberation, she is facing a more unpredictable situation. The new morality at its experimental stage sometimes becomes outrageous and controversial. Lawrence seems to suggest that the liberated sexual freedom, which has brought her no success in life or in love, simply gives her a chance to become independent. It will very much depend on her own courage and intelligence whether she is to win or lose the battle for emancipation. She has to face a further spiritual crisis and get through the burden of her pregnancy. Before she can emerge in the new life, she has to overcome the physical strength and sexuality represented by the threatening horses. Caught in the storm, challenged by the horses, losing the unborn child and finally waking up to a bright day,

Ursula has symbolically gone through the confrontations and sufferings in her emancipation and begun to realise the true meaning of her personal fulfilment. She is now looking for a relationship in which her personal consummation can be recognised. A prospect of such a fulfilled relationship is represented by the symbol of the rainbow, which indicates hope, but has not promised that she will definitely be loved in her emancipation. In the successive efforts to achieve both love and emancipation, the third generation of the Brangwen women has entered a wider sphere of social emancipation and her struggle for self fulfilment signifies a greater revelation than those of her seniors.

The Rainbow is concerned with the awakening of modern women in the dynamic events of a historical era - war and women's emancipation. Lawrence stresses education as a way for women's enlightenment and independence. School life is described in detail to emphasise the important role it then played in women's life, but Lawrence finally points to its inadequacy. At school, Ursula enjoys reading and is also quick at learning. She cherishes the belief that school is the place to enrich her knowledge and promote her individuality. School and education save her soul from subjugation and give her an opportunity to expand her desires for independence and freedom. But when she becomes a school mistress and begin to teach her pupils to fulfil the crucial task of being independent and individual, Ursula is confronted by more problems than enjoyment. She has a difficult class with a number of naughty boys and on one occasion she cannot restrain herself from beating one of the most insolent to keep the class under control. She finds that they have to be subdued before they can learn anything. In other words, their individuality has to be subjugated before it can be promoted. The incident of caning the boy in fact damages

her belief in the liberalising function of education. Growing sick of the evil school system, which brutalises both the pupils and herself, she then wants full independence and freedom to start a new life of her own. So she seeks for a higher education in college to compensate for her inadequacy as a woman. But Lawrence seems to suggest that a woman cannot liberate herself simply by obtaining equal education. The problems of social reality with regard to women's liberation are much more complicated than education can solve. Higher education is only an opportunity for equality, but it does not guarantee sexual balance. So she is to be disappointed again:

> College was barren, cheap, a temple converted to the most vulgar, petty commerce.
> ... she felt she was degrading herself in a kind of trade of sham gewgaws. (*Rainbow*, p. 404)

Although knowledge is still a glimmering mystery which remains attractive to her, she can hardly see a direct gateway through knowledge which will lead her to an immediate independence.

The inadequacy of education is presented in two main situations. The first is in school itself and the second is with the radical intervention of social events, especially the Women's Emancipation Movement, which sometimes causes even more problems than it solves for the supposed beneficiary of the movement. The first situation is suggested by the title of a chapter, school is a 'Man's World', in which equality does not exist either between man and woman or between human beings. Lawrence was dissatisfied with school and doubted that a place dominated by inequality could contribute anything to the making of freedom. He regarded this paradoxical situation as a reflection of social defects. In the second situation, he observed that an educated girl, through her knowledge, would be involved in new problems which the women's emancipation movements provoked. She would begin to realise the importance of freedom, but her independence would be far from easy. Lawrence affirmed that education

was unable alone to give a woman full emancipation. Although her consciousness for independence and freedom had already been awakened, it does not seem to have given her adequate means to establish a life of her own.

Apart from the inadequacy of education, Lawrence also observes that women's emancipation is a painful undertaking, specially for educated women. He even predicts that women will have to face further, even more arduous struggles to achieve self fulfilment, but unless they learn to achieve a balanced union with men, they will not succeed. He displays the struggles and frustrations of his women characters as they try to become independent social beings. These characters reflect his impressions of contemporary women who are no longer subordinate to the man's exclusive world, but with new confrontations and sufferings, they are experiencing a long process of their sensual growth and mental enlightenment.

As Lawrence himself had seen, the Emancipation Movement greatly changed people's inward attitudes towards women's role in society. Compared with industrialisation and war, it had been a more peaceful development, but its achievement should not be underestimated, because it was bringing about a new form of society. At the end of *The Rainbow*, Lawrence expresses hope for his contemporary women's efforts:

> And the rainbow stood on the earth. She knew that the sordid people who crept hard-scaled and separate on the face of the world's corruption were living still, that the rainbow was arched in their blood and would quiver to life in their spirit, that they would cast off their horny covering of disintegration, that new, clean, naked bodies would issue to a new germination, to a new growth, rising to the light and the wind and the clean rain of heaven. She saw in the rainbow the earth's new architecture, the old, brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the over-arching heaven. (*Rainbow*, pp. 458-459)

If Ursula has lost anything in the movement, she has only sacrificed her past to make a future possible. *The Rainbow* concludes with an expectation of an

individual woman, whose eventual emancipation will not make her a winner or loser, but will balance her position in her sexual relationships.

Having struggled in his conflict with conventional morality, Lawrence adopted sexual balance as his ethical principle. He now perceived sexuality and human sexual relationships as reflecting the law of nature. As he protested against accepted moral conventions, he began his didactic evaluations of the significance of sexuality. His characters come to understand life while they are being enlightened by their own sexual feelings. Lawrence did not use his treatment of sexuality merely to attack a vacuous society or immoral hypocrites. Neither did he propose that a sexual revolution would bring about an indulgent emancipation. He portrayed his characters as honourable individuals. They are ordinary men and women who are leading a normal life with genuine love and proper sexuality, which enable them to justify their sexual feelings and emotional attachments in their relationships.

CHAPTER TWO

THE INFLUENCE OF THE UTOPIAN TRADITION

§2.1 Aspects of Utopian Vision

Utopia has been a long cherished dream of human civilisation. A notion of an ideal society with sufficient material provisions and communal spiritual regeneration, has probably existed from the time when human beings formed their earliest communities. Before the word ‘utopia’ was first used by Sir Thomas More in 1516, a similar idea in different terms had already appeared in cultures other than English. Taoism had postulated its ideal community as an unambitious, but integrated and amiable rural life under the supervision of its local deities, as far back as the fifth century B. C. Utopia, as its connotations develop, is a notional social community, which embodies complete social and psychological fulfilment. Because this desired fulfilment is constantly limited by given reality, utopias usually spring up as a reversed reflection of the society that produces it. Despite the element of unfulfilled wishful thinking involved in utopian schemes, it should not be assumed that they made no contribution to the reform of real society. Although no utopias have ever been realised, they have in fact provided ideas to guide the process of social and political change. They reflected to a large extent their creators’ overall view of cosmology, their philosophical and religious beliefs, their political predispositions and their reforming intentions. To their contemporaries and to posterity as well, the ‘unsuccessful’ efforts of utopian idealists were not made in vain. They articulated a world-view that benefited the development of human civilisation.

In the earliest records of Taoist teachings, *Lao Zi*, the great master's dream of an ideal community was a peaceful rural area where his disciples lived in 'a small country with few inhabitants'[1] and felt no need to communicate with the outside world[2]. This peculiar utopia-like community reflected Lao Zi's observation of the chaos caused by war and his complaints about superpowers as the source of violence: if small communities did not communicate well, people would have no chance to mobilise large forces or form alliances to wage a war. The divided small countries, therefore, would be able to live in peace with each other, because none of them had sufficient population to annex its neighbours or become a superpower. *Lie Zi*, a Taoist collection prior to A. D. 300, further specifies the nature of its utopian residents:

> The people are gentle and compliant by nature, do not quarrel or contend, have soft hearts and weak bones, are never proud or envious. Old and young live as equals, and no one is ruler or subject; men and women mingle freely, without go-betweens and betrothal presents. Living close to the waters, they have no need to plough and sow, nor to weave and clothe themselves, since the climate is so warm. They live out their span of a hundred years, without sickness and early deaths; and the people proliferate in countless numbers, knowing pleasure and happiness, ignorant of decay, old age, sorrow and anguish.[3]

Taoist utopia was generally a fugitive community. As the Chinese feudal systems changed and developed from the early sanctioned violence to an institutionalised regime, this dream of escape correspondingly varied its forms and contents, seeking refuge from warfare and disorder or growing

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[1] Arthur Waley, tr., *The Way and Its Power* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1934), p. 241. Hereafter *Way*. Waley's footnote reads: 'i. e. no need for a large country and many inhabitants, which was what the princes of the world pined for.'

[2] Chapter LXXX concludes:

> There might still be boats and carriages, but no one would go in them; there might still be weapons of war but no one would drill with them. ... 'the people should have no use for any form of writing save knotted ropes, should be contented with their food, pleased with their clothing, satisfied with their homes, should take pleasure in their rustic tasks. The next place might be so near at hand that one could hear the cocks crowing in it, the dogs barking; but the people would grow old and die without ever having been there'. (*Way*, pp. 241-242)

[3] A. C. Graham, tr., *The Book of Lieh-tzu* (London: John Murray, 1960), p. 102. Hereafter Graham.

even more desirous of freedom from political inference. Such an archetypal Chinese utopia is represented in 'Peach-blossom Source' recreated by the Chinese poet Tao Yuanming (A. D. 365-427):

> In the hill was a small opening from which a light seemed to come. So he left his boat and went in through the opening. At first it was very narrow, barely allowing a man to pass, but as he went on for some tens of paces, it came out into the open air, upon lands level and wide with houses of a stately appearance. There were fine fields and beautiful pools, clumps of mulberries and bamboos. The field dykes intersected; cocks crowed and dogs barked to each other. The clothes of the men and women who came and went, planted and worked among them were entirely like those of people outside. The white-haired and the children with their hair in tufts happily enjoyed themselves.
>
> ... When the villagers heard of this man, they all came to pay their respects. They told him that their ancestors, fleeing from the troubles during the Ch'in period [221-208 BC], had brought their wives and children and neighbours to this inaccessible spot and had not gone out again. Thus they became cut off from people outside.[4]

In this isolated paradise, people were friendly and hospitable, but had no desire for power or wealth. These Chinese literary utopias, often claimed to have been accidently found by the narrators, suggested two basic qualities for an ideal community: an uncontaminated isolation and the good nature of its people. In this we shall find some similarity to the ideas of D. H. Lawrence.

Modern utopia in the West, as Kumar suggests in his book[5], started from the 1880s with the publications of Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* in 1888 in Boston and William Morris's *News from Nowhere* in

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[4] A. R. Davis, *T'ao Yüan-ming: His Works and Their Meaning*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 195-196. Hereafter Davis. Davis's commentary recognises 'Peach-blossom Source' recreated by Tao Yuanming as a reclusive utopia with Taoist inclination, in spite of the tale's origin:

> It would seem very likely, therefore, that when this tale reached T'ao, either by word of mouth or perhaps even in some written form, it was a tale about immortals, but he used it to give expression to his desire to withdraw from the world not as an immortal but as a recluse. For him the people living in this inaccessible spot 'beyond the dust and noise' were such as he would wish as his fellows. (vol. 1, p. 200)
>
> As I have maintained in my Commentary, he finally gave to the 'Peach-blossom Source' story a personal application. Here as elsewhere there is a suggestion of Taoist ideas of the simplicity and purity of the uncorrupted age of remote antiquity... (vol. 2, p. 143)

[5] Cf. Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987). Kumar's study in modern utopia covers the period between the 1880s and the 1950s. See 'Preface', p. vii.

1890 in London. Influenced by socialism and the rebellious antipathy of Romanticism towards mechanical civilisation, both books reflected their authors' views in rejecting capitalist industrial society. Owing to their own cultural tradition and historical development, the modern utopias of Bellamy and Morris demanded more systematic improvements in social structure and institutional organisation than any other occidental or oriental utopias had done before. Compared with the modern schemes of social reform, the ancient Chinese utopia was only an attempt to simplify the aspect of relations between the ruler and the ruled. Apart from the personality of its inhabitants, Taoist utopia emphasised the balance between human beings and Nature, which consequently led to the balance between man and woman. It has been claimed that both Bellamy and Morris failed to give any serious treatment to the position of women in their utopian society[6]. But the Taoist utopia, though hardly a paradise for women, at least raised the issue of sexual balance and freedom corresponding to Nature's principles.

Instead of following his immediate predecessors in the Western utopian tradition, and postulating mass-movements and overall social reform, Lawrence drew upon some primitive ideas from a variety of cultures. He attempted to find a group of natural aristocrats who would sequester themselves in a carefully chosen place, where Nature would work in both sexual relationships and material provisions. In a study of literary utopias by Northrop Frye (1965), this characteristic of Lawrence's natural paradise was already noted:

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[6] Cf. Ruth Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (Hemel Hempstead: Syracuse University Press, 1990). This comment is made on *Looking Backward* and *News from Nowhere*:

> In both male utopias the sexual division of labour persists, and although both claim to give real respect to women, both as mothers and as household managers, both simultaneously make this the main role of women and fail to discuss it at any length: women are, as usual, largely invisible. (p. 109)

> The attempt to see the sexual relationship as something in itself, and not merely as a kind of social relationship, is something that gives a strongly pastoral quality to the work of D. H. Lawrence. For him the sexual relation is natural in the sense that it has its closest and most immediate affinities with the physical environment, the world of animals and plants and walks in the country and sunshine and rain. The idyllic sense of this world as helping to protect and insulate true love from the noisy city-world of disembodied consciousness runs through all Lawrence's work from the early *White Peacock* to the late *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. People complain, Lawrence says, that he wants them to be 'savages,' but the gentian flowering on its coarse stem is not savage. Lawrence has been a major influence on the social attitude which has grown up in the United States since the Second World War, and which may be described as a development of Freudianism. Like the Marxism of which it is, to some extent, a democratic counterpart, it is a revolutionary attitude, but unlike Marxism it imposes no specific social obligations on the person who holds it. The enemy is still the bourgeois, not the bourgeois as capitalist, but the bourgeois as 'square,' as the representative of repressive morality.[7]

In spite of similarities between Lawrence's utopia and the Taoist ideal community, there is no textual evidence to support the assumption of a direct influence, and the complexity of Lawrence's utopianism suggests a multiple influence from a variety of cultures. As a prophet of sexuality for contemporary society, Lawrence certainly needed to inherit more traditions than one. His imaginative concept of a phallic utopia was deeply rooted in his kaleidoscopic apprehension of various philosophical theories. As a result of his assimilation of these theories, Lawrence erected upon his inherited Christian values, a more magnificent human paradise which, in the end, suggested an exotic, if not entirely oriental, tendency. This was prompted by his contemplation of a new cosmology that undermined the Christian creation story with 'One God, One Way, One Glory' ('Crown', p. 269) and by his exploitation of mythological symbols which expounded his views on the genesis of the cosmos and human prosperity. Despite his inheritance of Western culture, Lawrence as writer had never been a devout believer in Christianity, and he derived his convictions about cosmology from pagan traditions which he merged with his own heady mixture of

[7] Frank E. Manuel, ed., *Utopias and Utopian Thought* (London: Souvenir Press, 1973), pp. 47-48.

idiosyncratic religious and philosophical ideas. Although some Christian terminology is still to be found in 'The Crown', and later in 'The Two Principles'[8], it is generally employed for its symbolic rather than its more precise religious connotations. As a result of his dissatisfaction with the declining tradition of English puritanism, Lawrence actually denied Christianity's claims to vouchsafe a scheme of universal redemption and accused it of a spiritual barrenness which he called 'egoism' (cf. 'Crown', p. 269).

Lawrence attacked Christian egoism for its failure to recognise the need to reconcile the two opposing forces, and for destroying their relatedness by enforcing repression of one by the other. He saw the divine as always biased to one side, making the spirit degrade the body, or the light overwhelm the dark. This partiality of Christian moral assertion was further attacked by Lawrence in his 'The Two Principles', where he asserted that the balance of opposing absolutes was the aim of pagan beliefs:

> The religious systems of the pagan world did what Christianity has never tried to do: they gave the true correspondence between the material cosmos and the human soul. The ancient cosmic theories were exact, and apparently perfect. In them science and religion were in accord. ('Two', p. 227)

§2.2 Taoist Theory of Cosmogony

There is a similarity between Lawrence's understanding of paganism and the doctrines of Taoism, some of which may have been assimilated by Lawrence through his studies in oriental philosophies. Considering the long and outstanding influence of Taoism on various oriental and occidental ideologies, we have some reason to believe that the development of paganism, up to Lawrence's era, could not have been totally impervious to

[8] D. H. Lawrence, 'The Two Principles' (first publication in *English Review* for June 1919), in *Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished, and Other Prose Works* (pp. 227-237), ed. Warren Roberts & Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1968). Hereafter 'Two'.

Taoist influence. Even before Lawrence was born, some translations of *Lao Zi* had become available through the efforts of sinologists. The first complete English translation of *Lao Zi* was published in 1868 by John Chalmers[9], who mentioned in his introduction that he was helped by a French translator, M. Julien, in 1835[10]. Since that time, hundreds of translations and critical works on *Lao Zi* have been published[11]. These facts certainly cannot prove that Lawrence was influenced by Taoism, but it is clear that he did have the opportunity to get access to Taoist ideas. Before we search in Lawrence for evidence of the influence of Taoism, it will be as well to give a brief account of the basic Taoist doctrines.

Taoist theory began with an assertion that the origin of the cosmos was a state of Chaos. This was symbolised by an Egg or a Gourd, which was later broken into two opposing forces: *Yang* and *Yin*. The survival of the world subsequently depended on the balance of these two forces and if the balance was disturbed, disorder would occur. Theoretically, Chaos was not disorder: indeed, Taoism made a great distinction between them. Chaos was the primordial order; but disorder came from a violation of Nature which produced unstable rivals rather than harmony. Disorder occurred when *Yang* and *Yin*, male and female, heaven and earth, fire and water,

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[9] This book is entitled *The Speculations on Metaphysics, Polity, and Morality, of 'The Old Philosopher,' Lao-tsze* (London: Trübner & Co.).

Further translations include:

James Legge, tr., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Taoism*, 2 vols., in *The Sacred Books of the East*, vols. 39 & 40, ed. Friedrich Max Müller (London: Oxford University Press, 1891).

Walter Gorn Old, tr., *The Simple Way of Laotze* (London: Philip Wellby, 1904).

Lionel Giles, tr., *The Sayings of Lao Tzu* (London: John Murray, 1917).

Arthur Waley, tr., *The Way and Its Power* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1934).

Harold Witter Bynner, tr., *The Way of Life According to Laotzu* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1946).

The list only includes those translators whose works or personal contacts may have influenced Lawrence.

[10] Stanislas Julien, tr., *Lao Tseu Tao Te-king*, [in French] (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1842).

[11] According to R. H. van Gulik, in 1942 eighty-seven different translations of *Lao Zi* were seen in a private collection in Calcutta. He commented: 'There is no Chinese book which has been so often translated into Western languages.' Cf. his *Sexual Life in Ancient China* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1961), p. 42. Hereafter Gulik.

divine and human, creativity and vegetation, etc. were in conflict; both sides were troubled by the loss of their harmonic union and co-existence. Chaos was a goal to which the balanced *Yang-Yin* intended to return, which means that the two opposing forces, though living in relation to each other, were destined to return to their origin: the primordial Nature of cosmos[12].

When Taoist scholars describe this disorder as a loss of balance between the two forces, they might be referring to a war between strong and weak, to a frictional intercourse between man and woman, to a rivalry between rigidity and delicacy, to a disease caused by internal unbalance of the *Yang-Yin* in the human body, or to an environmental corruption in which an imperfect material reality affected psychological endurance. So, far from being disorder, Chaos was in fact the beginning as well as the end of the Taoist cosmology. It could be, at the same time, Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained, the only difference being that the former originated in primitive Nature and the latter was obtained by human compliance in response to the need to account for origins.

But Taoism did not envisage 'paradise regained' as a simple return to Nature. Chaos, as primitive and coherent Nature, only represented the cosmological period of non-human existence. After *Yang* and *Yin* were separated, human beings were created. Thereafter males and females had to find their 'Way' ('Tao' in Chinese literally means 'way' or 'path') to a Trinitarian harmony with Nature. This idea is expressed thus by Lao Zi in his *The Book of Morality*:

> Tao gave birth to the One; the One gave birth successively to two things, three things, up to ten thousand. (*Way*, p. 195)

Here, the One is the Chaos, the two things are *Yang* and *Yin*; their merging with Nature produces the three things, which represent Heaven, Earth and

[12] Cf. N. J. Girardot, *Myth and Meaning in Early Taoism: The Theme of Chaos (hun-tun)* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 38-43.

Man. As Taoism further reveals, two is the number that implies the opposition of discord; while three is the number of reconciliation and concord. It should be especially noted that the truth of Taoism is in the Three, not in the One. Thus Taoist theory proclaims that the ultimate destiny of human beings is a harmony between Nature and humanity.

This leads to another important theory of Taoism, that the correct interaction of Nature and humanity produces a prosperous era of peace and tranquillity. In this Taoist utopia, there is no distinction between Nature and society: both are combined into one and merged together into one reality. The theory also asserts that human society is merely a subordinate part of Nature and that the prosperity or decline of national welfare depends on whether human action complies with or violates this reality.

Besides this theory of the cosmos as a paradise lost to be regained by human compliance with Nature, Taoists also concentrated on the cultivation of the environment as well as personality, another balance-seeking attempt between Nature and human beings. In this, Taoism differed from Confucianism and Buddhism, both of which had been at one time or the other as influential as Taoism in China. Confucius advocated peaceful co-existence in benevolent relationships through the restoration of the old morality of past golden ages. The Confucian conception of Heaven was a mysterious nature which did not interfere directly with human society; while Buddhism, though also seeking for a retreat into a natural environment, was principally concerned with the next cycle of reincarnation. Neither creed paid as much attention as Taoism to the rebuilding of this life through sexual renewal and through Nature's intuition obtained in purified environments.

Taoist theory directed its reforming impulse to means of observing the material laws of the world and attempted to benefit from them by discovering the way of a balance. An early Chinese classic, *The Book of Changes*[13], incorporated the *Yang-Yin* opposition in a balanced array of eight diagrams: each of them was a varied combination of three lines, whole (*yang*) or broken (*yin*), representing the *Yang-Yin* balance in a circular map. Each of these diagrams had a name standing for a geological substance or a natural phenomenon: Heaven, Earth, Sun (or Fire), Moon (or Water), Mountain, River, Thunder and Wind. The practice of coordinating these eight diagrams was often an important part of Chinese geomantic surveys, architecture and construction engineering, the purpose being to assure a beneficial *Yang-Yin* balance leading to growth and prosperity. Because the geomantic survey was usually given a mystic or even superstitious sanction in identifying an auspicious location for a house or a tomb, the Taoist geomancer was able to convince his customers that the balance and the circulation of these eight diagrams could control both the natural world and human fortune.

The cultivation of the environment and the sublimation of sexuality made Taoism the only religion that encouraged its advocates to enjoy sexual pleasure. Although Taoism also concentrated on the collective achievement, and so interacted with other traditional Chinese classical theories in which personal qualities were often secondary to an authority, its emphasis on the environment made it a philosophy widely accepted among the prominent

[13] This book, also called *Yi Jing (I Ching)*, contains some basic theoretical elements for the early Taoist cosmology. The first part of it might have been composed before *Lao Zi*, but the surviving texts were afterwards revised and expanded by some Confucian scholars. It is therefore also regarded as a Confucian classic.

James Legge translated the work, entitled *The Yi King* and published it in 1882 in the series of *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 16, ed. Friedrich Max Müller (Oxford: Clarendon Press). According to C. G. Jung, this was the only English translation available for the first half of this century. Cf. Cary F. Baynes, *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, vol. 1, p. i (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1951). Hereafter *Changes*).

Chinese intellectuals. The history of Chinese literature shows that those who were tired of Confucian puritanism and imperial service, often found their retreat in the world of nature. Their attitudes to a large extent were susceptible to the Taoist ideas, and their personality spontaneously responded to the changes of natural environment.

§2.3 Taoist Doctrine of Sexuality

Taoism was the only Chinese religion that made a special contribution to sexuality. *The Book of Changes* had affirmed that sexual intercourse between man and woman formed a union similar to the divine union between Heaven and Earth. Both pairs of union were aspects of the interaction of *Yang* and *Yin*, which, according to the commentary literature[14] traditionally affiliated to it, was called 'Tao'[15], and their mutual operation and development would produce 'Changes'. While the union of *Yang* and *Yin* constituted the universe, their constant changes renewed fundamental elements of the universal life. So the union of the male and the female had indispensable importance to the continuation of human existence.

Enlightened by these earlier philosophies, the Chinese Taoists and the later pro-Taoist believers developed a detailed theory of sexual intercourse through various works and practice. By the Western Han Dynasty (206 B. C.- A. D. 24), a number of handbooks of sexuality had been written. Though these books are now mostly lost, their titles are still known as 'The Art of the Bedchamber' series in the bibliographical section of the Early Han historical documents (cf. Gulik, p. 70). From that time

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[14] 'Yi Zhuan', which contains commentary notes later added to annotate the original divinatory symbols, is generally known as the second part of *Yi Jing* (*I Ching*).

[15] The commentary concerned reads:

> That which lets now the dark [*yin*], now the light [*yang*] appear, is tao. (*Changes*, vol. 1, p. 319)

onward, handbooks of sexuality were produced in different periods under various titles, covering many aspects of sexual life in ancient China and some of these books survive today. Rather than discussing these individual works in detail, I give a synopsis of their contents[16].

Such handbooks usually contain detailed instructions to the master of the house on how to conduct sexual intercourse with his lady. As ancient Chinese society gave a woman little chance to become socially involved, the happiness of marriage and sexual life were crucially important for her at home. The handbooks, therefore, explained to the man, in explicit language, how to kiss and caress his consort in order to prepare and arouse her for a consummated orgasm. Besides the necessary contacts of lips, tongue and other parts of bodies, they also described and even illustrated various intercourse positions. The purpose of all this was to teach the man how to amuse his woman, and make her happy and enjoy sexual life. Some of the manuals even discussed ways of punishing a wife or a concubine without hurting her physically, and instructed the man not to scar or maim her. Because at that time a woman was still regarded as her husband's chattel, these manuals, now seemingly so absurd, really did consider woman's welfare as a human being. Joseph Needham has noticed this aspect of

[16] References available in English include:

Wolfgang Bauer, *China and the Search for Happiness*, tr. Michael Shaw (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976).

Michel Beurdeley, ed., *The Clouds and the Rain: The Art of Love in China*. Translated from French by Diana Imber. (London: Hammond, 1969).

John Byron, *Portrait of a Chinese Paradise* (London: Quartet Books, 1987).

Eric Chou (Sung Chiao), *The Dragon and the Phoenix: Love, Sex and the Chinese* (London: Joseph, 1971).

René Étiemble, *Yun Yu: An Essay on Eroticism and Love in Ancient China*, tr. James Hogarth (Geneva: Nagel Publishers, 1970).

Lawrence E. Gichner, *Erotic Aspects of Chinese Culture* (U. S. A.: Privately Published, 1957).

R. H. van Gulik, *Erotic Colour Prints of the Ming Period with an Essay on Chinese Sex Life*, 3 vols. (Tokyo: Privately Published, 1951).

-----, *Sexual Life in Ancient China* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1961).

Charles Humana (Charles Jacobs) & Wu Wang, *The Yin-Yang, the Chinese Way of Love* (London & New York: Wingate, 1971).

H. S. Levy & A. Ishihara, *The Tao of Sex* (Yokohama, 1968).

Taoism and its consequent difference from Confucianism and Buddhism. He comments:

> The recognition of the importance of woman in the scheme of things, the acceptance of equality of women with men, the conviction that the attainment of health and longevity needed the cooperation of the sexes, the considered admiration for certain feminine psychological characteristics, the incorporation of the physical phenomena of sex in numinous group catharsis, free alike from asceticism and class distinction, reveal to us once more aspects of Taoism which had no counterpart in Confucianism or ordinary Buddhism.[17]

It should also be noted that most of these handbooks of sexuality were written in sober language for serious instruction in sexual fulfilment. The classical and scholarly presentation of their descriptions of sexual acts, even at that time, made them incomprehensible to ordinary readers. The development from these to later works of Chinese sexuality can be found by comparing them with some Ming Dynasty fiction which is written in the vernacular, and intended to be read by a wider audience. The main characters of the Ming erotic fiction are often libertines of various social classes: villains and coxcombs of well-off families, or even country squires and members of the urban gentry - more realistic and familiar characters to the ordinary reader than the century-old Taoist sages and the Yellow Emperor's supernatural sex instructress. These characters are portrayed as common people who treat sex sometimes as a physical pleasure with candid humour, sometimes as part of a greedy desire for power and wealth. As a result of their insufficient or excessive sex, which is more fully presented than any pleasurable or health-giving sex, their lives are finally ruined or even preordained to turn to a Buddhist asceticism as a punishment. There are only few examples of mutual enjoyment, successful relationships and long-lasting happiness. The aim of Ming fiction was probably to teach positive sex so that its readers might achieve the effects prescribed by the

[17] Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, in *History of Scientific Thought*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 151.

sexual handbooks, but its characterisation usually had the opposite effect and did not help its disguised moral instruction. On the contrary, the reader still feels sex as dangerous, harmful, or even destructive. If we apply Lawrence's terminology to the differences between Taoist and Ming writings, the handbooks talk about sex in a technical manner, while the pornographic stories insult sex by throwing dirt on it[18]. It is therefore very doubtful whether Lawrence would have approved of these manuals had he seen them. He regarded sex as a natural instinct, so he might well have found the instructions in these books, if not necessarily wrong, cold and technical. Some of the manuals did advocate a mental concentration of the natural instinct, which could produce a spontaneous warmth and mutual sublimation between lovemakers, but Lawrence would have preferred the instinctive flexibility of sexual nature to instruction in a fixed form. In fact the manuals represented a later development in Taoist sexuality, and one not entirely derived from earlier Taoism. While Lawrence's views on the proper definition of pornography and obscenity seem amenable to this bold oriental exploration of sexual life; in the last analysis, he would have had more in common with the old master of Taoism, Lao Zi. Both Lao Zi and Lawrence would have disagreed with these sexual manuals, not because the books had described sexual acts as a natural instinct, but because they attempted to define the natural instinct merely as a compact and codifiable sexuality.

Taoism observed that sexual intercourse fulfilled two major purposes: firstly to beget a child to keep the family line, and secondly to benefit the man's health. In male-dominated ancient Chinese society, this

[18] Cf. D. H. Lawrence, 'Pornography and Obscenity', in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence* (pp. 170-187), ed. Edward D. McDonald (London: Heinemann, 1936), p. 175. Hereafter 'Pornography'.

second purpose told more and more against women in the later handbooks of sexuality. A notable innovation in some of these later versions was the advice to guard against female vampirism in sexual intercourse, because Taoism believed that the semen was a precious essence for man. So a method of maintaining this male essence was invented by the Taoist alchemists, who with the aids of medicine or without, helped the man to persist in his erection and retain his semen. The Taoists believed that in this way the man could extract the nourishment from the woman's *Yin* essence and make the semen return to his vital power. The Taoist sexual yoga, which also means 'union', was another way to achieve the mental concentration through physical exercises.

Taoist convictions about sexual life were derived from its confidence in rejuvenation, and the belief that the completion of the sexual act could regulate blood circulation and relax the nervous system. Some of these sex manuals mentioned Taoist sages who were said to have lived for hundreds of years before they died. The secret of their longevity was remarked as making love to many women throughout their life and on each occasion, extracting the *Yin* essence to strengthen their health instead of losing their *Yang* essence. So Taoist warnings against the danger of sexual lust were never an ascetic teaching, but intended to instruct its adherents to conduct sexual intercourse in a beneficial way.

As the ultimate aim of Taoists was to attain immortality, they regarded harmonious sexual relations with women as the way to approach Nature. Taoist adepts were either seclusive or promiscuous. They felt monogamy and institutionalised social life unnatural and artificial, and therefore seclusion could bring them close to a serene and tranquil environment; while promiscuity gave them chances to regain the primordial force of Nature. As the Taoist utopia denied no sexual pleasures, they were

also aware of the rivalry between man and woman. They considered women superior only in the sense that the *Yin* essence in the womb created and fostered new life, so that the female body was to be venerated as containing natural elements which were indispensable for the man to revive his phallic utopia.

The philosophy of early Taoism established the principle of *Yang-Yin* balance between Nature and human existence, and from the Han Dynasty religious Taoism developed into various groups, each concentrating on a certain aspect of Taoist teachings[19]. One of these groups was the geomantic sect, mentioned by Frazer in his magic and religious studies[20], which laid great emphasis on the environmental influence on

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[19] Cf. N. Sivin, 'On the Word "Taoist" as a Source of Perplexity. With Special Reference to the Relations of Science and Religion in Traditional China', *History of Religions* 17 (1978), pp. 304-305. Sivin quotes Holmes Welch:

> In a popular formulation, 'the Chinese themselves sum up Taoism by dividing it into *Tao chia* and *Tao chiao* - the "Taoist school" and "Taoist sect." The first category they restrict to partisans of the philosophy of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu. In the second they include all those groups that have taken immortality as their goal - alchemists, hygienists, magicians, eclectics, and, in particular, the members of the Taoist church.' (*Taoism: The Parting of the Way*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1966, p. 163. Hereafter Welch.)

In an earlier chapter, Welch groups geomancy with alchemy and hygiene, which practised experimental science and attempted to reveal the law of nature to despise the sovereignty of gods. (cf. pp. 133-134)

[20] James G. Frazer, *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, vol. 1, in *The Golden Bough*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1911), pp 169-170.

> Another application of the maxim that like produces like is seen in the Chinese belief that the fortunes of a town are deeply affected by its shape, and that they must vary according to the character of the thing which that shape most nearly resembles. Thus it is related that long ago the town of Tsuen-cheu-fu, the outlines of which are like those of carp, frequently fell a prey to the depredations of the neighbouring city of Yung-chun, which is shaped like a fishing-net, until the inhabitants of the former town conceived the plan of erecting two tall pagodas in their midst. These pagodas, which still tower above the city of Tsuen-cheu-fu, have ever since exercised the happiest influence over its destiny by intercepting the imaginary net before it could descend and entangle in its meshes the imaginary carp. Some thirty years ago the wise men of Shanghai were much exercised to discover the cause of a local rebellion. On careful enquiry they ascertained that the rebellion was due to the shape of a large new temple which had most unfortunately been built in the shape of a tortoise, an animal of the very worst character. The difficulty was serious, the danger was pressing; for to pull down the temple would have been impious, and to let it stand as it was would be to court a succession of similar or worse disasters. However, the genius of the local professors of geomancy, rising to the occasion, triumphantly surmounted the difficulty and obviated the danger. By filling up two wells, which represented the eyes of the tortoise, they at

human life. In its own terms, the geomantic omen could not only influence the living environment of a place, but also foretell the fortune of its dwellers and the destiny of their descendants. The adjustment of human life to environment would be efficacious if it complied with the law of nature, keeping the eight diagrams in a balanced order to create an atmospheric harmony. Only in this atmosphere, could human beings live in resonant rhythm with Nature. The utopian society, of which few details were given by the early Taoists, was primarily grounded in an intuitive sense of harmony. But as a religion, Taoism revered Nature and blurred the distinction between human life and spiritual incarnation.

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once blinded that disreputable animal and rendered him incapable of doing further mischief.

§2.4 Resources of Oriental Influence

The Western world is now much more advanced than Chinese society both in the theory and the practice of sexuality. In accounting for the sexual liberation of the West, it is necessary to take into account the combination of modern science, which owed much to psychoanalysts and sexologists, with the concept of oriental sexuality, which was inherited and adopted by Western intellectuals. Lawrence in particular showed the influence of these elements. His disagreements with Freud did not necessarily diminish the liberating effect on him of psychoanalytic discoveries, which helped him to break down outdated moral barriers and contributed to his wide-ranging liberty. But Lawrence was not satisfied with the method of Freudianism. While taking courage from its amoral scientific audacity, he plunged into oriental religious beliefs in search of his own methodology. His access to Eastern mythologies, such as the Osiris-Isis story, gave him a fascination with and an unconscious acceptance of oriental sexuality. Hence the value of comparing his assertions about sexuality with some of the Western perceptions of Orientalism which influenced him.

It is not easy to trace a direct influence of Taoism on D. H. Lawrence, as we have no clear evidence to show he had ever read any translations of Taoist classics available at that time. We know that he read *The Crown of Hinduism*[21] in May 1915[22], and his dislike of Hinduism (cf. *Letters 2*, p. 351) must have provoked him to produce his own power-seeking mythology in 'The Crown' that September, applying the naturalised British symbols of lion and unicorn to represent two forces struggling for

[21] John N. Farquhar, *The Crown of Hinduism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913).
[22] Keith Sagar, ed., *A D. H. Lawrence Handbook* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), p. 83. Hereafter Sagar.

power. As a result, the theory of balance expounded in that essay had some similarity to the Taoist *Yang-Yin* dualism, but there is no evidence to show a direct line of influence. If any trace of Taoist influence on his philosophy is perceived here, it might have come through a secondary source. Instead of ignoring the obvious similarity between Lawrence and Taoism, we should at least recognise that Taoism had been very influential in the Western perception of these oriental religions which fascinated Lawrence. His initial interest in the power of oriental religious rites had little to do with Taoism, but it was generated by his reading of James Frazer's comprehensive anthropological studies, *The Golden Bough*. On 8 December 1915, he wrote to Bertrand Russell reporting his important discovery of blood consciousness from his reading of ancient, and mainly oriental, civilisations:

> I have been reading Frazer's *Golden Bough* and *Totemism and Exogamy*. Now I am convinced of what I believed when I was about twenty - that there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and the nerve system: there is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness, which depends on the eye as its source or connector. There is the blood-consciousness, with the sexual connection, holding the same relation as the eye, in seeing, holds to the mental consciousness. (*Letters 2*, p. 470)

In the two voluminous works by Frazer, references to China and Taoism are scattered, mixed up with the customs of various nationalities. So it should not be assumed that it was Taoism which attracted Lawrence in particular. But one thing we can take for granted: that it was a number of oriental mythologies which convinced Lawrence of the existence of blood-consciousness. This conviction was to become the crucial element in his view of sexuality and the principal tie between his phallic utopians. Having confirmed this blood-consciousness in Frazer's anthropological discoveries, Lawrence was bound to understand it as a 'cosmic consciousness' which was however impaired by industrialism. He, therefore, attempted to bring his declining rationalised culture into relationship with the living force of

universal love, in the hope of initiating its revival. Later in his essay 'Nobody Loves Me', China is mentioned as part of such a potential stimulation:

> In some way or other, the cotton-workers of Carolina, or the rice growers of China, are connected with me and, to a faint yet real degree, part of me. The vibration of life which they give off reaches me, touches me, and affects me all unknown to me. For we are more or less connected, all more or less in touch: all humanity. That is, until we have killed the sensitive responses in ourselves, which happens today only too often.[23]

In fact, the fascination with myth inspired by Frazer coloured Lawrence's understanding of oriental humanity for the rest of his life. In his later writings, China always stands for an energy of life which not only engenders Nature's development, but also maintains a harmonious unity between man and Nature. In this he entrusts the wholeness of human beings only to Nature's balance and unity, an assertion similar to that maintained by Taoism. The following quotations from 'Aristocracy'[24] and 'Him With His Tail in His Mouth'[25] indicate Lawrence's knowledge of oriental pantheist regeneration and his appreciation of its balanced eternity:

> When man becomes stale and paltry, his sun is the mere stuff that our sun is. When man is great and splendid, the sun of China and Mithras blazes over him and gives him, not radiant energy in the form of heat and light, but life, life, life! ('Aristocracy', p. 370)

> How marvellous is the living relation between man and his object! be it man or woman, bird, beast, flower or rock or rain: the exquisite frail moment of pure conjunction, which, in the fourth dimension, is timeless. An Egyptian hawk, a Chinese painting of a camel, an Assyrian sculpture of a lion, an African fetish-idol of a woman pregnant, an Aztec rattle-snake, an early Greek Apollo, a cave-man's painting of a prehistoric mammoth, on and on, how perfect the timeless moments between man and the other Pan-creatures of this earth of ours! ('Him', p. 316)

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[23] D. H. Lawrence, 'Nobody Loves Me', in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Edward D. McDonald (London: Heinemann, 1936), p. 205

[24] D. H. Lawrence, 'Aristocracy', in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, ed. Michael Herbert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 365-376. Hereafter 'Aristocracy'.

[25] D. H. Lawrence, 'Him With His Tail in His Mouth', in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, ed. Michael Herbert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 307-317. Hereafter 'Him'.

In the above quotations, the references to China are juxtaposed with those to other national cultures. This indicates that it was Frazer's multi-cultural investigations that prompted Lawrence's recognition of the value of these oriental cultures, and which provided him with a weapon in his assault on the puritanic tradition of Christianity. In a letter to Gordon Campbell in September 1914, Lawrence mentions his visit to the British Museum, where he was impressed a great deal by the Egyptian and Assyrian sculpture (cf. *Letters 2*, p. 218). His later works also reveal that the influence of Egyptian mythology was stronger than that of the Chinese. While this warns us against overestimating the Chinese influence on his thought, it should not blind us to any palpable Chinese element which he later developed in his overall views of sexuality and utopianism.

Through Frazer's works, Lawrence definitely learnt some Chinese religious and philosophical ideas which could have supported his theory of a fundamental archetype grounded in the unconscious, and which led him gradually to an oriental utopianism. These notions would have been reinforced when in 1918 he came across some Chinese poetry full of Taoist utopian ideas. For, by the time he was writing *Movements in European History*, from 1918 to 1919, Lawrence had obviously read the Chinese poem he mentions in Chapter VI:

> The darting, horse-riding Hunnish men were dreaded on both sides of the world. Long before they troubled Europe, they had brought ruin on the beautiful, civilised empire of China. Twice they conquered the great, cultivated lands of China, and had to be paid off with enormous tribute. They even demanded every year a band of the fairest maidens of China: for the Tartar women were hideous and savage. Thus we have still a poem written by an unhappy Chinese princess who was given to a Tartar chief as tribute. She weeps and complains that she, who had been brought up so delicate, silken and flowery in the fair palace of her father in China, should be condemned to be carried off into far exile by a savage Tartar, mingled with his gruesome wives, her only food raw meat, her only drink sour milk, her only palace a tent of woven horse-hair, and her only music the shrill noise of Tartar speech. If she could but be a bird, she cries, and fly back to her dear home in China. - But no doubt the poor princess

> perished among the savages, carried hither and thither with the herds in Central Asia.[26]

In Rose Marie Burwell's 'A Checklist of Lawrence's Reading', this poem is listed in the unidentified reading for 1919 because its source was unknown (cf. Sagar, p. 91). In the Cambridge edition of the book, the editor has noted that Lawrence's source is Edward Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. The following is what Gibbon says:

> The situation of these unhappy victims is described in the verses of a Chinese princess, who laments that she had been condemned by her parents to a distant exile, under a Barbarian husband; who complains that sour milk was her only drink, raw flesh her only food, a tent her only palace; and who expresses, in a strain of pathetic simplicity, the natural wish that she were transformed into a bird, to fly back to her dear country; the object of her tender and perpetual regret.[27]

But when this passage is compared with Lawrence's account of the poem, one notices that it does not contain as much information as Lawrence has given. While Gibbon alleges the story comes from 'the verses of a Chinese princess', Lawrence states 'we still have a poem written by an unhappy Chinese princess', giving the impression that he was referring to a particular poem he actually read. Lawrence also speaks of 'mingled with his gruesome wives ... a tent of woven horse-hair, and her only music the shrill noise of Tartar speech.' These additional messages make me suspect that Gibbon was not the only source Lawrence referred to. He may have come across the poem and decided he should mention it as a first-hand reference. I am further convinced that Lawrence must have encountered the poem in Arthur Waley's translation. Here follows the whole poem[28]:

LAMENT OF HSI-CHÜN

> About the year 110 B.C. a Chinese Princess named Hsi-chün was sent, for political reasons, to be the wife of a central Asian nomad king, K'un Mo, king of the Wu-sun. When she got there, she found her

[26] D. H. Lawrence, *Movements in European History*, ed. Philip Crumpton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 65-66. Hereafter *Movements*.

[27] Edward Gibbon, *The Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 3 (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1910), p. 18.

[28] Arthur Waley, tr., *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1918), p. 53. Hereafter Waley.

> husband old and decrepit. He only saw her once or twice a year, when they drank a cup of wine together. They could not converse, as they had no language in common.
>
> My people have married me
> In a far corner of Earth:
> Sent me away to a strange land,
> To the king of the Wu-sun.
> A tent is my house,
> Of felt are my walls;
> Raw flesh my food
> With mare's milk to drink.
> Always thinking of my own country,
> My heart sad within.
> Would I were a yellow stork
> And could fly to my old home!

In Waley's introduction, the sentence 'He only saw her once or twice a year' seems to have prompted Lawrence's 'mingled with his gruesome wives'; 'they had no language in common' could have suggested 'her only music the shrill noise of Tartar speech'. In the poem, the line 'Of felt are my walls' is what Lawrence called 'a tent of woven horse-hair'. According to Arthur Waley, this poem had not been previously translated into English. Moreover, *A Bibliography of Arthur Waley*[29] reveals that this translation never appeared in any periodical, either before or after this publication. Waley later collected the poem in the other three of his translation works, but the earliest reappearance was in 1934[30]. So it seems likely that Lawrence read the poem in *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* published in July 1918, and, more importantly, that he would have had the opportunity to read all the 170 poems, some of which expressed the Taoist search for withdrawal and most of which were about the enjoyment of nature. Arthur Waley comments in his introduction on the characteristics of these poems:

> The Chinese poet introduces himself as a timid recluse, 'Reading the Book of Changes at the Northern Window,' playing chess with a Taoist

[29] Francis A. Johns, ed., *A Bibliography of Arthur Waley* (London: The Athlone Press, 1988).

[30] The poem reappears in the following three works:
Herbert A. Giles & Arthur Waley, tr., *Select Chinese Verses* (Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1934).
Arthur Waley, tr., *Translations from the Chinese* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941).
Arthur Waley, tr., *Chinese Poems* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1946).

> priest, or practising calligraphy with an occasional visitor. If 'With a Portrait of the Author' had been the rule in the Chinese book-market, it is in such occupations as these that he would be shown; a neat and tranquil figure compared with our lurid frontispieces. (Waley, p. 5)

In the section on the Taoists, Waley makes a further criticism:

> Confucius inculcated the duty of public service. Those to whom this duty was repulsive found support in Taoism, a system which denied this obligation. The third and fourth centuries A.D. witnessed a great reaction against state service. It occurred to the intellectuals of China that they would be happier growing vegetables in their gardens than place-hunting at Nanking. They embraced the theory that 'by bringing himself into harmony with Nature' man can escape every evil. Thus Tao (Nature's Way) corresponds to the Nirvana of Buddhism, and the God of Christian mysticism. (Waley, p. 14)

In this anthology, Waley also collected twelve poems by T'ao Ch'ien (Tao Yuanming), whose name has long been associated with 'Peach-blossom Source', a Chinese equivalent of Utopia (cf. §2.1). The poems Waley prints are among the best poems he had written in praise of Taoist seclusion. Although he was not an original Taoist thinker, his great poetry presented the most beautiful utopia the Chinese have ever imagined. The following is typical of his theme and style (Waley, p. 76):

> I built my hut in a zone of human habitation,
> Yet near me there sounds no noise of horse or coach[31].
> Would you know how that is possible?
> A heart that is distant creates a wilderness round it.
> I pluck chrysanthemums under the eastern hedge,
> Then gaze long at the distant summer hills.
> The mountain air is fresh at the dusk of day:
> The flying birds two by two return.
> In these things there lies a deep meaning;
> Yet when we would express it, words suddenly fail us.

If, as seems possible, Lawrence read poems of this kind, he would have responded to the powerful appreciation of nature, which later formed one of the essential themes in his own utopian ideal. This influence may have helped constitute Lawrence's overall utopian ideas, which also involved blood-consciousness, physical touch and tenderness, sexual relationships

[31] It suggests that he was not visited by any monarchic officials or aristocrats who usually came in carriages with servants shouting all the way. In the ancient feudal China, the business of governments and courts seemed to have made T'ao Ch'ien (Tao Yuanming) feel as annoyed as D. H. Lawrence felt about twentieth century industrialism.

beyond material enslavement, spiritual renewal as well as the love of nature. Because in both Lawrence's and Taoist doctrines, Nature's superior power generated all the other elements of life, it is possible that Lawrence's acquaintance with poetry of Taoist seclusion, as well as Frazer's studies of oriental religions and mythologies, helped him to recognise that Nature was the basic element, and to develop the idea of the natural environment's impetus in his utopianism. Frazer's influence on Lawrence is prolific, and more obviously apparent in the myth of Osiris. Although Osiris is classified 'as personification of the great yearly vicissitudes of nature, especially of the corn.'[32], the image is mainly worshipped as a symbol of resurrection, a theme which Lawrence adapted in his last story, *The Escaped Cock*, following the revelation from the Etruscan tombs he visited in April 1927[33]. In the late 1910s, however, when Lawrence had completed *Women in Love*, his utopian idea had not yet developed its theme of resurrection. Birkin's plan for an island paradise (cf. Chapter XI) resembled the Taoist poet's dream of tranquil seclusion.

It is impossible to list all the religions that had some influence on Lawrence. Among them, Christianity and Buddhism were two important ones that Lawrence was most familiar with, but, in his letters and essays as well as in his fiction, he disparages them. As early as on 2 June 1915, he wrote to E. M. Forster and expressed his distaste:

> I can't tell you how I detest things Hindu and things Buddhistic - it is all such ineffable self-conceit as to be overwhelming. (*Letters 2*, p. 351)

His knowledge of Buddhism owed much to his acquaintance with Earl Brewster, who was a specialist in oriental philosophy. Soon after they first

[32] James G. Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion*, vol. 2, in *The Golden Bough*, vol. 6 (London: Macmillan, 1914), p. 3.

[33] Cf. Keith Sagar, 'The Secret of the Etruscans': The Genesis of *The Escaped Cock*', in *D. H. Lawrence: Life into Art* (Harmondsworth: Viking, 1985), p. 304.

met, Lawrence wrote to him, on 8 October 1921, with regret: 'In the old world, even of Buddha, I have no deep hope.'[34] Even when he was preparing to visit the Brewsters in Ceylon, he had no intention of exploring Buddhism. While trying to enjoy a temporary escape from the boring life of his own world, he vaguely hoped to find something else further to the East. On 24 January 1922, he explained to Catherine Carswell his intention:

> suddenly it came over me I must go to Ceylon. I think one must for the moment withdraw from the world, away towards the inner realities that *are* real: and return, maybe, to the world later, when one is quiet and sure. I am tired of the world, and want the peace like a river: not this whiskey and soda, bad whiskey too, of life so-called. I don't believe in Buddhistic inaction and meditation. But I believe the Buddhistic peace is the point to start from.' (*Letters 4*, p. 175)

After coming face to face with Buddhism in Ceylon, his disappointment increased. He wrote from Kandy to Bessie Fisher on 21 April 1922:

> We had good times here - but I like Buddha *much less* than ever on closer acquaintance. The east is not for me - that I am sure of. What *is* for me, I dont know. (*Letters 4*, p. 231)

At that time, Seltzer wanted him to write a book about India, but he declined the offer as he found that Buddhism failed to meet his needs for a utopia and did not feel like writing a novel to explore it further (cf. *Letters 4*, p. 244). Although Buddhism discouraged his further oriental exploration, Lawrence did not return to any hope in Christianity. In their interpretation of the worldly life, Christianity and Buddhism are similar in accepting suffering as the basic form of human existence. While Christianity regards suffering as punishment for sin, the fundamental ideas of Buddhism emphasise it even more[35]. To cleanse themselves from sins and escape

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[34] Warren Roberts, James T. Boulton and Elizabeth Mansfield, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol. 4 [June 1921 - March 1924] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 95. Hereafter *Letters 4*.

[35] Henri Maspero, *Taoism and Chinese Religion*, tr. Frank A. Kierman, Jr. (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), p. 251.

> You know what the fundamental ideas of Buddhism are. They rest upon the Four Noble Truths, the realization of which marked the peak of the Buddha's Illumination, and which are (to use the terms of the Sacred Books) 'suffering, the origin of suffering, the extinction of suffering, and the way to the extinction of suffering'. Existence,

from this suffering existence permanently, human beings have to repent or even sacrifice the body to save the soul; then redemption and resurrection will be possible, and promotion to a paradisial kingdom of heaven. Both puritanical and Buddhist doctrines emphasise the importance of the afterlife and admonish their adherents to restrain themselves, and to limit the enjoyment of their present life. Buddhism further defies any form of human existence and even denies rebirth into a new life of any significance[36]. Another similarity between Christianity and Buddhism is the belief that the world is created and controlled by a divine god, whose teachings and guidance have to be obeyed and always remain unchallenged. Lawrence attacked this as worship of a sacred image, and his disgust for such thinking grew ever more bitter towards the end of his life. In *A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'*[37], he wrote:

> Buddha, Plato, Jesus, they were all three utter pessimists as regards life, teaching that the only happiness lay in abstracting oneself from life, the daily, yearly, seasonal life of birth and death and fruition, and in living in the 'immutable' or eternal spirit. But now, after almost three thousand years, now that we are almost abstracted entirely from the rhythmic life of the seasons, birth and death and fruition, now we realise that such abstraction is neither bliss nor liberation, but nullity. It brings null inertia. And the great saviours and teachers only cut us off from life. It was the tragic *excursus*. (*Propos*, pp. 330-331)

Lawrence's rebellion against these divinities and thinkers is seen in his espousal of the concept of natural aristocracy. Like the Taoists who

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beginning with birth, continuing through illness and old age, ending with death, to begin again in a new life which will be like the preceding one, is suffering and sorrow.

[36] Cf. *Ibid*, p. 252.

To obtain this annihilation there is but a single way, the Noble Way preached by the Buddha, which leads to salvation: one must have correct beliefs, among which the main ones are the recognition that all is sorrow and that the Me is nonexistent; one must have correct behavior, conforming to the five moral prohibitions, the chief of which are to avoid killing living things and to suppress desire; one must have correct meditations, and so on.

In this way one 'enters the current' which in four stages will lead to liberation from the necessity of rebirth after death, will bring about release from the wheel of transmigration, and will lead on to the unconditioned existence which is designed by the name Nirvana.

[37] D. H. Lawrence, *A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'*, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (pp. 303-336), ed. Michael Squires (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Hereafter *Propos*.

believed that the cultivation of personality could make 'everyone' a sage, Lawrence also thought that the regeneration of contemporary society depended upon exceptional human beings rather than any god[38], and he emphasised that human beings would be blessed in a harmonious relationship with the natural environment. Besides postulating this communication between aristocratic sages and Nature, both Lawrence and the Taoist utopians insisted on the importance of sexuality in achieving a more intense state of being. The basic theory they applied in this matter was the balance of the two opposing elements in the universe. Taoist *Yang-Yin* theory and Lawrentian Male-Female reconciliation proclaimed the integrity and necessity of sexuality. Taoist sexual yoga affirmed that bodily exercises including sexual acts, if performed properly, could promote mental health. This feature of yogism is seen in Lawrence's novels by Weiss, who points out that 'Lawrence consolidated this recoil from the orgasm into a synthetic philosophy derived mainly from yogic quietism.'[39] Indian critics also recognised some yogist characteristics in Lawrence's thinking and Chaman Nahal cites a letter of Sri Aurobindo:

> 'Lawrence was a Yogi who had missed his way and come into a European body to work out his difficulties.' (Yogi in India means a man

[38] In ancient civilisation, 'everyone' was variably used to refer to members of certain social classes only. Although it here by no means suggests the modern concept of equal opportunity for each individual, it can be taken in as a selected group of men, either called accomplished sages by Taoists or natural aristocrats by Lawrence. Their paradise is not to be regained by the resurrection of the supernatural God, but by cultivation of human beings. The difference between Christianity and Taoism can be seen in James Legge's comparison:

> The second thing which I wish to point out here, in connexion with the disclosures of the future by Christianity, is, that they all rest on the event of our Lord's resurrection, which the New Testament writers assert in the most direct and positive terms. The supernatural element in our religion here comes out prominently; and if the record in our books concerning it be admitted as true, a most important distinction between Christianity on the one hand and Confucianism and Taoism on the other is established. THEY are of men and by man, - not without God indeed, but with Him only as all things are included in the circle of His knowledge and ordination; IT is of God, and by God, specially revealed to make known the path of duty and the way of life. (*The Religions of China: Confucianism and Taoism Described and Compared with Christianity*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880, p. 277)

[39] Daniel A. Weiss, *Oedipus in Nottingham: D. H. Lawrence* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), p. 105.

> who has realized his Self, not a routine practitioner of physical exercises, as people in the West like to believe.)[40]

Lawrence was known to hate the idea of sexual activities merely as exercises, and of disciplining natural response in regimes or programmes. Nevertheless, Lawrence's theories about physical contact and sexual touch were identical to the religious application of the yogist exercises which were intended to revive phallic potency and fulfil individualism. In *A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover*', he developed his theory about the regenerative capacity of sexual touches and contacts:

> If England is to be regenerated - to use the phrase of the young man, who seemed to think there was need of *regeneration* - the very word is his - then it will be by the arising of a new blood-contact, a new touch, and a new marriage. It will be a phallic rather than a sexual regeneration. For the phallus is only the great old symbol of godly vitality in a man, and of immediate contact. (*Propos*, p. 328)

Both Christianity and Buddhism stressed the inevitability of the Last Judgement, and among the sins, sexual indulgence was one of those to be severely punished. As a liberator of sexuality, Lawrence rejected the repressive aspects of these ascetic doctrines. He wished to recreate a new morality through a sexual revival which would arrest the decline in society, but it seemed to him that no Western religion encouraged such a sublimation. He even disliked Freudianism, which had revealed from a scientific point of view the prevalence of sexuality in human life, because Freudian theory postulated sexuality as an element in psychic disturbance, whereas Lawrence wanted it to be recognised as a form of sublimation. So, the Taoist doctrines of mental renewal through various sexual fulfilments would have been congenial to him.

Lawrence was an omnivorous reader of philosophy, but he did not completely believe in any one system. His understanding of sexuality was

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[40] Chaman Nahal, *D. H. Lawrence: An Eastern View* (London: Thomas Yoseloff Ltd., 1970), p. 248.

certainly enhanced by Freudianism, but his *Fantasia of the Unconscious* did not admit any indebtedness to it. He made frequent use of mythological symbols in his essays and novels, but refused to limit their connotations to traditional meanings. His writing, even when borrowing from his reading, was always creative, by which I mean that he never bothered about giving his critics convenient references. Thus, if he did absorb some Taoist theories, perhaps through second-hand sources, it still remains very difficult to identify exactly where they are from. The following quotation from 'The Two Principles' perhaps provides firm evidence of a Taoist influence on Lawrence, for he quotes directly the Chinese theory of how *Yang-Yin* gives birth to the world:

> The sex division is one of the Chinese three sacred mysteries. Vitally, it is a division of pure otherness, pure dualism. It is one of the first mysteries of creation. It is parallel with the mystery of the first division in chaos, and with the dualism of the two cosmic elements. This is not to say that the one sex is identical with fire, the other with water. And yet there is some indefinable connection. ('Two', p. 234)

There are not many examples like this to be found in Lawrence's writings, and a fully documented study of the influence of Taoism on Lawrence is hardly possible. But if we try to ascertain Lawrence's 'religious' affinities, we find that while they are far from Christianity, Buddhism, not to mention Confucianism, they seem close to Taoism, even if that creed was known only obscurely to him. Thus, while Lawrence adhered to no formal religion, his assertions about sexuality had much in common with Taoist doctrines, and his phallic utopia shared many features with the Taoist 'reposing resorts'. Both solitudes required the balance of *Yang-Yin* or male-female; both were influenced by the decisive effect of natural environment which benefited human growth and multiplication; and both finally aimed for a rhythmical progress of human life in resonance with the reviving harmony of Nature.

§2.5 Initial Pursuit of Utopia

In Lawrence's novels, from *Women in Love* onward, there is a preoccupation with such Taoist-like utopias, which are grounded in complicated social, philosophical, religious and mythological systems. Lawrence's ideas have been analysed by various critics, and my particular interest is merely to reveal and assess the influence on Lawrence which might have been exercised by the utopian beliefs of Taoism. Lawrence's interest in utopia began in 1914, shortly after the outbreak of the First World War, when he saw how a competition for power had brought about a social and moral crisis for the world. In a letter dated 18 January 1915, he wrote to William Hopkin:

> I want to gather together about twenty souls and sail away from this world of war and squalor and found a little colony where there shall be no money but a sort of communism as far as necessaries of life go, and some real decency. It is to be a colony built up on the real decency which is in each member of the Community - a community which is established upon the assumption of goodness in the members, instead of the assumption of [...] badness. (*Letters 2*, p. 259)

This community was sometimes called Rananim, representing a green, fresh and flourishing utopian society (cf. *Letters 2*, p. 252). Throughout his life, Lawrence's dream of such a utopia persisted, while its constituent elements varied from time to time. In the course of its development, this dream gathered a variety of fresh or grotesque ideas, which directly or indirectly altered its features from a colonial utopia to an exotic nowhere.

At the time he was writing his 'Sisters' novels, Lawrence conscientiously applied his theory of the universal balance in sexual relationships. In the process of writing *The Rainbow*, he discovered that the full awakening of female sexuality unbalanced the traditional sexual equilibrium, so that by the third generation it was necessary to seek a wholly new set of relationships. As the first two generations adjusted themselves to the wholeness of the universe, to complete a Christian

archway of communication, Lawrence could still work under the illusion of the rainbow symbol which retained a Christian promise of happiness for the coming generation. As an individual experience, sexuality constantly rocked the social order and impelled the development of social reforms. But in *The Rainbow*, sexuality could not yet free the emancipated female pioneers because social circumstances still held them back from full self-realisation. While he was completing *The Rainbow*, Lawrence was not yet obliged to seek a fugitive utopia abroad. But as he observed the abrupt changes in English society resulting from the devastating war and industrialism, he also noticed the disturbing effect of the emergence of the modern woman. The third generation of Brangwen women are confronted with a possible loss of balance; although they have a greater chance for emancipation, their physical passions are on occasions more destructive than constructive of their spiritual satisfaction. At the end of *The Rainbow*, we perceive that the old balance, lost because of the rising consciousness of women's emancipation, is only to be regained through a new relationship between modern man and woman. But Lawrence only tentatively expresses this wish in the symbol of the 'Rainbow'. Although there is a possibility of bringing about an unprecedented equality between the sexes in the new generation, that hope is still overshadowed by the impositions of a Christian justice.

Lawrence's quest for a colonial utopia must have been enforced by the suppression of *The Rainbow*, which not only undermined his confidence in English society, but also silenced him publicly for five years until the appearance of *Women in Love*. This ban affected the composition of his sequel, which Lawrence began to revise in late April 1916. On 1 May, he wrote to Barbara Low:

> I have begun the second half of the *Rainbow*. But already it is beyond all hope of ever being published, because of the things it says.

> And more than that, it is beyond all possibility even to offer it to a world, a putrescent mankind like ours. I feel I cannot *touch* humanity, even in thought, it is abhorrent to me. (*Letters 2*, p. 602)

Towards the end of that May, when he had written 'two thirds' (actually more than three fourths of the final text) of *Women in Love*, he confessed, again to Barbara Low, that 'It is the book of my free soul.' (*Letters 2*, p. 614) In the process of his revising the novel, Lawrence had a great deal of trouble in finding a sympathetic publisher. The dark shadow of *The Rainbow* censorship overcast his painful efforts for years, and discouraged his publishers' commitment. This predicament must have accelerated Lawrence's search for utopia in *Women in Love*, which, though it was started earlier than its preceding volume, was mostly rewritten and revised during his bitterest years with the bullying censorship. In this second 'Sisters', his pursuit for balance still continued. His exploration of dualism involved not only social morality, but, more emphatically, a mental and sexual balance between a natural man and a newly liberated woman. This new relationship was now found to require a quest for a regenerated natural community, not necessarily at home. In this, Lawrence went further than his previous enthusiasm for growing female freedom in sexuality. His concern was not only with the individual's participation in progressive social movements, exemplified by Ursula's experiences in *The Rainbow*, but also with the crisis of humanity in modern society which leads Birkin to his sequestered meditations in *Women in Love*. As the principal heroine in both novels, Ursula in *Women in Love* transcends her bewilderment in the inherited struggle for women's emancipation and resolves to join Birkin in their corporate search for a utopian home. Here, the inconsistency between the two consecutive novels reveals how Lawrence switched his central thematic focus from a Christian hope to a Utopian effort. So I regard the split of 'The Sisters' as the initiation of Lawrence's utopianism, and this new orientation is more obviously displayed in *Women in Love*.

Lawrence's preoccupation with cosmological balance and his engagement in sexual relationships had a logical connection. But neither of them were his own invention. The philosophy of universal balance bore a certain similarity to the *Yang-Yin* doctrine of Taoism, while the subsequent application of sexual dualism to modern society was an aspect of the current movement towards sexual liberation. These affiliations suggest that Lawrence's philosophy of sexuality was conceptually shaped by a critical combination drawn from Taoist natural instinct and the modern artistic demand for individual freedom. Presuming that these two aspects functioned in Lawrence's approach to utopianism, I should like to track down some clues to show how Taoism played its role in transforming an idealised individuality which originated in English Aestheticism.

CHAPTER THREE

AESTHETICISM AND THE FREE SOUL: MODERN INTERPRETATION OF NATURE AND INACTION

§3.1 Oscar Wilde's Review of a Chinese Sage

Modern literature in the West has paid special reverence to the superiority of Art and admired the idiosyncrasy of the artist. The feature of artistic independence from conventional morality and the didactic tradition required the artist to be free, so that he could be liberated in his 'perverse' explorations, one of which was related to the search for sexual freedom. Towards the end of the last century, this literary tendency, which originated in Romanticism, was given fresh impetus by the Aesthetic Movement, whose influence on twentieth-century ideas of artistic creation has been profound and long-lasting. D. H. Lawrence adhered to a similar assertion of artistic freedom, though his pursuit proved a more intensely didactic attempt to preach a new morality, and not for the artist alone. He was familiar with some of the major works on Aesthetic theories, having read Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde with Jessie Chambers in his early twenties, and the influence from that direction seemed to have persisted. The significance of this Aesthetic influence to my study is bound up with the influence of Taoism on Oscar Wilde.

A variety of influences went into the making of Wilde's Aestheticism. During his Oxford years, he lived in the shadow of Matthew Arnold, John Ruskin and Walter Pater; apart from his successful studies in Literae Humaniores, he was avidly reading the Romantic and the Pre-Raphaelite poets. His idea of the free-souled artist was, on the one hand, a

protest against society's mockery and hostility, while on the other, it was already taking shape under the encouragement of those Oxford influences. And, added to these influences, was a later interest in Taoism.

The year of 1889 saw the publication of *Chuang Tzu [Zhuang Zi]*[1] in English by Herbert Giles, then British Consul at Tamsui (Danshui, Taiwan), who later became Professor of Chinese at Cambridge University. The original Chinese text of this book was a Taoist classic dating back to the second century B. C. and its author was believed to be Zhuang Zhou[2], the second sage who developed Lao Zi's Taoism. The most noticeable of the ethical improvements in Zhuang Zi's revision of Taoism was to proclaim mankind as free souls. Giles's translation not only made a great contribution to Chinese Studies in the West, but, incidentally, also contributed to the development of some theoretic points in Aestheticism. Oscar Wilde reviewed the translation[3] and the theoretical assertions he found in *Chuang Tzu* later appeared in his two essays: 'The Critic as Artist' and 'The Soul of Man under Socialism'[4]. Even Lord Goring in *An Ideal Husband* simulates the virtue of the Taoist[5].

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[1] Herbert A. Giles, tr., *Chuang Tzu: Mystic, Moralist, and Social Reformer* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1889). Hereafter Giles.

[2] Zhuang Zhou (fl. 4th century B. C.) is also known as Zhuang Zi. Zhou is the given name while Zi means Teacher or Master. There is an inconsistency in Romanisation concerning the transliteration of Chinese characters. For example, Giles spells the name as Chuang Tzu and Wilde's spelling formula is Chuang Tsu. The transliteration system I generally apply is called *pinyin*, which simply means 'spelling' and has been used as a Romanisation system in the Mainland China to transliterate Chinese proper names. Since the early 1980s, the system has gradually been adopted by Western academic publications. I use this system in this thesis unless a different system appears in quotations.

[3] Oscar Wilde, 'A Chinese Sage', *The Speaker* 8 Feb. (1890), vol. 1, pp. 144-146. Reprinted in *Reviews* (1909), pp. 528-538. Hereafter 'Sage'.

[4] In an early study of Oscar Wilde, George Woodcock perceived a Taoist influence in the two essays:

> It is clear that the reading of Chuang Tzu's writings had a decisive influence on Wilde's own philosophy, confirming his natural tendencies towards non-action and philosophic anarchism. In two of his later works, *The Critic as Artist* and *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*, he makes prominent and appreciative references to the Chinese philosopher, and, as we have already noticed in a previous chapter, his moral outlook came to agree in many respects with Taoist ideas. (*The Paradox of Oscar Wilde*, London: T. V. Boardman & Co. Ltd., 1949, p. 148)

[5] In a comparative study between Oscar Wilde and Zhuang Zi, Isobel Murray briefs in a footnote

The philosophy of Zhuang Zi is full of paradoxical issues and controversial viewpoints, and Wilde's review certainly did not cover all its arguments. But the points he selected for discussion suggest an attempt to relate this Taoist theory to his own ideas. Zhuang Zi asserted that Nature was greater than man. If man had not invented various means to govern the world and violate the permanent Tao - Cosmic Nature, an ideal self-governing society would have remained, in coherent and peaceful fulfilment. Wilde had already rejected the idea that artistic creation should be an imitation of Nature, and, instead of accepting the Taoist natural divinity, Wilde converted it into an artistic superiority that could create a better world than Nature was able to produce. What really interested him in Taoism was its Inaction theory, which asserted that government and society should leave mankind with the freedom to allow Nature to keep its own way. Wilde preferred to read 'mankind' as 'artist', whose creative potential was not to be suppressed by any social authority. In his review, Wilde first identified this core theory of Taoist Inaction:

> ... Chuang Tsu spent his life in preaching the great creed of Inaction, and in pointing out the uselessness of all useful things. 'Do nothing, and everything will be done,' was the doctrine which he inherited from his great master Lao Tsu. ('Sage', p. 144)

He went on to explain how the theory of Inaction was applicable to Aestheticism:

> All modes of government are wrong. They are unscientific, because they seek to alter the natural environment of man; they are immoral, because, by interfering with the individual, they produce the most aggressive forms of egotism; they are ignorant, because they try to spread education; they are self-destructive, because they engender anarchy. ('Sage', p. 145)

By assimilating Zhuang Zi's natural spontaneity into his Aesthetic intuition,

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of her essay ('Oscar Wilde's Absorption of "Influences": The Case History of Chuang Tzu', *The Durham University Journal*, 64 (1971), pp. 1-13. Hereafter Murray):

> The 'dandy' figure in Wilde's comedies, especially as seen in Lord Goring (*An Ideal Husband*), like the ideal aesthetic critic of his dialogues, has considerable resemblance to a modernized version of the Sage of Chuang Tzu. (p. 5)

Wilde could proclaim the significance of the Taoist theory to his notion of the artist's transcendentalism. Towards the end of his review, Wilde summed up his apprehension of the Chinese sage:

> It is clear that Chuang Tsu is a very dangerous writer, and the publication of his book in English, two thousand years after his death, is obviously premature, and may cause a great deal of pain to many thoroughly respectable and industrious persons. It may be true that the ideal of self-culture and self-development, which is the aim of his scheme of life, and the basis of his scheme of philosophy, is an ideal somewhat needed by an age like ours, in which most people are so anxious to educate their neighbours that they have actually no time left in which to educate themselves. ('Sage', p. 146)

§3.2 Inaction and Nature in Art and Man

Not long after this review, he confessed a Taoist influence on his own work, in 'The Critic as Artist'[6]. This essay was first published in two parts in *The Nineteenth Century*[7], where it appeared under a different title - 'The True Function and Value of Criticism'. Significantly, the subtitle for both parts was exactly the same - 'with some remarks on the importance of *doing nothing*: a dialogue'. In the version later reprinted in *Intentions*, the main title was changed to 'The Critic as Artist', and while the first part retained the 'doing nothing' subtitle, in the second part the 'doing nothing' phrase was replaced by '*discussing everything*' (The italics are mine). These subtitles apparently suggested the core theory of Taoist Inaction, which was translated from *Lao Zi* by Giles and quoted in his introduction to *Chuang Tzu*:

> Do nothing, and all things will be done.
> I do nothing, and my people become good of their own accord.
> Abandon wisdom and discard knowledge, and the people will be benefited an hundredfold. (Giles, p. viii)

This basic teaching incorporated the essential arguments of Taoism, the first

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[6] Oscar Wilde, 'The Critic as Artist' (1890), in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (pp. 1009-1059), ed. F. B. Foreman (London: Collins, 1966). Hereafter 'Critic'.

[7] The two parts are respectively contained in the issues of July and September, 1890, vol. 28, pp. 123-147 and pp. 435-459.

of which Wilde had already cited with a little verbal variation in his review. Now he argued that the Chinese sage was advocating complete artistic freedom. Gilbert in 'The Critic as Artist' seems to have comprehended the consequence of such contemplation[8]:

> It is to do nothing that the elect exist. Action is limited and relative. Unlimited and absolute is the vision of him who sits at ease and watches, who walks in loneliness and dreams. But we who are born at the close of this wonderful age are at once too cultured and too critical, too intellectually subtle and too curious of exquisite pleasures, to accept any speculations about life in exchange for life itself. ('Critic', p. 1039)

This passage points to the cultivation of the privileged moment of aesthetic contemplation that Walter Pater described in his 'Conclusion to *The Renaissance*' as 'perfect', 'choicer', 'irresistibly real and attractive'[9]. The impulse of this appreciative force evaded the manipulation of orthodox philosophical systems and rejected the confinements of stultifying tradition. In this sense, the passionate insight of Aestheticism could also be understood as resembling the methodology of Taoism which advised an inactive approach to the supreme truth of the universe. But on the other hand, it differed significantly from Taoist theory. Inaction was a method of avoiding human abuse of Nature. For the Taoist, the ultimate truth was Tao, and Nature provided an intuitive access to this truth if human beings did not deliberately interrupt it. So, what was left for mankind was nothing but Inaction. Wilde adopted this method without bothering about its purpose. His ultimate truth was in the beauty of Art, and the cultivation of Inaction

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[8] Isobel Murray, though pointing out the disappearance of Taoist influence in Wilde's later work *De Profundis*, comments on Wilde's laborious effort in this essay to interpret Zhuang Zi's view into what his aesthetic accepts:

> We might consider that *The Critic as Artist* demonstrates the peak of Chuang Tzu's influence on Wilde, or at least of its immediate impact; certainly he is more concerned here to adapt to Chuang Tzu than anywhere else: he follows him far enough here to say what he does not really believe, that contemplation is the highest occupation of man. Where Chuang Tzu balances action and inaction, or action and contemplation, Wilde is forced to insert a midway category, art. So he has Gilbert state (W 1023): 'It is very much more difficult to talk about a thing than to do it' (i.e. art is superior to action), and later (W 1039): 'to do nothing at all is the most difficult thing in the world, the most difficult and the most intellectual' (i.e. contemplation is superior even to art). For both Chuang Tzu and Wilde this is an exclusive ideal, for an élite only: (Murray, p. 6)

[9] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (London: Collins, 1961), p. 222.

could help his artist avoid social intervention, and hopefully obtain freedom in his artistic creation. Later in the essay Wilde applied this Taoist concept of Inaction to Shakespeare:

> Action being limited would have left Shakespeare unsatisfied and unexpressed; and just, as it is because he did nothing that he has been able to achieve everything... ('Critic', p. 1045)

Wilde had already demonstrated that Art was greater than Nature, and in adopting Zhuang Zi, he sensibly avoided committing himself to the Taoist theory of Nature's greatness and inserted his own concept of artistic freedom in the process of Inaction.

Strictly speaking, Inaction is a method which should only be applied to social and material interference with the natural rights of human beings. But in privileged undertakings such as aesthetic observation and artistic imagination, both Zhuang Zi and Wilde put aside their 'inactive' rules to enjoy the energetic freedom of their exuberant psychological explorations. Wilde's affirmation of this freedom replaced the notion of the artist as a rational thinker with one that was flexible and sensitive to new ideas. Two anecdotes in *Chuang Tzu* gave examples of irrational inspiration. The first illustrated the quality of intuitive insight gained through sensuous apprehension:

> Chuang Tzu and Hui Tzu had strolled on to the bridge over the Hao, when the former observed, 'See how the minnows are darting about! That is the pleasure of fishes.'
>
> 'You not being a fish yourself,' said Hui Tzu, 'how can you possibly know in what consists the pleasure of fishes?'
>
> 'And you not being I,' retorted Chuang Tzu, 'how can you know that I do not know?'
>
> 'If I, not being you, cannot know what you know,' urged Hui Tzu, 'it follows that you, not being a fish, cannot know in what consists the pleasure of fishes.'
>
> 'Let us go back,' said Chuang Tzu, 'to your original question. You asked me how I knew in what consists the pleasure of fishes. Your very question shows that you knew I knew. I knew it from my own feelings on this bridge.' (Giles, pp. 218-219)

This story, though not directly pertaining to artistic criticism, reflects the significance of the subjective view in a philosophy of irrational observation.

This philosophy is congenial to the principal idea in 'The Critic as Artist', that the critic's genius is seen in his task of enquiring into the artistic value hidden in a work, even when it is unknown to the artist. According to Wilde:

> ... the highest criticism deals with art, not as expressive, but as impressive purely, and is consequently both creative and independent, is in fact an art by itself, occupying the same relation to creative work that creative work does to the visible world of form and colour, or the unseen world of passion and of thought. ('Critic', p. 1032)

Instead of regarding a critic as an interpreter repeating the rigid truth, Wilde further justifies the personal and subjective approaches of the critic:

> ... it is only by intensifying his own personality that the critic can interpret the personality and work of others, and the more strongly this personality enters into the interpretation, the more real the interpretation becomes, the more satisfying, the more convincing, and the more true. ('Critic', p. 1033)

Although the above quotations show no sign of influence by *Chuang Tzu*, its theoretical argument supports the gist of the Chinese fable.

In the second story from *Chuang Tzu*, Zhuang Zi appears as a dreamer, who blurs his identity to show the ephemerality and instability of the phenomenal world:

> Once upon a time, I, Chuang Tzu, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man. Suddenly, I awaked, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man. Between a man and a butterfly there is necessarily a barrier. The transition is called *Metempsychosis*. (Giles, p. 32)

Wilde's comment on the variability of his artist could almost serve as an annotation to this second fable:

> He will realise himself in many forms, and by a thousand different ways, and will ever be curious of new sensations and fresh points of view. Through constant change, and through constant change alone, he will find his true unity. ('Critic', p. 1048)

Compared with Wilde, Zhuang Zi was much more abstruse and opaque. His ultimate truth of Tao, basically inherited from Lao Zi, was

indescribable and any attempt at elucidation would simply make the truth untrue. The superiority of Nature over man was absolute and thus degraded the capacity of human beings in general. In spite of its fundamental disparity from Wilde's reverence for art, the Taoist Nature did not undiscriminatingly invalidate the artist's freedom of creation. In her essay comparing Wilde and Zhuang Zi, Murray attempts to relate Wilde's artistic criticism to Zhuang Zi's irrational contemplation (Murray, p. 6). She is however surprised to find that Zhuang Zi 'had no obvious interest in art, and the aim of self-conscious artifice in creation jars with his aims of natural spontaneity and inaction.' (Murray, p. 11) This apparent anomaly, shown in the fables of the fishes and of the butterfly, had in fact been elucidated by Welch, in his study of Taoist influence on Chinese art. He argues that Taoist philosophy encouraged unconventional artistic inspiration through its recognition of Nature and Inaction:

> Philosophical Taoism, ... exercised an important influence on Chinese painting, poetry, music, and sculpture. ... In Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu Chinese artists have found purpose, method, and themes. As an example, let us consider landscape painting. In China the *purpose* of landscape painting has been to express the identification of the painter with nature. To use Lao Tzu's words, the painter, like the sage, must 'clasp the Primal Unity' (22W). His *method*, once his novitiate is passed, is to reject rules (like the wheelwright in *Chuang Tzu* XIII, 10), to 'discard knowledge' (19W). He must 'see without looking' (47W) so that he comes to know his subject from the inside, like the carver in *Chuang Tzu* III, 2. Only in this way can his brush catch the *ch'i*, or vital breath, of what he is painting. (Welch, pp. 159-160)

It is this aspect of Taoism that would have appealed to Wilde as an aesthetic critic. He was further involved in a discussion of whether an artistic creation should be objective or subjective. The fundamental argument on objectivity and subjectivity had been a celebrated topic of Aestheticism before Wilde, but a similar discussion had occupied Zhuang Zi, and the following passage in Giles's translation of *Chuang Tzu* may also have influenced Wilde's views:

> There is nothing which is not objective: there is nothing which is not

> subjective. But it is impossible to start from the objective. Only from subjective knowledge is it possible to proceed to objective knowledge. Hence it has been said, 'The objective emanates from the subjective; the subjective is consequent upon the objective. This is the Alternation Theory.' (Giles, pp. 17-18)

In response to the Taoist view that everything is both objective and subjective, Wilde began his argument:

> The difference between objective and subjective work is one of external form merely. It is accidental, not essential. ('Critic', p. 1045)

And then he continued to elaborate on the point that the subjective is superior to the objective:

> ... I would say that the more objective a creation appears to be, the more subjective it really is. ('Critic', p. 1045)

Although we can detect influences in the parallel statements of Zhuang Zi and Wilde, we must also recognise that Wilde laid a different stress on the Taoist argument. Zhuang Zi maintained that the difference between the objective and the subjective was insignificant. One was at the same time almost the other, as they were mutually alternative and indistinguishably blended. Wilde agreed with this argument, when he declared that 'the object form is the most subjective in matter'; but he disagreed with the Taoist conclusion that the subjective and the objective can only be unified by intuition of Nature, not by efforts of an artist. Wilde was fascinated by the Taoist 'subjective relation with all things' and trusted his artist's 'subjective form' with its capacity to reveal the most objective truth, whereas a Taoist would maintain that any human attempt, even an artist's attempt to favour the subjective and bias against the objective, merely makes the truth more confused and more obscurely veiled.

Taoism admired Nature's predominance not only in pursuing art, but also in governing social affairs. As the Taoist sage affirmed, the matter of human welfare could only be entrusted to 'pure, perfect men' who had been metaphysically trained to understand how Nature operates, and who were

capable of staying in harmony with all creation:

> ... a perfect man can destroy a kingdom and yet not lose the hearts of the people, while the benefits he hands down to ten thousand generations do not proceed from love of his fellowman. (Giles, p. 71)

Such a perfect man was conveniently adopted by Wilde as his true artist, though theoretically he disagreed that the artist should follow or imitate Nature as the Taoist adept was supposed to. He bestowed the same kind of leadership on his critic:

> For who is the true critic but he who bears within himself the dreams, and ideas, and feelings of myriad generations, and to whom no form of thought is alien, no emotional impulse obscure? ('Critic', p. 1041)

The benefits that human beings would receive for generations, suggest that the target both the perfect man and the true critic should aim for is eternity.

This literary coincidence between Wilde and Taoism might be deemed accidental if lexical evidence did not also divulge some possibility of influence. Wilde's use of the phrase 'myriad generations' seems to have been unconsciously picked up from Giles's translated phrase 'ten thousand generations'. In Chinese numerals, 'ten thousand' is a major unit, more or less corresponding to 'million' in English. Without understanding Chinese, Wilde might have been annoyed by the phrase's wordy specification or puzzled by its exoticism, and have replaced it with the poetic word 'myriad' when he was composing his own statement. The choice of this poetic word in a critical essay may reveal Wilde's reference to the translated text and suggest his reflection on oriental mysticism.

It is clear that a major difference between Zhuang Zi and Wilde was that Wilde substituted his superior artist in the place of intuitive Nature. He converted the Taoist theory of human interference with Nature into social interference with artistic creation. But in both cases, the masses are seen as supporting the interference: they obstinately resist the penetration of fresh ideas and despise the natural instinct of a sage or the intellectual excitement

of an artist. Wilde specifically referred to Zhuang Zi in this respect:

> The security of society lies in custom and unconscious instinct, and the basis of the stability of society, as a healthy organism, is the complete absence of any intelligence amongst its members. The great majority of people being fully aware of this, rank themselves naturally on the side of that splendid system that elevates them to the dignity of machines, and rage so wildly against the intrusion of the intellectual faculty into any question that concerns life, that one is tempted to define man as a rational animal who always loses his temper when he is called upon to act in accordance with the dictates of reason. But let us turn from the practical sphere, and say no more about the wicked philanthropists, who, indeed, may will be left to the mercy of the almond-eyed sage of the Yellow River Chuang Tsu the wise, who has proved that such well-meaning and offensive busybodies have destroyed the simple and spontaneous virtue that there is in man. ('Critic', p. 1044)

In accusing 'the wicked philanthropists' of violating the Taoist doctrine of Inaction, Wilde launched his attack on his contemporary bourgeois society 'with their puritanical morals which they nevertheless could reconcile with a mercantile and national egoism.'[10]

[10] Günther Debon, *Oscar Wilde and Taoism*, tr. Bettina Debon (Bern: Peter Lang, 1986), p. 114. Debon also discerned this Taoist influence on Wilde's play written five years after his review:

> The main targets of Wilde's ridicule, however, are the busy and self-complacent philanthropes. They are called 'earnest', maybe already in anticipation of the inimitable burlesque *The Importance of Being Earnest*, where Victorian society is caricatured. And we notice with amazement how close Confucianism and Victorianism are to each other. (pp. 114-115)

§3.3 In Conflict with Modern Civilisation and Humanity

In spite of certain shared views, the differences between Zhuang Zi and Wilde are greater than the similarities. But this does not mean the Taoist influence on Aestheticism should be underestimated, and my argument is that some of the ideas which Wilde assimilated from Taoism later influenced certain of Lawrence's views on the necessity of freedom to life and art. As the historical materials reveal, there was an evident connection at least between the book of *Chuang Tzu* and the two essays Wilde composed in 1890-1891. He definitely reviewed *Chuang Tzu* with great admiration, and quoted its ideas and paraphrased the Taoist sayings in his works.

My concern now is to trace the possible ways in which this Taoist influence was transmitted from Wilde to Lawrence. At the age of twenty-three, Lawrence already found the impact of Nature in Art, while writing his essay 'Art and the Individual'[11]. The essay shows his interest in Aestheticism which he felt 'embraces all art' ('Art', p. 225). While talking about Harmony as Beauty, he believed that 'Beauty in Nature' can be turned into 'the human productions of Art' ('Art', p. 226). He further argued that 'the mission of Art' is to try 'to unite ourselves with the whole universe' ('Art', p. 228). This is the evidence of Aesthetic influence on Lawrence in the first version of the essay, and then in the completed version, some Taoist influence began to take shape:

> It is Art which opens to us the silences, the primordial silences which hold the secret of things, the great purposes, which are themselves silent; there are no words to speak of them with, and no thoughts to think of them in, so we struggle to touch them through art; and the eager, unsatisfied world seeks to put them all into a religious phrase. ('Art', p.

[11] D. H. Lawrence, 'Art and the Individual: A Paper for Socialists' (1908) & 'Art and the Individual', First Version (1908), in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays* (pp. 133-142 & pp. 221-230), ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). Hereafter 'Art'.

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Although this seems to confirm that Lawrence was fascinated by a Taoist-like silence and quietism, there is little evidence that he had direct access to Taoism, and he does not seem to have read *Lao Zi* or *Chuang Tzu*, though both translations were available during his lifetime. However, there is good reason to believe that Lawrence read Wilde's *Intentions* (cf. Chambers, p. 110), which contains 'The Critic as Artist'. Notwithstanding the difficulties of attempting a comparative study between classical Chinese philosophers and a modern English writer, a comparative study of the parallels between Taoism and Lawrence reveals interesting similarities; but I wish to go further and suggest that there was also an influence. Not, to be sure, a direct or obvious influence, but an influence which came through a Taoist element in Aestheticism and certain modernist theories. Since much of the Chinese influence on Western modernist thought has been assimilated and fundamentally naturalised, teasing out the various strands sometimes involves an examination of possible channels of influence, and sometimes the pointing up of unexpected and illuminating parallels.

A way to approach this study is to consider Lawrence's familiarity with Wilde's Aesthetic theory and to identify possible points of agreement. Wilde's appraisal of *Chuang Tzu* provides a good opportunity for tracing and discerning theoretical similarities, which help to associate the three in a broad philosophical network. Given Wilde's openness to Taoist influence, we may assume something of a similar influence on Lawrence. Lawrence assimilated some of the Aesthetic theories which were fed into modernism including Wilde's, and his ideas deal with major issues common to Taoism. Surprisingly, Lawrence was actually closer to the Taoist theory of Nature than Wilde was, though he had no direct access to it. Whereas Wilde removed 'Nature', the superior feature of the Taoists, and substituted his own judgement, it is strikingly noticeable in *Women in Love* that Lawrence

restored the Taoist idea of the autonomy of Nature:

> 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.[12]

Birkin's meditation on the crisis of humanity caused by a rationalist interference with Nature has affinities with the Taoist doctrine of Inaction, outlined above. According to Lawrence, it was this rational morality or pragmatic humanity that denied the co-existence of mankind and made the reconciliation of the dark and light impossible. Through industrial interference with Nature, people were enslaved by machines and by the social principles that mechanisation had produced. More importantly, this jungle law of competition and survival severely disturbed and violated a balanced universal existence. In the following quotation, Lawrence uses the terms 'mankind' and 'humanity' in his specially chosen senses, referring to the arbitrary and ostentatious human efforts which had substituted for the natural growth of human civilisation a greedy industrial prosperity, making a small number of winners proud. So, literally and conceptually, Lawrence regarded belief in 'humanity' as a destructive morality, created by mechanical power, and envisaged a creative mystery of Nature that would contemptuously execute a natural law:

> 'Well, if mankind is destroyed, if our race is destroyed like Sodom, and there is this beautiful evening with the luminous land and trees, I am satisfied. That which informs it all is there, and can never be lost. After

[12] D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, ed. David Farmer, Lindeth Vasey & John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 479. Hereafter *Women*.

> all, what is mankind but just one expression of the incomprehensible. And if mankind passes away, it will only mean that this particular expression is completed and done. That which is expressed, and that which is to be expressed, cannot be diminished. There it is, in the shining evening. Let mankind pass away - time it did. The creative utterances will not cease, they will only be there. Humanity doesn't embody the utterance of the incomprehensible any more. Humanity is a dead letter. There will be a new embodiment, in a new way. Let humanity disappear as quick as possible.' (*Women*, p. 59)

In challenging the concept of 'humanity' as an arbitrary effort of mankind, Lawrence also postulated a natural law of creative mystery which could inaugurate a new way of human progressive development. This philosophical approach bears some similarity to the Taoist ethic in Nature, which Zhuang Zi clarified in his book. In the chapter 'The Great Supreme', the Chinese philosopher writes:

> He who knows what God is, and who knows what Man is, has attained. Knowing what God is, he knows that he himself proceeded therefrom. Knowing what Man is, he rests in the knowledge of the known, waiting for the knowledge of the unknown. Working out one's allotted span, and not perishing in mid career, - this is the fulness of knowledge.
>
> Herein, however, there is a flaw. Knowledge is dependent upon fulfilment. And as this fulfilment is uncertain, how can it be known that my divine is not really human, my human really divine? (Giles, p. 68)

The word 'God' here is by no means to be translated into Christian terminology. The original Chinese word given by Zhuang Zi was 'Heaven', and should be interpreted as Nature[13]. So it was a natural divinity that the Taoist celebrated. Taoist philosophy explained that Nature, by following the primordial but permanent Tao, could guide the world intuitively without involving arbitrary activities, whereas 'knowledge' was a human action which actually numbed man's natural instinct. Man had made efforts to obtain knowledge, but in the end when he thought he had comprehended the great supreme, he in fact only experienced a superficial phenomenon which

[13] According to the connotation made by Guo Xiang (?-312), a famous philosopher of the Western Jin Dynasty (265-316), 'Heaven' here means 'Nature'. In other translations, Feng Youlan translates it into 'nature' in 1931 (cf. Yu-lan Fung, *Chuang Tzu: A New Selected Translation with an Exposition of the Philosophy of Kuo Hsiang* [Guo Xiang], Shanghai: The Commercial Press, p. 111) and Burton Watson retains the original word 'Heaven' in his translation of 1968 (cf. *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 77).

shifted, changed and eventually faded. More unfortunately, as man deluded himself into thinking that his knowledge was superior to the power of Nature, he increasingly abused and polluted the natural environment. This was to have psychological consequences: eventually he would find himself confined in his hardened shell and cut off from any vital communication with Nature. His knowledge thus acquired would stop flowing, become gradually muddled and start decaying. When this knowledge attempted to supersede the natural order of Tao, which required an instinctive response from human beings, it caused great confusion by blurring the distinction between human action, controlled by knowledge, and Nature's way, directed by instinct. In practice, this knowledge pretended to be the tradition of human civilisation, but enslaved man to follow, obey and cultivate it.

Zhuang Zi wanted to make a distinction between Nature and Man. The former represented the superior, imperturbable Tao, but the latter violated its course with ephemeral, inconsistent and fragmentary knowledge. In the histories of both the East and the West, a conflict between Nature's operation and human beings' interference has always been a controversial subject. At one time or the other, human morality has been placed above the quality of Nature by socially orientated intellectuals whose confidence was in rational cultures, which could be named as humanity or knowledge. For Zhuang Zi and Lawrence, on the other hand, natural instinct was regarded as more essential for the development of civilisation than a morality which had become hardened and which was deteriorating. Both Zhuang Zi and Lawrence were looking for a way towards eternity. In the cosmology of Zhuang Zi, eternity could be intuitively achieved by some familiar natural objects of the universe:

> The [constellation of the] Great Bear obtained it [Tao], and has never erred from its course. The sun and moon obtained it, and have never ceased to revolve. (Giles, p. 77)

For the Taoist, Tao was a higher structure of the universe than Nature, and Nature was a more privileged form than Man. Nature could intuitively follow the guidance of Tao, so it was eternal; but human society, so Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi considered, had violated Tao by using its limited knowledge and cunning intelligence. So Taoist philosophy had to persuade Man to obtain the eternal Tao by following the way Nature was taking or, more precisely, stay inactive and let Nature guide his movement. For Lawrence, this conception of Tao was perhaps too supernatural. But like the Taoists, Lawrence was also fully aware of the conflict between Nature and Man. He recognised the superiority of Nature over humanity. His condemnation of contemporary humanity contained, however, a desire to establish a new humanity for mankind, whose creative power should remain in a sympathetic course with Nature. So instead of making his characters inert in action, as Taoism did, to cope with the Nature-versus-Man conflict, Lawrence initiated an active approach in order to arrive at a possible solution. The very emphatic effort he urged was to improve the internal relationship of human beings. If Taoist terms are still applicable here, we should say that Lawrence was adopting the theory of *Yang-Yin* dualism to keep the primordial order of Nature, having rejected the doctrine of Inaction; because the latter was also related to the Buddhist belief that life was an insignificant passing-by and that human action, even with its achievements, was merely emptiness. Christianity also retained a kind of dualism in its comprehension of the world, but this was the dualism between good and evil, and Lawrence was not satisfied with that. He would after all reject the dualism of mind and matter, as Christianity explained how sins were constantly committed by human beings because of their vulnerability to external or internal evil temptations and how they were eventually redeemed by the goodness of the divinity. Dualism for Lawrence

was sexual balance which functioned inevitably in human relationships. This point drew Lawrence's philosophy again closer to Taoism than to other religions he had known. But unlike the Taoist who seemed to have full confidence in Nature's intuitive execution against its violators, Lawrence could not persuade himself that the natural law was in itself able to diminish the injustice of an unbalanced humanity. His characters, who are deprived of power by destructive desire of humanity and disarmed by industrialism, are not as confident in Nature's final judgement as the Taoists. Before they can start searching for a Nature-guided utopia, Lawrence's characters must first attempt to free their souls, so that their individualism can respond to natural instinct. Apart from a few trivial differences, such a free man is identical with the Taoist 'pure, perfect man' and Wilde's liberal artist. In *Women in Love*, Birkin first undergoes a pessimistic struggle to free himself from offensive female domination. After surviving Hermione's hysterical attack with the *lapis lazuli*, he wanders naked into a wild valley where, touched and prickled by the trees and plants, he opens himself to a relaxed contact with the 'responsive vegetation' (cf. *Women*, pp. 105-107). Having recognised Nature's inactive superiority over man, he finally embarks on a search for a utopian community with Ursula, as a 'natural aristocrat'. This was a term Lawrence invented later, but was identical with the pure, perfect man of Taoism.

Both Wilde and Lawrence agreed with Taoism that man should maintain a free soul in seclusion, but Lawrence further shared the Taoist view that human freedom must be guided by Nature's intuition. In the search for utopia, however, the two modern writers diverged from Taoism. Wilde's socialism was certainly not a Taoist return to Nature, while Lawrence attempted to combine the Taoist essence of Nature with social reform. In his philosophical work, Zhuang Zi was creating a utopian ideal

for a nation, which fostered one of the world's earliest civilisations, but which also witnessed its first crisis. So, two thousand years ago, the sweetness of the past was certainly more strongly felt than today:

> The people have certain natural instincts; - to weave and clothe themselves, to till and feed themselves. These are common to all humanity, and all are agreed thereon. Such instincts are called 'Heaven-sent.'
>
> And so in the days when natural instincts prevailed, men moved quietly and gazed steadily. At that time, there were no roads over mountains, nor boats, nor bridges over water. All things were produced, each for its own proper sphere. Birds and beasts multiplied; trees and shrubs grew up. The former might be led by the hand; you could climb up and peep into the raven's nest. For then man dwelt with birds and beasts, and all creation was one. There were no distinctions of good and bad men. Being all equally without knowledge, their virtue could not go astray. Being all equally without evil desires, they were in a state of natural integrity, the perfection of human existence. (Giles, pp. 107-108)

This quotation bears a striking similarity to Gonzalo's eloquent speech on 'the Golden Age'[14] and presents a similar regret for a declining morality. Just as in the long Western tradition of pastoral literature from Theocritus, Virgil, Milton, Shelley to Matthew Arnold, Zhuang Zi wished to return to the good old days for his utopia. He wanted man to discard his knowledge and wisdom in order to find out where his natural instinct originated. This, of course, was an unpractical ambition which, even for his contemporaries, was impossible to carry out, and is even more unapproachable for the modernists. On occasion, twentieth-century writers and intellectuals seem to yearn for this return, but this aspect of Taoism was not accepted by Wilde or Lawrence. They were both looking onward to the future, adopting the canon of natural instinct only for the purpose of giving freedom - either to Wilde's sacred art or to Lawrence's human relationship. Instead of accepting the primitive utopia of Taoism, Wilde maintained the natural individualism of his artist, by converting the Taoist ethics of human instinct into his spontaneous aesthetics, so that while the soul of man is being saved, the creativity of the artist will prevail. The following quotation from 'The

[14] Frank Kermode, ed., *The Tempest* (London: Methuen, 1954), pp. 50-51.

Soul of Man under Socialism'[15] demonstrates how, in this thinly disguised attempt, Wilde designates his own preferred personality without admitting his commitment to Taoism:

> It will be a marvellous thing - the true personality of man - when we see it. It will grow naturally and simply, flowerlike, or as a tree grows. It will not be at discord. It will never argue or dispute. It will not prove things. It will know everything. And yet it will not busy itself about knowledge. It will have wisdom. Its value will not be measured by material things. It will have nothing. And yet it will have everything, and whatever one takes from it, it will still have, so rich will it be. It will not be always meddling with others, or asking them to be like itself. It will love them because they will be different. And yet while it will not meddle with others, it will help all, as a beautiful thing helps us, by being what it is. The personality of man will be very wonderful. It will be as wonderful as the personality of a child. ('Soul', p. 1084)

In this essay on socialism, Wilde did not mention the name of the Chinese sage or his book, but he did indicate his indebtedness to a wise man, who was no doubt Zhuang Zi himself. Some of the sentences in the essay read like paraphrases of the *Chuang Tzu* texts, so that the ideas of Taoist utopianism sometimes appear more or less directly. One of these paraphrases expressed the idea of Inaction:

> ... in the present state of things in England, the people who do most harm are the people who try to do most good. ('Soul', p. 1079)

The philosophy of Inaction might not have been unfamiliar to European culture, but it was perhaps the reading of *Chuang Tzu* that prompted Wilde to return to this issue. His adoption of Taoist Inaction was shrewd and partial: as has been shown, in 'The Critic as Artist', Wilde admired the idea of Inaction without accepting Zhuang Zi's belief that Nature was superior to Man. He was more interested in the belief that human development should not be governed by an ossified administration, so that freedom of imaginative creation could be left to flourish better. Having adopted some socialist ideas (such as 'converting private property into public wealth', see 'Soul', p. 1080), Wilde concentrated his argument on the development of

[15] Oscar Wilde, 'The Soul of Man under Socialism' (1891), in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (pp. 1079-1104), ed. F. B. Foreman (London: Collins, 1966). Hereafter 'Soul'.

Individualism as the key to freedom for Art. He paraphrased Zhuang Zi more precisely at this point:

> Individualism, then, is what through Socialism we are to attain. As a natural result the State must give up all idea of government. It must give it up because, as a wise man once said many centuries before Christ, there is such a thing as leaving mankind alone; there is no such thing as governing mankind. ('Soul', p. 1087)[16]

The Taoist utopia was philosophically complicated and involved with supernatural religions, but practically it was naïve since, in seeking attachment with Nature, it abandoned the human knowledge and wisdom which had been accumulated in the long course of civilisation. Wilde wished rather to change this accumulated knowledge and intellect than to abandon it completely. Inaction for Wilde was the awareness of the limitation of action, but what was not limited for him was the creativeness of imaginative ideas. So his utopia would first be realised in Art and then it would provide guidance for post-industrial society. This was how he first opened his mind to practical thoughts of redistributed ownership, and in the end, turned emphatically to individual freedom.

It may not be too much to say that the mystery of Chinese philosophy fascinated Wilde in his speculations on aesthetic matters. Even W. B. Yeats, who was known to be influenced by Arthur Waley's translation of Chinese poetry, sensed this oriental appeal in Wilde. When he was reviewing Wilde's *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*, Yeats commented:

> I had already heard that 'The Soul of Man under Socialism' was much read in the Young China party; and for long after I found myself meditating upon the strange destiny of certain books. ... His vogue in China would have touched him even more nearly, and I can almost hear his voice speaking of jade and powdered lacquer.[17]

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[16] The original text from Giles's translation (Chapter XI: On Letting Alone) reads:

> There has been such a thing as letting mankind alone; there has never been such a thing as governing mankind. (Giles, p. 119)

[17] Karl Beckson, ed., *Oscar Wilde: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 396.

§3.4 Embarking in Search for a Utopia

In *Women in Love*, Lawrence observed three situations which in fact covered both Taoist and Wilde's utopianism. First he looked back at the old utopia symbolised by the chair which Birkin and Ursula find in the market. It is a pretty, charming chair, a peculiar remnant in the country of jumble, and Birkin descants upon its harmonious structure and style:

> 'It is the fine unity of the lines that is so attractive - look, how they run and meet and counteract. - But of course the wooden seat is wrong - it destroys the perfect lightness and unity in tension the cane gave. - I like it though - ' (*Women*, p. 355)

They buy the chair, and Birkin continues to express his admiration of the old power it represents:

> 'When I see that clear, beautiful chair, and I think of England, even Jane Austen's England - it had living thoughts to unfold even then, and pure happiness in unfolding them. And now, we can only fish among the rubbish heaps for the remnants of their old expression. There is no production in us now, only sordid and foul mechanicalness.' (*Women*, p. 355)

But this modern couple certainly do not want to live in the past. They also hate the present, but are not sure where their future is. A pilgrimage, in search of a 'complete place' of their own with 'natural grandeur', is soon to start, and so they decide to give the chair away and travel abroad to look for a perfect home. Significantly they present the chair to a young couple, whom Birkin regards as 'Children of men'. When he observes that 'The meek shall inherit the earth.'(*Women*, p. 361), he certainly believes that the woman's pregnancy has bound the couple to the land. The young couple can only wait calmly for a change in life with the arrival of their child. They may by chance find a utopia in the land, but it is impossible for Birkin and Ursula to create there the new life they seek.

The young couple stand for the second situation, which is to take up the burdens that the first utopian circumstance has left for them. There

might be happiness in inheriting the land and in enjoying their unity as in the first two generations of the Brangwen family. But this second situation cannot produce individualism either. Man and woman are united, perhaps retain a harmony, but they do not have independence. They have to commit their life to their unity and suffer whatever threatens to break it. In his focus on relationships under the third utopian circumstance, Lawrence is searching for individual independence, a free soul first in its own perfection and then united with another soul in their completion. These souls can be bound by no land or territory, nor can they belong to any material category. They are travelling to find the third situation - a utopianism with a natural balance and a creative unity.

So this dramatic search begins with Birkin and Ursula, travelling from the old world to the new with the sea of death in between. It is a sea of darkness, full of danger and fear, which can be overcome only by their confidence and determination, foreseeing the light of the future in prospect:

> In Ursula the sense of the unrealised world ahead triumphed over everything. In the midst of this profound darkness, there seemed to glow on her heart the effulgence of a paradise unknown and unrealised. Her heart was full of the most wonderful light, golden like honey of darkness, sweet like the warmth of day, a light which was not shed on the world, only on the unknown paradise towards which she was going, a sweetness of habitation, a delight of living quite unknown, but hers infallibly. (*Women*, p. 388)

To find this undiscovered and unrealised world requires the adventurers to maintain a spiritual and sensual balance, in which natural desire is not aroused by material existence, but by a primal call for eternity. To complete this journey, a joint effort is also demanded: the adventurers must secure their independent personality as well as their sincere coordination. But *Women in Love* ends without Lawrence's utopian wish being realised. The snow-covered mountain tops are too isolated, too high above the actual world. The new world is pure, but it is also so cold that a permanent relationship cannot grow. Birkin and Ursula are sure of their love, but they

also fear that the unnatural coldness will congeal their feelings and their liberty. This is why Ursula suddenly feels strangled in her soul. She wants to leave immediately:

> She wanted to realise the miracle at once. She wanted at this instant to have done with the snow-world, the terrible static, ice-built mountain-tops. She wanted to see the dark earth, to smell its earthy fecundity, to see the patient wintry vegetation, to feel the sunshine touch a response in the buds. (*Women*, p. 434)

As for Birkin, he does not want to be snowed up like Gerald. His heart and love will become frozen unless he resumes communication with human beings in general. He misses his relationship with Gerald, who represents a world he has retreated from or failed to win, and the new world still lacks a complete love. Only an environment full of natural force and warmth could satisfy Lawrence's ideal utopia.

As this comparative section has revealed, the utopianists were lonely fighters. Zhuang Zi appreciated the good old days, but none of his civilised Chinese would be willing to follow him back. Wilde took up the contemporary fashion for socialism but carefully confined it in his ivory tower, so that he might be admired by the intellectuals, but not followed by the mob. It is doubtful if Lawrence ever attempted to build an ivory tower. In dismissing the past, he wished to find a utopia for ordinary people, brought up from his social background. He preached at them to break their old attachments, and encouraged them to establish independence and individualism. From time to time, he called on Nature for salvation like a cheerful and confident Taoist, but eventually sought for spiritual regeneration to cure his pessimistic failure. Sexuality always played an essential role in his utopia, since he had found it a potent force in Nature and in human relationships.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FOUNDATION OF A MULTI-CULTURAL SYMBOLISM

§4.1 Edward Carpenter and Influence of Orientalism

The similarity between Lawrence's utopian doctrine which opposes modern civilisation and the Taoist theory of *Yang-Yin* balance and the superiority of Nature is, I believe, not just coincidental. The influence of Chinese philosophy on Lawrence must have first come from ideas prevailing at the time. As has been revealed by Emile Delavenay[1], some of Lawrence's ideas were originally taken from Edward Carpenter, who was fascinated by oriental philosophies and quotes Lao Zi in his works[2]. Lawrence had never met Carpenter personally, but was almost certainly familiar with Carpenter and his works. The similarity between their attitudes towards sexuality can be seen from Carpenter's sympathetic comments on the banned *Rainbow*, which he borrowed from William Hopkin, a friend of both Carpenter and Lawrence (cf. Delavenay, pp. 30-32). Although the 'Checklist of Lawrence's Reading' (cf. Sagar, pp. 59-126) does not name any books by Carpenter, Delavenay has suggested that it is highly possible that Lawrence read Carpenter in his youth, when Jessie Chambers borrowed *Love's Coming of Age* from Alice Dax, an Eastwood suffragette and a close friend of Lawrence (cf. Delavenay, pp. 21-22). Delavenay has argued that Lawrence must have read Carpenter from 1905

[1] Emile Delavenay, *D. H. Lawrence and Edward Carpenter: A Study of Edwardian Transition* (London: Heinemann, 1971). Hereafter Delavenay.

[2] I have found a few references to Lao Zi in two of Carpenter's works: *The Art of Creation* and *Intermediate Types among Primitive Folk*. But I have also noticed that Carpenter spelt Lao Zi in two different ways: Lao-tzu and Lao-tsze, which suggests that he must have consulted the two important translations available at his time by James Legge (1891) and by John Chalmers (1868). Cf. §2.2.

or 1906 onwards, because his influence can be traced in *Study of Thomas Hardy* and *The Rainbow* (cf. Delavenay, pp. 36-37). It was not until 1916 that 'the streams of thought of the two men diverge in certain respects' (Delavenay, p. 9). This is the year when Lawrence started to rewrite *Women in Love* after the publication and the suppression of *The Rainbow*. Until this, Carpenter's influence on Lawrence can be detected in his ideas on democracy, woman suffrage, human sexuality and oriental philosophy of Nature. This influence gradually worked its way into Lawrence's theory of 'pollyanalytics' in his two psychoanalytic essays.

It is worth pointing out Carpenter's interest in the ideas of oriental philosophers, because it was probably these ideas that launched Lawrence into his search for a natural utopia. Carpenter announced in the 'Preface' of his *Art of Creation*[3] his intention of revealing a new philosophy, which was to be 'a great synthesis for all human thought on the ancient and ever-engrossing problem of Creation' (*Art*, p. vii). As well as to certain Western thinkers and modern scientists, Carpenter also refers to the *Upanishads*, Buddha and Lao Zi in formulating his ideas for the creation and resurrection of human civilisation. Later in the book, Carpenter reveals that the purpose of synthesising Eastern and Western thought is to achieve a universal balance in Nature, which will not only reconcile man and woman, but also reconcile human civilisation to the law of nature:

> We must in the future look to a restoration of the harmony between (roughly speaking) the Mind and the Body, the Brain and the Great Sympathetic, the conscious and the subconscious Man. ... The *recovery* of the organic consciousness, the realisation of the *transparency* of the body and the splendour of its intuitions, is not an impossible feat. The Hindus and other Orientals have in these directions, partly by deliberate practice, come into touch with and command of regions whose existence the Western peoples hardly suspect. In the West, the modern upgrowth of Woman and her influence will ere long make possible a Humanity which shall harmonise even in each individual the masculine and the feminine elements, and bring back at last the Brain and the self-conscious mind

[3] Edward Carpenter, *The Art of Creation: Essays on the Self and Its Powers* (1904) (London: George Allen, 1907). Hereafter *Art*.

> into relation with that immense storehouse of agelong knowledge and power which is represented by the physical body in the individual, as it is represented by the communal life and instinct in the mass-people. (*Art*, pp. 109-110)

The idea of bodily harmony expressed in the above quotation reiterates the general oriental belief in yogic meditation on physical and mental balance, which is practised in sexual relationships by Taoist masters. They maintain that the female possesses more powerful essences of Nature, which in harmonious sexual intercourse will be passed on to the male, thus helping him to achieve balance of body and mind. But Carpenter is also concerned with the integrity of society, given the emergence of modern woman, who in theory will show no physical inferiority to man. Instead, she will restore nature to man and harmony to the individual. Carpenter seems to have intentionally applied the Taoist theory of male-female harmony to his own advocacy of social equality. He was very much concerned with the balance between the Mind and the Body in the emancipated individual, and he quotes Lao Zi in the book's dedication, along with a line from his *Towards Democracy*, to point out that the principle of his social reform is based on the guidance of Nature's origin:

> These two things, the spiritual and the material, though we call them by different names, in their Origin are one and the same. (*Art*, p. v)

Although Lawrence never mentioned Lao Zi the way Carpenter did, he seems to have shown a new interest in Chinese culture. An episode in *Women in Love* shows Lawrence's attempted approach to Chinese art and philosophy. In Chapter VIII, 'Breadalby', Hermione finds Birkin copying a Chinese drawing of geese in his room 'with much skill and vividness' (*Women*, p. 88). When she asks him why he does not do something original, Birkin first replies, 'One gets more of China, copying this picture, than reading all the books.' Then follows Birkin's, and certainly Lawrence's own, philosophical explanation of a balanced art in Nature:

> 'I know what centres they live from - what they perceive and feel - the hot, stinging centrality of a goose in the flux of cold water and mud - the curious bitter stinging heat of a goose's blood, entering their own blood like an inoculation of corruptive fire - fire of the cold-burning mud - the lotus mystery.' (*Women*, p. 89)

Lawrence's interest in oriental philosophies has already been seen in 'The Crown', in which he argues that the cosmic principle requires the balance of opposing forces and that they survive not as winners and losers, but in a reconciliation and harmony. These ideas of sexual, as well as cosmic consummation, are obviously incorporated into his revision of *Women in Love* in 1916, one year after 'The Crown' was published. But Lawrence's further search for oriental philosophies and his departure from Carpenter's influence on social reforms led him to seek a natural utopia which gradually diverged from social reality. To explore the evolution of *Women in Love*, I should like to discuss his essay, 'The Two Principles', which he wrote while finally revising the novel[4].

[4] After the split of 'The Sister' and the publication of *The Rainbow*, Lawrence did not return to the *Women in Love* material until late April 1916, when he started the fourth version. Further revisions were made until September 1919 when he finished the sixth version.

§4.2 Cosmic Principles of Sexual Consummation

'The Two Principles' is an essay which reiterates the theory of duality Lawrence had already explored in 'The Crown'. Having emphasised his idea on the balance and compromise of two opposing forces, Lawrence here further developed an idea of consummation in the universe, as a balance between man and Nature. He sought a correspondence between the material cosmos and the human soul, which he believed Christianity had failed to address (cf. 'Two', p. 227). Lawrence's discovery of this idea was based on his studies in pagan religious systems, in which included not only ancient Greek philosophies, but also Oriental symbolism, such as Egyptian symbols of life, and the sex division of Chinese mysteries. When he again applied the Creation myth to life and existence, Lawrence shifted his focus from the eternal separation of two opposing forces to their joint efforts in productivity:

> Every new thing is born from the consummation of the two halves of the universe, the two great halves being the cosmic waters and the cosmic fire of the First Day. In procreation, the two germs of the male and female epitomise the two cosmic principles, as these are held with the life spell. In the sun and the material waters the two principles exist as independent elements. ('Two', p. 230)

The concept of consummation pushes forward the theory of duality. Fire and water are now treated as eternally separated by the first division in the Chaos. They are therefore independent elements, each having its own perfect form. On the First Day of Creation, there existed only two such elements - Fire and Water. But the creation went on to produce all creatures in the same format of this duality. On the Second Day, the two elements were multiplied into four - Earth, Air, Fire and Water. These four elements are also composed as pairs of opposing forces. Fire and Water can fight either in Air or on Earth. Air and Earth can also be set to contradict each other. But the cooperation of these independent elements is more important

than their conflict, which is still the absolute existence. Instead of destroying and eliminating each other, the conflicting existence produces more opposing pairs. So consummation is no longer the highest ideal to be achieved, because it has become a form, a law of existence. It will be replaced by the virtue of productivity on various levels of consummation. Lawrence thus introduced an idea of polarity as an additional principle of duality, while defining the attribute of different kinds of consummation in his essay:

> The coming-together of the sexes may be the soft, delicate union of pure creation, or it may be the tremendous conjunction of opposition, a vivid struggle, as fire struggles with water in the sun. From either of these consummations birth takes place. But in the first case it is the birth of a softly rising and budding soul, wherein the two principles commune in gentle union, so that the soul is harmonious and at one with itself. In the second case it is the birth of a disintegrative soul, wherein the two principles wrestle in their eternal opposition: a soul finite, momentaneous, active in the universe as a unit of sundering. ('Two', p. 234)

The two kinds of consummation are similar to the relationships of the two couples in *Women in Love*. The Birkin-Ursula relation stands for the 'gentle union', while the Gerald-Gudrun represents the 'eternal opposition'. Both relationships are forms of consummation, but the former is endorsed by Lawrence because it imitates the productive union of Nature, whereas the latter represents the conflict of disintegrative souls, which Lawrence always opposed. In the novel, there is one force excluded from this consummation. That is Birkin's former mistress, Hermione Roddice. She has exercised dominance and power over Birkin and would like to possess him by undermining his independence. If Birkin submitted to her power, he would be defeated and the potential consummation would be destroyed, so he seeks for a new balance with Ursula. In Lawrence's view, Hermione stands for the negative side of the female sexual unconscious, which defies the dignity of individual independence in the male, and violates the privacy of his psychic realm. On the other hand, Ursula, who has struggled

strenuously in *The Rainbow* to identify her sexual self, now comes to find her proper position in both social and sexual life. But Birkin's first response to her love is inert, because he has been confused in his intellectual, sexual and spiritual choices of love. In his mind, he has formed a theory of marriage as a union in which two elements are independent but have to cooperate in harmony. He asserts that love is a bond, but he does not want to bind his manhood to it. He replies to Ursula:

> '... Love is a direction which excludes all other directions. It's a freedom *together*, if you like.'
> '... it is the law of creation. One is committed. One must commit oneself to a conjunction with the other - forever. But it is not selfless - it is a maintaining of the self in mystic balance and integrity - like a star balanced with another star.' (*Women*, p. 152)

Birkin doubts whether he will be able to find the right woman to fulfil such a union. His fear of female domination is symbolically conveyed when he throws stones to destroy the moon's reflection in a pool. In order to maintain his balance with woman in duality, he explores his relationship with man to find a consummation in polarity. We see him wrestling naked with Gerald to obtain psychological power through bodily contact and prove his sexual as well as social integrity. When Ursula finally saves him from fear and revives his love, confidence and sexuality, he is still able to safeguard his independent personality. Female sexuality in Ursula has exerted a productive effort towards the success of their union, which is to create the man but will not interfere his efforts in recreating his life. So between Birkin and Ursula, a fourfold consummation is reached. Retention of male dominance and realisation of female emancipation are jointly fulfilled. As a result, love is complete both spiritually and sexually. The female sexual unconscious thus finds its position in a still male-dominant, but much-reformed society. This ideal is indicated by Lawrence at the end of this essay:

> Any man who is perfect and fulfilled lives in fourfold activity. He knows the sweet spiritual communion, and he is at the same time a sword to enforce the spiritual level; he knows the tender unspeakable sensual communion, but he is a tiger against anyone who would abate his pride and his liberty. ('Two', p. 237)

Just as Birkin and Ursula's union stands for the positive side of sexuality, Gerald and Gudrun's relation shows the destructive forces created by awakening of sexuality. Gerald seeks for both power and sensual pleasure. His nature is firmly attached to the mining industry and is revealed by his ruthless treatment of animals and the miners. Like Gerald, Gudrun also lacks tenderness in her personality. She is physically attractive, but because of her ambition to become a successful artist, she is self-conscious, craving and conceited. Her love for Gerald comes out of sexual passion, which makes her desirable as a mistress, but not as a wife. She cherishes her independent experience and defends her own freedom against Gerald's possessive lust. She accepts no obligation in her relationship with Gerald and turns to Loerke simply to reassure herself of her own resolution to be disengaged from Gerald, overlooking the sterility of the new liaison. So Gudrun's sexual passion exerts her freedom towards the destruction of her union with man, while Lawrence asserts that the significance of sexual liberation should lie with the perfection of the freed souls and eventually head towards their communion:

> There in the sexual passion the very blood surges into communion, in the terrible sensual oneing. There all the darkness of the deeps, the primal flood, is perfected, as the two great waves of separated blood surge to consummation, the dark infinitude. ('Two', p. 236)

In the case of Birkin and Ursula, the union is so formed. In spite of her awareness of female independence, Ursula shows her willingness to join Birkin and maintain their union. That makes their love affair a success. Gudrun's desertion of Gerald is sympathetically criticised by Lawrence as a unique case of female dominance. He recognises Gudrun's awakening into her sexual individuality as a sign of social progress and admits that the

driving force behind the emancipation is powerful. But he also points out that the awakening of female sexuality could possibly cause social disintegration and even more problems for modern women after their emancipation. In the case of Gudrun's absolute demand for independence and her rejection of union with man, Lawrence predicts the achievement of female emancipation as a force of potential destruction.

Lawrence's essays are the best glosses on his fictions. And *vice versa* his fictions are the best imaged embodiments of the theories in his essays. Lawrence raises the issue of sexuality not only by referring it to human beings, but also by relating it to the law of nature as it relates to the fundamental formation and creation of the universe. As we have seen in 'The Crown' and 'The Two Principles', the biblical story of creation exemplifies Nature's law of a harmonious balance between two opposing forces. The ancient Greek beliefs about the formation of the universe with four elements also has to be fitted to satisfy the ubiquitous belief that only balance can maintain a harmonious existence. The theory of the male-female harmony expressed so emphatically by Lawrence in these two essays is also somehow congenial to the *Yang-Yin* theory on balance, which is known as the basic principle of Taoism and its sacred understanding of the universe.

§4.3 Independence and Union Between Man and Woman

The relentlessness of modern industry and the upheaval of the women's emancipation movement in the wake of the war shocked Lawrence, and forced him to recognise a crisis in masculine morality. His affection for Nature, however, inspired him further to confirm his philosophical thinking. He realised there should be a new morality that would favourably enhance a steady and productive relationship between

man and woman, but his painful experiences in searching for such a relationship exemplified a protracted struggle both for man and for woman. Throughout his characterisations in *Women in Love*, this struggle became conspicuous and intelligible.

Lawrence understood that the ultimate ideal relationship for the fulfilment of human beings and the development of civilisation should be initiated and established by productive sexual relationships between man and woman. So in *Women in Love* he was more concerned with the union of the couples than with the questions of female emancipation which dominate *The Rainbow*. Through his characters, Lawrence posited a balanced relationship between the sexes and also a balance between sexual yearnings and spiritual fulfilment. Like Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers*, Rupert Birkin in *Women in Love* resembles Lawrence himself in many aspects. That enables us to presume that Birkin is a further treatment of Lawrentian man fighting for freedom from women's control. Here Birkin's unconscious fear of maternal possessiveness is embodied in his resentment against Hermione Roddice, who claims him as her weak dependent and treats him as 'a sulky boy' (*Women*, p. 88) trying to tear away from her dominion. The conflict is described in many scenes such as in the class-room (cf. *Women*, Chapter III) and at the Breadalby party (cf. *Women*, Chapter VIII). Birkin's attempt to fight for his freedom irritates Hermione deeply, and culminates in an explosion of violence. To consummate her voluptuous ecstasy, she flings a paper-weight ball of lapis lazuli at his head, in a desperate attempt to possess through killing, as Salomé possessed her victim lover. But Hermione does not succeed. Her slowness and left-handedness deadens the crash (cf. *Women*, p. 105). The Breadalby event reveals Birkin's innermost conflict. He is fed up with Hermione's manipulation, while tearing away

from her orbit, he is also for a moment scared of any other contacts with human beings:

> What a dread he had of mankind, of other people! It amounted almost to horror, to a sort of dream terror - his horror of being observed by some other people. (*Women*, p. 108)

He insists that he should be a separate soul. Before he can turn to Ursula to regain his confidence in life, he finds that nature gives him more strength to resist the manipulation of Hermione. His naked exposure in the long grass and the young fir-trees tempers his physical and spiritual integrity. Nature, as he feels, is 'more delicate and more beautiful than the touch of any woman' (*Women*, p. 107). He wishes to be on an island, free, glad, and secluded among its 'vegetation' (cf. *Women*, p. 108). This island, however, is bound not to be a place of seclusion. Ursula will be there with him (cf. *Women*, Chapter XI) and rescue him from the crisis of his inner conflict.

After Birkin escapes Hermione's control, he is vigilantly on guard in his new relationship with Ursula. He wants to hold it as 'a pure balance of two single beings' (*Women*, p. 148) and asserts that two people in love should be two perfect individuals. But still he feels thrilled when he is conscious of the Great Mother, 'claiming back the man she had borne in suffering' (*Women*, p. 200). In this fear, he regards marriage as 'a dreadful bondage' (*Women*, p. 199) and the moon as a supernatural female demon (*Women*, p. 247). He regards sex as a limited and imperfect 'process of singling into individuality' (*Women*, p. 201) to separate man and woman, and is convinced that they should be perfectly polarised in this separation and eventually become pure man and pure woman. His ambition is to have a 'perfect union with a woman - sort of ultimate marriage' (*Women*, p. 58), which he has believed in as his way to salvation. In Ursula, Birkin finds such a possibility. His speculation before proposing to her specifies this ambition:

> There was the Paradisal entry into pure, single being, the individual soul taking precedence over love and desire for union, stronger than any pangs of emotion, a lovely state of free proud singleness, which accepts the obligation of the permanent connection with others, and with the other, submits to the yoke and leash of love, but never forfeits its own proud individual singleness, even while it loves and yields. (*Women*, p. 254)

But at this time, Ursula is not so ready. She wants Birkin to love her exclusively and 'absolutely, with complete self-abandon' (*Women*, p. 264). She dislikes Birkin's idea of marriage beyond love. So, when Birkin tells her that he has to go to Shortlands to say goodbye to Hermione, Ursula breaks into a fit of passion (cf. *Women*, pp. 305-310). Her jealousy reveals to Birkin the vital difference between the two women, one assumes a spiritual leadership while the other a physical one. He now realises that:

> Hermione saw herself as the perfect Idea, to which all men must come: and Ursula was the perfect Womb, the bath of birth, to which all men must come! (*Women*, p. 309)

He feels that Ursula's absolute demand for a physically devoted love is reasonable but sometimes horrible. Immediately after their impulsive passion is spent, their furious intensity calms down. They both feel relieved and immersed in a perfect feeling of intimacy. Ursula meditates on the mysterious force which brings them together:

> ... this was neither love nor passion. It was the daughters of men coming back to the Sons of God, the strange inhuman Sons of God who are in the beginning. (*Women*, p. 313)

There is a metaphorical submission, implied and insisted upon by Lawrence's philosophy in the above quotation. But it also reveals his recognition of rebirth through 'the perfect Womb'. By this rebirth, he does not mean attachment to family life as symbolised by chair (cf. *Women*, Chapter XXVI), but an ultimate marriage of independent individuals.

This is Lawrence's principle of spiritual perfection for modern man and woman, and his vision of a sexual utopia, in which the modern family can acquire its balanced integrity. He hopes that people with fulfilled individuality in such an ideal society will not merely want each other for

material necessities, but most importantly, love each other as independent and polarised individuals so that their relationship can promote social humanity. Lawrence stressed balance and productivity in his presentation of sexual love, and portrayed Birkin as an ideal Lawrentian man who underwent this experience of fulfilment.

Lawrence also tried to illuminate the philosophical meaning of love. He portrayed love as the coming-together of two individuals, a oneness of joy and praise. He understood that a man and a woman could not unite unless they were previously apart, fulfilling their individuality. Lawrence's idea of love is a balance between two individuals, and at the same time a balance between human beings and the cosmos. He stressed the first balance more strongly than the second, because he was more consciously aware of the conflicts between sexes. Only when he was disheartened by obstinate social conventions, did he start to emphasise the balance with the cosmos to achieve a consolatory sense of eternity. Lawrence's idea of love came from his observation of contemporary society and was created by his perception of individualism and the supernatural.

Lawrence believed in the beneficial strength of sexuality, but he was also aware that it could be a dangerous force. The significance of sexual love does not exist for its own sake. Love inspires imagination and creativity, but it can also be misleading. Relationships in their traditional form had become insufficient to sustain the wholeness of life. It required a balance which took account of a new morality. In his endeavour to create a new morality, Lawrence despaired of the defects in individuals. Because he never lost confidence in the capacity of individual love to win freedom, he always attempted to overcome these defects and sought for wider possibilities for fulfilment. In *Women in Love*, he endeavoured to solve this problem by establishing a devoted friendship between men.

§4.4 Symbolic Meaning of Homosexuality

Lawrence's dislike for mother-love and female dominance is obviously in his novels. He had always been very sensitive in his relations with women, because he was conscious that women's possessive desire was a threat to men's freedom and integrity. In contrast to his criticism of lesbian love in *The Rainbow*, which results in no freedom or emancipation, Lawrence presents Birkin's homosexual contact with Gerald as an alternative relationship, which not only allays his agony and fear of female control, but also directs him towards self realisation. Lawrence's attitudes towards lesbian and homosexual loves are not consistent with each other. While lesbian love was definitely treated as an unproductive relationship, Lawrence's opinion about homosexuality was often ambivalent or even obscure, another result of Carpenter's influence, as seen by Delavenay:

> But a major and very significant difference between Lawrence's two novels is that in *The Rainbow* homosexuality is presented in an unfavourable light, in the characters of Winifred Inger, of the younger Tom Brangwen, whom Winifred ultimately marries, and of Skrebensky whose friendship with Tom is slightly shadowy; whereas in *Women in Love*, especially in its suppressed 'Prologue', homosexuality is endowed with a power of fascination which suggests a marked change in outlook between March 1915 and the summer of the following year. While this conversion may be due to reasons other than literary, it is not unconnected with the persistent influence of *The Intermediate Sex*, both on *Women in Love* and on later works. (Delavenay, p. 215)

In the creation of his fictional character, Lawrence attempted to relate Gerald to the power of industry, so that Birkin's physical as well as mental contact with Gerald could reveal Lawrence's positive recognition of industrial power as well as his condemnation of its numbing mechanisation. Lawrence had seen the mining industry in Eastwood and knew very well how it could ruin the natural environment and enslave the people. Anti-industrialism can be dated back to early nineteenth-century Romanticism. But Lawrence's hatred of industry was accompanied by his awareness of its

efficient inhuman power. He craved the tranquil countryside life as the Romantics did, but did not expect that society would abandon the power and prosperity that industry could assure. He wished to keep power and humanity side by side in reconciliation and was not happy when he found them at war with each other. This was the ambivalence he expressed through homosexuality.

In Lawrence's Birkin-Gerald relationship, Gerald represents a captain of industry. He has strong will-power and an advanced knowledge of industrial management. Lawrence does not simply portray him as an unproductive business man. He recognises the power and the effectiveness of industry, but exposes its lack of sympathy and real emotion. Gerald is a complicated character. He is the child of an unsuccessful marriage. In childhood, he kills his brother by accident. To escape from a family he hates and fears, he explores the Amazon and serves in the army, and then returns to take over his father's mining industry and brings it to affluence. Lawrence has a negative opinion of his success. Focusing all modern man's psychological defects and humiliations in Gerald, Lawrence makes him an Oedipus, a Cain, a soldier and at last an industrialist. He uses these literary, social and psychological backgrounds to sketch such a symbolic character, who has a strong possessive desire and a blind passion to conquer and to own. To reveal this will-power, Lawrence describes how cruelly he treats his mare by forcing her to stand quivering in the face of a fast approaching train. As this episode reveals, Gerald does not really love anything but wants everything to be subdued to his control and power. Because of this urgent pressure, he always feels an insecurity which makes him cruel and violent. He wants sensual pleasure to comfort his nerves. Lawrence describes how this figure of gruesome desire steps out of his father's graveyard and then immediately seeks consolation from Gudrun. Their love

ends up in failure, because his tension prevents him from reaching an understanding with Gudrun, the woman. Lawrence's awareness of the contradiction in this industrial dominance is reflected in his protagonist character, Rupert Birkin, who feels a steady relationship between man and woman insufficient and wants to establish a relationship with a man like Gerald too. Because the power represented by Gerald is ferocious but indisputable, Birkin also wishes to test the integrity of this power. In his wrestling contest with Gerald, Birkin discovers the potential power of darkness and offers to join force with him on terms of love and friendship. But Gerald believes in nothing but his power; he turns down Birkin's suggestion of a broader understanding between human beings. At Gerald's death, Birkin believes that although Gerald has rejected his cooperation, he himself will have to hold on to it:

> He [Birkin] forgot her [Ursula], and turned to look at Gerald. With head oddly lifted, like a man who draws his head back from an insult, half haughtily, he watched the cold, mute, material face. It had a bluish cast. It sent a shaft like ice through the heart of the living man. Cold, mute, material! Birkin remembered how once Gerald had clutched his hand, with a warm, momentaneous grip of final love. For one second - then let go again, let go for ever. If he had kept true to that clasp, death would not have mattered. Those who die, and dying still can love, still believe, do not die. They live still in the beloved. Gerald might still have been living in the spirit with Birkin, even after death. He might have lived with his friend, a further life. (*Women*, p. 480)

So, the death of Gerald is Lawrence's symbolic solution in which he wishfully subdues the figure of industry with the boundless snow of eternal Nature. Lawrence was fully aware of the double-sided characteristics of industry - its remarkable capability and its insensitive power. He consciously realised the existence of this power and ascertained that he should not ignore its force being so effectively practised in his contemporary life. We can therefore discern that in the character of Gerald, Lawrence's attitude towards industry grew more sophisticated. He recognised the indispensable necessity of industry as well as its lustful

impetus of getting something material done and profits made. By associating homosexuality with industry, he suggested that this relationship could broaden the sphere of community in modern society, whereby a spiritually robust man could derive a natural power from industry to achieve a balance with emotion, sympathy and sincerity.

§4.5 The Making of 'Pollyanalytics'

Carpenter's influence continued to appear in Lawrence's later works. Since his divergence from Carpenter in 1916, Lawrence had been searching for a natural utopia for his own group of free souls. This utopia was cautious, sometimes even dubious, of Carpenter's advocacy of democracy, woman suffrage and social equality, but was seeking for independent, natural, and even perfect men and women, like Birkin and Ursula in *Women in Love*. This unique approach to social, but mainly moral, reform was initiated by Carpenter's great synthesis of all human thought. In the 'Foreword' to *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Lawrence refers to 'the universities of China', a reference which he must have found in Carpenter's assumption that the Chinese Academy succeeded in directing the thought of the mass by assisting their self-determination[4]. But Lawrence's emphasis, in the early 1920s, had already shifted into a more sophisticated understanding of oriental philosophies. Apart from Carpenter, Lawrence had read James Frazer, Blavatsky and Pryse, and obtained rich references to exotic cultures. Having been fascinated as well as preoccupied by various grotesque ways of approaching Nature, Lawrence now began to call his philosophy 'pollyanalytics', an idea similar to Carpenter's 'synthetic' thought. He used it as a principal methodology in writing his two essays,

[4] Cf. Edward Carpenter, 'India, China and Ourselves', *I. L. P. News* (July 1900), (London: Independent Labour Party). Carpenter confirmed his admiration of the Chinese Academy in his pamphlet, *British Aristocracy and the House of Lords* (London: A. C. Fifield, 1908).

Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (1921) and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922)[5]. Some of his pollyanalytical elements, I believe, show signs of Chinese influence.

At several places in *Fantasia*, for instance, Lawrence mentions Chinese perceptions on human survival and was trying to comprehend the mysteries of this ancient culture:

> Then came the melting of the glaciers, and the world flood. The refugees from the drowned continents fled to the high places of America, Europe, Asia, and the Pacific Isles. And some degenerated naturally into cave men, neolithic and palaeolithic creatures, and some retained their marvellous innate beauty and life-perfection, as the South Sea Islanders, and some wandered savage in Africa, and some, like Druids or Etruscans or Chaldeans or Amerindians or Chinese, refused to forget, but taught the old wisdom, only in its half-forgotten, symbolic forms. More or less forgotten, as knowledge: remembered as ritual, gesture and myth-story. (*Fantasia*, p. 13)

The world flood, comparable to the biblical story, is also recorded in Chinese mythologies, legends and even history books. But Lawrence's association of the flood with the old wisdom in symbolic forms suggests that he might have heard of the Chinese legend about ancient enigmatic symbols endowed by Heaven. The earliest account of this is found in *Yi Jing*, which James Legge translated as *The Yi King* in his series of Confucian texts. One passage concerning the heavenly inscribed symbols reads:

> Heaven hangs out its (brilliant) figures from which are seen good fortune and bad, and the sages made their emblematic interpretations accordingly. The Ho gave forth the map, and the Lo the writing, of (both of) which the sages took advantage.[6]

This heavenly power is Nature, which endowed the Chinese sages with the map and the writing, both of which were inscribed in symbols and emerged

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[5] D. H. Lawrence, *Fantasia of the Unconscious* and *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971). Hereafter respectively as *Fantasia* and *Psycho*. The two essays were first published in two separate books by Thomas Seltzer in New York, but the Penguin two-in-one version does not print them in their chronological order.

[6] James Legge, tr., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism* (part 2: *The Yi King*), in *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 16, ed. F. Max Müller (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1882), p. 374.

respectively from two rivers, the Ho and the Lo, now known as the Yellow River and the Luo River. According to some historical records[7], the Ho map was consulted by Fu Xi, a legendary ruler of China, in the making of the Eight Diagrams, formed on the basis of a combination between *Yang* and *Yin*; and the Lo writing was endowed to the Great Yu, a Chinese hero, known for his leadership in saving the people from the flood. The method of his fighting the flood was different from that used by his father, who tried to block the way where the water flowed. This failed, and Yu adopted a new method, by which water was diverted into the sea. Yu owed his success to the revelation he received from the Lo writing, through which he found a method corresponding to the law of nature rather than against Nature. This story is also recorded in *The Shu Jing*, another Confucian classic, with some variations:

> ... his son Yu rose up (and entered on the same undertaking). To him Heaven gave the Great Plan with its nine divisions, and the unvarying principles (of its method) were set forth in their due order.[8]

Legge's translation also includes an introductory note about the Great Plan, pointing out the significance of the Lo writing in revealing to Yu the meaning of the heavenly symbols, that not only led to his successful conquest of the flood, but also provided him with the great model for his kingdom:

> Heaven or God gave the Plan with its divisions to Yu. To explain the way in which the gift was made, there is a tradition about a mysterious tortoise that appeared in the waters of the Lo, bearing well-defined marks on its back from one to nine, and that thereupon Yu determined the meaning of those marks and of their numbers, and completed the nine divisions of the Plan. (Legge, p. 138)

Apart from associating the great flood with ancient symbols, Lawrence also showed his interest in China in other passages of *Fantasia*.

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[7] Ban Gu, *Han Shu [The History of the Han Dynasty]* (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Press, 1970), p. 1315. Hereafter *Han*.

[8] James Legge, tr., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism* (part 1: *The Shu King*), in *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 3, ed. F. Max Müller (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1879), p. 140. Hereafter Legge.

His lack of confidence in modern Western society and his initial pursuit of a utopia of his uniquely defined civilisation had been a theme in *Women in Love*. Having made no success, he now felt that his utopia should contain different elements of civilisation drawn from various cultures. He was not prepared to ground his belief in any single one of the cultures or civilisations he had studied. Instead, he set about analysing them before adding them to his original ingredients. While he compared other cultures with his own and criticised each of them, he was actually attempting to select from their elements to produce a perfect mixture of his own:

> We have fallen now into the mistake of idealism. Man always falls into one of the three mistakes. In China, it is tradition. And in the South Seas, it seems to have been impulse. Ours is idealism. Each of the three modes is a true life-mode. But any one, alone or dominant, brings us to destruction. We must depend on the wholeness of our being, ultimately only on that, which is our Holy Ghost within us.(*Fantasia*, p. 134)

This is Lawrence's analysis of ancient Chinese culture, in which he found the disadvantages of the old wisdom. He believed that tradition had been a heavy burden on the Chinese themselves and hindered them from developing their civilisation. But Lawrence did not neglect the possibility that the old wisdom with its symbolic forms could somehow restore a primary power to modern man, who, after surviving the confusion of his misorientated ideals of material success, would eventually become a natural individual. Lawrence closely observed the symbols of oriental culture and admired their potential. He hoped that his utopians could adopt the natural power of oriental symbolism to revive degenerated modern civilisation, rather than leave the task to the hands of other people:

> The world is very full of people, but all fixed in civilizations of their own, and they all have all our vices, all our mechanisms, and all our means of destruction. This time, the leading civilization cannot die out as Greece, Rome, Persia died. It must suffer a great collapse, maybe. But it must carry through all the collapse the living clue to the next civilization. It's no good thinking we can leave it to China or Japan or India or Africa - any of the great swarms. (*Fantasia*, p. 180)

As far as the titles are concerned, the two essays on the unconscious are Lawrence's refutations of Freudianism, which he first heard from Frieda and her sister Else's circle in Germany[9]. Their long arguments about psychoanalysis disclosed to Lawrence that his problem had already been diagnosed by Freud as the Oedipus complex. Frieda also introduced him to some Freudian theorists. For more sophisticated Freudian theories, Lawrence's later indebtedness to his discussions with David Eder, a pioneering psychoanalyst[10], and to his reading of Barbara Low, also a professional Freudian[11], is undeniable. Both of them became friends with Lawrence in 1914 and substantially widened Lawrence's understanding of Freudianism[12]. But it has not yet been established that Lawrence had read any of Freud's writings before Brill's translations came out in 1922 (cf. Sagar, p. 94). In 1918, he borrowed a book by Jung, probably *Psychology of the Unconscious*, from Barbara Low[13], but does not seem to have made any comments to show he was familiar with it until 1929 (cf. Sagar, p. 111). His knowledge of Freudianism by 1920 was limited to these second-hand sources, though Trigant Burrow thought one of his students might have sent Lawrence a reprint of his paper, 'Psychoanalysis in Theory and in Life', which he read at an international conference in 1919 (cf. Nehls, vol. 3 [1925-1930], p. 147). Lawrence and Burrow had never met each other, but they entered into correspondence in 1925. On Christmas Day 1926, Lawrence wrote to Burrow and thanked him for the paper in a way that

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[9] Hilary Simpson, *D. H. Lawrence and Feminism* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), p. 91. Hereafter Simpson.

[10] Cf. Edward Nehls, ed., *D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography*, 3 vols. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1957), vol. 1 [1885-1919], p. 231. Hereafter Nehls.

[11] Cf. Simpson, p. 98. Here a footnote reads: 'Barbara Low's book *Psycho-Analysis: A Brief Account of the Freudian Theory* (Allen and Unwin, London, 1920) is a possible source for Lawrence's knowledge of Freudianism. He was sought out by Freudians after the publication of the 'Oedipal' *Sons and Lovers* in 1913.'

[12] Cf. Harry T. Moore, *The Priest of Love: A Life of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Heinemann, 1974), p. 164.

[13] James T. Boulton & Andrew Robertson, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol. 3 [October 1916 - June 1921] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 307. Hereafter *Letters 3*.

suggests he had only just read it for the first time[14]. So, if Lawrence had not read Freud before he started writing *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* in 1920, why was he tempted to write an essay on a Freudian topic? And furthermore, what encouraged him to expatiate on the same topic in another much longer essay - *Fantasia of the Unconscious* - in 1921? As we compare them today, we find the contents of these two essays similar. There appears no significant difference between them. But neither of them contains categorical criticisms of the original Freudian theories.

Lawrence's dislike of the prevailing theory of the Oedipal complex seems to be the main reason why he attacked Freud in his two essays on unconscious. The first essay starts in a satirical vein to reveal Lawrence's estimation of the damage caused by the trendy method of psychoanalysis:

> By this time psychoanalysis had become a public danger. The mob was on the alert. The Oedipus complex was a household word, the incest motive a commonplace of tea-table chat. (*Psycho*, p. 201)

This was the disturbance that Lawrence believed psychoanalysis had caused in society. Proper human relations in our society, Lawrence believed, should be based on each individual and his 'polarized connection with the other individual - or even other individuals.'(*Psycho*, p. 244) But Lawrence does not intend to refute Freud from a scientific point of view. He regards Freud as a scientist, but himself an artist, who is particularly concerned with things social and emotional rather than things physical and biological. Instead of defending his novel directly against any established Freudian criticism, Lawrence attempted to generalise the defects of the Oedipus theory as a whole. He thought psychoanalysis, apart from overstating the influence of the unconscious, was also too medical, and more suitable for treating psychiatric patients than enlightening artists. He claimed that his

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[14] Lawrence's letter reads:

> Many thanks for the paper - 'Psychoanalysis in Theory and in Life'. It's the first thing I've read for a long time that isn't out to bully somebody in some way or other. (*Letters 5*, p. 611)

unconscious *id* was not so creative in his writing, but it was his conscious self which predominantly participated in his literary creation. Lawrence admits that *Sons and Lovers* is a confession of his emotional attachment to his mother, but more importantly it is his commitment to the subject of love and sexuality. In this boldly presented and thinly disguised personal story, he shows how he has struggled to grow out of the emotional control of his mother's love. This intentional commitment to the theme of motherly love, when studied by the method of psychoanalysis, can hardly evade the Oedipus complex. The Freudian diagnosis can easily spot the Oedipal nature of the story and psychoanalyse it as it normally does to any other literary activities. In fact, Freudian criticism never has to rely on the admission of the author that he has an Oedipus complex, because it is assumed that his incest wishes are expressed unconsciously, without himself knowing it. Lawrence believed that psychoanalysis had exaggerated the influence of his unconscious in writing the novel, and neglected the larger part his conscious creation played. If we now have to find anything in Lawrence's novel which indicates Freudian influence, we may well accept that it was the liberal atmosphere Freudian influence had helped create that encouraged Lawrence to write more bravely on sexuality.

It is clear that Lawrence did not turn to any methodology of psychoanalysis in composing his novel, because he found it impossible to write unconsciously and maintained the view that psychology and sexuality were not everything in literary creation. Lawrence asserts that emotional elements are absolutely essential to literature, and that psychology and sexuality only provide more precise means to express emotions. As a young artist, Lawrence had already started to develop his peculiar theory of sexuality as a by-product of creating his imaginative and fictional characters. He was unwilling to accept scientific terms in interpreting his

fiction. Neither was he interested in the medical facts of sex. He disliked interpretations worked out by psychoanalysis and wanted something direct, familiar and palpable so that the reader would be able to see and to understand it. Thus he experimented with ways in which fictional characters could express their emotional ideals. But Freud described neurotic symptoms clinically, a method that Lawrence's highly conscious approach to human emotion certainly did not favour. To make a distinct point, he separates in his own way the concept of the unconscious into two - 'the subjective and the objective.' (*Psycho*, p. 228) When this division reappears in the 'Foreword' to *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, he refers them to two sciences that indicate the difference between his ideas and Freudianism:

> I refer to the science which proceeds in terms of life and is established on data of living experience and of sure intuition. Call it subjective science if you like. Our objective science of modern knowledge concerns itself only with phenomena, and with phenomena as regarded in their cause-and-effect relationship. (*Fantasia*, p. 12)

Lawrence would not accept Frieda's suggestion[15] that his *Sons and Lovers* could be treated as a confessional novel of an Oedipal type, because that might imply the recognition that his novel was such a physical phenomenon. He argues that this novel presents a totally different relationship in human life from what Freudianism has analysed by the Oedipus complex. The Freudian conception of the Oedipus complex is an incest motive which is hidden in everybody's unconscious and is revealed in one's dreams. Freud, Lawrence argues, reveals how this complex goes beyond the psychic boundary and drives people into insanity. So Lawrence believes that Freud has merely discovered how psychic balance is maintained inside the individual. The relationship in Freudianism is internal but not external. Lawrence suggests, in both his essays and his novels, that the complex or the sexual tendency should be kept in balance between

[15] Frieda wrote a skit called 'Paul Morel, or His Mother's Darling', which Lawrence abhorred. Cf. Rosie Jackson, *Frieda Lawrence* (London: Pandora, 1994), p. 130.

individuals. The proper relationship, balanced between mother and son, brother and sister, husband and wife, etc., is kept with the help of their awareness of sexuality. Lawrence refutes the Freudian view of kinship, pointing out that the danger of the Oedipus complex does not usually derive from the male incest motive, but from the female incest motive of overwhelming the male. Lawrence believes that this female motive of dominance is the most pressing problem in English society. *Sons and Lovers* proclaims his anxiety that a drinking father and a loving mother could in the end jeopardise social integrity and turn education into a feminised activity. So he was indignant with the interpretations of *Sons and Lovers*, which laid the blame on the son in some way. He therefore made his point clearer in *Fantasia*:

> The sad thing today is that so few mothers have any deep bowels of love - or even the breast of love. What they have is the benevolent spiritual will, the will of the upper self. But the will is not love. And benevolence in a parent is a poison. It is bullying. In these circumstances the father must give delicate adjustment, and, above all, some warm, native love from the richer sensual self. (*Fantasia*, p. 50)

Here Lawrence seems to provoke an egg-or-chicken dispute. Whether it is the Oedipus complex or the female benevolent will that threatens the moral society is the question Lawrence attempts to answer in favour of the son. He believes that the Oedipus complex plays only a minor role in human relations. Sex, of course, could be a very important activity among human beings, but it can only become functional among adults and has little to do with children. Freud has exaggerated sexuality and read a child's dream in its surface meaning (cf. *Fantasia*, p. 167). If sexuality really exists in children, Lawrence believes it can only be there as a natural and 'evanescent sex consciousness' (*Fantasia*, p. 95). These innate illusory dreams cannot be counted as mature sexuality. So it is quite wrong for the Freudians to apply this immature sexuality to adult relationships, as they psychoanalyse everybody as if he was a lunatic patient or a naïve child. To

Lawrence, sexuality is an attribute of the mature human being. It works properly in its balance which is maintained in an individual by a compromise between his emotional and sensual beings. If his sexual passion is governed by an immature sexuality, say the Oedipus complex, it has to be admitted into his ethical emotion, where the passionate love finds its corresponding activity with the spiritual love (cf. *Fantasia*, p. 167). While Freud exaggerates the effects of the unconscious, Lawrence believes that it is one's conscious self that more often takes the dominant position.

But Lawrence's main approach is not to find out how an individual maintains a balance between his conscious and unconscious selves, because he is more interested in the balance between individuals. It is for this reason that he regards sexuality as an important part of human activity. Talking about the sexual balance between individuals, Lawrence develops his ideas beyond Freudianism. He asserts that 'Sex holds any *two* people together,'(*Fantasia*, p. 110) and in this togetherness of the male and the female, male dominance holds together the integrity of their relationship. This view has no origin in Freudianism. It is Lawrence's own idea of sex and also where he disagrees most obviously with the Freudians. So, according to this new Lawrentian theory, to hold the integrity of society is to assert male dominance in the family. Thus he interprets his *Sons and Lovers* as an attack on female dominance. He wants it in no way to be understood as a representation of the Oedipus complex.

To the general reader, Lawrence and Freud have both ventured into hidden areas of the human psyche. By justifying the emotional and impulsive features of sexuality in the relationship between man and woman, they, in their respective approaches, brought to light the importance of sexuality in our life and society. But Lawrence did not accept the Freudian assertion that sexual unconscious was the most decisive influence in human

life. He regarded sexual sublimation as necessary, but did not classify it as a result of the unconscious, while he was very actively conscious in participating in literary creation. As Delavenay has argued, Lawrence's works on the whole show very little signs of Freudian influence. I think the two essays on the unconscious are also examples of this paradox:

> Such thinkers as Bergson and Freud are freely named by critics as early influences on Lawrence's works. We hope to have shown conclusively that the ideas which were in his mind when he wrote his two most ambitious novels, the two most definitely structured on a system of ideas, owed very little to Bergson and next to nothing to Freud. He did not have to look so far from home for his psychology, and he had found it ready-made in his Midlands as a complement to the more orthodox teaching at Nottingham University College. Even his interest in yoga, in the Vedas, in Asia, even his determination to go to America via India and Ceylon, might be imputed to Carpenter and to very early and durable impressions. As for his aesthetic, deeply indebted as it is to English romantic tradition, and influenced by late nineteenth-century realism, it seems based on a synthesis of ideas which is found in Carpenter as much as in symbolism and post-realist literature and art. (Delavenay, pp 239-240)

Carpenter's influence on the two essays on the unconscious can be seen in Lawrence's recomposing of Carpenter's synthetic thoughts into his pollyanalytics. Lawrence did not classify his essays as 'scholarly' works, but as 'amateur among amateurs'. He would not have said this, had the essays been a direct criticism of Freudianism. Lawrence admitted that he had got hints and suggestions from some books by scholars including Freud. But Freud is listed in an insignificant place along with many other scholars.

But what is Lawrence's general evaluation of Freudianism as a revolutionary theory on sexuality? In his opinion, the Freudian methodology of pan-sexuality has no relevant use in reforming human life and society:

> What Freud says is always partly true. And half a loaf is better than no bread.
>
> But really, there is the other half of the loaf. All is *not* sex. And a sexual motive is *not* to be attributed to all human activities. (*Fantasia*, p. 17)

> Sex has at least *some* definite reference, though when Freud makes sex accountable for everything he as good as makes it accountable for nothing. (*Fantasia*, p. 19)

But Lawrence does not ignore the discoveries made by science. His problem is how to make use of these discoveries to reform morality. Lawrence's criticism of Freud does not seem to directly refute those points Freud made in his writings such as *The Interpretation of Dreams* or 'Creative Writers and Day-dreaming'. If Lawrence had read and written about them, he might have agreed that they were acceptable interpretations of the writer's creative motives. Here, in these two essays, he is dissatisfied with the theory of the unconscious, not because Freud introduces depressed sexual unconscious as the initiation of literary creation, but because the introduction also assumes that the sexual unconscious could control the whole process of literary creation.

Lawrence does not deny the existence of the unconscious, but he thinks there is no use in teaching people generally about the Oedipus complex or the incest motive. It is even more absurd to teach children about sex (cf. *Fantasia*, p. 95). He asserts that people should be taught differently according to their sexes, because sexual difference is the basic elements of the cosmos. His idea of the sexual balance had been discussed in his early essays such as 'The Crown' and 'The Two Principles'. He now further applies it to present his idea of how sex education should be carried out in the modern society:

> Of course there should be a great balance between the sexes. Man, in the daytime, must follow his own soul's greatest impulse, and give himself to life-work and risk himself to death. It is not woman who claims the highest in man. It is a man's own religious soul that drives him on beyond woman, to his supreme activity. For his highest, man is responsible to God alone. (*Fantasia*, pp. 100-101)

These words also reveal Lawrence's confession of his male chauvinism, which, from time to time, drags him away from the idea of universal balance which he learnt in oriental symbolism. Feminist criticism

has caught the moments of Lawrence's diversion from his attempted course in achieving balance between sexes, and pointed out Lawrence's hectic assertion of male dominance. Kate Millett claims that Lawrence is following Freud's doctrine that 'female is passive, male is active', as it is revealed in the scenes of sexual intercourse in his novels (cf. Millett, p. 240). But Hilary Simpson doubts whether there is Freudian influence here (cf. Simpson, p. 132). In comparing the issue of sexuality between the Hardy study and *Fantasia*, she discovers that sexuality in the latter has become a secondary issue and a greater impulse than the sexual is 'the desire of the human male to build the world'. Lawrence's problem, she comments, is that only men are responsible for and capable of achieving the correct balance between the 'male' and 'female' worlds (cf. Simpson, p. 94).

For the rest of Lawrence's life, he was constantly struggling to ascertain the balance by experimenting with his heroes. Sometimes he insisted that the male should dominate over the female so that their relationship could be guided to the right course for balance. At other times he showed a perfect understanding of female proficiency in emancipation and allowed her to make her contributions to balanced achievements in the relationship. The contradiction between Lawrence's insistence on male dominance and his acceptance of a compromised sexual balance reveals the two sides of his ambivalence. This, therefore, makes his ideas controversial, incurring different criticisms for or against him, which range from Kate Millett's severe attack on his phallocentricity to Sheila MacLeod's favourable appraisal of 'his central concern with male-female relationships'[16]. In my opinion, Lawrence's lost balance is more obviously exposed in his three novellas - 'The Captain's Doll', 'The Fox' and 'The

[16] Sheila MacLeod, *Lawrence's Men and Women* (London: Heinemann, 1985), p. 7.

Ladybird' - than in his later novels. Here Lawrence's course of balance is diverted to his nervous defence against female dominance and lesbianism.

§4.6 The Lost Balance: Male Chauvinism

These three novellas were written between October and December 1921[17]. All were finished after the completion of *Psychoanalysis* (1920) and *Fantasia* (1921). Therefore, we can regard them as Lawrence's embodiment of his male chauvinism which had been theoretically asserted in *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia*. On the other hand, we should be aware that an early version of 'The Fox' (first written in 1918) was published in *Hutchinson's Story Magazine* in November 1920[18] and that 'The Captain's Doll' and 'The Ladybird' have their sources respectively from 'The Mortal Coil' (first written in 1913) and 'The Thimble' (first written in 1915), both published in 1917[19]. But when we compare these three early versions with the versions later published in book form[20], we find 'The Fox' has been largely expanded, and a significant new ending changes the thematic emphasis of the story. As for the other two stories, a comparative reading can hardly recognise the final version as the expansion of the other. Lawrence not only changed the characters' names, the locations and the plots, he also changed the imagery and the thematic focus. So 'The Captain's Doll' and 'The Ladybird' can be regarded as newly created stories rather than revisions of 'The Mortal Coil' and 'The Thimble'. Even if it is accepted that Lawrence actually worked on the early versions in rewriting the stories, the revisions still should not be considered as similar

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[17] Keith Sagar, *D. H. Lawrence: a Calendar of His Works* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979), pp. 114-118.

[18] *Hutchinson's Story Magazine* 3:17 (1920), pp. 477-490.

[19] Cf. Elgin W. Mellown, '*The Captain's Doll*: Its Origins and Literary Allusions', *D. H. Lawrence Review* 9 (1976), p. 226.

[20] D. H. Lawrence, *The Ladybird* (London: Martin Secker, 1923) / *The Captain's Doll* (New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1923).

to his rewriting the three versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, but more comparable to the way he created both 'The Woman Who Rode Away' and *The Plumed Serpent*. For these reasons, I regard the three novellas as fictional embodiments of his mid-term ideas which are explicitly expressed in his two psychoanalytic essays.

Of the three novellas[21], two aggressively present Lawrence's male chauvinism, but there is an ambiguous variation in the last one - 'The Ladybird'. To deal with them respectively, I identify 'The Captain's Doll' as his assertion of male dominance in marriage. 'The Fox' is his attack on lesbian love and further confirms the need for female submission. And 'The Ladybird', which the last of the three to be finished, stresses male leadership with its sexual, social and cultural significance, and also gives due importance to the female unconscious, which plays an indispensable role in maintaining emotional balance. So far as the finishing dates are concerned[22], the American edition entitled *The Captain's Doll* has the right chronological order. I should also like to follow this order and start with 'The Captain's Doll'.

'The Captain's Doll' is a story about a Scottish soldier, Captain Hepburn, who has been fighting against women's emotional control all his life. His relationship with women starts in the same way as Paul Morel's. Mother love has fatally prevented him from loving properly. Later in his life, he feels uncomfortable in all his relationships with women. Being afraid of women's control over him, he grows suspicious of any womanly love. Having been freed by his wife's death, he is even not sure whether he would like to fall in love again. As he tells his mistress:

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[21] D. H. Lawrence, *The Fox, The Captain's Doll, The Ladybird*, ed. Dieter Mehl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Hereafter respectively as 'Fox', 'Doll' and 'Ladybird'.

[22] 'The Captain's Doll' was finished on 6 November 1921. The long tail to 'The Fox' was finally added on 16 November. On 17 December, 'The Ladybird' was also completed.

> 'To begin with, my mother: and that was a mistake. Then my sister: and that was a mistake. Then a girl I had known all my life: and that was a mistake. Then my wife: and that was my most terrible mistake. And then I began the mistake of loving you.' ('Doll', p. 149)

As the story starts, Captain Hepburn has already been married for seventeen years and has two children. His wife is eight years older than he is, and she tries to possess his spiritual being in the same way as his mother and sister did before. It is in order to escape from this emotional control that Hepburn begins his love affair with Hannele. The story does not go back to the details of how the mother, the sister and the wife fell in love with him, but there is an indication that they all started by loving the man in the same way as Hannele does - by making a doll of him. The doll image is an effective Lawrentian symbol. The conflict for possession of the doll is a tough, sexual struggle between two women - the wife and the mistress, so Hepburn's position is not to fight against one for the other, but to fight for his own freedom from both of their controls. Lawrence invents an amusing situation to show the two women in conflict. They meet by chance and Hannele is invited to tea with Mrs. Hepburn. The latter mistakes Mitchka, another German girl, for her husband's mistress. As she does not know of Hannele's interference with her family life, Mrs. Hepburn very proudly tells Hannele about her love for her husband. This clearly shows in what sense she is in love with him:

> 'Oh but he's been perfect to me, perfect. Hardly a cross word. Why, on our wedding night, he kneeled down in front of me and promised, with God's help, to make my life happy. And I must say, as far as possible he's kept his word. It has been his one aim in life, to make my life happy.' ('Doll', p. 99)

Such a monologue makes it clear that the little woman's love for her husband lies in her pleasure of manipulating him and making herself happy at his cost. This, Lawrence believed, in fact destroys a man's love and spoils the balance the couple should maintain. Hannele's envy of Mrs. Hepburn shows that her love for the captain is similar to his wife's. She

simply wishes to substitute the little woman with herself. It has never occurred to her that Hepburn humiliated himself when he was on his knees. On the contrary, 'if he had been at her own feet, then Hannele would have thought it almost natural: almost a necessary part of the show of love.' ('Doll', p. 104) Here, Lawrence suggests, all Hepburn's love affairs are struggles to be free from women's control. Lawrence's disapproval of this kind of adoring love is more sharply marked in the later parts of the story. Through the device of the sudden death of Mrs. Hepburn, Lawrence in fact gives his hero one more chance to choose his love, or, literally speaking, gives the reader a chance to understand his choice. But would his freedom last long? Or how could it last long? So it does not happen that Hepburn marries Hannele immediately after he is free to remarry. He first begins to wander from place to place, symbolically from choice to choice. He leaves Hannele for England. While travelling, Hepburn meditates on Love:

> That tiresome word Love. It means so many things. It meant the feeling he had had for his wife. He had loved her. But he shuddered at the thought of having to go through such love again. ('Doll', p. 115)

He has experienced adoration, when he kneeled before his wife. But at last, he decides that he will not do it again. 'The temptation this time was, to be adored.' ('Doll', p. 116) The image of the adorable doll is also transferred to a still-life, which is a duplication of the doll through the work of an artist. Neither of the women is in possession of this new image. It eventually falls into Hepburn's own hand. After the hero obtains the picture, the story slips into something resembling a travel book, in which new symbols are created and a new relationship between Hepburn and Hannele is formed. The new formation is based on Lawrence's perception of the power of Nature, which has developed since the writing of his essays on Creation:

> The other range of symbols in the novella derives from nature: it comments chiefly on Hepburn's resort to nature as a source of renewal, discovering there the sources of his own positive energies and the forces capable of destroying an outworn culture. But nature can also be inimical,

> destructive not only of the impediments to vitality but of valuable expressions of it. Nature must therefore be seen in full perspective. It can provide not only unlimited spiritual reserves, as the moon does for the Captain, but it can also be annihilating, as the Captain discovers the mountains to be. Nature can even mock human pretensions, thwart the individual as he aspires to mystical authority, and emphasize his insignificance when set against the cosmos. Mystic aloofness in nature, furthermore, can result not only in transcendence but in spiritual passivity and atrophy of will. To some extent, then, one must circumvent its power as well as court it.[23]

Having experimented with the pagan and oriental symbolism regarding the mystery of Nature in 'The Two Principles', Lawrence is fully aware of the sustained balance between the material cosmos and humanity. But this theory of duality is further enforced by the polarity theory, which also emphasises the consummation between man and Nature. Lawrence must have realised the overwhelming power of Nature over man. Having already presented Gerald's death in the eternally snow-covered mountains, he seems to have warned against the negative power of nature, to which Gerald, a hero in a non-productive relationship, has to surrender. If the snow is associated with water, *yin* and female as Lawrence so presents it in 'The Two Principles', then we can understand that it is the negative power of nature which puts out the fire of Gerald's desire.

In creating new symbols and a new relationship between the Captain and Hannele, Lawrence therefore attempts to spare Hepburn from being defeated by a similar female power of nature. When the couple climb the mountains and arrive at the glacier, they start an argument on the mysterious power of nature. Hannele admires the greatness of the glacier. She wants to climb to its top. Metaphorically, the mountains stand for her ideal, which she cherishes and believes to be greater than Hepburn. Facing the challenge of his male power in Hannele's use of this metaphor, Hepburn argues that although the mountains are physically bigger than he is, the

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[23] Frederick P. W. McDowell, '"The Individual in His Pure Singleness": Theme and Symbol in *The Captain's Doll*', in *The Challenge of D. H. Lawrence*, pp. 143-158, ed. Michael Squires & Keith Cushman (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), p. 150.

significance of their existence is less than his own (cf. 'Doll', p. 138). While still stressing the importance of human action in seeking a balance with Nature, Lawrence was not fully willing to give up his idea of masculine dominance, which suggests his belief in the male's leading role in maintaining the balance with Nature and also between the sexes.

After all these mysterious journeys amid the greatness of nature, and heated arguments on its power of destruction, the story draws to the conclusion that female dominance in marriage cannot lead to a natural union with a productive consummation. Captain Hepburn speaks on behalf of Lawrence when he says that marriage is 'Honour, and obedience: and the proper physical feelings' ('Doll', p. 150). Hannele immediately challenges his point by saying that 'love', as an overwhelming force, should be greater than all these things. But Lawrence further distinguishes what he means on the one hand by love and adoration, and on the other by honour and obedience. Hepburn once again speaks out for him:

> 'A woman may love you, she may adore you, but she'll neither honour you nor obey you. The most loving and adoring woman today could any minute start and make a doll of her husband...'('Doll', p. 151)

Lawrence believes that only by being honoured and adored, can the husband be free from the wife's control. He can be her hero, but not her doll. So Lawrence will not accept marriage on a basis of love. His concept of love is limited and subordinate in principle to female submission. The story ends when Hannele accepts Hepburn's concept of love and promises to honour and obey him as his wife. Symbolically, she burns the picture to show that she will no longer make a doll of her husband. When the reconciliation is reached and the relationship is retained in marriage, Lawrence wishes to further ensure that the society has benefited at the woman's cost. This idea persists in the next novella, 'The Fox', which

attacks lesbian love because it has denied the leading role of the male in the relationship.

The theme of 'The Fox' is also focused on love and marriage. Lawrence's idea of sexual balance may prove that he accepts a general meaning of sexual equality in society, but this story shows his severe disapproval of it in marriage. 'The Fox' expresses Lawrence's negative opinion of lesbian love, because he has been preoccupied with the notion that a dominating female love jeopardises social integrity, no matter whether it is heterosexually or homosexually orientated. If we understand this story in the context of Lawrence's writings, we find his criticism of lesbian love is only part of his attack on female love in general. His symbolic use of the farm expresses his prejudice against women's ability to undertake a productive activity when attempting to become independent. Lawrence may have accepted the position of working women during the war, but he thought that after the war they should hand their jobs back to men and be re-confined in domestic chores (cf. Simpson, p. 73). As 'The Fox' begins, two girls run an unproductive farm on their own. March, one of the two heroines, has to undertake all the heavy work that is supposed to be the duty of the husband. But she is not able to do it at all. The chickens do not flourish and refuse to lay eggs because of food scarcity. What is more, they are consistently pestered and bewildered by a predatory fox, a male force intruding from outside that March cannot conquer (cf. 'Fox', pp. 8-9). If we interpret the fox symbol as a male force, we can see it affects March in two ways. First, the fox is her enemy. She tries to shoot and kill it, but her will often fails her. This shows that a female is not as competent as a male. Second, the fox fascinates March, and she starts to explore its true existence. When she associates it with Henry, her female self is awakened.

She serves his dinner quietly and at the same time her female unconscious is reconfirmed in the darkness:

> The lamp was shaded with a dark-green shade, so that the light was thrown downwards, the upper half of the room was dim. His face moved bright under the light, but March loomed shadowy in the distance. ('Fox', p. 16)

It is interesting to notice that in the two novellas - 'The Captain's Doll' and 'The Fox', the major symbols are altered half way through. The doll is sold. The replacement is the picture which is no longer kept in the possession of either of the women. In the same way, the fox is killed by Henry, who now stands not as the obscure sexuality that March pursues, but as the concrete male that awakens her female being. Thus, both stories show how the Lawrentian dominant man casts off his subordinate emblem and becomes a master of life on his own.

As the story goes on, Banford gradually becomes a symbolic character. She obstinately insists on her attachment to March and blames her for lowering herself to Henry. March wavers between her choices of either lesbian love with Banford or of heterosexual love with Henry. She dreams of Banford dead and wrapped in the fox-skin. The awakening of her female desire makes March unconsciously wish her past to die with Banford and the illusionary fox, but she cannot comfortably detach herself from her moral responsibility for Banford. At this time, Henry forces her to think both rationally and sexually of these questions:

> 'Do you wish you were with Miss Banford? Do you wish you'd gone to bed with her?' he asked, as a challenge.
> She waited a long time before she answered.
> 'No,' she said at last. 'I don't wish that.' ('Fox', p. 54)

March's female unconscious is thus awakened. Her strenuous sexual pursuit of the mysterious male fox comes to a solution when she finds a concrete man in Henry. But what can she do with the friendship with Banford, which is now symbolised by the tree that stands obstinately there and refuses to

make way? The character Banford is symbolically associated with the tree. When March finds her own effort unable to cope with it, Henry arrives to help her. As he fells the tree, he warns Banford not to obstruct its falling. But she ignores the warning and refuses to move. She is not ready to be as submissive as March is, so she is to die for it. The story could have ended with Banford's death, but Lawrence continues for several pages longer. The death of the fox, the murder of Banford and the supplemental extension form a substantial ending in the revised version, because it more penetratively represents Lawrence's opinion of the female submission in marriage. He stipulates this principle towards the end of the story:

> He wanted her to commit herself to him, and to put her independent spirit to sleep. He wanted to take away from her all her effort, all that seemed her very raison d'être. He wanted to make her submit, yield, blindly pass away out of all her strenuous consciousness. He wanted to take away her consciousness, and make her just his woman. Just his woman. ('Fox', pp. 69-70)

'The Fox' exemplifies Lawrence's restless anxiety over the war situation. The symbolic illustration of the lesbian relationship represents the forlornness of war-torn England. Lawrence hated this forlornness and was disgusted with a landscape defaced by the war. He could only turn away and try to avoid seeing what he hated. So he began to travel abroad and wished he could be like Henry going to Canada with March to run their own farm. His dream was of a re-creative human relationship in peaceful harmony with nature in the countryside. Henry shares his wishes:

> He was aching almost in torment to leave England, to go west, to take March away. To leave this shore! He believed that as they crossed the seas, as they left this England which he so hated, because in some way it seemed to have stung him with poison, she would go to sleep. She would close her eyes at last, and give in to him. ('Fox', p. 70)

Lawrence's dislike of lesbianism is closely associated with his hatred for the First World War, as he was aware that women's emancipation was taking shape in various forms because men had to leave to fight in the front. Lawrence assumed that women were taking advantage of the war to get

emancipated. This fear was a disagreeable notion grotesquely growing out of Lawrence's impulsive anxiety and nervous state of mind. It was in his struggle with these vexations and disquiets that Lawrence developed his defiant repugnance against lesbianism. He felt that it was destroying social integrity by ignoring man's traditional role. In the early years of the war, when he first tried to find a peaceful seclusion from potential chaos, he set himself a principle of love, which he maintained could create unity but which rejected war. His assertion that the force of love can win over the desire for war is clearly expressed in a letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith of 2 November 1915:

> If I love, then, I am in direct opposition to the principle of war. If war prevails, I do not love. If love prevails, there is no war. War is a great and necessary disintegrating autumnal process. Love is the great creative process, like Spring, the making of an integral unity out of many disintegrated factors. We have had enough of the disintegrating process. If it goes on any further, we shall so thoroughly have destroyed the unifying force from among us, we shall have become each one of us so completely a separate entity, that the whole will be an amorphous heap, like sand, sterile, hopeless, useless, like a dead tree. This is true, and it is so great a danger, that one almost goes mad, facing it.
>
> That is why I almost went away, out of the country: I may still have to go: because in myself I can never agree to the complete disintegration, never stand witness to it, never. (*Letters 2*, p. 424)

In 'The Fox', Lawrence regarded lesbian love as the phenomenon of such a 'disintegrating process', so he contemptuously presented such an unproductive relationship as a haunting apparition which could 'have destroyed the unifying force'. He let Henry rescue March from her degenerating state - lesbian love - like a legendary knight rescuing his lady from a demon. What Henry kills is not Banford the woman, but Banford 'a dead tree', a symbolic stronghold of a lesbian relationship, which should be invalidated because, as Lawrence believed, it had overgrown in the chaos of war.

'The Fox' concludes with the triumph of a dominant man who defeats and wins over lesbian women; 'The Ladybird' starts with a further affirmative assertion of male leadership. But in this new story, the leadership is not only sexual but also a social and cultural dominance of the male. Set in the usual Lawrentian way of a triangular love affair, the main part of 'The Ladybird' is a story of three aristocrats. Their social status here is more symbolic than realistic, because Lawrence's characterisation tries to present what he accepts as a spiritually and naturally aristocratic being. The argument between Basil and Dionys tells us what they respectively stand for. Basil advocates love and democracy. He believes there should not be 'obedience, submission of one person to another, and one man having power over others'. It is only 'the soul of love' that deserves obedience and submission[24]. In other words, he submits himself to a relationship, not considering himself as a natural aristocrat to be obeyed. Dionys takes the opposite position. He believes in power and obedience, and in his 'sacred duty to hold the destiny of other men' ('Ladybird', p. 202) in his hands, because a greater soul should be obeyed by the ordinary people, who yield to him because of their awareness of his being greater than they are. The two different approaches to leadership have their social reference to the postwar situation. Whether it is benevolent love or overwhelming power that is to maintain the postwar peace seems to be the controversial point between these two veterans. But the social issue is ambiguously presented by Lawrence through Daphne's instinctive pursuit of a sexual communication. She is destined to sway between love-democracy and power-obedience. A satisfactory choice is very difficult for her to make.

[24] This point is made clear in the English edition, *The Ladybird*, which is consistent to Lawrence's autograph manuscript. But it becomes obscure in the American edition, *The Captain's Doll*, which Lawrence probably revised in proof. Cf. Textual Apparatus 201:40 ('Ladybird', p. 304).

When Basil is ‘coming back from the east, from the war and death’, Daphne expects him to be ‘a new lover - a new bridegroom - a new superman’ after having experienced ‘the awful fire of suffering’. But from his ‘Cambridge intonation’ over the telephone call announcing his arrival, she only finds ‘a new icy note that went through her veins like death’ (‘Ladybird’, p. 189). He is still an adorable husband, who returns from the war with a scar that still hurts in his soul, and Daphne is prepared to love him and submit to him. This intention of submission is suggested by Lawrence’s description that in Daphne’s face there suddenly appears ‘a touch of Chinese’ and ‘she gave herself a long, sideways glance, curious and Chinese’ (‘Ladybird’, p. 190). This description sounds as if Lawrence was trying to portray a submissive look, which he must have seen in female faces in traditional Chinese painting. But the ‘slow, Chinese side-look’ (‘Ladybird’, p. 193) does not help Basil to heal his internal wounds. He still feels inwardly that something of him died in the war, and this prevents him from touching Daphne, a sign of his incapability in sexual love. At the sight of her submissive Chinese look, he instead worships her by kneeling down and kissing her feet, a typical Lawrentian scene to signify an incompetent male. Basil has realised that his love for Daphne has become a sacrament and that in his sexual failure he can only sustain a sterile spiritual love.

Lawrence has intentionally associated the characters’ names and the leading symbol with those of the Greek and the Egyptian mythologies. Daphne, the goddess of the laurel tree, is shocked spiritually by the Basil-Apollonian sterility and, therefore, passionately attracted by Dionysus, the god of intoxication, whose ladybird crest, derived from Egyptian mythology, combines its potential reviving force with the mystical folk song that awakes Daphne from her sexual being and fascinates her spiritual intelligence. When Daphne answers the call of his folk song and comes to

his room at night, she touches his arm with her finger-tips. Although he is also severely wounded by the war, Dionys is to be resurrected by the touch of woman in darkness. Immediately, he feels himself 'seated in flame, in flame unconscious, seated erect, like an Egyptian king-god in the statues.' ('Ladybird', p. 216) The redeeming touches of the woman come from her sexual unconscious, while the resurrection of the man is intuitive[25]. It is perhaps from this story or later that Lawrence begins to develop a theme of resurrection, which of course mainly concerns the resurrection of the male unconscious. But we also find here that the male resurrection is more or less in harmony with the female unconscious. Unlike the frictional relationships between the male and the female that were present in his early and middle fictions, 'The Ladybird' attempts to achieve a sexual balance in harmony through tenderness.

Dionys was severely injured in action during the war. To be resurrected, he has to struggle to retain his power through sexual redemption. When Daphne comes close to him, he feels:

> Two things were struggling in him, the sense of eternal solitude, like space, and the rush of dark flame that would throw him out of his solitude, towards her. ('Ladybird', p. 216)

When the dominant power is revived in the dark flame, Dionys knows it is only a sexual resurrection for his individual being. To retain this reviving power, not to surrender to the female darkness, the man has to attach this power to a mythological resurrection of the ancient patriarch for a more

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[25] Cf. James G. Frazer, *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild*, 2 vols., in *The Golden Bough*, vols. 7 & 8 (London: Macmillan, 1912). According to Frazer:

> Dionysus was merely a disguised Osiris, imported directly from Egypt into Greece. (vol. 1, p. 3)
>
> Like other gods of vegetation whom we considered in the last volume, Dionysus was believed to have died a violent death, but to have been brought to life again; and his sufferings, death, and resurrection were enacted in his sacred rites. (vol. 1, p. 12)

Frazer also points out that the ritual resurrection is a common custom in some other hieratic cultures. He cites the Chinese New Year rite for example, and then concludes:

> On the whole we may perhaps conclude that both as a goat and as a bull Dionysus was essentially a god of vegetation. The Chinese and European customs which I have cited may perhaps shed light on the custom of rending a live bull or goat at the rites of Dionysus. (vol. 2, p. 16)

deep-rooted cultural and spiritual resurrection. But his consciousness of the future makes him understand that his power is limited in darkness. In daylight, spiritual love still works. So Dionys has to leave Daphne to Basil, who deserves her loyalty as her daytime husband. At the same time, Dionys claims his power over Daphne in darkness. She has to endure this double-sided reality of postwar life, which is a resurrection in darkness and a pursuit of eternity in light. A conflict between love and power exists in Daphne. She follows love in daylight, but submits to power in darkness.

Because of the symbolic use of these characters, and perhaps because of their allusions to the Greek and Egyptian mythologies, 'The Ladybird' ends with a very different tone from those of the first two novellas. From this story on, Lawrence's affirmation of male dominance in personal and sexual relationships gradually becomes a paradoxical experiment through political and religious authority. In his leadership novels, he began to explore new environments for the new relationship and attempted to discover a utopia to ensure the freedom and integrity of sexuality. Some of his characters then start to inaugurate dialogues with nature and the supernatural. These human and superhuman sexual relationships in his works indicate that his hopes for social reformation had turned to supernatural and religious powers. Throughout the period of the leadership novels, Lawrence's exploration of sexual relationships did not stop. It still struggled its way through the conflict between man and woman, and eventually reached a comparatively relaxed stage when his *Lady Chatterley's Lover* discovered the productive pursuit of female unconscious and attempted to reveal it in an ideal relationship of harmony.

CHAPTER FIVE

POWER OF NATURE IN LEADERSHIP: *AARON'S ROD* AND *KANGAROO*

§5.1 Legendary Symbols of Dynamic Life

As the overwhelming threat of industry described in Lawrence's war-time *Sisters* novels had highlighted his wish for an utopian escape, the consequences of the Great War destroyed any of his dreams based in England. Because he was hurt by the banning of *The Rainbow* at home, he desperately felt a need of escaping to a utopia abroad. On 21 February 1918, he wrote to Mark Gertler:

> So I always want to have a plan of going away after the war - anywhere that is not England - perhaps Italy - going away and living in one place, all of us, at least for a while. - But it is no good, if work, or love either, seems to you the be-all and the end-all. Work and love are subsidiary. What one wants is a free, spontaneous, harmonious relation amongst ourselves, each of us being in some way a complete fulfilled being. (*Letters 3*, pp. 215-216)

The idea thus started in Lawrence's mind was not yet a serious plan of permanent life abroad, since he had just resumed[1] writing his *Aaron's Rod*[2]. At the beginning, the novel did not seem to be intended as 'the end of *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* line.' (*Letters 4*, p. 92) In his earlier correspondence, he described it as a 'blameless' and 'quite "proper" novel' (*Letters 3*, p. 227 & p. 364). He might have been trying to rehabilitate himself after the censorship of *The Rainbow*. Instead of reiterating the sacred integration of marriage as his *Sisters* novels had done, he now started in the new novel to explore the nature of human relationship in post-war

[1] Lawrence started writing *Aaron's Rod* in the autumn of 1917. But it was not until 21 February 1918 when he wrote to Montague Shearman that the novel was for the first time referred to in his letters (cf. *Letters 3*, p. 216).

[2] D. H. Lawrence, *Aaron's Rod*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Hereafter *Aaron*.

social and political life. But there was no further reference to the composition of the novel in his correspondence for more than a year, which suggests that during that period he stopped working on it for some reason. But thirteen months later he wrote to Thomas Seltzer on 10 July 1920 that he was writing 'another novel', and he described it as 'amusing' (*Letters 3*, p. 565). By that time, he had completed one-third of it (cf. *Letters 3*, p. 572), but soon this 'amusing' story got stuck. At first, Lawrence did not realise his predicament and he still believed that:

> I may get a go on him at Taormina. If not, I think I can sort of jump him picaresque. (*Letters 3*, p. 602)

It was about this time, when he was in Italy, that he thought of the title of *Aaron's Rod*, first mentioned in a letter to Catherine Carswell on 7 October 1920:

> I am still stuck in the middle of *Aaron's Rod*, my novel. But at Taormina I'll spit on my hands and lay fresh hold. (*Letters 3*, p. 608)

In Chapter X of *Aaron's Rod*, 'The War Again', Lilly for the first time calls the flute 'Aaron's Rod' and suggests that it will put forth buds and flowers. So, this chapter must have been written when Lawrence had been in Italy for a year, because neither in his earlier correspondence nor in the first nine chapters of *Aaron's Rod*, was there any mention of this legend. Lawrence's decision about the title is the key point in determining where he got stuck. We can deduce that the first nine chapters were probably written between 1918 and 1919, and that after a break of more than a year, he resumed his work, being stimulated by a new title. In 1920, when he was in Italy, he began to call the novel *Aaron's Rod* and worked on it from Chapter X onwards, resuming his search for an overseas utopia.

In the letter quoted above, Lawrence still sounds optimistic for the legendary association seems to have stimulated his imaginative creativity. The title suggested to Lawrence that although paradise was lost at home, it

was still possible to find a utopia abroad. In this novel, he undertook a painstaking search for it, but as soon as he started working seriously on it, he found there were still many difficulties:

> I did more than half of *Aaron's Rod*, but can't end it: the flowering end missing... (*Letters 3*, p. 626)

> I left off *Aaron's Rod* ... the end won't blossom. (*Letters 3*, p. 634)

Lawrence's insistence on the budding of the rod (cf. *Letters 3*, p. 653) was based on the legend from *The Bible*, in which 'Aaron's staff, the staff for the tribe of Levi, had sprouted. Indeed, it had sprouted, blossomed, and produced ripe almonds.' (Numbers xvii. 7-8) Aaron's staff has traditionally been regarded as a miraculously blossoming plant, through which God chose to settle a dispute over tribal competition for power. God's choice here was based on a principle of nature and the budding rod brought a message of peace to rid the twelve opponents of their grudges and complaints. Peace rooted in Nature was a theme Lawrence also pursued in this novel, but the flowering end he was still trying to achieve was associated with a more complicated theme of utopia, which he explored and attempted to discover outside his country.

There is a Chinese legend based on a similar theme in *The Book of Lieh-tzu*. Graham's later translation of the Taoist masterpiece goes like this:

> K'ua-fu, rating his strength too high, wanted to chase the day-light, and pursued it to the brink of the Yü valley. He was thirsty and wished to drink, and hurried to drink the Yellow River and the Wei. The Yellow River and the Wei did not quench his thirst, and he ran North intending to drink the Great Marsh, but died of thirst on the road before he reached it. The staff which he dropped soaked up the fat and flesh of his corpse and grew into Teng forest. Teng forest spread until it covered several thousand miles.[3]

Although this Taoist book had already been published in English and other European languages in Lawrence's time[4], I am not necessarily suggesting

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[3] The translator's note on the same page also explains:
K'ua-fu is variously described as a divine animal, and as a man wearing a pair of snakes as earrings and carrying another pair in his hands. (Graham, p. 101)

[4] The most well-known translations are:

that Lawrence had ever read it. Lawrence may have, directly or indirectly, come across the utopian idea implied by the Taoist legend, but I have been unable to locate this influence in any specific book available to Lawrence. My argument, therefore, has to be based on a parallel comparison. Having been struck by the similarity between Aaron's flute and K'ua-fu's staff, I wish to argue that both symbols have a deeply rooted connection with Nature and strongly reveal their potential forces in regeneration. As both were sometimes believed to be snakes as well, they can also be regarded as penis images, but both symbols certainly signified more than sex could contain. The Taoist worshipper of the Sun, K'ua-fu, sacrificed himself to create a Peach Orchard, Teng forest, a Chinese Utopia with its fruitful provisions. Lawrence's *Aaron's Rod*, facing a more afflicted society than that of the ancient Chinese, could not easily reach such a blossoming triumph. His Aaron was not only looking for a place where material life was abundant, but also seeking for a community where human nature was not contaminated.

The comparison also reveals that Lawrence's search for a utopia involved not only a further exploration of sexual relationship which he had already begun in his previous novels, but also implied an attempt at regeneration through a Taoist-like sexual practice to restore the male mastership. As I think *The Bible* reference cannot adequately explain Lawrence's tendency to associate sexual regeneration with the regaining of male mastership, I hope a comparison with the K'ua-fu legend and with some other Taoist doctrines on sexual practice for the restoration of man's potency will support my argument that *Aaron's Rod* represents a change in Lawrence's views on the balance of sexual relationship and proclaimed his

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Ernst Faber, tr. *Der Naturalismus* (London: Trübner & Comp., 1877).
Lionel Giles, tr., *Taoist Teachings from the Book of Lieh Tzu* (London: John Murray, 1912).
Richard Wilhelm, tr., *Liä Dsi* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1921).

leadership-period rejection of any further development towards sexual equality. By adopting a similar belief to that of the Taoist sexual school, he turned to encourage man to regain his mastership through a properly conducted sexual practice, which was treated as Nature's way for the realisation of a natural utopia.

§5.2 Bewilderment of a Post-war Picaresque

As the last in a series comprising *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, *Aaron's Rod* continues Lawrence's search for a utopia. Although in this novel he concentrates more intensively on man's leadership rather than on women's emancipation, his search for ideas which would produce social reform went on. In the two previous novels, Lawrence had dealt with women's emancipation and the new relationship between man and woman, but in *Aaron's Rod*, he seemed to have realised that even his most idealised relationship would probably not be able to meet post-war demands for social reconstruction. The new relationship between man and woman may provide an amiable situation and a new moral ground for social reform, but it could not be used as a force to execute the social reorganisation and reconstruction, which was badly needed during the post-war period. So in the new novel Lawrence entrusted man with the task of social reform and awarded him the leadership, which both man and woman in their new relationship had been trying to win. Lawrence insisted that woman would still join her man in the reconstruction of their life, but would not undermine his leadership in politics. Lawrence may have still been holding the view that politics and government were purely matters for men, as none of his women characters ever show a real interest in politics. Their main concern is about their own emancipation and fulfilment along with social and political reforms. He seems to have hoped that politics would restore

man's superiority. It was with this belief that Lawrence started writing this leadership novel, hoping to create a utopia through the political reform of society, led by 'masters' or natural aristocrats. *Aaron's Rod* is a result of this thinking.

The story begins with Aaron wandering about the post-war streets and thinking of his responsibility towards post-war political and social reform. The threatening sound of his wife's accusation comes like this:

> what I should like to see is a man that has thought for others, and isn't all self and politics. (*Aaron*, p. 8)

In Lawrence's opinion, women seemed to be more concerned about strengthening the emancipation they achieved during the war and getting their voices heard in the issues of social reform. Lawrence realised that in the post-war society the balance or equality between man and woman lacked the material basis to develop their love, and he dreamt that social and political reform through post-war reconstruction could give man and woman a chance to produce such an ideal society for their new union. But Mrs Sisson's nagging does not show any sign of co-operation. So Aaron's first retreat is the Royal Oak where talking about politics is becoming a popular pastime. Instead of going to do the Christmas shopping for his family, he wanders about and celebrates his Christmas Eve with candles on real trees. He has stopped worrying about the material goods that his family still needs for maintenance, and he has even given up the peaceful enjoyment of a post-war Christmas, but wishes to turn it into a ritual dance to achieve a harmony with nature. This clearly indicates that Lawrence envisioned an ideal society that was not interested in material reconstructions in the post-war period, but was trying to restore man's confidence through winning leadership. When Aaron decides to leave home for no particular reason, the relationship between man and woman ceases to be the main theme of the novel. It is replaced by a new theme that teaches

man how to regain his leadership through a natural regeneration. As far as the theme of this novel is concerned, there was a need for Lawrence to re-define the concept of love. During Aaron's wandering about in London, 'LOVE IS LIFE' (*Aaron*, p. 61) becomes his philosophy, so endorsing Lawrence's assumption that sexual relationship was essential in providing an opportunity for man to regain his natural power. It will no longer be a mere private business between two human beings. It now has a wider moral issue related to one's natural environments:

> LOVE IS THE SOUL'S RESPIRATION.
>
> WHEN YOU LOVE, YOUR SOUL BREATHES IN.
>
> WHEN YOUR SOUL BREATHES OUT, IT'S A BLOODY REVOLUTION. (*Aaron*, p. 62)

Here Lawrence's concern with love is no longer an issue between man and woman; it is now a communication between man and nature. Aaron still loves his family, but he does not want to be forced to love (cf. *Aaron*, p. 66). He 'wanted to have some free room' for his soul to breathe and be able to have 'a breath of fresh air' (*Aaron*, p. 66). It is not that Aaron is seeking a love affair with another woman, as is later proved by his declining Josephine's offer of a kiss. Aaron's 'free room' implies that he is looking for some chance to build up a communication with nature, probably through his music. His flute - Aaron's Rod - is a natural plant which he hopes to use to tune his instinct and restore his spiritual dignity.

Lawrence, both in his life and literary works, had always opposed female dominance in sexual relationships and in marriage. He hated the idea that a man should be confined by a family with children and wanted to give him freedom from this care and responsibility. In *Aaron's Rod*, he further asserts that the necessity of this freedom is to make sure that man can retain the privilege of participating in political and social reforms without the interference of his woman. In the relationship between Aaron and Lilly,

Lawrence is trying hard to justify their wish to submit to 'healthy individual authority' (*Aaron*, p. 97) by breaking away from marriage:

> marriage wants readjusting - or extending - to get men on to their own legs once more, and to give them the adventure again. (*Aaron*, p. 101)

In *Women in Love*, Lawrence presented love and marriage as a productive union of two individuals and criticised the possessive desire that one partner might use against the other. But in *Aaron's Rod*, this productivity does not seem to be able to satisfy his demands for ideal marriage. He regrets, as he assumes all men will, that 'all that is productive, all that is fine and sensitive and mostly essentially noble, is woman.' (*Aaron*, p. 159) He was disillusioned with a co-operative leadership, because he believed 'the woman would never yield' the mastery.

Taoism also asserts that the basic principle of the Universe is the harmonious union between the male and the female. But it also warns its believers that there has always been a danger that the *Yin* or Female essence could in certain circumstances overrule the *Yang* or Male essence. So, the Taoist master is advised to cultivate individual perfection, if necessary, in seclusion, so that he may avoid domination by the female essence and remain master of the union with his woman. Whenever a conflict between man and woman occurs, the universal law, or its supreme representative - heaven - is sought in order to restore the *Yang-Yin* balance. When Aaron is running away from his wife, Lawrence examines his problem in a similar way:

> He looked at the sky, and thanked the universe for the blessedness of being alone in the universe. To be alone, to be oneself, not to be driven or violated into something which is not oneself, surely it is better than anything. He thought of Lottie, and knew how much more truly herself she was when she was alone, with no man to distort her. And he was thankful for the division between them, Such scenes as the last were too horrible and unreal.
>
> As for future unions, too soon to think about it. Let there be clean and pure division first, perfected singleness. That is the only way to final, living unison: through sheer, finished singleness. (*Aaron*, p. 128)

But Aaron's walking-out raises more problems than a Taoist was wont to encounter. Facing the growing pressure of women's emancipation after the War, Lawrence was more desperate than Taoist patriarchs to restore male superiority. In fact, the 'perfected singleness' is an idea Lawrence had developed since *Women in Love*, where it was a target for both man and woman to achieve. But as he had started promoting his doctrines of leadership and moving towards male chauvinism in the three novellas, his insistence on the 'perfected singleness' began to change and gradually became one of man's privileges over woman. The *Sisters* novels indeed insist that both man and woman should stand in their 'perfected singleness' before they can come together in a perfect union. But what begins to appear in *Aaron's Rod* is no longer a recommendation of this equal opportunity. Here the women characters are not consciously fighting for their freedom or independence as a single human being. Nor are they even trying to be dominant over men. In Lawrence's depictions, they become dependent, clinging to their men for their own benefits. Holding this prejudice against woman, Lawrence denied women their demand for singleness. He therefore asserted that man should disentangle himself from woman's nagging and pestering, and so justified Aaron's walking out on his wife. But modern industry denies a secluded place of release to the freedom-seeking tramp-like artist. Lawrence found himself stuck for an answer to this problem. Later on, even when he had resumed writing the novel and attempted to create a new life in Italy for Aaron, he was not certain whether Italy was able to provide him with the utopia he needed. As the novel reveals, Aaron gradually finds that Italy is not an ideal place in many ways, although it first appears to him as a place of freedom, which he enjoys because it enables him to escape from the burden of the family. But running away from woman gives man only a limited freedom in isolation. His confidence in

freedom can only be regained through the restoration of his mastership in politics and reform. But he finally realises that Italy is not to be reformed because 'the people were afraid of themselves: afraid of their own souls, and that which was in their own souls.' (*Aaron*, p. 181) This feeling is intensified when Aaron comes across the riot (cf. *Aaron*, pp. 182-186) in the chapter 'XX September', which was a day in history that turned Italy into a united, free country[5]. Aaron is greatly shocked by the violence of the riot. These passages actually describe scenes Lawrence himself witnessed when he was visiting Florence[6]. He probably found this riot no less horrible than the war itself. The fear of the soul may be understood as a lack of sympathy, love and tenderness, which were the basic human qualities Lawrence expected in his utopian population. So, politics in Italy did not give him much encouragement. He was looking for a power, both just and authoritative, something the Chinese social system often dreamed of - a wise man to govern and rule over the people.

Having arrived in Florence, Aaron started his utopian search in the historic city of enlightenment. He has escaped from 'the horrors of real domesticity' and come into 'the Italian brutal way.' (*Aaron*, p. 209)

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[5] 'On September 20, 1870, ... Italy was made - modern Italy.' But Lawrence further comments:

> No wonder liberty so often turns to ashes in the mouth, after being so fair a fruit to contemplate. Man needs more than liberty. (*Movements*, p. 291.)

[6] According to Catherine Carswell, street riots were common scenes in Florence during the summer of 1921. Lawrence came across some shooting incidents and saw crowds disperse on the sound of shots, which he later vividly described to her. (Cf. *The Savage Pilgrimage*, London: Martin Secker, 1932, pp. 160-161.) But Lawrence's own writing suggests a different date for this incident:

> In the summer of 1920 I went north, and Florence was in a state of continual socialistic riot: sudden shots, sudden stones smashing into the restaurants where one was drinking coffee, all the shops suddenly barred and closed. ('Epilogue', in *Movements*, p. 316)

Lawrence visited Florence twice during the summer of 1920. He arrived there on 12 August, but stayed briefly for no more than two days, while the second visit was from 2 to 28 September. His next visit to Florence was on 22 April 1921 when he was travelling from Capri to Baden-Baden. This is also a very short visit. Rebecca West, whom Lawrence met and had lunch with in the streets of Florence, mentioned nothing like the incident in her reminiscences (cf. Nehls, vol. 3 [1925-1930], pp. 61-66). *Aaron's Rod* was reported to have been finished on 1 June 1921 (*Letters 3*, p. 731). So it seems to me that Lawrence's own date is correct.

Although he feels it is a better environment than home, it is still not favourable to the growth of his rod - the symbolic plant:

> his flute was too sensitive, it winced from the new strange surroundings, and would not blossom. (*Aaron*, p. 210)

Aaron's concern with his flute is very much related to his own situation. The rod seems more sensitive than himself to the unsuitability of the circumstances for both of them. In this way, the flute represents his unconscious which foretells his failure and disappointment. He means to find a place where his flute can blossom, which more or less means that the place will also eventually become his own utopian settlement. In Florence, Aaron looks among the old architecture and statues (cf. *Aaron*, p. 211), hoping to find enlightenment in his quest for human life and desires:

> he felt that here he was in one of world's living centres.... The sense of having arrived - of having reached a perfect centre of the human world. (*Aaron*, p. 212)

He also finds a strong sense of resurrection:

> Here men had been at their intensest, most naked pitch, here, at the end of the old world and the beginning of the new...
>
> Aaron felt a new self, a new life-urge rising inside himself. Florence seemed to start a new man in him. It was a town of men. (*Aaron*, p. 212)

In Aaron's search for a favourable place in which he can live with his flute, Lawrence is trying to endow nature with a superiority to human life. Like a mating bird looking for its companion, his flute strives to play a natural tune like a bird's singing with 'no human emotion or passion or intention or meaning' (*Aaron*, p. 227), but as communication between nature and human life fails, it turns out to be impossible 'to read all the human pathos into nightingales' singing.' (*Aaron*, p. 227) While the flute fails to make progress, the insolence of the mob shocks Aaron even further. Trapped among a mob of soldiers, he is pushed and robbed, psychologically assaulted, and finally, against his free will, is brought to a confused feeling of loss and violation. (cf. *Aaron*, p. 230) In his disappointment, he now

regards coming to Italy as an accident (cf. *Aaron*, p. 238), but, in fact, he has been directed by his fate, which has sent him searching for a utopia.

§5.3 Revival of a Phallic Power

As a symbol of a living plant with a phallic significance, Aaron's flute is searching for a way of blossoming and resurrection. In Aaron's relationship with the Marchesa, the flute creates a channel for their communication. Lawrence has shown that Aaron's flute can play a natural sound like a bird's singing, but he wants to prove that communication between the music of the natural instrument and the response of human beings can also be re-connected, and this he symbolically presents through Aaron's affair with a woman. Aaron is invited to the Marchesa's home to play a tune at her party. He successfully accompanies her singing and actually encourages her performance. The natural music of his flute perfectly matches her sweet voice, which, though being unaware of the existence of the flute, breathes freely from her free soul. It is the flute that releases her spiritual sorrows. As her soul draws its own deep breath, a communication is established between nature and her to refill the emptiness of the worldly life and bring about a hope of resurrection. It is at this time that Aaron remembers that Lilly once called his flute 'Aaron's Rod', and he recognises it as a symbol of phallic power and living force:

> Aaron's black rod of power, blossoming again with red Florentine lilies and fierce thorns. He moved about in the splendour of his own male lightning, invested in the thunder of the male passion-power. He had got it back, the male godliness, the male godhead. (*Aaron*, p. 258)

In abandoning his wife and family, Aaron is actually rejecting a boring materially orientated post-war life. The recovery of industry following the end of the war could not have brought an end to the routine life of sorrow and misery. The harmony between man and nature was still in as great a chaos as it had been during the war, when nature had already lost

ground to human violence. Aaron deserts his country and his family, coming abroad to find a new settlement. He brings with him his rod as the last of nature's survivors, trying to use it in recruiting uncontaminated human beings for his utopian society. The rod blossoms at the first sight of a mutual response. The recovery of the Marchesa, cured by the natural sounds of the rod, not only suggests that communication between nature and human beings has been reconstructed, but also means a great deal to Aaron himself who bears a belief in nature's potency. As nature is symbolised by the rod and personified by Aaron, the triumph is certainly a joint celebration: a reviving nature, a blossoming rod and an inspired Aaron:

> His manhood, or rather his maleness, rose powerfully in him, in a sort of mastery. He felt his own power, he felt suddenly his own virile title to strength and reward. Suddenly, and newly flushed with his own male super-power, he was going to have his reward. The woman was his reward. (*Aaron*, p. 257)

> he felt his turn had come. The phoenix had risen in fire again, out of the ashes. (*Aaron*, p. 258)

But a blossoming rod is merely Aaron's illusion. Although the Marchesa has answered nature's call announced by the flute, she is not capable of fulfilling nature's way. Even before their affair starts, when Aaron is trying to play some music for her as they are alone:

> he felt that he did not cast the spell over her. There was no connection. She was in some mysterious way withstanding him. She was withstanding him, and his male super-power, and his thunderbolt desire. She was, in some indescribable way, throwing cold water over his phoenix newly risen from the ashes of its nest in flames. (*Aaron*, p. 259)

When he gets into the Marchesa's room, he immediately finds her 'strange', 'not powerful, as he had imagined her', but 'small and childish, ... the naked way she clung to him' is 'almost like a sister, a younger sister!' (*Aaron*, p. 261). When they are together in bed, things do not improve either:

> In some strange and incomprehensible way, as a girl-child blindly obstinate in her deepest nature, she was against him. (*Aaron*, p. 261)

In what way does Aaron actually expect the Marchesa to behave? Lawrence does not seem to give a positive answer. As far as can be understood from the novel, the Marchesa should act naturally, as if she has been awakened by the flute - the call of nature. But she does not satisfy this expectation. Although Aaron finds that things have gone wrong in their relationship, he still hopes that

> he and she would get into unison in the evening. His flute, his Aaron's rod would blossom once again with splendid scarlet flowers, the red Florentine lilies. (*Aaron*, p. 269).

Aaron's problem with the Marchesa can be considered from the viewpoint of the Taoist sexual school. Although it seems unlikely that Lawrence had ever come across this Taoist philosophy, it is still worthwhile comparing Lawrence's doctrine with it. For even if Lawrence reached his doctrine completely independently, it is still interesting to know that a similar doctrine had already been expounded on the other side of the globe two thousand years ago.

As has been argued in previous chapters, the principle of division, balance and union is for the Taoist the natural law of the universe. As a philosophy produced under the very strong influence of the Chinese patriarchal society, the sexual school of Taoism further emphasises the male's privilege in sexual relationship and his responsibility for social integrity. At the same time, it warns man against the female physical advantage in sexual potential. Different from other Chinese schools of moral philosophers, this Taoist doctrine does not advise its believers to cultivate sexual restraint. Instead, it exaggerates the male sexual potency by instructing its believer to conduct sexual intercourse in such a way so as to compensate his *Yang* essence. This belief also maintains that the source of female essence is inexhaustible. So, during intercourse, man should learn the way of gaining his strength from the reservoir of the female essence to

nourish his soul, rather than losing it to his woman. The following are two examples:

> Isn't it nonsense to always caution only against eroticism? Man and woman create each other, as heaven and earth create each other. When vitality and the life fluid are guided and nourished, man will not lose his balance. Heaven and earth practise the union of love; for this reason, they are without limits. If man surrenders the path of loving union, he can be certain that he will only harm himself. But if he can avoid all harmful influences and learn the art of love, he will attain the path of immortality. During the day, heaven and earth separate, at night they come together. 365 times a year they mingle with each other and exchange their fluids in complete harmony. Therefore they can bring forth the 10,000 creatures without becoming tired. If man can pattern his conduct after them, he can live eternally. (P'eng-tsu)[7]

> Of all the ten thousand things created by Heaven, man is the most precious. Of all the things that make man proper none can be compared with sexual intercourse. It is modelled after Heaven and takes its pattern by Earth.
>
> Those who understand its significance can nurture their nature and prolong their years: those who miss its true meaning will harm themselves. (*Tung-hsuan*)[8]

In Lawrence's time, Taoist ideas had already been studied by Western sinologists and translations of the main Taoist documents, such as various versions of *Lao Zi*, *Zhuang Zi* and *The Book of Changes*, were also available. But for the sexual school of Taoism which includes the two books quoted above, little research had been done until the 1950s when R. H. van Gulik pioneered his studies into the erotic prints and sexual life of ancient China, and Lawrence E. Gichner privately published his *Erotic Aspects of Chinese Culture* in U. S. A. The ideas of the Taoist sexual school, though insinuated in the general philosophy of Taoism and probably acknowledged

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[7] Michael Shaw, tr. from German, *China and the Search for Happiness* by Wolfgang Bauer (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976), p. 107.

P'eng-tsu (Peng Zu) is a fairy character in many Taoist legends. This teaching, ascribed to him, is a quotation from *Stories of Gods* (1:5a) written by Ge Hong (A. D. 284-364). The book contains the stories of eighty-four gods, one of which tells how P'eng-tsu managed to live for over 700 years and then became a god. The high value attributed here to unrestrained sexual activity by P'eng-tsu made him the official founder of the Taoist sexual practices.

[8] Lawrence E. Gichner, *Erotic Aspects of Chinese Culture* (Privately Published in U. S. A., 1957), p. 5.

Tung-hsuan (*Dong Xuan*) is the second volume of *San Dong Jingshu [The Classical Books of Three Caves]*, which is said to have collected the teachings of the Supreme God of Medicine. The book was edited by Lu Xiujing (A. D. 406-477) in about 467.

by some scholars, was constantly inhibited from being daringly or explicitly introduced in the early years of the twentieth century, when even the psychoanalysis theory of Freudianism had to suffer severe criticism. In such circumstances, Lawrence would have had very little chance to get direct access to these Chinese texts. But he could have encountered similar ideas in secondary sources. The following passage is Carpenter's version of the same idea. He refers to it as *Karezza*, but the sexual practice is similar to that described in some Taoist teachings:

> There is also another method which, while it may seem at first to demand considerable self-control, does really perhaps in the end yield fuller satisfaction than any. Late authors have pointed out that a distinction can and should be made between sexual intercourse for the definite purpose of race-propagation and sexual intercourse for simple union - that, in fact, the methods are different. Mrs. A. B. Stockham, in her little book *Karezza* (Progress Publishing Co., Chicago), dwells on this subject. She indicates that for the latter purpose, i.e., union, there may be complete and indeed prolonged bodily conjunction; but the whole process being kept (by the use of a certain amount of physical control) on the emotional plane and the plane of endearment and affection, there need be no actual emission, and the final orgasm may be avoided. 'Given abundant time and mutual reciprocity, the interchange becomes satisfactory and complete without emission or crisis by either party.' The result of this is really a more complete *soul-union*, a strange and intoxicating exchange of life, and transmutation of elements. 'The whole being of each is submerged in the other, and an exquisite exaltation experienced. ... In the course of an hour the physical tension subsides, the spiritual exaltation increases, and not uncommonly visions of a transcendent life are seen, and consciousness of new powers experienced.' This 'gives to the sexual relation an office entirely distinct from the propagative act - it is a union on the affectional plane, but at the same time it is a preparation for best possible conditions of procreation.'[9]

The instruction here given by *Karezza* sounds like a guidance of yogic exercises in sexual intercourse, theoretically asserted by the sexual school of Taoism; and the above quotation appears as a section of 'Remarks and Notes' in some twentieth-century versions of the well-known *Love's Coming-of-Age*, which Lawrence had read. It therefore may not be a coincidence in *Aaron's Rod* that some of Lawrence's descriptions of sexual

[9] Edward Carpenter, 'On Preventive Checks to Population', in *Selected Writings*, vol. 1: Sex, pp. 181-183, ed. David Fernbach & Noël Greig (London: G. M. P. Publishers Ltd., 1984), p. 182.

intercourse seem to apply this Taoist notion the other way round, proposing an explanation that some of his characters fail their relationship as a result of being unable to reach such a 'soul-union' in their sexual intercourse. These descriptions were expurgated in all editions of *Aaron's Rod* and are only restored in the recent Cambridge edition of the novel[10]:

> And this night, in his extreme, he felt his passion drawn from him as if a long, live nerve were drawn out from his body, a long live thread of electric fire, a long, living nerve finely extracted from him, from the very roots of his soul. A long fine discharge of pure, bluish fire, from the core of his soul. It was an excruciating, but also an intensely gratifying sensation. As his passion broke from him to her, he felt the long live hot fire-thread drawn downwards through him, terribly down his legs and through his heels, leaving his heels feeling bruised, and himself feeling vacant. It was like a discharge of lightning, but longer, more terrible. (*Aaron*, p. 272)

This passage does not really suggest that the sexual contact between Aaron and the Marchesa is physically a failure, but it eventually leads to Aaron's rejection of the Marchesa. Lawrence's descriptions could be interpreted according to the Taoist view of sexual intercourse to reveal the reason of their separation. In this case, the Marchesa is not a dominating woman; but neither does she possess the female regenerating essence. So, their contact does not benefit his male potency. Aaron feels drained rather than compensated, and it leads to a loss and exhaustion. The balance of the union on the part of the male collapses. If their affair were to continue, Aaron might not lose his position of mastery which she does not demand, but his capacity for regeneration would be destroyed. What Aaron wants to achieve through this affair is his male power, which, in Taoist terminology, could also mean 'the magic feeling of phallic immortality' (*Aaron*, p. 272). To win such power, Aaron needs to resist temptation, avoid consumption and conduct sexual intercourse in the way a Taoist sage would have done, to benefit himself by drawing from the female essence for his health and for the refreshing of his soul:

[10] Cf. Textual Apparatus 272:9 (*Aaron*, p. 351).

> There was a lust and a temptation: the phallic Godhead. The lust and loveliness of his flesh, his godlike phallic power in the flesh. And the inevitable consummation, the drinking of his innermost drop of heart's blood. Lust and temptation. - And then carrion.
>
> But his soul stood apart and could have nothing to do with it. If he had *really* been tempted, he would have gone on, and she might have had his central heart's blood. Yes, and thrown away the carrion. He would have been willing.
>
> But fatally, he was not tempted. His soul stood apart and decided. At the bottom of his soul he disliked her. Or if not her, then her whole motive. Her whole life-mode. He was neither God nor victim: neither greater nor less than himself. His soul, in its isolation as she lay on his breast, chose it so, with the soul's inevitability. So, there was no temptation. (*Aaron*, p. 274)

Aaron's affair with the Marchesa ends for a different reason from the one he left home for. It is even more different from the ways Lawrence separated Paul and Miriam, Ursula and Skrebensky, or Gerald and Gudrun. It is not because the Marchesa is a dominating woman trying to possess Aaron's spirit, neither is that because she is an independent woman trying to make a bargain with him. When he was composing this novel, Lawrence made an effort to show the distinctive nature of this relationship. He cancelled or rewrote passages to demonstrate what he meant to convey by the separation. Some cancelled extracts of the novel, now published in the Appendix of the Cambridge edition, explain the reason for the separation as Aaron's dislike of their making use of each other and as his resentment of making a bargain with her:

> No wholesome person can bear to [be] made use of. And if it be a case of: 'I'll let you make use of me, if you'll let me make use of you,' this, indeed, is a bargain, but it is a bargain one always regrets, whilst one remains oneself, and whole. A bargain one not only regrets, but resents and deeply begrudges. (*Aaron*, p. 307)

Lawrence must have realised that in the descriptions of this passage, the Marchesa still sounds more or less like Hermione or Gudrun in *Women in Love*. He eventually cancelled and rewrote it because he wanted to find a different reason for Aaron's separation from the Marchesa and he certainly wanted to make Aaron a different character from Birkin and Gerald. In *Aaron's Rod*, he was no longer looking for love, marriage, not even necessarily for harmony and balance. He is looking for his lost mastership

in order to establish his utopia. He needs to regain his potential force and resurrect into a new life. But the Marchesa does not have that power: that Taoist transferable female essence to create her new man. To clarify this difference, the rewritten passage now reads:

> She was absolutely gone in her own incantations. She was absolutely gone, like a priestess utterly involved in her terrible rites. And he was part of the ritual only, God and victim in one. God and victim! All the time, God and victim. When his aloof soul realised, amid the welter of incantation, how he was being used, - not as himself but as something quite different - God and victim... (*Aaron*, p. 273)

Here Aaron is treated as a sacrificial object in the Marchesa's ritual, but it is not the person that is used, but the male potency that suffers a loss. Thus, the reason for Aaron's retreat has affinities with the Taoist master's warnings to his believers, that if he cannot regain his male potency in his sexual intercourse with woman, the *Yang* or Male essence will be lost and there will be no health and longevity for him. So Aaron leaves the Marchesa, in order to maintain his own individuality, because he cannot revive his mastership in his affair with her. Although, here in Aaron, Lawrence does not insist that woman should yield to man, his persistent efforts in maintaining Aaron's approach to love as a practice of re-creation coincide with the Taoist idea that a man should restore his power by having sex with a woman of reviving force, while being always on guard against any love affair which exhausts his potential energy.

As he was undertaking the search for a utopia, Lawrence came across two major disillusions in *Aaron's Rod*: Love and Power. In its contacts with life and society, Aaron's flute also symbolically experiences both disillusions with him. As a living plant with the promise of blossoming, it travels everywhere with its owner and wishes to awake a few natural survivors of all the human-created disasters to answer its call for love and happiness. As a seeker driven by the urge for love, Aaron uses this musical instrument to express his desire for a woman he can love and live

with happily ever after. He admits to Lilly that he actually started his journey from England to Italy to look for a woman of this kind (cf. *Aaron*, p. 293). But his relationship with the Marchesa reveals that his illusions cannot fulfil his wish to attain eternity and immortality through his male potency. His disappointment is revealed by his flute, which will not blossom as a promise of happiness. But Aaron still wanders about with his flute, which though not revived by the love-urge, still wishes to regain its natural power. As Aaron's conversation with Lilly in the last chapter of the novel shows, Lawrence must have realised the inadequacy of the union between the individual man and the individual woman for his idea of utopia. He understood that the war for power, and even the effort to achieve a balance, will not put an end to the struggle of human life and society. Neither the submission of woman to man nor the submission of man to man will be able to bring lasting happiness to the world. Instead, man should submit to the power of Nature so that woman can follow him in this submission. The Taoist chamber practice suggests that man regains natural power through his intercourse with woman while woman assists him to obtain this power and submits to him.

Having been engaged in such a search for a natural power, Lawrence also suffered disillusionment through the actions of the mob. Aaron, in his travels, has already had horrific experiences with the mob, which usually appears as an unbridled force in times of revolution. Lawrence had always been suspicious of the mob, regarding them as anarchists, criminals or even murderers. His anti-democratic views[11] were developed in response to the horrid violence of the War. When a nation struggles in defence, the state itself asserts more power over its citizens. As war-time defence demanded

[11] Cf. D. H. Lawrence, 'Democracy' (1919), in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, ed. Michael Herbert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 61-83. Hereafter 'Democracy'.

mobilised strength rather than individualism, the idea of democracy was hijacked by the government, which attempted to assure 'the proper adjustment of material means of existence.' Lawrence despised this 'Material Standard', so he regarded democracy as a 'dead' ideal, because it did not 'exist for the sake of the individual.' ('Democracy', p. 66) In the new social order he wished to establish, men should first 'become their own decent selves again,' ('Democracy', p. 82) then the material world can be spontaneously arranged. To fulfil his favoured rearrangement of social order, he hoped that selected individuals might possess a natural power which, regained through love, could control the mob and make them submit. Disappointed in the failure of the regenerating power of love in England, Lawrence made his trip to the post-war Italy hoping to find the chance of regaining such a natural power. Aaron, as his courier with a blooming message in his flute, is threatened and finally discouraged by the mob. So Lawrence had, though very unwillingly, to put an end to the symbolic flute, which is either destroyed by the explosion of the bomb or by the trampling of the crowd. In the disillusionments of Love and Power, Aaron feels that he is left in a world which is deprived of love and dominated by evil power. He suffers Lawrence's own failure in proving his conviction that the power of love can defeat the power of materialism. But instead of giving up his search, Lawrence still wanted to go on. Just before the novel ends, although Aaron is disheartened and disillusioned about a natural power, Lilly suggests to him a new outlook for a natural leadership:

> 'Woman - and man too. Yield to the deep power-soul in the individual man, and obey implicitly. I don't go back on what I said before. I do believe that every man must fulfil his own soul, every woman must be herself, herself only, not some man's instrument, or some embodied theory. - But the mode of our being is such that we can only live and have our being whilst we are implicit in one of the great dynamic modes. We *must* either love, or rule. And once the love-mode changes, as change it must, for we are worn out and becoming evil in its persistence, then the other mode will take place in us. And there will be profound, profound obedience in place of this love-crying, obedience to

> the incalculable power-urge. And men must submit to the greater soul in a man, for their guidance: and women must submit to the positive power-soul in man, for their being.' (*Aaron*, pp. 298-299)

Aaron's Rod marks the beginning of Lawrence's leadership novels and it actually concludes his *Sisters* series on the issue of love and relationship. It starts to look for an eternal solution to the problem of human society which includes his solution to the conflict between man and woman. So in his leadership novels beginning with *Aaron's Rod*, Lawrence's main concern shifted to the issue of love and power. Lawrence was looking for a natural force whose existence and power had been ratified by Taoism. Like the Taoist, Lawrence also wishes to base this power on love, create this power through love and revive the strength of this power by love. Like the Taoist, Lawrence also believed that man could not rule without woman, because he needed her resources for birth, her tenderness for consolation and her potential essence for resurrection. So in his next leadership novel, *Kangaroo*, his hero becomes more actively involved in politics and tries to re-establish a natural power to serve for his idealised political utopia.

§5.4 Utopia with a Male Leader

Having failed to find his utopia in Italy and Ceylon, Lawrence continued his pilgrimage to Australia. On 4 May 1922, the Lawrences arrived in Western Australia and stayed there for a fortnight. At that time, he showed no intention of writing anything about Australia. But he did hope that something in this outlying continent might turn up to satisfy his utopian expectations. Having been disappointed by the other parts of the world he had explored, he hoped he could at least live in seclusion in this free country for a while. On board of the Malwa before his arrival in Sydney on 27 May 1922, he wrote to Robert Mountsier:

> I doubt if I shall ever like Australia. The country is rather wonderful, with its clear sky and air and sense of emptiness. If I were chucking up the literary sponge, and turning my back on the world, and going to live

> just for my own sake and pleasantness, I'd stop in Australia. One could live in the bush for next to nothing, and a great free land. But I suppose I must hang on at least till I've tried America. The sense of futility grows - and it's nice to know there is this country - the North West particularly - where one could lose oneself away from the world. (*Letters 4*, p. 245)

A couple of days later when he moved to a cottage forty-eight miles away from Sydney, the idea of an Australian novel began to form in his mind. It was first intended to be 'a romance' (*Letters 4*, p. 247), which Lawrence planned to finish within three months (cf. *Letters 4*, p. 251). But during the next six weeks when he worked at a great speed on writing *Kangaroo*[12], this idea of a romance changed and expanded. It eventually became another leadership novel, which Lawrence himself later inaccurately specified as 'an Australian novel with no women in it: more political, ... - more a thought adventure...' (*Letters 4*, p. 353). What directly influenced Lawrence in mixing the theme of politics with a story of love and relationships seemed to be the contemporary Australian social issues that Lawrence read in the Sydney *Bulletin*, some of which are quoted in *Kangaroo* (cf. *Letters 4*, p. 10). Although Lawrence was trying to produce authentic pictures of contemporary Australian politics - some of the passages in his novel were based on actual people and events - *Kangaroo*, on the whole, was a product of his own imagination. He used his Australian materials to build up his own utopian ideas. As a result, the reproduction of his Australian experiences reflected his struggles for leadership in marriage and for freedom in society, both of which he felt were requisite for his utopia.

His feelings towards Australia were mixed and contradictory. He highly appreciated the landscape, the climate and even the isolation. But he did not like the people, the weird emptiness and even its democracy. On 13 June 1922, he wrote to Else Jaffe:

> This is the most democratic place I have *ever* been in. And the more I see of democracy the more I dislike it. It just brings everything down to

[12] D. H. Lawrence, *Kangaroo*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Hereafter *Kangaroo*.

> the mere vulgar level of wages and prices, electric light and water closets, and nothing else. You *never* knew anything so nothing, Nichts, Nullus, niente, as the life here. They have good wages, they wear smart boots and the girls all have silk stockings; they fly round on ponies and in buggies - sort of low one-horse traps - and in motor-cars. They are always vaguely and meaninglessly on the go. And it all seems so empty, so *nothing*, it almost makes you sick. They are healthy, and to my thinking almost imbecile. That's what the life in a new country does to you: it makes you so material, so *outward*, that your real inner life and your inner self dies out, and you clatter round like so many mechanical animals. It is very like a Wells story - the fantastic stories. I feel if I lived in Australia for ever I should never open my mouth once to say one word that meant anything. Yet they are very trustful and kind and quite competent in their jobs. There's no need to lock your doors, nobody will come and steal. All the outside life is so *easy*. But there it ends. There's nothing else. The best society in the country are the shop-keepers - nobody is any better than anybody else, and it really *is* democratic. (*Letters 4*, pp. 263-264)

That was the attitude Lawrence adopted when he was depicting Australia in *Kangaroo*: it is a free country with no class distinction. A citizen may feel better off in monetary terms, but he does not really feel he is better than his fellow man. The real democracy here probably can be seen through the fact that nobody actually rules over anybody else. As God's Own Country, Australia must have attracted Lawrence as a natural settlement. He endeavoured to find a natural power in its innocent freedom, which, according to him, had already been too much for this country which was evolving a chaotic system of democracy.

As a romance, *Kangaroo* also depicts Australia as an ideal place for the Somerses to re-adjust their relationship within marriage. The husband has no need to break away from his wife as Aaron has to do, because his wife has already joined him in seeking a utopia. She likes Australia and its freedom, and is ready to take this opportunity to reintegrate their love and marriage. But the process of reintegration is more painful for man. In this novel, Lawrence clearly indicates that a woman's utopia is somehow different from that of a man, and Somers is to make his wife believe that equality in marriage does not mean happiness. For Harriett, a utopia is a peaceful place for two in love, isolated from the disturbance of society. She

does not care about failures and successes in the outside world which she has finished with. In this way, Australia seems to meet her satisfaction:

> In her heart of hearts she said she wanted to live alone with Somers, and know nobody, all the rest of her life. In Australia, where one can be lonely, and where the land almost calls to one to be lonely - and then drives one back again on one's fellow-men in a kind of frenzy - Harriett would be quite happy, by the sea, with a house and a little garden and as much space to herself as possible, knowing nobody, but having Lovatt always there. And he could write, and it would be perfect. (*Kangaroo*, p. 67)

But Somers shares with Birkin and Aaron the fear of being let down by woman in marriage. In his dream, he is terribly haunted by the feeling that he will not succeed in anything unless his woman believes in him. But as he wakes up, he encourages himself:

> The dream is one of these larvae of my past emotions. It means that the danger is passed, the evil is overcome, so it has to resort to dreams to terrify me. In dreams the diseases and evil weaknesses of the soul (and of our relations with other souls) take form to triumph falsely over the living, healthy, onward-struggling spirit. This dream means that the actual danger is gone. (*Kangaroo*, p. 97)

So he starts looking for a utopia different from Harriett's paradise, because under the protection and love of his mother and wife, man feels vulnerable in defending his equality. Lawrence had already experimented to free his man by either Birkin's seclusion or Aaron's utopian escape, but now he wanted to try a new way for Somers to win his leadership over woman. In the conflict between man and woman, Somers has to identify himself by participating in politics and 'fight out something with mankind' (*Kangaroo*, p. 68). To prove man's superiority in politics and restore his initiative position in sexual relationship, Somers is more actively involved in politics than any of Lawrence's previous heroes. But this involvement proves a very dangerous way for Somers to express his ideas of social reform. Although his original thought is to make every man give up his unnatural power and to allow the natural feelings of love and sympathy to grow up into an atmosphere which favours a spiritual fulfilment for all the utopian residents,

his efforts can easily be mistaken as an ambition for the free exercise of his own power. Kangaroo considers this writer of political articles on democracy as such an activist. He appreciates Somers's political enthusiasm without understanding his idea of a natural revolution. He wants to drag Somers into his circle and tries to persuade him to vow his devotion. He has a politician's professional suspicion of anyone's alienated action. The tension between Kangaroo and Somers is reminiscent of this Taoist fable:

> Hui Tzu was prime minister in the Liang State. Chuang Tzu went thither to visit him.
>
> Some one remarked, 'Chuang Tzu has come. He wants to be minister in your place.'
>
> Thereupon Hui Tzu was afraid, and searched all over the State for three days and three nights to find him.
>
> Then Chuang Tzu went to see Hui Tzu, and said, 'In the south there is a bird. It is a kind of phoenix. Do you know it? It started from the south sea to fly to the north sea. Except on the *wu-t'ung* tree, it would not alight. It would eat nothing but the fruit of the bamboo, drink nothing but the purest spring water. An owl which had got the rotten carcass of a rat, looked up as the phoenix flew by, and screeched. Are you not screeching at me over your kingdom of Liang?' (Giles, pp. 217-218)

Like Chuang Tzu, Somers is just travelling by, looking for his own ideal utopia. He has no intention of staying in Australia to take over Kangaroo's position. His purpose is to re-establish a natural power by means of political reforms without disregarding individual freedom and human quality. He detests the unnatural power of politics which restricts the development of creative souls and he also disdains the vulgar freedom which could cause violence and social disturbance. He wants to restore a natural leadership which used to regulate the human instinct for peace and initiate his wisdom against violence. His ideal utopia will ensure its residents a natural freedom, a spiritual fulfilment and a peaceful unity. But Kangaroo's political effort is to provide his people only with a material satisfaction. So Somers questions Kangaroo on this point:

> 'But their minds, their souls, their spirits?' said Somers.
>
> 'They must more or less look after those themselves. I want to keep *order*. I want to remove physical misery as far as possible. That I am sure of. And that you can only do by exerting strong, just *power* from above. There I agree with you.'

> 'You don't believe in education?'
> 'Not much. That is to say, in sixty percent of the people it is useless. But I do want those sixty percent none the less to have full, substantial lives: as even slaves have had under certain masters, and as our people hardly have at all. That again, I think, is one of your ideas.'
> 'It is,' said Somers. But his heart sank. 'You want a kind of benevolent tyranny, then?'
> 'Not exactly. You see my tyrant would be so much circumscribed by the constitution I should establish. But in a sense, he would be a tyrant. Perhaps it would be nearer to say he would be a patriarch, or a pope: representing as near as possible the wise, subtle spirit of life. I should try to establish my state of Australia as a kind of Church, with the profound reverence for life, for life's deepest urges, as the motive power. ...' (*Kangaroo*, pp. 111-112)

The ideas of Kangaroo's benevolent tyranny bears some similarities to the ideal of the Chinese feudal realm. In the novel, Kangaroo is referred to several times as presenting some Chinese-like characteristics. He first invites Somers to an impressive luncheon served by a Chinese waiter. The food is substantial - or so we gather from Kangaroo's queer, pursed, thick-lipped mouth and his stout, firm stomach. The great varieties exhibited in the pompous style of the luncheon makes Somers feel equivocally that 'I might be anywhere.' (*Kangaroo*, p. 108) Even the ugly, grotesque body of Kangaroo becomes at this time beautiful to Somers like a Chinese Buddha (cf. *Kangaroo*, p. 114). Although these casual comments by Lawrence on Kangaroo's character are inadequate to suggest that Lawrence had any deep knowledge of traditional Chinese systems of government, his disagreement with Kangaroo on political terms reveals that his ideal natural aristocrat would also reject the ruling style of a benevolent Chinese emperor. There are two points of resemblance between Kangaroo's benevolent tyranny and imperial systems of government in ancient China. The first one can be referred to Confucius's assertion that 'the common people can be made to follow a path of action, but they cannot be made to understand it.'[13] Although Confucius is also known as a great educationalist in Chinese history, he did not, since his era restricted him, regard everyone as

[13] Cf. James Legge, tr., *Confucian Analects*, in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1 (London: Trübner & Co., 1861), part 2, p. 75, with reference to Waley's translation (*Analects*, p. 134).

educable, nor did he grant the majority of people the right of being educated. His political ideas were intended for the élite scholars and rulers to provide them with a ruling repertoire, such as how to ensure political power, suffice material life and keep social order. So he disregarded the common people's understanding of his political doctrines. Kangaroo's idol of a benevolent 'patriarch, or a pope' with 'the wise, subtle spirit of life', who can accommodate 'sixty per cent' of the dim-witted people with 'full, substantial lives', is no less than the ideal image of a wise and merciful Chinese emperor. The second resemblance can be seen in the material sufficiency the ruler condescendingly provides to stabilise the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Chinese emperors learnt from historians that a successful ruler should rely on the support of his people while his people would rely on food for their survival. If they were not fed properly, the empire would collapse with them. This teaching is commonly known as 'food is the people's god from heaven' (cf. *Han*, p. 2108), which relates not only to the problem of famine years' starvation, but also to the luxurious dietary tradition in China. In addition, it hands over to the ruler the key to his administration. So the first material sufficiency a regime should ensure its people is the provision of food. Kangaroo's luncheon ironically suggests a theoretical recognition of this Chinese practice on food and Kangaroo himself also seems to be insistent on his idea of a material abundance to relieve the Australian people from their physical misery. But at the same time he wishes to control their minds, souls and spirits, and requires their obedience to his power. In a word, both Kangaroo and the Chinese doctrine of government attempted to rule by an orderly system invented by a number of rational minds. Instead of following Nature's intuition to govern and rule, they both introduced the action of human intelligence to overwrite the power of Nature.

On behalf of Lawrence, Somers rejects this materially based power because it neglects the spiritual freedom of individuals. Although Kangaroo also demands a spiritual love from his people, it is not a natural love as Somers wants it to be: 'Not through the spirit. Enters us from the lower self, the dark self, the phallic self...' (*Kangaroo*, p. 135). Here, Somers's idea is a spontaneous love which is mutually exchanged between the leader and his people on equal terms. This should allow them to love each other and enjoy their individual freedom at once, but they should not be forced to surrender their love for exchange of material substances.

The dispute over the theory of love between Kangaroo and Somers continues Lawrence's former struggle for love and power started in *Aaron's Rod*. But in this further pursuit, *Kangaroo* provides two new elements in an attempt to compromise the conflict. Firstly, Somers does not have to abandon a family, as Aaron does, to seek for his participation in politics. He is still in love with his wife, Harriett, and is also loved by her. They can share 'their personal, human life of intimacy' (*Kangaroo*, p. 96), but their problem seems to be her impossibility of understanding his 'impersonal business of male activity' (*Kangaroo*, p. 96). He needs her belief and trust in him when he decides to join in the impersonal activity which may eventually exclude her. *Kangaroo* undertakes to find a possible solution to Lawrence's problem of obtaining both love for woman and power in politics. Secondly, the leader, Kangaroo, also offers a scheme of love as part of his political philosophy. But it is almost a compulsory love for the leader and seems more or less like a devotion rather than affection. This love is not an instinctive urge, but a moral obligation. Somers argues against this demand for love, and proclaims instead a love which is nature's inspiration of creative activity without any moral or spiritual intervention. Given these two new circumstances, Lawrence attempted to find a way of

maintaining the balance between love and power, and between nature's creation and man's political action.

§5.5 Search for a Natural Ruler

Lawrence arrived in Australia on his way of a global search for his utopian dreams. But his ideal did not lie entirely with freedom and democracy. For Lawrence, real freedom and democracy should not be worked out or managed under a particular system. They should evolve from man's instinctive nature. If there had to be a power in control, or leadership, he did not want it to operate against any individual. In *Kangaroo*, Lawrence insisted on man's being alone (cf. *Kangaroo*, p. 282), and this meant not only a rejection of the common social significance of freedom and democracy, but also re-defined his position on the importance of communication between man and the unknown God:

> The purest lesson our era has taught is that man, at his highest, is an individual, single, isolate, alone, in direct soul-communication with the unknown God, which prompts within him.
>
> This lesson, however, puts us in danger of conceit, especially spiritual conceit.
>
> In his supreme being, man is alone, isolate, nakedly himself, in contact only with the unknown God.
>
> This is our way of expressing Nirvana.
>
> But just as a tree is only perfect in blossom because it has groping roots, so is man only perfected in his individual being by his groping, pulsing unison with mankind. The unknown God is within, at the quick. But this quick must send down roots into the great flesh of mankind. (*Kangaroo*, pp. 301-302)

Here the influence of Buddhism is clearly shown. But in addition to this Nirvana, Lawrence also laid emphasis on the imitation of Nature, or even obedience to Nature by referring to the roots. Thus this unknown God was to be recognised as a power of Nature. According to Taoism, Nature demonstrates its power in every form of human or non-human existence, including the sun and the moon, wind and rain, mountains and rivers, change of seasons, animals and human beings. This power of Nature, which lies within every natural individual and forms an essential part of him, will

eternally remain unknown because firstly it never requires any human recognition of its force and secondly it is by no means manipulated by human action. All human efforts in understanding it can only result in an awareness of its existence, an awesome appreciation of its force, and the identification of human action with the law of nature. Taoism applied this belief to the administration of an empire, and Lao Zi set the following principles for the ruler:

> 'The goodness of a wise ruler,' answered Lao Tzu, 'covers the whole empire, yet he himself seems to know it not. It influences all creation, yet none is conscious thereof. It appears under countless forms, bringing joy to all things. It is based upon the baseless, and travels through the realms of Nowhere.' (Giles, p. 94)

In Lawrence's opinion, the freedom and democracy enjoyed by Australian politics had gone beyond the maintenance of Nature's operation. Democracy had triumphed by producing a mastership based on possessions, so the ultimate perfection of Nature was spoiled. As a country geographically separated from Europe, Australia could enjoy its own freedom, which was basically different from the freedom allowed under the system of European democracy. What Lawrence appreciated here was a Nature-endowed freedom which kept Australia free from rigid political systems and from the devastating force of industrial development. But Lawrence was also disappointed by this freedom because he thought the Australian people had abused it by opting for political turmoil and violence. In his opinion, the Australian paradise was being destroyed by its excessive freedom, and its democracy threatened to develop a system hostile to the preservation of Nature. That explains why Lawrence sometimes admired, but sometimes resented this freedom. In the vicious circle Lawrence observed, freedom was turning to deny itself when Nature was trimmed to suit modern life. So his principle was neither freedom nor democracy, but the preservation of Nature.

Lawrence's insistence on the role of Nature in political systems resembles the Taoist disapproval of human efforts to alter Nature:

> Therefore every addition to or deviation from nature belongs not to the ultimate perfection of all.
>
> He who would attain to such perfection never loses sight of the natural conditions of his existence. With him the joined is not united, nor the separated apart, nor the long in excess, nor the short wanting. For just as a duck's legs, though short, cannot be lengthened without pain to the duck, and a crane's legs, though long, cannot be shortened without misery to the crane, so that which is long in man's moral nature cannot be cut off, nor that which is short be lengthened. All sorrow is thus avoided. (Giles, p. 101)

Kangaroo's political effort in reforming Australia seems to Lawrence similarly to be adding something unnecessary to the free life of the country, which will eventually cause pain and loss of freedom to its people. In Taoist theory, this is called deviation from Nature.

Lawrence always understood well the significance of balance in Nature, which Taoism also strongly asserted. So he did not exclusively favour either side in a conflict, whether the opposition was between man and woman, lion and unicorn, or day and night. In *Kangaroo*, love and power meet in conflict. Lawrence called them the flow of love and the flow of power. He emphasised the importance of their mutual existence on the survival of the human race. The theory sounds fundamentally a doctrine of Taoism:

> In the balance of these two flows lies the secret of human stability. In the absolute triumph of either flow lies the immediate surety of collapse. (*Kangaroo*, p. 303)

In the Australian political situation, the power flow has destroyed communal ownership and the love flow has been dethroned. So the Diggers' political reform is heading towards a material revolution, but the prospect of a spiritual fulfilment in terms of individual freedom has been ruined. As a free country, Australia might qualify as Lawrence's ideal for utopia, but he felt that the Australian paradise was losing ground to a human invented civilisation. The new democracy advocated by Kangaroo's

political movement overrides the virtues of primitive freedom enjoyed by individuals in a natural state. This critical situation is reminiscent of the Chinese lost paradise theorised by the Taoist sages in opposition to the development of Chinese civilisation:

> Primeval man enjoyed perfect tranquillity throughout life. In his day, the Positive and Negative principles were peacefully united; spiritual beings gave no trouble; the four seasons followed in due order; nothing suffered any injury; death was unknown; men had knowledge, but no occasion to use it. This may be called perfection of unity. At that period, nothing was ever made so; but everything was so.
>
> By and by, virtue declined. Sui Jen and Fu Hsi ruled the empire. There was still natural adaptation, but the unity was gone. A further decline in virtue. Shen Nung and Huang Ti ruled the empire. There was peace, but the natural adaptation was gone.
>
> Again virtue declined. Yao and Shun ruled the empire. Systems of government and moral reform were introduced. Man's original integrity was scattered. Goodness led him astray from Tao; his actions imperilled his virtue. Then he discarded natural instinct and took up with the intellectual. Mind was pitted against mind, but it was impossible thus to settle the empire. So art and learning were added. But art obliterated the original constitution, and learning overwhelmed mind; upon which confusion set in, and man was unable to revert to his natural instincts, to the condition in which he at first existed. (Giles, pp. 196-197)

Lawrence finished the first manuscript of *Kangaroo* in the middle of July 1922 in Australia, and sent it to Robert Mountsier. He expressed his disappointment at the violation of freedom in Australia at the end of Chapter 17, which was the last chapter of the *Kangaroo* manuscript at that time. Upon the death of Kangaroo, the victim of a human action against Nature, Somers wanders into the Zoo and there sees a couple of real kangaroos. He feels impelled to touch their animal tenderness; he has refused to give in to the love of Kangaroo, but now he allows himself to be fully absorbed into this contact with nature. He feels an intuitive call from nature through animals, the moon, and the sea. Nature, so close to him when he is walking along the beach, is a shapeless but comprehensive God:

> This God without feet or knees or face. This sluicing, knocking, urging night, heaving like a woman with unspeakable desire, but no woman, no thighs or breast, no body. The moon, the concave mother-of-pearl of night, the great radium-swinging, and his little self. The call and the answer, without intermediary. Non-human Gods, non-human human being. (*Kangaroo*, p. 341)

The formlessness of the unknown God not only represents a boundless power, but also effortless existence. Any human attempt to define or to alter the formless image of this God will be harmful. The following Chinese fable tells of such consequences:

> The ruler of the southern sea was called Shu. The ruler of the northern sea was called Hu. The ruler of the central zone was called Hun Tun. Shu and Hu often met on Hun Tun's territory, and being always well treated by him, determined to repay his kindness.
>
> They said, 'All men have seven holes, - for seeing, hearing, eating, and breathing. Hun Tun alone has none. We will bore some for him.'
>
> So every day they bored one hole; but on the seventh day Hun Tun died. (Giles, p. 98)

Having sent the first version of *Kangaroo* to the printers, Lawrence waited for three months before he got the proof back in the middle of October 1922. By this time he had moved to Taos in New Mexico, and he made 'many changes' and also created 'a new last chapter' (*Letters 4*, p. 322). Chapter 18, 'Adieu Australia', registers strongly his regrets at having to leave Australia and admits his original willingness to settle down there. His characters speak on his behalf of how he appreciated Australia for its nature and freedom. According to the novel, Somers leaves Australia because of his unhappy involvement in politics, which reveals to him that a new-found freedom has deviated from the principle of Nature and fallen into the hands of devils. This explanation of the contradiction in his loving Australia but refusing to give in to it, was purely fictional. It does not explain Lawrence's own reasons for leaving Australia, because there is no evidence of his own involvement in contemporary Australian political events. Lawrence's accusation that Australians had violated Nature and perverted freedom came purely from his own imagination as his Australian experiences were actually not at all as painful as those which Somers suffers. Lawrence had read and used the local newspapers, but unlike Somers he himself never had any direct contact with Australian politicians. What causes the Somerses to leave Australia is an unconscious expression

of Lawrence's own fear that the world may be doomed through a misguided civilisation. His concept of utopian civilisation is that it should enjoy a close connection with Nature:

> ... I'm the enemy of this machine-civilisation and this ideal civilisation. But I'm not the enemy of the deep, self-responsible consciousness in man, which is what *I* mean by civilisation. (*Kangaroo*, pp. 348-349)

Lawrence's protest at man's violation against Nature in *Kangaroo* not only refers to Australia in particular, but in fact includes all the places Lawrence had visited. It reveals Lawrence's feeling of the crisis about human existence. But when he was in New Mexico, revising *Kangaroo*, he must have come to the realisation that Australia was probably the country in the world least contaminated by the machine civilisation. The real reason for his leaving Australia was probably similar to that given by Harriett and Somers further in the last chapter: the Lawrences would have been willing to stay in Australia for good, had they been able to live for three lives or for a hundred years (cf. *Kangaroo*, p. 356). They might have wished that they were like the Taoist sages who avoided the turmoils of the world and lived in health and longevity by practising love in a paradisial natural environment. In *Kangaroo*, especially in its later-added last chapter, Lawrence realised that Australia had been his last opportunity of finding a utopia where Nature could prevail. But since he was so estranged from the people there, he was by no means able to return. In addition to this disappointment, he knew his health was declining. He realised that the possibility of a real utopia was gradually eluding him. From that time on, in his fiction, Lawrence's search for utopia was no longer in real places of the world, but the mystical and imagined ones.

CHAPTER SIX

A UTOPIA OF MYSTICISM: PRIMITIVE REGENERATION IN *THE PLUMED SERPENT*

§6.1 Aspects of Mexican Symbolism

There had been great pressure on D. H. Lawrence, probably since the banning of *The Rainbow*, to leave England for a better place. And this restlessness is reflected in his fiction: *Women in Love* showed his hero and heroine sailing abroad to a new settlement, though no details were given of its location. Aaron, in his picaresque search for a utopia, shows no intention of settling down anywhere and he seems to be on a never-ending quest. The destruction of his flute in an explosion reveals Lawrence's lack of confidence in any civilisation highly dominated by industry. During this period when he travelled in Europe, he began seeking for a culture different from his own. This attempt resulted in his travel book *Sea and Sardinia* (1921)[1], in which he expressed his ambivalence:

> Where does one go? ... Tunis? Africa? Not yet, not yet. Not the Arabs, not yet. Naples, Rome, Florence? No good at all. Where then? (*Sea*, p. 3)

It was the 'uncaptured Sardinia' that now interested Lawrence because he had nearly lost hope for the rest of Europe. He was fed up with England, where his book was banned and he was suspected as a spy because he was married to a German wife. On 23 January 1919, when he wrote to Nancy Henry from Derby, he had already made up his mind to travel far away: 'I want to go on to America - south if possible - I am finished here in Europe.'(*Letters 3*, p. 322)

[1] D. H. Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1956). Hereafter *Sea*.

Lawrence's world-wide pilgrimage for a utopia first started with his visit to Italy from November 1919 to February 1922, marked by *Sea and Sardinia*, and then it continued with his brief stay in Ceylon where he disliked Buddhism. Following his journey to Australia, which resulted in *Kangaroo*, his search came to its climax when he arrived in New Mexico, still remembering his dream of 'Raninim' (cf. *Letters 4*, p. 350). The attainment of 'Raninim' was physically impossible, but Lawrence's two visits to Mexico brought him close to a civilisation completely unlike his own and he became deeply involved in studying it. During his stay in America and Mexico, Lawrence read a number of books on Mexico, ranging widely not only on its history and revolution, but also its anthropology. He was fascinated by its mythical culture and primitive civilisation. These readings significantly influenced Lawrence's writing of his Mexican novel[2], in which he added the symbols of mystic gods to his utopian elements.

The source of the symbolism in *The Plumed Serpent* is Zelia Nuttall's work *The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations*[3], from which Lawrence drew the name of Quetzalcoatl as his representative of regeneration. Nuttall's book was primarily intended to be a short monograph of forty-one pages on the study of the swastika in aboriginal Mexican civilisation, but was soon extended to 284 pages to cover the same fundamental set of ideas in other American civilisations. Eventually it became a lengthy book (548 pages) of comprehensive research on the world-wide application of the swastika as a symbol of circularity

[2] D. H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent (Quetzalcoatl)*, ed. L. D. Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Hereafter *Serpent*.

[3] Zelia Nuttall, *The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations: A Comparative Research Based on a Study of the Ancient Mexican Religious, Sociological and Calendrical Systems* (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, 1901). Hereafter Nuttall.

and, therefore, a symbol of regeneration. The concentration and the extension of Nuttall's work have not received much attention from critics of *The Plumed Serpent*. Nuttall's research owed something to her deep interest in Asiatic Civilisations. As she explained in her preface, when she first compared Mexican and Chinese symbols, it was their similarities and relationships that encouraged her to carry on her research, from Eastern to Western Asia, and eventually from Asia Minor to Egypt, Greece, Rome and Western Europe. She consulted at least a dozen works on Chinese studies available at that time. Apart from a wide range of references to Chinese Civilisation, scattered throughout the book, she wrote more specifically on Chinese symbolism of duality, astronomy and star-worshipping (cf. Nuttall, pp. 284-309). It is true that Quetzalcoatl is a purely Mexican, not Chinese, symbol and that Lawrence, staying in Mexico, chose to locate it in a Mexican story. So it is highly understandable that no critics have mentioned a second-hand influence, which would be regarded as not especially relevant. But a close look at Nuttall's study contributes our understanding of how Lawrence assimilated this symbol. He must have followed Nuttall through her studies of the swastika and found that the central meaning of the symbol coincided with what he believed in. He had been engaged in searching for an ideal leadership for his utopian society and would have responded enthusiastically to Nuttall's study of the swastika as a wheel of winds:

> 'wheel of the winds'... is recorded as 'another name for Quetzalcoatl.' This undeniably proves that the Mexicans not only figured the Deity by the image of a serpent but also thought of him as a wheel which obviously symbolized centrical force, rotation, lordship over the four quarters, *i.e.*, universal rulership. (Nuttall, p. 33)

There are many of reasons to believe that Lawrence's application of the Quetzalcoatl symbol did not mean his Mexican novel was exclusively dedicated to Mexico. Rather, it was part of his world-wide search for a

utopia which he had already started. Although for the moment he undertook a Mexican search, his mind was open to any influences, especially those with long ancestry in varied civilisations. One strand of influence was found in Chinese civilisation.

§6.2 Accumulated Understanding of Chinese Culture

As early as in 1910, Lawrence came across a collection of Chinese poems entitled *A Lute of Jade*[4]. The book was borrowed from Helen Corke's brother, Arthur Stanley Corke, who had been in military service in China for five years. Lawrence must have been impressed by the tranquillity of these poems and he admired Li Po's poems[5] for their 'Chinese spirit, abstract and noble'. He commented: 'it is the same in their paintings in the British Museum.' (*Letters 1*, p. 168) Fascinated by the beauty of Chinese poems, Lawrence two years later (1912) added to his reading another Chinese poetry collection - Clifford Bax's translation of *Twenty Chinese Poems*[6] (cf. *Letters 1*, p. 405). If this sowed some seeds of Lawrence's future utopia, they were naturally merged into his idyllic dream within the tradition of English Romanticism, which shared with Taoism the concept of an undisturbed nature.

For the next few years, he read a number of books concerning oriental philosophy and anthropological studies, including a book edited by Arthur Ransome[7]. This book contains 'Sayings of Confucius' and a poem by Li Po (cf. Ransome, pp. 89-91), two most prominent masters in Chinese

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[4] L. Cranmer-Byng, tr., *A Lute of Jade: Being Selections from the Classical Poets of China* (London: John Murray, 1909).

[5] Li Po [Li Bai] (A. D. 702-762) was the best poet in the Tang Dynasty (A. D. 618-907) and also the most famous name in Chinese literature. The book contains eight poems translated from him.

[6] Clifford Bax, tr., *Twenty Chinese Poems* (Hampstead, N.W.: W. Budd & Co., Orpheus Press, 1910).

[7] Arthur Ransome, ed., *The Book of Friendship: Essays, Poems, Maxims and Prose Passages* (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1909). Hereafter Ransome.

literature and philosophy. One of Ransome's essays[8] on the Japanese poet, Yone Noguchi, which Lawrence may have read in 1913 (cf. *Letters 2*, p. 27), tells how 'So-shi [Su Shi], a Chinese philosopher, dreamed that he was a butterfly' (Noguchi, p. 189)[9]. Lawrence had read Noguchi's poetry[10] and appreciated his metrical skills (cf. *Letters 2*, p. 61), and may have absorbed from him the idea that by dreaming of being a butterfly, Noguchi was seeking freedom in two worlds and finding reality both in his own existence and in things beyond touch or description. The butterfly image had a powerful fascination for Lawrence. Fourteen years later when he came across it again in Koteliansky's translation of Rozanov[11], Lawrence remarked:

> [Rozanov] is the first to see that immortality is in the vividness of life, not in the loss of life. The butterfly becomes a whole revelation to him: and to us. When Rozanov is wholly awake, and a new man, a risen man, the living and resurrected pagan, then he is a great man and a great seer, and perhaps, as he says himself, the first Russian to emerge. (*Phoenix*, p. 369)

Back in the 1910s, Lawrence also loved and was fascinated by other books about China, such as *Les Fumeurs d'Opium en Chine*, which he read in December 1913 (cf. *Letters 2*, p. 114). The most important books concerning oriental and anthropological studies, which he read two years later (1915), were Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and *Totemism and Exogamy*, in which he discovered the concept of blood consciousness that formed an essential element in his philosophy. His researches into ancient

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[8] Arthur Ransome, 'The Poetry of Yone Noguchi', in *Portraits and Speculations* (London: Macmillan, 1913), pp. 187-205. Hereafter Noguchi.

[9] The story of butterfly transformation was originated from the Taoist master, Zhuang Zi [Chuang Tzu]. But Su Shi (A. D. 1036-1101) was a great poet and essayist in the Song Dynasty (A. D. 960-1279). He was also an accomplished painter and calligrapher, and a hard-working public official. Noguchi must have made a mistake in reference. Cf. Giles, p. 32 and §3.2.

[10] Yone Noguchi (1875-1947), *The Pilgrimage* (Written in English), 2 vols. (Yokohama: Kelly & Walsh Ltd., 1909).

[11] Vasily Vasilyevich Rozanov (1856-1919), Russian writer and author of *Solitaria*, *Fallen Leaves*, *The Apocalypse of Our Times*, and *Oriental Motifs*. Lawrence reviewed *Solitaria* in *Calendar of Modern Letters* in July 1927 (*Phoenix*, pp. 367-371), but he seemed to be more interested in *The Apocalypse of Our Times*, of which Koteliansky sent to him only 20 pages.

religions did not stop after this. In 1916, he read Sir Edward Burnett Tylor's *Primitive Culture*[12] and commented on it as 'a very good sound substantial book, far rather read it than *The Golden Bough*' (*Letters 2*, p. 593). Lawrence might have been introduced to the primitive philosophy of the cosmos from Tylor's book. In 'The Crown', written in 1915, Lawrence had already attempted to achieve a balance between two conflicting forces. Tylor's studies of Chinese nature-worship may have given him the inspiration to promote his idea of balance into a cosmic theory, in which he could identify the two conflicting parties as Heaven and Earth originally coming from the division of the primordial Chaos. The primitive philosophy Tylor presented in his book was basically a Taoist belief both in the division of Chaos and in the balance between Heaven and Earth, and therefore, between sexes:

> ... in the ancient nature-worship of China, the personal Earth holds a place below the Heaven. Tien [Heaven] and Tu [Earth] are closely associated in the national rites, and the idea of the pair as universal parents, if not an original conception in Chinese theology, is at any rate developed in Chinese classic symbolism. ... the 'worshipping of Heaven and Earth,' is the all-important ceremony of a Chinese marriage. (Tylor, p. 247)

It is quite possible that this Chinese symbolism amplified Lawrence's theory of the balance between man and woman. He found a ready theory in traditional Chinese philosophy which provided him with an original formulation of the balance he was pursuing. His insistence on the necessary compromise between the lion and the unicorn was now transferred from mythology to religion, where he found support for his belief in sexual balance. The results of his thinking are seen in his 'Two Principles' (1919), published three years after reading Tylor and four years after writing 'The Crown', and which reiterates the idea that 'the living cosmos stretched out the first Heaven and the first Earth, terms of the inexplicable primordial

[12] Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1871). Hereafter Tylor.

duality.' ('Two', p. 228) That of course came from the Chinese source of sex division to which he was directly referring (cf. 'Two', p. 234 and §2.4).

Lawrence began to study theosophy from 1917[13]. The first book he came across was Madame Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, in which the most important Taoist classic - *Tao-te-King*[14] - was briefly introduced. Although Mme Blavatsky did not rely mainly on Chinese sources for her theosophical studies, she seemed, from what she quoted, to have consulted numerous books on Chinese studies. In her introduction to the three huge volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*, she announces that:

> ... if a great portion of the Sanskrit, Chinese, and Mongolian works quoted in the present volumes are known to some Orientalists, the chief work - that one from which the Stanzas are given - is not in the possession of European Libraries. (Blavatsky, vol. 1, p. xxii)

Even so, she still did her best to use all the Chinese materials she could get hold of. In *The Secret Doctrine*, two famous orientalists, Professor Friedrich Max Müller[15] and Professor James Legge[16], are quoted for their authoritative comments on Lao Zi and Confucius (cf. Blavatsky, vol. 1, p. xxv & p. xxxvii). The mysterious pro-Taoist text, *Yi-King* (*The Book of Changes*), is also referred to on the issue of Cosmogony (cf. Blavatsky, vol.

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[13] In 1917, Lawrence read two books on theosophy:
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*, 3 vols. (London: Theosophical Publishing Company, Ltd., 1888 & 1897). Hereafter Blavatsky.
James Morgan Pryse, *The Apocalypse Unsealed* (London: John M. Watkins, 1910). Hereafter Pryse.
In 1919, he became familiar with another book written by the first author:
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology*, 2 vols. (London & Benares: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1910). Hereafter *Isis*. The book was originally published in New York in 1877. This is a new edition of her first work.

[14] *Tao-te-King* [Dao De Jing] is the Chinese name for *The Book of Morality*, the only book by Lao Tseu [Lao Zi]. Although there were other Western language translations of the book available then, the one that Blavatsky consulted must have been Stanislas Julien's French translation, entitled *Lao Tseu Tao Te-king*. Cf. §2.2).

[15] Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900), fellow of Christ Church, Oxford from 1849 to 1875. His principal achievement was the editing of *The Sacred Books of the East*, 51 vols., 1879-1904.

[16] James Legge (1815-1897), fellow of Corpus Christi, Oxford. He was the first Professor of Chinese in Oxford University from 1876 to 1897.

1, p. 440), along with other Chinese mythological works, such as *Shan Hai King*, 'Bamboo Books' and 'Rh Ya' (Blavatsky, vol. 2, p. 302). The second book Lawrence read by Mme Blavatsky was actually her earliest work, *Isis Unveiled*, in which she revealed that Isis was the symbol of nature and referred in a dozen of places to Lao-tse, Chinese religion and immortality, as well as various Chinese customs and literary documents, such as the *Shu-King* (Shu Jing) (cf. Legge, §4.5) and the *Shi-King* (Shi Jing)[17] (cf. *Isis*, vol. 1, p. 11), the latter of which Lawrence may have already read in his early youth (1907) from Richard Garnett's *The International Library of Famous Literature*[18].

Lawrence never fully accepted orthodox theosophy, and rejected in particular Blavatsky's approval of Buddhism, since he had personally experienced that religion in Ceylon and found it suffocating. But he seemed to be fascinated by Taoism and was sympathetic to many of its ideas on sexual utopia and symbolic regeneration. According to Tindall[19], 'Mme Blavatsky... gave Lawrence two important ideas, which affected several of his later works: the idea of the primitive religious Utopia and the idea of ancient myths and symbols as the way of understanding and return.' (Tindall, pp. 138-139) It has to be added that Mme Blavatsky owed many of these ideas to her study of Chinese civilisation.

Another poetry collection about China Lawrence read in 1917 was written by an American poet, Eunice Strong Tietjens, whose first book,

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[17] James Legge, tr., *The She King, or The Book of Poetry*, in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 4 (London: Trübner & Co., 1871).

[18] Richard Garnett, ed., *The International Library of Famous Literature*, 20 vols. (London: The Standard, 1899). Vol. XI contains five poems translated from the *Shi-King* (*Shi Jing*) by William Jennings (cf. pp. 5261-5264).

[19] William York Tindall, *D. H. Lawrence & Susan His Cow* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939). Hereafter Tindall.

Profiles from China[20], recorded what she had seen during her visit there. The picture of China in the beginning of the twentieth century was certainly not as good as the one produced during the prosperous Tang Dynasty (A. D. 618-907). The self-sufficient Chinese community had been destructively ravaged by domestic trouble and foreign invasion, as Tietjens in her book demonstrated. But by that time, Lawrence's own idyllic dreams had already been shattered. He grew to hate moralised humanity and mechanical evolution, which he regarded as the product of modern industry. He found something sympathetic in Tietjens' book, and wrote to tell her that in her poems 'an inward boredness with all the phenomena of humanity and the humanised cosmos, revealed flatly, is the best.' (*Letters 3*, p. 139) So Lawrence stopped looking for the old tranquillity in his new readings about China and turned to find something mysterious, but deep-rooted and decisive in the culture:

> This is the real truth. Man was man in eternity, has been man since the beginnings of time, and is man in the resultant eternity, no evolution, only unfolding of what *is* man. And the same with the Chinaman: no evolution beyond the Chinaman, none, none, none. But, I don't pretend to define what *is* the Chinaman. (This in reference to your ricksha boy with the ears that suggest a horse's ears.) There are animal *principles* in man, which totemism recognises, but these have nothing evolutionary. (*Letters 3*, p. 139)

What Lawrence suggested here by 'unfolding' probably referred to the idea of circularity represented by the 'beautiful white circle' in Tietjens's 'The Altar of Heaven' (Tietjens, p. 66), which she saw in Peking. Lawrence became very interested in the concept of the circularity of human life which he later found in Nuttall's study of swastika. It brought him to the idea of regeneration through ancient gods of remote cultures which have potential healing powers. In *Profiles from China*, Tietjens was struck with awe by the fascinating 'Hand', a sketch she used as the book's Proem:

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[20] Eunice Tietjens, *Profiles from China: Sketches in Verse of People & Things Seen in the Interior* (Chicago, Illinois: Ralph Fletcher Seymour Publishers, Fine Arts Building, 1917). Hereafter Tietjens. The book is also an important work in the history of the Imagist movement.

The Hand

> In your hand, as in a microcosm, the vast and shadow Orient is made visible.
> You are a large man, yet it is small and narrow, like the hand of a woman and the paw of a chimpanzee.
> With a tiny brush it can feather lines of ineffable suggestion, glints of hidden beauty.
> With a little tool it can carve strange dreams in ivory and milky jade.
> ... it can device exquisite tortures...
> Delicately it can caress a quivering skin, softly it can glide over golden thighs...
> Who can read me your hand?
> I am afraid of your hand... (Tietjens, pp. 11-12)

When Lawrence wrote to her about the poem, he made the following comments:

> When I [...] abuse the 'Hand' poem, it is because you do not feel so strongly about the boneless hand as you say. You feel a real *mental* irritable curiosity, and a certain angry contempt, which is not quite contempt because you can't understand. But you should address the hand with irritable curiosity, rather than with false reverence and not quite genuine desire. (*Letters 3*, pp. 141-142).

It was with the encouragement of this 'irritable curiosity' that Lawrence began to explore in other cultures a healing and reviving force which he hoped would restore the physical and mental integrity of human beings. But the above quotation also reveals that Lawrence was highly selective in his adoption of ancient civilisations. He would not accept a mystery that he had not converted by his own understanding. He was still at the stage of assimilating and processing Chinese material which came within his reach, but was very cautious in choosing from it.

Interested in what he had learnt about China, Lawrence still wished to dig deeper into the true nature of her culture in order to find what he was looking for. When he heard Amy Lowell was working on a translation of Chinese poetry with Florence Ayscough, he wrote to her on 9 October 1921 with great eagerness: 'Have you done your Chinese book? I shall be interested to see that' (*Letters 4*, p. 97). On 20 March 1922, Lowell replied:

> I have sent you a volume of Chinese translations which I have been doing for four years with a friend of mine who lives in China. I wonder if there will be anything you will like in it. I hope so. I think these old fellows are very fine.[21]

But Lawrence does not seem to have got the book before he arrived in America. He was impatiently waiting in Ceylon for its arrival and sent Lowell a postcard on 17 April 1922, complaining: 'I never got your last book that you said you sent me (*Letters 4*, p. 229). And on 20 May 1922, he wrote again during his journey from Australia to San Francisco:

> This makes two books you have sent me to Germany, and neither of them have I got. (*Letters 4*, p. 242)

On 12 September 1922, Lowell wrote to Lawrence to console him about the lost book; she knew that he had been travelling and would soon arrive in America:

> I am awfully sorry you have lost the various books that I have sent flying after you. I suppose that they have disappeared in the mail and that you will never get them. As a matter of fact, there is only one, ... my Chinese Translations, which I did in collaboration with Mrs. Ayscough, 'Fir-Flower Tablets.' I will not send you another copy during your wandering, but will wait until you are stationary somewhere and then send it to you. (Lowell, p. 109)

There is no more mention of this book in their correspondence, but there is no doubt that Lawrence's interest in China was growing. He finally began making plans to visit China. His curiosity about China and his intention of travelling to the Far East was further enhanced by Alan Insole, who went to China and Japan (cf. *Letters 4*, p. 141) and wrote to Lawrence from there (cf. *Letters 4*, p. 39). Lawrence was amused by Insole's letter:

> Heard from Alan: rapturising over the sweetness of Jap. brothels and gardens. Hope the whale won't swallow him. I can see the Japs are gently pulling his leg, poor dear. (*Letters 4*, p. 43)

Lawrence then made up his mind: 'Insole writes from Japan that it is perfectly fascinating. I should like to see it.' (*Letters 4*, p. 49) He wrote to Mary Cannan on 27 January 1922:

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[21] E. Claire Healey & Keith Cushman, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence & Amy Lowell (1914-1925)* (Santa Barbara: Black Sparrow Press, 1985), p. 106. Hereafter Lowell.

> We have suddenly changed our plan.... we are going to Ceylon.... I must go out of Europe now... I feel it will give one rest, peace, inside one: this Ceylon. ... Later on I want to go forward to China: and then at last across to America, to New Mexico.' (*Letters 4*, p. 179-180)

The ambivalence in *Sea and Sardinia* now seemed to be settled in this planned pilgrimage to the East. It was the first specific plan Lawrence made to start a world-wide search for his utopian dreams. Unfortunately, he finally failed to find the ideal he was looking for. When Lawrence arrived Ceylon in March, it was very hot, not at all agreeable to his mood of writing (cf. *Letters 4*, p. 214). Although by that time he had begun to consider the possibilities 'among all this different world' (*Letters 4*, p. 216) for his utopia, Ceylon did not seem to encourage him to continue his search further to the East. Mis-orientated by Buddhism, his confidence in an oriental utopia was shattered and confused. The visit to Ceylon was a regrettably uncompleted journey to the East. At that time, Lawrence does not seem to have known enough Chinese philosophy to persuade him to continue his journey. His inclination towards the East was quenched by his dislike of Buddhism; his trip to China and Japan was cancelled forever, and he changed his route in quest of utopian dreams to Australia and Mexico.

§6.3 Residing within the Influence of an American Sinologist

Although Lawrence eventually chose Mexico as a possible settlement for his utopia, we should not disregard the influence from other cultures on his subsequent utopianism. The influence from the East, which had previously generated Lawrence's pilgrimage, could not completely fade away. When Lawrence arrived in America in September 1922, he was certainly exposed to American and Mexican cultures. But the fascination with China seems not to have vanished; instead, it was recalled and strengthened by a variety of things he met with pertaining to Chinese culture.

Just a few days after he arrived in San Francisco, Lawrence spent some time in Santa Fe, in a house owned by Witter Bynner[22]. By that time, this sinologist had returned from his two trips to China, having stayed there altogether for sixteen months. In 1918, he started translating an anthology of Chinese poetry, entitled *Three Hundred Poems of the Tang Dynasty*, a classic in Chinese literature. He did not know Chinese, so he worked under the advice of Dr. Kiang Kang-hu[23], who was one of his colleagues in the University of California at Berkeley. During that year, Kiang helped Bynner with the literal translation of the poems and provided him with notes and biographical information. In 1920, when Bynner made his second trip to China, he was already at work on shaping the literal notes into poetry, expecting a book to be ready for publication by 1921. Although the anthology, eventually entitled *The Jade Mountain*, did not come out until 1929, only one year before Lawrence's death, its contents and ideas were already familiar to Bynner when Lawrence first met him. Bynner obviously told Lawrence about this translation; for a few years later, on 31 January 1928, Lawrence wrote to him from Switzerland: 'When will you really get your Chinese book out?'[24], showing his eagerness to read *The Jade Mountain*. The book finally reached Lawrence and he must have read it

[22] Witter Bynner, *Journey with Genius: Recollections and Reflections Concerning the D. H. Lawrences* (London: Peter Nevill, 1953). Hereafter Bynner.

[23] Kiang Kang-hu [Jiang Kanghu] (1883-1954), Chinese scholar, who studied in Japan in his youth and returned to China as a socialist. He founded the first Chinese socialist party in 1912. But his early radical and later conservative views brought him no success in his political career. He spent most of his life as a teacher lecturing in Chinese and Western universities and also travelled around the world, notably to Russia, Europe, U. S. A. and Canada, sometimes for political propaganda and sometimes for missions of cultural exchanges. He met Witter Bynner when he taught Chinese in the University of California at Berkeley from 1913 to 1920. He brought with him some 13,000 volumes of his father's books and generously donated them to the university's library. He was back in China when the Japanese invaded in 1937 and was later persuaded to take an official post in the puppet government controlled by the invaders. Following the Japanese surrender in 1945, he was punished for treason and sentenced to imprisonment as a war criminal. He finally died of sickness in a communist prison.

[24] James T. Boulton and Margaret H. Boulton, with Gerald M. Lacy, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol. 6 [March 1927 - November 1928] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 278. Hereafter *Letters 6*.

before he sent it to Laurence Pollinger on 20 February 1930 from Vence[25], where he was on his deathbed.

While he was visiting America, Lawrence encountered elements of Chinese culture. Bynner's house in Santa Fe was filled with Chinese scrolls and jade he had brought back from China. Mabel Luhan[26] recalled an occasion when she and Frieda 'stood looking at a Chinese painting in the living-room' where Lawrence had been dining (Mabel, p. 48). In her reminiscences, as well as those of Dorothy Brett's[27], a number of such occasions are recorded. With Brett, Lawrence had an excellent Chinese meal in a restaurant (cf. Brett, p. 161) and saw Indians with Chinese lanterns moving slowly, gently, and silently in a procession (cf. Brett, p. 183). In Mabel's house, Lawrence sometimes played 'Ma Jong' (Brett, p. 51), a traditional Chinese gambling game, with Mabel, Ida and Brett. Mabel and her first husband, Leo Stern, were more or less Sinophils. When Lawrence was searching for his Utopia in Ceylon, they sent him a letter inviting him to visit New Mexico. Mr. Stern wrote:

> New Mexico is really one of the tremendous things. No landscape that I have ever seen elsewhere is so beautiful. It is the only place that for me actually realized the vision of the great Chinese landscape painters. (Mabel, p. 31)

In her second marriage, Mabel continued her hobby of collecting Chinese artefacts. In her house at Taos, she possessed a number of pictures from many lands and among them there were Chinese paintings and Indian things (cf. Mabel, p. 53). She had 'a splendid Chinese coat that Clarence had given' her (Mabel, p. 203) and even once employed 'a Chinese cook, named Wong'.(Mabel, p. 137) All these trivial encounters associated with China

[25] Cf. Keith Sagar and James T. Boulton, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol. 7 [November 1928 - February 1930] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 649. Hereafter *Letters 7*.

[26] Mabel Dodge Luhan, *Lorenzo in Taos* (London: Martin Secker, 1933). Hereafter Mabel.

[27] Dorothy Brett, *Lawrence and Brett: A Friendship* (London: Martin Secker, 1933). Hereafter Brett.

may have left pleasant impressions on Lawrence. The effect of them proved be long-lasting. Even some years later, on 8 December 1927, when he wrote to Emily King from Florence, small things of China still seem agreeable to him:

> The tea came all right, 4/-duty. But it is very nice, such a nice bouquet, and I'm always so glad to have a bit of good China after a few months of India. It's so soothing, in comparison. (*Letters 6*, p. 234)

Bynner certainly played a big part in exposing Lawrence to Chinese influence. When he was looking around with Lawrence in Mexico City, Bynner was reminded of the similarity between Mexico City and Shanghai. The Mexican boatman's face gave him an impression that he was again travelling in a houseboat on the West Lake in Hangchow. Bynner's knowledge of the colours of Chinese jade impressed the Lawrences. Frieda got a gift from Bynner, which was a jade necklace he had brought back from China. Even the symbol of the plumed serpent was in some way associated with this Chinese influence. When Lawrence saw again and again the feathered serpent in the Museum of Mexico City, he began to like Bynner's poem 'The Winged Serpent' (Bynner, pp. 106-107), in which one line compares the symbol with the dream of 'the yellow people of the middle kingdom.' Bynner also mentions that Lawrence was interested in some three-legged Chinese-looking plates at a time when he believed Lawrence was making mental notes for *The Plumed Serpent* and was developing some of the images.

Lawrence's reading of Mme Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* may have suggested a similarity between the serpent symbol and the Chinese dragon:

> The serpent has ever been the symbol of the adept, and of his powers of immortality and divine knowledge.... It shows the dual power of the Secret Wisdom: the black and the white magic. It shows this personified Wisdom guiding the Soul after death, and its power to call to life that

> which is dead - a very deep metaphor if one thinks over its meaning.... The Chinese, one of the oldest nations of our Fifth Race, made of it the emblem of their Emperors, who are thus the degenerate successors of the 'Serpents' or Initiates, who ruled the early races of the Fifth Humanity. The Emperor's throne is the 'Dragon's Seat' and his dresses of State are embroidered with the likeness of the Dragon. The aphorisms in the oldest books of China, moreover, say plainly that the 'Dragon' is a human, albeit *divine*, Being. (Blavatsky, pp. 364-365)

When Lawrence was in Mexico, coming face to face with this serpent symbol and reading Nuttall's further research on Quetzalcoatl and regeneration, he was probably reminded by the presence of Witter Bynner that the serpent was a symbol identical to the Chinese dragon. As Tindall discovered:

> ... the dragon of Revelation should be the same as Quetzalcoatl. This dragon, whose liberation was the principal problem of the good old days, Lawrence also found to be identical with that of the Chinese... (Tindall, p. 157)

Lawrence did refer to the Chinese dragon symbol in *The Plumed Serpent*, but probably because he did not know enough about it, he was not inspired to use it as an independent symbol. However, he had realised its significant existence and was ready to merge it into his formation of the mystic Quetzalcoatl.

Lawrence's contacts with Chinese civilisation were gradually reinforced through the Chinese things he saw, heard and felt in Mexico. They inevitably appeared in *The Plumed Serpent*. The mysterious kindness Cipriano displays is described as:

> bird-like, and the face with the eyes slanting under arched eyebrows, and the little black tuft of an *impériale* on the chin: a face with a peculiar Chinese suggestion, without being Chinese in the least, really. (*Serpent*, p. 30)

Bynner's knowledge and collection of jade must have impressed Lawrence too, so when he was creating the character of Owen in *The Plumed Serpent*, he wrote a brief dialogue which owed something to Bynner's fascination with jade. Lawrence himself actually shared the same mysterious feeling with his character:

> 'But weren't you telling me,' put in Mrs Norris, in her clear, metal-musical voice, 'that you loved China so much, Mr Rhys?'
> 'I *did* like China *very* much,' said Owen.
> 'And I'm sure you made some wonderful collections. Tell me now, what was your particular fancy?'
> 'Perhaps, after all,' said Owen, 'it was jade.'
> 'Ah jade! Yes! Jade! Jade is beautiful! Those wonderful little fairy-lands they carve in jade - !'
> 'And the stone itself! It was the delicate stone that fascinated me,' said Owen. 'The wonderful quality of it -' (*Serpent*, p. 34)

Using jade for its special suggestion of mysterious power, Lawrence twice mentioned the Chinese jade necklace Bynner had given to Frieda. At the same lunch table, Kate sounds as expert as Owen:

> 'Isn't this strange stuff!' said Kate, picking up one of the Aztec stone knives on the parapet. 'Is it a sort of jade?'
> 'Jade!' snarled the Judge. 'Jade's *green*, not black. That's obsidian.'
> 'Jade *can* be black,' said Kate. 'I've got a lovely little black tortoise of jade, from China.'
> 'You can't have. Jade's bright green.'
> 'But there's white jade too. I know there is.' (*Serpent*, pp. 44-45)

Again:

> She also wore a long string of jade and crystal. (*Serpent*, p. 60)

Writing his novel celebrating mystical experience in Mexico, Lawrence certainly wanted to concentrate on Mexican culture which was the immediate influence[28]. But he did not ignore other cultures which, to different extents, had fascinated him. China, Japan, and perhaps India, though he had never intensively explored them, were selected as possible places for his utopian dreams. He only had a superficial understanding of these countries: the information he obtained through reading and other contacts was not always accurate and the reality would probably have never matched his expectations. But in writing *The Plumed Serpent*, he insisted on introducing, along with the Mexican elements he was presenting, certain ancient Chinese symbols, which he believed had potential power. The Chinese white poppy appears side by side with the Mexican agave plant (cf. *Serpent*, p. 75). The Chinese, with 'the spent people' of 'all the colours and

[28] He wrote to Amy Lowell on 21 April 1923: 'I would like to sit down and write a novel on the American continent (I don't mean *about* it: I mean while I'm here).' Frieda also said that Lawrence 'would like to write a novel of each continent.' (*Letters 4*, p. 385)

the races' 'crossed to the great continent of the negation, where the human will declares itself "free," ...' (*Serpent*, p. 78). And when the gods of all the nations were restored to their native lands, the First Man of Quetzalcoatl could 'meet, with sure souls, the other great aristocrats of the world,' including 'the Son of the Greatest Dragon.' Among the Chinese things he had seen in Bynner's house, Lawrence picked up some 'tall Chinese candlesticks' and used them as his props with New-Mexican rugs and Persian curtain to present Kate as 'a woman who lived her own life, for her own self.' (*Serpent*, p. 400)

In his reminiscence, *Journey with Genius*, Witter Bynner did not make clear what he had told Lawrence about China, or how much he had spoken in detail about his Chinese translations. But on several occasions, he did compare Lawrence's doctrines with Taoism, about which he himself may not have known as much when he met Lawrence in 1922 as he did in 1943, when he commenced a translation of *Lao Zi* under his own title *The Way of Life According to Laotzu* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1946). He regretted that Lawrence had not gone on with his journey from Ceylon to the Far East:

> Why, if not drawn by his blood to China, was he not drawn, through his reading, by the classic Chinese tradition of a remote past in which a perfect society of men had lived with natural goodness, with natural leaders and natural followers bound in balanced and happy relationship, much as in his own dreams of heroic antiquity. (Bynner, p. 234)

Then, after quoting a lengthy passage from his own translation of Lao Zi, Bynner asks emphatically: 'What could be closer than this to Lawrence's social faith?' (Bynner, p. 235) He follows the comparison for a few pages, concluding with a reference to *The Plumed Serpent*:

> He [Lawrence] was often on the edge of that doctrine of cosmic instinct which Laotzu did not wish to put into words lest words obscure it - the solving of existence by solution in it, by the dissolving of one's own being in the being of the universe; but Lawrence felt his sort of Tao

> [Way] to be different: not a quiescent acceptance but an activity of his dynamic self participating in the generally dynamic life-flow, recognizable by instinct and conscience. As I have remarked before, I do not think the Laotzu quietism and Lawrence dynamism are so different as they sound. Either one of them might have said with Don Ramon of *The Plumed Serpent*: 'There is no liberty for a man, apart from the God of his manhood.... I can't find God, in the old sense. I know it's a sentimentalism if I pretend to.... I have realized that *my will* no matter how intelligent I am, is only another nuisance on the face of the earth.... Then! I ask what else is there in the world, besides human will, human appetite? because ideas and ideals are only instruments of human will and appetite.... And then when you find your own manhood ... then you know it is not your own, to do as you like with.... It comes from - from the middle.... Beyond me, at the middle, is the God. And the God gives me my manhood, then leaves me to it ... gives it me, and leaves me to do further.' (Bynner, p. 238)

If Lawrence encountered Taoist ideas, as Bynner vaguely suggests, 'through his reading', he did not refer to them directly, for he had never had the chance to go to China and experience a living Taoism. Although he was fascinated by the regenerative element in its doctrine, he was still too cautious to commit himself in case it should disappoint him in the way that Buddhism had done in Ceylon. As was usual in his treatment of other traditional cultures, he abstracted the message, assimilated the central idea and then articulated it in his own language. He interpreted everything in his own way and for his own needs. That is why it is difficult to cite the books he might have consulted, and is often only possible to detect the general similarity between his ideas and those of other civilisations. His Mexican story was specifically Mexican because he was there to see everything with his own eyes and experience it with his own feelings. Even so, Mexicans and scholars of Mexico sometimes find Lawrence's depiction of the specific realities of Mexico unreliable. Lawrence interpreted Mexico in his own way and smuggled ideas he borrowed from other cultures into what he named as 'Mexican'. Eventually, his Mexican novel embodied his own doctrines and exhibited beliefs derived from miscellaneous sources, so that only the main structure remained Mexican.

§6.4 Location of the Soul in Human Body

Lawrence was never able to believe in one doctrine without expressing fundamental reservations. When he was writing his two essays on the unconscious in the early 1920s, he tried to adapt Freud's doctrine on the functions of the unconscious in his belief that this dark recess of the human psyche should be generated into the centralised conscious area of active inheritance and dynamic creation. What he first did in this respect was to define the physical place in which the mystic function of the unconscious was housed and began to develop new ideas drawn from the information about ancient civilisations the theosophists provided. He must have come across the Gnostic Chart on page 26 of James Pryse's *The Apocalypse Unsealed*, which presents human physical structure in the order: Head-Heart-Navel-Genitals. As he started writing his essays on the unconscious, Lawrence made an attempt to explain it:

> To balance the solar plexus wakes the great plexus of the breast. In our era this plexus is the great planet of our psychic universe. In the previous sympathetic era the flower of the universal blossomed in the navel. (*Psycho*, p. 235)

Although a few lines further on Lawrence disagreed with the theosophists because they 'don't realize that the universal lotus really blossoms in the abdomen - that our lower man, our dark, devouring whirlpool, was once the creative source, in human estimation.' (*Psycho*, p. 235), he actually made use of their materials and attempted to locate the soul in the navel as a means for cosmic communications.

The modern industrialised society by Lawrence's age had long entered an era where the mind or the brain was recognised as the centre of man. Lawrence hated this over-cerebral view of man as a merely rational metaphysics, which he believed had produced and maintained a cruel social system to enslave human beings. To a certain extent, Lawrence had accepted the theosophists' belief that the centre of man lay in the heart, but

Freudian theories about the sexual unconscious convinced him that there was a deeply rooted soul in man which generated the love of the heart. He disagreed with Freud that the sexual impulse was the deepest and most dynamic motive of creation and pointed out that this creative motive should not be regarded only as a result of unconscious sexual repression. In his second essay on the unconscious, he asserted that 'the essentially religious or creative motive is the first motive for all human activity. The sexual motive comes second.' (*Fantasia*, p. 18) As he worked to discover the primary motive of human creativity, choosing between the sexual impulse of Freud and the religious impulse of theosophists, he finally reached a conclusion that the navel should be identified as the centre of man and as the root of the dynamic consciousness:

> The first seat of our primal consciousness is the solar plexus, the great nerve-centre situated behind the stomach. From this centre we are first dynamically conscious. For the primal consciousness is always dynamic and never, like mental consciousness, static. Thought, let us say what we will about its magic powers, is instrumental only, the soul's finest instrument for the business of living. Thought is just a means to action and living. But life and action take rise actually at the great centres of dynamic consciousness. (*Fantasia*, p. 34)

Anatomy seems to justify Lawrence's locating the navel as the source of inherited human consciousness. The navel is attached to the womb by the umbilical cord, through which the child inherits 'blood consciousness'. But Lawrence went beyond anatomy by asserting that the navel inheritance did not end with the cutting of the umbilical cord at the time of birth. The navel, he believed, remained as the entrance of the soul and therefore served as the channel for regeneration.

Nuttall's anthropological study further convinced Lawrence of this belief, as he was writing his Mexican novel. Nuttall compared Mexican and Chinese beliefs as she worked on the similarity of the swastika symbol between the two cultures. Her comparative study of the swastika revealed

that the symbol originally represented a primitive understanding of geography, which recognised in the symbol a circular map with four directions polarised from the middle. She also discovered that the four directions were assigned to represent the four elements which ancient peoples believed had formed the world. But from this point the ancient Chinese developed their system differently from the ancient Americans. Each direction was designated with a different element as well as a different colour indicating its nature in astrology. Nuttall produced the following table comparing three different polarisation systems (Nuttall, p. 293):

	MEXICO		ZUNI		CHINA	
North,	Red,	Fire.	Yellow,	Air.	Black,	Water.
West,	Yellow,	Earth.	Blue,	Water.	White,	Metal.
South,	Blue,	Air.	Red,	Fire.	Red,	Fire.
East,	Green,	Water.	White,	Earth.	Blue,	Wood.
Middle,	Many colors.		Middle,	All colors.	Yellow,	Earth.

As the table shows, the Chinese used five elements instead of four to present their understanding of the making of the world. Among them, Air was neglected while Metal and Wood were introduced. But this difference is not clear enough to ascertain Lawrence's preference for the Chinese system. However, when these directions were assigned to parts of the human body, the Chinese designation seemed closer to Lawrence's, as two tables which Nuttall separately presented showed (Nuttall, pp. 294-295):

	CHINESE	ZUNI
North,	Kidneys.	Right fore foot.
West,	Lungs.	Left fore foot.
South,	Heart.	Right hind leg.
East,	Liver.	Left hind leg.
Middle,	Stomach.	Heart.
Zenith,	-----.	Head.
Nadir,	-----.	Tail.

The fundamental difference Nuttall clearly indicated here is that in ancient American Civilisation, the Heart was assigned to the Middle, while in China, it was the Stomach or the Navel (cf. Nuttall, p. 296). Lawrence's

inconsistency with regard to Mexico may have owed something to the Chinese doctrine of the centre of man. *The Plumed Serpent* gives some evidence that at least on the issue of the location of the navel as the centre of the soul, Lawrence was inclining to Chinese rather than Mexican belief. First, the body, the spirit and the soul were respectively located in and parallelled with the phallos, the heart and the belly:

> 'With his eyes and his mouth he dreams, with his hands and his feet, with phallos and heart and belly, with body and spirit and soul, in a tempest of dreams.' (*Serpent*, p. 176)

The mystic rebirth of Cipriano as the living Huitzilopochtli is to be completed in these three aspects. He is first sent back to the primordial darkness - a womb-like condition before rebirth:

> Ramon came quietly to him, placed one of his hands over Cipriano's eyes, and one over the back of his head. Cipriano waited in the dark, living warmth, his head in the circle of Ramon's hands. And slowly the darkness began to move upon a centre in Cipriano's consciousness, to a centre that plunges into the bottomless depth like sleep. (*Serpent*, p. 367)

It is followed by the refilling of the heart:

> Ramon felt the thud of the man's heart slowly slackening. In Cipriano, another circle of darkness had started slowly to revolve, from his heart. It swung in widening rounds, like a greater sleep. (*Serpent*, p. 368)

And then the endowment of the soul:

> Ramon bound Cipriano's arms at his sides, with a belt of fur round the breast. Then he put his one hand over the navel, his other hand in the small of the other man's back, pressing with slow, warm, powerful pressure. (*Serpent*, p. 368)

Finally comes Lawrence's essential reviving of the body:

> Ramon bound him fast round the middle, then, pressing his head against the hip, folded the arms round Cipriano's loins, closing with his hands to the secret places. (*Serpent*, p. 368)

Cipriano appears as a new-born child and Ramon as an exhausted mother after the mystic rebirth:

> And both men passed into perfect unconsciousness, Cipriano within the womb of undisturbed creation, Ramon in the death sleep. (*Serpent*, p. 369)

As the sequence of the above quotations reveals, Lawrence's ritual of regeneration involved placing the soul between the heart and the body, just as Pryse's Gnostic Chart emphasised the importance of the Navel, placed between the Heart and the Genitals. For Lawrence, the soul-navel served as a link between Freud's sexual unconscious and the sympathetic heart of dynamic creation, because he believed that the heart would not have been robust enough to resist the brain, had it not been supported by a joint force with the body, both taking the navel as their primeval source of regeneration. Having located the Navel in the physical geography of the human body as a spiritual centre opposed to the domination of the brain, Lawrence managed to maintain his theory of blood consciousness which he had found in Frazer's anthropological studies. By establishing a connection between natural man and his spiritual source through the navel and the umbilical cord, he reached a conclusion that if human beings were to survive the industrialised catastrophe, they would have to reestablish the blood inheritance of the navel and reject the mental inheritance of the brain, because the civilisation inherited by the brain had been polluted by industry. After an intensive search for a potential utopia, Lawrence was now persuaded that only the ancient civilisation of blood consciousness was capable of rescuing the declining human race. This theory had gone beyond the Romantic adoption of nature as the source of creative inspiration and also surpassed his immediate predecessor, Thomas Hardy, who took a pessimistic view on the nature and the destiny of human beings. Lawrence's revolutionised theory now bore a similarity to Taoism, which concentrated on the balance between *Yang* and *Yin*, advocating a joint effect by the male and the female to follow the primordial Nature. This influence deeply affected Lawrence's writing of *The Plumed Serpent* on the issue of female

submission, which was now different from his previous anxiety on the war-time trend of women's emancipation.

§6.5 Intuitive Return to the Embrace of Nature

Criticism of Lawrence's demand for female submission has been a widely accepted. In his three novellas, this is probably justified. This demand for female submission to the male can also be traced in *Sisters* and other leadership novels. He had insisted on the different qualities between man and woman, and on the different areas of government between male and female leaders. These texts certainly provide evidence of Lawrence's belief in the necessity of female submission. But later, when he turned to explore this submission in primitive ritual ceremonies in *The Plumed Serpent*, he seemed to lose confidence in male domination. He now accepted the male and the female as two separate halves and promoted the conviction that neither of them would signify anything if they persisted in remaining alone:

> Was the individual an illusion? Man, any man, every man, by himself just a fragment, knowing no Morning Star? And every woman the same; by herself, starless and fragmentary. Even in relation to the innermost God, still fragmentary and unblest. (*Serpent*, pp. 389-390)

But, Lawrence's approach to the issue of submission no longer referred to ordinary male-female relationships. The balance between man and woman became less significant than the human being's submissive attempt to achieve a balance with Nature. The Taoist theory of Chaos throws light on this point. Chaos, before the primary sacred division between *Yang* and *Yin*, was an asexual primordial state. The division caused the appearance of two distinguishable egoistic sexes and a disorder resulting from their conflicts. According to the theory, the world will never return to its asexual primitiveness, so a new order can only be attained by the balanced existence and combination of the male and the female. Lawrence also seemed to agree

with Taoism to the point that if there had to be a submission of any kind, it should be first the human submission to Nature, because female submission to the male alone could not assure human beings' harmonious existence with eternal Nature.

Lawrence seemed to be aware of the limitation of male dominance and was convinced that it could not signify on its own. A submission to Nature was demanded from both the male and the female, and only their union could serve the primordial call to regain the cosmic order whence they originated. Only when the new order of sexual balance was restored, could man and woman both regain their physical strength and youthful robustness through a sexual flame:

> And when he comes to me he lays his pure, quick flame to mine, and every time I am a young girl again, and every time he takes the flower of my virginity, and I his. (*Serpent*, p. 394)

The repeated restoration of virginity shows Lawrence's comprehension of an ancient belief that the physical character of the female possesses a more direct access to Nature. This belief is held by Taoists who assert that the male is benefited in his sexual intercourse by taking natural essences from the female. Sexuality, therefore, could be conducted as a health-keeping activity which, under correct performance, would become a way leading to longevity. The Taoist assertion of the female reviving force bears a striking similarity to what Lawrence defines as Kate's intuitive access to primitive Nature. It is not certain whether he borrowed this idea from Taoism, but even if he had not come across this doctrine in Taoism, he might have read of it in one of Edward Carpenter's most important books:

> Woman is the more primitive, the more intuitive, the more emotional. If not so large and cosmic in her scope, the great unconscious processes of Nature lie somehow nearer to her; to her, sex is a deep and sacred instinct, carrying with it a sense of natural purity; nor does she often experience that divorce between the sentiment of Love and the physical passion which is so common with men, and which causes them to be aware of a grossness and a conflict in their own natures; she is, or should be, the interpreter of Love to man, and in some degree his guide in sexual

> matters. More, since she keeps to the great lines of evolution and is less biassed and influenced by the momentary currents of the day; since her life is bound up with the life of the child; since in a way she is nearer the child herself, and nearer to the savage; it is to her that Man, after his excursions and wanderings, mental and physical, continually tends to return as to his primitive home and resting-place, to restore his balance, to find his centre of life, and to draw stores of energy and inspiration for fresh conquests of the outer world.[29]

The male's access to Nature through the female does not necessarily authorise female submission to the male, who is benefited only if he can retain both his union with the female and his harmony with Nature. The first step towards sexual recovery is to achieve a balance with the female. Then, according to Taoism, the purpose of achieving the balance of the two (male and female) was to realise the harmony of three - heaven, earth and human beings. In *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate is gradually persuaded to accept the idea of submission to the supernatural. She struggles with her inner contradiction of wishing to be independent, and from time to time, her ego and individuality still want to be affirmed (cf. *Serpent*, p. 429 and pp. 438-439). Although she rejects any traditional submission to man, she is in some way prepared for the return to the embrace of Nature. The union of harmony does not come to pass until she painfully understands the impossibility of her absolute independence and the necessity of human submission to Nature. Finally, her ego submits to a collective blood consciousness - which resembles the Taoist return to eternity:

> And sometimes, when she tried to hold herself up, in the proud old assertion: *My blood is my own. Noli me tangere*, she would see the terrible ancient hatred in their eyes, the hatred which leads them to atrocities and fearful maimings.
>
> They would defer to her spirit, her knowledge, her understanding. They would give her deference, and a sort of grudging reverence for this. She belonged to the ruling races, the clever ones. But back again they demanded her acquiescence to the primeval assertion: *The blood is one blood. We are one blood*. It was the assertion that swept away all individualism, and left her immersed, drowned in the grand sea of the living blood, in immediate contact with all these men and all these women.
>
> To this she must submit. Or they would persist in the slow revenge. (*Serpent*, pp. 416-417)

[29] Edward Carpenter, *Love's Coming-of-Age* (1896) (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1914), p. 40.

The Plumed Serpent was a book Lawrence himself highly valued. Just before it was published, he anticipated that it would become his 'most important novel, so far' (*Letters 5*, p. 332). All the time he was working on it, he knew it would not be popular because it was 'too different for most folks' (*Letters 4*, p. 455), but he still persevered with it as it 'means more to me than any other novel of mine.' (*Letters 4*, p. 457) It contained everything he had collected during his expatriate search for a utopia. In fact, the distinctive feature of the novel is its absorption of multiple influences in what appears to be simply a Mexican theme. These influences came from various ancient civilisations that provided rich philosophical traditions of their own, even if they were now materially behind more worldly civilisations. Lawrence wished to find in them the basic elements which had benefited human beings in their relationship with Nature, and he attempted to synthesise a philosophy from these elements in opposition to the materialistic development of the modern world. Although his novel failed to create any viable utopia, his condemnation of modern demoralised society did invite a reconsideration of the significance of contemporary developments. He warned against man's usurpation of Nature's operation which could lead to a concentration on materialism at the expense of man's spiritual welfare. His idea of reforming the world suggested two steps in the creation of balance: firstly between man and woman and secondly between human beings and Nature. In Lawrence's era, conventional society was still strong enough to deny him the first balance. Modern science and industrial development to some extent lifted the conventional opposition to sexual balance, but meanwhile were exerting an ever-growing force to prevent the achievement of the second. Lawrence was frightened by the combination of the two forces against the vulnerable possibility of a natural existence and

was searching in panic for an urgent solution. Although in his haste he may not have found the right solution to his contemporary problem, his warning was to become more and more audible for the later generations, so that they became increasingly alert to the preservation of our human qualities and the conservation of our natural environment.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PHALLIC UTOPIA AND SEXUAL RESURRECTION

§7.1 Utopia for Retirement and Regeneration

In May 1926 after long years of travelling, Lawrence settled down in an Italian cottage, the Villa Mirenda, where he was to begin his last novel. Looking back at his lifelong search for a utopia, Lawrence may have despaired that his efforts had not succeeded. He felt hopelessly disappointed by the failure of his quest in so many countries and continents, and discouraged by his experiments with exotic, mystic and supernatural philosophies. Tired and exhausted, he was not initially prepared to write another novel. It was a time of insouciance, as Derek Britton[1] puts it, and a mood of withdrawal from further literary adventures was then permeating his letters to his friends. On 5 July 1926, he wrote from the Villa Mirenda to his publisher, Martin Secker, declining Secker's suggestion that he should write another novel:

> I don't feel much like doing a book, of any sort. Why do any more books? There are so many, and such a small demand for what there are. So why add to the burden, and waste one's vitality over it. (*Letters 5*, p. 490)

The next few letters, to his close friend Dorothy Brett, reveal that there was a sense of frustration and failure behind his reluctance to write. The frankest confession of this feeling comes from his letter to Brett on 29 July:

> I am not doing any work at all: feel sufficiently disgusted with myself for having done so much and undermined my health, with so little return. Pity one has to write at all. (*Letters 5*, p. 504)

From *Aaron's Rod*, through *Kangaroo* and *The Plumed Serpent*,

[1] Cf. Derek Britton, *Lady Chatterley: The Making of the Novel* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), pp. 2-3. Britton observes that Lawrence's doctrine of insouciance was first formulated between 1925 and 1926. But Lawrence's essay 'Insouciance' was not written until June 1928 when he was correcting the proofs of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

Lawrence had changed the sites of his novels from home to abroad, searching for a utopia. But despite painstaking efforts in the three leadership novels, no viable utopia had emerged. Consequently, he was disheartened by the prospect that his 'Rananim' was destined to remain as a dream forever. He had travelled widely, but apart from the ranch in New Mexico where he could have retired with Frieda, he still had not found a place for his utopian community. Had he not travelled enough? Should he continue his long planned journey to Japan and China? Physically and financially, Lawrence knew he was not going to make it. In the two previous Februaries, he had been struck down by severe illness as a result of cold weather. Now in Italy, while enjoying sunshine, he had more or less abandoned his plans for travelling around the globe. Over the next few months, sometimes travelling to other European countries, he continued to enjoy the lovely summer and hot autumn. When he returned to the Villa Mirenda on 4 October, he still showed no intention of writing. His letter to Else Jaffe on 12 October indicates that he was seeking a sort of retirement:

> We have been back here just a week, and I am very glad to sit still in the peace of these quiet rooms. I am getting really tired of moving about, and cast round in my mind for a place which I shall keep as a permanency. Perhaps it will be in England. (*Letters 5*, p. 554)

The intention of retiring in England supports the assumption that Lawrence's visit to Eastwood that summer inspired his writing of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*[2], especially since his sympathy towards the miners and his attempted socialist solution to Connie's problem in the first version of the novel clearly reveal the effects of that journey. As the above letter shows, Lawrence began to reconsider England as a place of retirement, which he had hitherto been seeking abroad. So the Eastwood visit not only re-engaged Lawrence's literary concerns with current political events, but

[2] D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, ed. Michael Squires (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Hereafter *Lady 3*.

also prompted him to resume his attachment to his own country. While starting to create a utopia for retirement, Lawrence was no longer keen on recruiting members for his 'Rananim'. His utopia in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, therefore, was not going to be a new society as 'Rananim' was originally intended to be, but a natural paradise for one man and one woman.

Lawrence entertained sharply contradictory feelings towards England. His previous novels based in England deplored the forlornness and alienation produced by a dehumanising industrial system, and now he was even more disgusted with the emotional indifference caused by a devastating War. But in seeking his last utopia at home he knew that he would have to idealise reality in order to convince himself that England could still be regenerated. So Lawrence took a new attitude in writing *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Instead of travelling the world to find a real site for his utopian society, 'Rananim', he turned inwardly to build up a conceptual utopia for a couple in his own country. He may have realised that his deteriorating health had disabled him from further search for a utopia abroad, but he may not have realised that his new way of idealisation is a form of travelling inwardly, conforming to the teaching of a Taoist traveller, Lie Zi, whose peculiar way of travelling, according to legend, was by riding the wind. But his teacher, Hu Zi, revealed to him the insufficiency of this outward travel and explained that only an inward journey, contemplation, is the perfect pursuit of life:

> You busy yourself with outward travel and do not know how to busy yourself with inward contemplation. By outward travel we seek what we lack in things outside us, while by inward contemplation we find sufficiency in ourselves. The latter is the perfect, the former an imperfect kind of travelling. (Graham, p. 82)

The same excerpt is quoted by Arthur Waley, who compares this inward travel with yoga. He points out that both need concentration on

contemplation, and so they are both regarded as a spiritual, rather than a bodily, journey to a paradise[3]. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was started as such an attempt at contemplation. But unlike a Taoist with a doctrine of Inaction, who felt no worry about not knowing his destination in innocently following the guidance of Nature, Lawrence insisted that his hero and heroine should make an active effort to find a new life. This is a conscious pursuit, generated by instinctive sexual unconscious. Lawrence's pursuit in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is, in this way, different from the Inaction of classical Taoism, but his attempt at regeneration through active sexual relationship is close to the *Yin-Yang* School of later Taoism[4]. He holds the belief, as in his leadership novels, that Nature provides guidance to man, but instead of philosophising the mystic power of Nature as he had done, he now wanted to recognise the potential of regeneration in the sexual relationship between his hero and heroine, who are identical to the corresponding *yang-yin* phases that Nature basically contains. In a study of Chinese thinking about the relationship between man and nature, Richard Wilhelm, in his German translation of a Chinese book about Taoist elixirs, first published in 1928, comments:

> It is built on the premise that cosmos and man in the last analysis obey common laws; that man is a cosmos in miniature and is not divided from the great cosmos by any fixed limits. The same laws rule for the one as for the other, and from the one a way leads into the other. The psyche and

[3] Cf. Arthur Waley, *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1939), pp. 59-61.

[4] Cf. Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 350. Hereafter Schwartz. In the chapter entitled 'Correlative Cosmology', the influence of this Taoist school is first briefly introduced:

> ... as we move from the fourth into the third century B. C., we become ever more aware of the growing ascendancy of another mode of thinking about the general frame of things - a mode of thinking which was actually to survive the Ch'in revolution and achieve the height of its influence in the Former Han dynasty (roughly 200 B. C. to the first century A. D.), leaving its lasting mark on the entire subsequent development of the 'philosophy of nature' in China. It is later treated in the doxography of Ssu-ma T'an as one of the 'six schools' under the rubric of the 'School of *Yin* and *Yang*' (*yin-yang-chia*). It is perhaps also described more precisely elsewhere as the doctrine of the 'Interrelation of Heaven and Man' (*T'ien-jen chih chi*). In seeking an English term I have opted for the term 'correlative cosmology,' although 'correlative anthropocosmology' might be more accurate.

> the cosmos are related to each other like the inner and outer worlds. Therefore man participates by nature in all cosmic events, and is inwardly as well as outwardly interwoven with them.[5]

Compared with the Taoist view of cosmic nature, where retreat is assured by its principal doctrine, Lawrence's retreat from his utopian search abroad is a reluctant withdrawal, but also reflects his conjecture that a new search for a phallic utopia now becomes worth doing. It cannot be assumed that Lawrence took this idea from the Taoist principle, but there is a palpable change of attitude in *Lady Chatterley Lover*, compared with that in his leadership novels. In writing this phallic novel, Lawrence abandoned his preoccupation of seeking power. His characters continue to communicate with nature and the cosmos, not because they are craving for the power of leadership, but because they are exploring a peaceful retreat. Michael Squires's study of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* has noted Lawrence's new attempt in relating sexual tenderness, a relationship rather than a power, to the natural cosmos:

> Lawrence wanted primarily to show the value of sexual relations in marriage. But he wanted more: he wanted to demonstrate the relation between a *phallic* marriage and the larger cosmos, to show that sexuality must acknowledge its roots in the daily and seasonal rhythms of the cosmos. *Lady Chatterley*'s concern with tenderness and touch ought to express this 'cosmic' dimension of sexuality; it ought to make fully persuasive the connection between opening leaves and opening desire, between daily rhythms and the progression of desire, between religious ritual and sexual rite.[6]

Although the writing of the novel was first inspired by the political event of a miners' strike in Nottingham, the rewritings suggest that Lawrence gradually moved away from politics and concluded the novel with a retreat, which idealises his personal wish for a peaceful retirement on the ranch in New Mexico. On the other hand, Lawrence did not really want to give up his search for a utopia abroad. He wanted to recover from his

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[5] Richard Wilhelm, tr., *The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life*, with a European Commentary by C. G. Jung, tr. from German by Cary F. Baynes (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1931), p. 11.

[6] Michael Squires, *The Creation of Lady Chatterley's Lover* (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 177. Hereafter Squires.

physical weakness and gain the financial means to realise his dream of travelling around the globe before he finally settled down on the ranch with Frieda. Even when he had finished the second version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, he was still worried that it would not be accepted for publication[7]. It was probably the idea that he could have it printed privately that prompted him to rewrite the novel for the third time and work it further into a dream of a rural seclusion. He may have hoped to turn the profit of the novel into sunshine, which would recover his lost health, and then the rest of his own dream would become true. This intention was later confirmed when he agreed to sell some manuscripts to Harry Crosby, an American poet and publisher (cf. *Letters 6*, p. 301).

First with a quiet preparation for retirement, but then regaining confidence in an idealised utopia which regenerated his persistent ideas as well as his personal dream, Lawrence started to write and rewrite his last novel. He wanted to sum up all his past searches and efforts and put everything that he had painfully comprehended into one novel. He tried to make it a summary of his hard-won understanding of social disintegration, which he had keenly felt, but been incapable of stopping. Lawrence had feared women's dominance all his life, and this fear had been reflected in *Sons and Lovers* and the two 'Sisters' novels. This apprehension turns into an expression of male-chauvinism in the three novellas, *The Captain's Doll*, *The Fox* and *The Ladybird*, and the idea of male leadership persists through his fiction set in Italy, Australia and Mexico. But in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* he tried to resolve these conflicting and disturbing nervous tensions, and the novel reflects Lawrence's mature reflections on the place of sexuality in modern society. In so far as it is a comprehensive conclusion of

[7] He wrote to Dorothy Brett on 8 March 1927:

> I've done my novel - I like it - but it's so improper, according to the poor conventional fools, that it'll never be printed. And I will *not* cut it. (*Letters 5*, p. 651)

his literary experiments, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* intensifies some aspects of sexuality that his past fiction had, to a certain extent, explored. The gamekeeper's growth to sexual maturity is hindered by a dominant mother in his youth, a situation similar to that of Paul Morel's. The possessive lust of Mellors's wife, and of Hermione, in the same way justifies Connie's sexual desire, as well as Ursula's independence in love. Industrialism and war, having impetuously influenced the life of the characters in *Sisters* and the three novellas, have now mutilated the competence of English life, as here presented in Clifford's symbolic paralysis. Homosexuality, with which Birkin tests his strength and tactics, is again to form part of Mellors's crucial experience in the army to certify his full exploration of life, love and friendship. Pastoral landscape, enticing birds and animals are more realistically depicted, than the exotic backgrounds and the mystical emblems of Italy, Australia and Mexico, to confirm Nature's justification of sexual fulfilment.

§7.2 Union of Natural Tenderness

Instead of continuing to preach a belief in supernatural sexuality, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* teaches that love, marriage and sexuality provide the natural basis for instinctive morality for human beings. Lawrence has forsaken convention and bravely committed his book to showing how sex, love and life constitute a three-stepped process which is his theme. As the novel begins, Lawrence blames emotional and physical paralysis for the incompetence of a dispirited upper-class society in postwar England. He ironically depicts Clifford as such an upper-class figure, who is still capable of sustaining his industrial business, but whose tenderness is numbed by his symbolic impotence. The lack of tenderness does not prevent Clifford from preserving the traditional upper-class virtues such as solidity, patience,

determination, and the persistence to overcome all his catastrophes. But from Lawrence's point of view, none of these virtues is able to retrieve lost energy and enthusiasm. Without tenderness, Clifford has lost the ability of attending to natural human feelings; he remains paralysed as regards emotional love and sympathetic consideration. Lawrence thus portrays him at the beginning of the novel:

> Having suffered so much, the capacity for suffering had to some extent left him. He remained strange and bright and cheerful, almost, one might say, chirpy, with his ruddy, healthy-looking face, and his pale-blue, challenging bright eyes. His shoulders were broad and strong, his hands were very strong. He was expensively tailored in London, and wore handsome neckties from Bond Street. Yet still in his face one saw the watchful look, the slight vacancy too, of a cripple.
>
> He had so very nearly lost his life, that what remained to him was inordinately precious to him. It was obvious in the anxious brightness of his eyes, how proud he was, after the great shock, of being alive. But he had been so much hurt, that something inside him had perished, some of his feelings had gone. There was a blank of insentience. (*Lady 3*, p. 6)

Because of his lack of tenderness, communication between him and Connie gradually becomes impossible. The conventionally maintained relationship is in fact an insult to morality and human nature. Sterility has spoiled the essential balance of the relationship. To resurrect the old, more joyous England, Lawrence started to explore the female unconscious in a search for tenderness. After many years of prolonged anxiety about female dominance, he began to accept female sexuality as a force of regeneration. Connie in this novel stands for this potential.

One theme of the novel is to reveal the significance and essence of this pursuit undertaken by the female unconscious, so Connie's sexual experiences with her lovers become of great significance. Without the knowledge of her previous sexual affairs, especially the descriptions of sexual intercourse, the presentation of such a theme would have been impossible to portray. Connie's sexual pursuit is not a smooth or straightforward progress. Before she meets Mellors, Connie has had two

lovers with whom she had sexual encounters[8]. The first lover is a German young man she met before the war when she was eighteen. Connie's affair with him is only a 'physical experience', as Lawrence discloses:

> A woman could take a man, without really giving herself away. Certainly she could take him without giving herself into his power. Rather she could use this sex thing to have power over him. For she had only to hold herself back, in the sexual intercourse, and let him finish and expend himself without herself coming to the crisis; and then she could prolong the connection and achieve her orgasm and her crisis while he was merely a tool. (*Lady 3*, pp. 7-8)

To Lawrence, this physical affair is not a spiritual relationship because it does not hold the balance and there is no mutual exchange of feelings between the two love-makers. This is the sort of female sexual dominance that Lawrence is disgusted by; it is a form of masturbation which can only be afflictive, unproductive and exhausting. Later in his essay on pornography and obscenity, while defending his sexual approach to literature, Lawrence insists that masturbation should be excluded from natural sex, because it violates the natural law based on a two-in-one principle, a view which Taoism also supports:

> The great danger of masturbation lies in its merely exhaustive nature. In sexual intercourse, there is a give and take. A new stimulus enters as the native stimulus departs. Something quite new is added as the old surcharge is removed. And this is so in all sexual intercourse where two creatures are concerned, even in the homosexual intercourse. But in masturbation there is nothing but loss. There is no reciprocity. There is merely the spending away of a certain force, and no return. ('Pornography', p. 179)

Connie's second lover is an Irish playwright, called Michaelis, who is a guest at Wragby where she is the hostess. In spite of Connie's marriage and sexual maturity, the relationship still goes nowhere. Sexual contact starts as a result of loneliness. In other words, sexual frustration drives them into an ephemeral satisfaction but not a sustained connection. Contrary to the

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[8] In his introduction to the recent Cambridge critical edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Michael Squires divides the novel into three sections, each given a subtitle to facilitate analysis. They are 1) Chapters I-IX: negation; 2) Chapters X-XVI: regeneration; 3) Chapters XVII-XIX: resolution and escape (cf. *Lady 3*, pp. xxiv-xxv). These plots are in the first section.

tenderness later seen in Mellors, Michaelis is a 'hard, erect passivity' that Connie holds on to as her tool. In a situation similar to her first affair, Connie is 'active, wildly, passionately active, coming to her own crisis.' (*Lady 3*, p. 29) Lawrence's presentation of this affair shows that there is an unbalanced communication between the two lovers. They are only involved in a physical affair, but still not in a spiritual relationship. Tenderness is denied them by the frivolous uneasiness that obstructs their emotional contacts.

To further confirm that Lawrence's descriptions of sexual encounters are essential for his theme, it is necessary to consider a few episodes in the successful relationship between Mellors and Connie. Their first encounter at the chicken hut is of course very important to the beginning of their relationship. When Connie visits the pheasant woods, she has never 'felt so acutely the agony of her own female forlornness.' (*Lady 3*, p. 114) The painful awareness of her miserable situation climaxes when she touches the new-born chicks. She feels the contrast between these natural, lively creatures and her forlorn, deadly life, and sobs unconsciously. It is Mellors's tenderness that comes to console her melancholy and enlighten her sensual awareness. But the first encounter is not a success because mutual fulfilment is not reached. What makes them fail for the first time? Lawrence's answer to this question is definite and clear:

> It was not woman's fault, nor even love's fault, nor the fault of sex. The fault lay there, out there, in those evil electric lights and diabolical rattlings of engines. There, in the world of the mechanical greedy, greedy mechanism and mechanised greed, sparkling with lights and gushing hot metal and roaring with traffic, there lay the vast evil thing, ready to destroy whatever did not conform. Soon it would destroy the wood, and the bluebells would spring no more. All vulnerable things must perish under the rolling and running of iron. (*Lady 3*, p. 119)

Contrary to this industrial background, the second encounter is set in a surrounding of dense fir-trees - a natural environment. The sexual being inside Connie is awakened by 'the bright phallos', the beauty of the male. In

the first encounter, Connie feels only the soft touches of Mellors's hand. The orgasm for her is only a kind of sleep. That is to say she is seduced by a sort of tenderness that relieves her from forlornness. But in the second encounter, she neither holds on to her own satisfaction, nor does she cry for a consolation of self-pity. The intercourse itself has become an influx of enjoyment in the embrace of Nature. Physically, or rather symbolically, Connie's consciousness of the womb and the penis proves the new awakening:

> Connie went slowly home, realising the depth of the other thing in her. Another self was alive in her, burning molten and soft and sensitive in her womb and bowels. And with this self, she adored him... (*Lady 3*, p. 135)

These two samples are sufficient to demonstrate that Lawrence's characterisation of Lady Chatterley is purposefully directed to the sexual education and awakening of modern woman. He is also attempting to emphasise that this awakened sexual unconsciousness is merging with a new social consciousness. In promoting the point, sexual intercourse is a peculiar way in which Lawrence expresses his assertion of individualism; that is to say, the establishment of the individual against the industrialised society, which involves the relationship between sexes and concerns one's position as a social being. So in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the power-seeking conflict between sexes melts and disappears. In place of the conflict, the male and the female, the lower-class and the upper-class exchange their potential powers and share a spiritual force between them. The result of this exchange brings about a productive connection, which enables a future to be conceived through a sexual regeneration.

It would be inadequate to limit Lawrence's regeneration only to the relationship between sexes, because this regeneration is also achieved through a Nature-against-industry conflict and through a class reconciliation as well. His hero, Mellors, emerges from a mining industry, a business

familiar to Lawrence as a form of dehumanising power. But as a gamekeeper, he merges with birds, dogs, woods - a natural environment that Lawrence always appreciates. Mellors, therefore, self-consciously speaks a dialect, which Connie at the beginning teases as an uneducated patois, failing to recognise its natural power. The roughness of Mellors's dialect by no means suggests that he is illiterate. Speaking with an accent, Mellors also utters sacred words suggesting a revelation of sexuality, such as 'Lift up your heads o' ye gates, that the king of glory may come in.' (*Lady 3*, p. 210) Mellors's identity as a man of natural aptitude is further confirmed when he is discovered to be a reader of useful books and someone who has sufficient knowledge to survive the corruption of a conventional puritan education. His love of nature is enormous and the flowers he puts on Connie's naked body for decoration show Lawrence's attempt to combine a living nature with the beauty of human being. Mellors represents not only a competent male, but also the primitive essence of Nature. Having survived the mining industry and the War, he manages to maintain his natural inclination as a gamekeeper. He therefore possesses a potential reviving force, which Connie's female unconscious needs to awaken her conscious pursuit of new life.

The success of the Connie-Mellors relationship is the imaged embodiment of Lawrence's ideal. The significance of the relationship does not lie in itself, but in a promising future that enables people to know how to live. Lawrence has gestured towards this future in the central symbol of *The Rainbow*. In this last novel, the promise is more concrete and natural. It is the forthcoming child conceived by Connie, a future produced by a spiritual and physical exchange between the two lovers. Connie insists that she should not give up the unborn child to the heir of Wragby, so the new life will not belong to the old society and its declining civilisation. The

child will become a successor to a culture awakened by Nature and motivated by sympathy, tenderness and class compromise. Mellors calls the unborn baby 'the little forked flame between me and you'. This flame excludes 'Cliffords and Berthas, colliery companies and governments and the money-mass of people' (*Lady 3*, p. 301), but it will eventually burst into a new life, that the two lovers have created for themselves.

§7.3 From Sexual Harmony to Social Compromise

Lawrence's fictional exploration was full of struggles against a deteriorating social environment and unhealthy sexual conflicts for dominance. Because he found these conflicts were turning into a destructive threat to sexual relationships, he began to idealise sexual balance and directed its target to a harmony between human beings. In writing *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence felt a pressing need to present this harmony in his descriptions of sexual acts, which his former books had never sufficiently managed. He was even more interested in how to achieve this harmony, which he now believed had to be anticipated by an inevitable environmental change which would re-establish wholeness with nature and the cosmos. This belief was gradually merged into his utopian ideal, which constantly developed in the three versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

Between 1926 and 1928, Lawrence wrote the novel three times. The final version, first published privately in 1928 by Giuseppe Orioli in Florence, was known as *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The first version, entitled *The First Lady Chatterley*[9], was published by Frieda Lawrence in 1944 (New York: Dial Press), fourteen years after the author's death. For almost thirty years afterwards, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was known from these two different versions, until the second draft, *John Thomas and Lady Jane*[10],

[9] D. H. Lawrence, *The First Lady Chatterley* (London: Heinemann, 1972). Hereafter *Lady 1*.
[10] D. H. Lawrence, *John Thomas and Lady Jane* (London: Heinemann, 1972). Hereafter *Lady 2*.

was published in 1972. To the advantage of contemporary critics, all three versions of this novel have survived, so that an evaluation of the novel's genesis and development has become possible.

The difference in the three versions reveals Lawrence's attempt to find a utopia in an industrialised social background. Having realised that his health was declining, Lawrence still persisted in being a prophet, looking forward to the future more than to the past. When he was speculating on his utopia, he seemed to think very little of the traditional pre-industrialisation society or of the classical idyllic way of life, of which some of his contemporaries dreamed. This was not because he wanted to cut off the past, but because he wanted to reject a tradition which repressed natural feelings - sexuality in particular. Lawrence believed that the development of human society could not go backward. It should not refer to the past unless the idyllic way of life could be preserved and sexuality could be liberated. So, while he was trying to bring the idea of utopia closer to nature and rural life, he emphasised that human relationships, which had been twisted by industrialisation, had to be vitally revived. The three versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* actually record how Lawrence desperately tried to establish such a rural utopia in his English countryside. But they also indicate how firmly he had convinced himself that a new relationship between human beings was absolutely needed. The purpose of the novel is to teach a modern sexual morality. Lawrence was preoccupied with this didactic purpose before he started writing the first version. As far as the issue of sexual didactics is concerned, the three versions appear almost identical. But what developed in his mind through the process of his writing was the theme of utopia, which we now find inconsistent from the first version to the last. It was the exploration of this theme that made Lawrence engage in his intensive rewriting. He worked strenuously on revising the

plots and the characters in order to explore more deeply contemporary social and psychological problems and find some basis for his new principles. Determined to be a prophet in teaching sexuality, Lawrence insisted that he should not only raise questions but also provide answers.

The difference in the three versions can be briefly observed thus: in the first version, Lawrence attempted to find a utopian solution to declining social morality in socialism, but abandoned this attempt in the second and the final versions. The reason for this change of attitude towards socialism was probably due to Lawrence's individualistic temperament which would not stand socialist discipline, though his sympathy might well be on the workers' side. The second version, though keeping the story and the characters basically the same as in the first version, strikes a different note to echo Connie's demands for establishing a permanent settlement with Parkin, where the painful awareness of their class difference can be ignored. Lawrence now intended to solve the problem by emigration. But 'where to'? Lawrence himself was unable to answer. Italy, Canada or other overseas colonies, all seemed to be a personal and temporary solution. Lawrence's own life had actually been very restless, but he was certainly not satisfied with exile as an answer. With his declining health, Lawrence wanted to create something that had a permanent value, something which, like a resurrected phoenix, could survive his own death. To create such a work and prophesy a sexual revival, he realised that he had to direct his solution in response to national demands. A personal solution would seem too superficial. It was perhaps for this reason that he abandoned the first two versions and started all over again. The conclusion he arrived at in the third version indicates some evidence for this. Instead of emigrating, Mellors and Connie remain in Britain, one in the Midlands and the other in Scotland, waiting for their reunion and showing no intention of moving

abroad. Although they are aware that they are incapable of changing the surroundings and the conventions they do not like, they have some hope that they will be able to keep a living flame between them. In the third version, obviously, Lawrence's search for a utopia has changed from an objective approach to a subjective approach. His only hope was to keep the little flame alive, preparing an emotional revival for the coming generation. If there should be any revival, it would no longer be through a successful emigration, but a sexual regeneration in his own country.

In the sexually revived utopia Lawrence now explores in the third version, the union between the new man and the new woman is shown to despise the materialism encouraged by industry, and to disapprove of the inert life of the vulgar world. Their vigorous physical contact goes beyond their social boundaries and class differences. Their sexually harmonious relationship rescues Connie from her forlornness and rouses Mellors from his seclusion, so that they can join their hands to create a new life, which will become Lawrence's idealised society - a phallic utopia. Lawrence, however, was not a sociologist. His idea of utopia lacks a solid political basis and his expression of it should be regarded as a painful cry rather than as a practical call for social reform. From the first to the last version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence's utopian ideas change from a realistic picture of reform to an illusive idealisation of reality.

In *The First Lady Chatterley*, Lawrence proposes a communist solution to redeem a declining England. After Parkin is dismissed from his work as a gamekeeper, he becomes a miner and even gets involved with the miners' movement. In September 1926, when Lawrence was about to begin the first version of the novel[11], he revisited his home in the Midlands[12].

[11] No one knows exactly on which day Lawrence started drafting the first version of his last novel. It is only known that by 26 October Lawrence had written forty-one pages (cf. *Letters 5*,

There, in the Notts-Derby coal area, the miners were on strike. The fact of his having travelled widely in various countries and to different continents, and his plan to return to the Villa Mirenda near Florence, did not prevent Lawrence from feeling 'connected in deeper destiny' with the miners (cf. 'Bestwood', p. 264). Thus, in the first version, his sympathy for the working people is reflected in his support for the socialist movement. With this affinity in his mind, Lawrence was trying philosophically, if not practically, to find a solution to the working class or industrial class problem. His hero, having been driven out of his idyllic wood, now becomes the secretary of the miners' Communist League. But Lawrence was not going to write a working class novel. His own marriage to an aristocrat suggests that he would not be a ready advocate of the Marxist movement. His goal was not to overturn the existing social system, but to heal the divisions between classes. In the first version, this programme seems strained because Lawrence could not convince himself that a marriage between Connie and Parkin was possible. Connie finds it difficult to imagine living with Parkin, and is aware of the deep class gap between them:

> It would be absurd for her to become a gamekeeper's wife. Her piano, her paints, her books - leave them all behind? But even if she did, she wouldn't be able to leave her thoughts behind, and all she had acquired, the whole run of her mind. (*Lady 1*, p. 62)

She also confesses to Parkin that:

> '... I want to be your wife, *really*. - But can't you understand, can't you see, there's Clifford. I *can't* leave him in the lurch! He understands that I need *you*. Can't you understand that I need *him*?' (*Lady 1*, p. 77)

Connie has been trying to make reconciliation possible, at least, between Clifford and Parkin. She is happy that she has knocked her nail in beside

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p. 563). Michael Squires estimates it was on 22 October (cf. *Lady 3*, p. xii).

[12] His trip is recorded in his essay, 'Return to Bestwood', in *Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished, and Other Prose Works* (pp. 257-266), ed. Warren Roberts & Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1968). Hereafter 'Bestwood'.

Parkin's. At the same time, however, she is trying to hang on to some of her upper-class advantages in order to retain her privacy and dignity. She therefore is not fully ready to desert her life with Clifford. But these two men, representing two opposed classes, are unable to compromise. Clifford hates Communism, calling it anarchy, and believes that '... the few must govern the many.' (*Lady 1*, p. 84)

Connie wants to keep both men for herself until she hears of the scandal about Parkin. Then her former admiration for ruling class privileges, which she had believed could provide a wider sphere for her child, turns to disgust at what she now sees as a refined, but egoistic and cold-blooded society. She wants to cut off her connection with Clifford and this insentient society, having been conscious of the phallus which 'is the symbol of our unison in the blood.' She realises there is a fountain of life in that column of blood, and decides:

> 'I won't take Parkin's child and hand it over to Clifford! It shall *not* be a Chatterley and a baronet and a gentlemen and another cold horror. If I've warmed my hands at the fire of life I *won't* spit in the fire. And Parkin is my fire of life, and he warmed me all the length of my body and through my soul. I've been denying him lately, and I've felt beastly because of it. I won't deny him. And I'll go home and tell it him. And I'll tell him his penis is more beautiful to me, and better, than all the bodies of all the people in Tevershall and Wragby.' (*Lady 1*, p. 138)

As the keeper of the phallus, which fascinates her, Parkin stands for her desire for liberation. But she does not want to commit her life to a working class family. She is fumbling her way in her own abstract dreams rather than seriously standing on realistic working class ground. When the old world becomes obsolete to her, the new world is still floating in the air:

> '... Tevershall isn't real. They aren't real, all of them. Only the moon is real, and you and me...' (*Lady 1*, p. 155)

Though neither Clifford nor Tevershall has the power to retain her, Parkin's mastership also seems too obscure to be dependable. Gradually, she converts that abstract concept of a happy world into a concrete idea and

intends to rent a farm for Parkin, but he conversely refuses to become a gentleman. As Secretary of the Communist League, he is firmly attached to his job in Sheffield which, though providing him with little chance to undertake social reform on the scale of the Russian Soviets, really gives him confidence that he could make a home of his own, rather than take what an upper-class lady has offered him.

The First Lady Chatterley left Connie's problem unsettled. In other words, Lawrence could not provide a solution to what would happen to Connie if she left Wragby. She is determined to go away from Clifford's 'egoistic control' (*Lady 1*, p. 227), but she still cannot be assured of a life with Parkin, who persists in the desire to have life on his own terms. He fancies a working class home, based on his socialist ideas, while Connie's ambition is different:

> ... she needn't go into a workman's dwelling! But some farm-house, or some suburban villa with nine or ten rooms... (*Lady 1*, p. 231)

Through Parkin, she has started contact with life, but the contact does not guarantee her a happy future. Parkin has set her off on the way toward a fresh view of life, but their social orientations are still divergent. So by the end of *The First Lady Chatterley*, Lawrence still has not found a utopia, but only an unsettled problem for Connie.

In the second version, individual forlornness is no longer the most crucial problem that afflicts Connie; she now makes a new attempt to analyse her position. Lawrence gives her a chance to observe more people from her own class (cf. *Lady 2*, Chapter 5) and lets her work out why she does not like them. At the Christmas party scene of *John Thomas and Lady Jane*, Connie feels like leaving Clifford and Wragby because she finds that she is no longer sentimentally attached to her aristocratic form of life. She now decides to give up all her possession in exchange for a flow of life:

> 'I can imagine a world where nobody cared terribly about money, or owning things, or bossing other people. Personally, I wouldn't care a bit if the land and the mines and all those things belonged to everybody. I only want to live. And I don't seem to make a very startling success of it!' Constance persisted.
> 'But you want to own Wragby,' said Jack. He certainly did.
> 'Not necessarily. I can imagine lots of nicer things than Wragby,' she said.
> 'Scotch castles and Italian villas!' he smirked.
> 'No! Where one needn't be desperate about owning anything. Where a bit of life flowed.' (*Lady 2*, p. 57)

This utopian illusion is unconsciously connected with the white, lonely body of the gamekeeper she accidently glimpsed on the previous day. While she fears the insane, futureless society with maniac money-seeking people, the keeper's body seems to her as a fresh wind which blows in a promising message for a new life.

The essence of the utopia in the second version is based on Connie's illusory social equality. Before Connie makes up her mind to leave Wragby for good, she only wants to be Parkin's wife on and off (cf. *Lady 2*, p. 180). But as Lawrence wishes to create a permanent relationship between them, their love gradually bridges the gap between their class differences. Connie begins to minimise the class distinction that she feels so strongly in the first version:

> A new truth seemed to have entered Connie's soul, when she realised that there was no real class-distinction any more. In spite of herself, she had been obliged to think in terms of upper and lower class. And Parkin had been lower class, she herself had been upper class. And unconsciously, she had been forced to feel a certain class hatred. The ugly humanlessness which was killing the world, she had been forced, with helpless automatism, to identify with the lower class, the working class, the so-called proletariat. (*Lady 2*, pp. 288-289)

Having tried to blur the difference between their social status, Connie now feels so attached to Parkin that she wants to marry this classless lover forever, and even regards their union as her destiny (cf. *Lady 2*, p. 295). But social equality does not really provide a solution, because her destiny is still not firmly grounded. The question of how and when they are to live together remains. In the first version, Parkin is going to remain in Sheffield as a workman. Connie, who does not want to be a workman's wife, has to

stay in her favourite 'farm-house'. That leaves their relationship quite unsettled and it is even doubtful whether they can continue to be lovers in the same way as they have been in the pheasant hut. In the second version, as Lawrence no longer insists on a socialist solution, some compromise has to be made on Parkin's side. Connie will buy a farm and Parkin agrees to work as her tenant (cf. *Lady 2*, p. 328). So, Parkin finally decides to leave the Sheffield workshop and find a place as a farm-labourer. By changing his job from a worker to a farmer, Parkin may prepare in some way for their future, because Connie believes Sheffield work is degrading and not suitable for him at all (cf. *Lady 2*, p. 326).

But this idyllic picture with love and nature close by still does not seem very promising, because Lawrence has got to convince himself that there is a congenial place in this world for such a utopia. In proposing emigration as a solution, Lawrence comes across further questions. Parkin plans to go to Canada, but Connie wishes to stay away from the colonies and forget about politics, no matter whether it is socialism or fascism. She wants to live in a society of equality without class discrimination and with people as friends. So what occurs to her is Italy, where they can stay as outsiders to the social life and enjoy tranquillity. But Lawrence could not make up his mind whether migration would attain his idea of a utopia which encompassed the growth of love, nature and traditional humanity. What dissatisfied Lawrence with the first and the second versions of the novel is probably this inability to find a place for the phallic utopia which can accommodate his hero and heroine. Lawrence felt that he could not convincingly establish their future. In the first two versions, he actually failed in various experiments: among the solutions he suggests, all that Parkin and Connie will have to either live separately, or work on a farm, or go abroad; all seem very confused and unconvincing. The second version

sees even more contradictions in Lawrence's restless choice-making.

Although Lawrence had travelled extensively, he had never found any place which turned out to be an ideal reality and satisfy his utopian demands. So in the last version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, he gives up seeking for an existing place, and proposes an imaginative settlement for Mellors and Connie. They no longer worry about where they are actually to go, but only wish it could be a farm with natural surroundings. In this utopia of the mind, man and woman are fully aware of the presence of natural phallic consciousness in their relationship. While they communicate through their bodily touches, they feel the sexual contact of the blood column and blood valley regenerate a spiritual life of eternity[13]. After his failures in the first two versions, Lawrence knew that class struggle, and even revolution, could not produce the blood relationship, which he believed should be born through love, care, touch and contact between man and woman, between man and nature, and even between the upper and the lower classes. So in the last version, Lawrence's idealisation of Mellors-Connie relationship personifies his wish to establish such a blood relationship and produce a modern myth of class compromise in preservation of human quality and emotions.

But this idealised relationship still faces the problem of a conflict between individual freedom and social circumstances, as exemplified by contemporary society. Individual freedom is a modern notion cherished and appreciated by Lawrence. He has succeeded through his descriptions of

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[13] Lawrence's analogy is identical to Lao Zi's valley spirit, the source of all creations, as shown in the following translation from Arthur Waley's *The Way and Its Power*:

> The Valley Spirit never dies.
> It is named the Mysterious Female.
> And the Doorway of the Mysterious Female
> Is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang.
> It is there within us all the while;
> Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry. (*Way*, p. 149)

sexual contacts in endowing his characters with a spiritual freedom, but that freedom is still constantly threatened by old circumstances and conventions. Lawrence seems to understand that individual freedom could not guarantee a new life, unless there is a natural environment to preserve the dignity of individuals and the sacredness of a phallic union. An escape from existing social corruption is only the beginning of the move to a new direction, but the quality of the new life still relies on personality of the free individuals who have escaped to undertake the creation of a new community. Lawrence takes up this question in his intensive revision of the characterisation of the gamekeeper in the novel.

§7.4 The Making of a Phallic Master

Having grown up in the Eastwood mining community, Lawrence was fully aware of the real meaning of class opposition, so he could not persuade himself to marry Connie to Parkin in the first version, though he perhaps originally intended to. He knew that being a workman's wife was too far beyond Connie's capability, so in the second version he decided to endow Parkin with natural aristocracy. The first thing he did was to polish his accent. Throughout *The First Lady Chatterley*, a strong working class accent is consistently used. When Parkin wants to establish a permanent relationship with Connie, he resents her social position and her reluctance to leave Clifford. He understands he cannot marry her because she is above his social status and the class distinction cannot be easily eliminated. This resentment is presented in a strong dialect:

> 'You're foolin' yourself, you know,' he said. 'You think you can make a nice little place for me an' put me in it, an' keep it all nice accordin' to your own ideas: and say come! when you want me to come, and keep off! when you don't want me: and puss! puss! when you're pleased and summat else when you're not pleased. - But it'd niver work. I've got to be th' man i' my own house. An' you'd have to be my lady no matter wheer you was - except 'appen in Canada, when you'd have to wash it off a bit. But I don't care about Canada neither.' (*Lady 1*, p. 160)

In the second version, we find that Parkin's dialect sometimes switches into 'good English'. When they talk about whether they can think of marrying, Connie asks:

> '... Will you be my husband, like now: off and on?'
> 'Yes!' he said in good English. 'I will! I will while ever we can.'
> 'Why not always!' she said, pressing herself to his breast.
> 'Sometimes always, always sometimes,' he said, smiling. (*Lady 2*, p. 180)

Here the use of 'good English' suggests a compromise between classes, which Lawrence wished to reach in the second version. Although Lawrence intended to change Parkin's identity as a communist advocate in the second version, he more or less persisted in retaining his lower-class attributes. Thus when Parkin insists on seeking his own way of liberation, he lapses into dialect:

> 'I'm not afraid. Only let me try what I can do by mysen. An' if I canna ma'e no headway - why, I maun come to thee.' (*Lady 2*, p. 326)

The third version still presents Mellors as a lower-class man, using dialect from time to time, but whenever Lawrence uses Mellors as his spokesman to present his philosophical thinking on the world, Mellors's working class accent totally disappears:

> 'Because when I feel the human world is doomed, has doomed itself by its own mingy beastliness - then I feel the colonies aren't far enough. The moon wouldn't be far enough, because even there you could look back and see the earth, dirty, beastly, unsavoury among all the stars: made foul by men. Then I feel I've swallowed gall, and it's eating my inside out, and nowhere's far enough away to get away. - But when I get a turn, I forget it all again. Though it's a shame, what's been done to people these last hundred years: men turned into nothing but labour-insects, and all their manhood taken away, and all their real life. I'd wipe the machines off the face of the earth again, and end the industrial epoch absolutely, like a black mistake. But since I can't, an' nobody can, I'd better hold my peace, an' try an' live my own life: if I've got one to live, which I rather doubt.' (*Lady 3*, p. 220)

Lawrence must have realised that the lower-class identity of Mellors contradicted his assumed middle-class gentleman's speech, but he deliberately adopted the inconsistency of accent in order to move Mellors into a sort of classless position.

The different accents he gave to Mellors were intended to reveal different human qualities rather than to indicate class distinctions. Mellors's primitive strength: natural physique, strong limbs, robust loins, which correspond to earthy dialect, endow him with reviving power of sexual touches and contacts, to which Connie responds. Some examples in the third version reveal this intention, such as when Mellors insists, on a few occasions, that 'Tha mun come one naight ter th' cottage' which amuses Connie into a communication with him in his dialect (cf. *Lady 3*, pp. 177-178). In the first cottage night, Mellors's dialectical appraisal on 'John Thomas' and 'Lady Jane' is like a ritual oration said at a ceremony (cf. *Lady 3*, p. 210). As Lawrence indicated in the second version, Parkin 'used the dialect as a sort of amour and a weapon, forcing her to physical compliance' (*Lady 2*, p. 169). The following quotation exemplifies this intention:

> 'Let me be. I like thee. I luv thee when tha lies theer. A woman's a lovely thing when 'er 's deep ter fuck, and cunt's good. Ah luv thee, thy legs, an' th' shape on thee, an' th' womanness on thee. Ah luv th' womanness on thee. Ah luv thee wi' my ba's, an' wi' my heart. but dunna ax me nowt. Dunna ma'e me say nowt. Let me stop as I am while I can. Tha can ax me ivrythink after. Now let me be, let me be!' (*Lady 3*, p. 212)

While he adopted good English, Lawrence intended to reveal his spiritual decency which enables him to exercise sympathetic and curing love and the force of regeneration:

> 'Yes, I do believe in something. I believe in being warm-hearted. I believe especially in being warm-hearted in love, in fucking with a warm heart. I believe if men could fuck with warm hearts, and the women take it warm-heartedly, everything would come all right. It's all this cold-hearted fucking that is death and idiocy.' (*Lady 3*, p. 206)

The variation in accent does not always work as effectively as Lawrence intended in designating respectively Mellors's spiritual and natural competence. Some dialogue appears arbitrary in its change of accent, but Lawrence kept up this throughout the final version. So far as the conversational part of the novel is concerned, that has been regarded as a

failure[14]. This failure, if we call it so, is derived from the impossibility of the class compromise which Lawrence wished to achieve, but due to his ambivalence on the point, he could not fit the inconsistency of accent to his purpose. Although he attempted in vain to keep Mellors as a realistic representative of lower-class man, he actually began to idealise him more and more as if he were a legendary figure. He veered from his realistic approach, found his solution to the problems of sexual freedom inadequate, and finally created a utopia based on phallic master. In writing the final novel, Lawrence was not worried about the justice of Connie's adultery with her gamekeeper lover, a theme which occurs persistently as the main plot in the other versions. What he was anxious about was to find a way-out for this adulterous affair, which he was reluctant to leave unsettled. The realistic solution which he had searched for in the first version was spoiled by his use of inconsistent accents in the second version. In the third version, Lawrence's experiment with different accents turned the story and its characters into a modern myth, which enabled him to continue his search for a utopian solution.

Apart from modifying the accent, Lawrence also added other qualities to his idealised hero. As his revision went on, he started to refine the gamekeeper's personality and extend his experiences. In the first version, when Lawrence was still trying to create a realistic working class gamekeeper, he involved Parkin in an awful fight with his brother-in-law, Dan Coutts, to reveal his tough, but dignified personality. In the third version, the emphasis on his lower-class identity almost disappears. Instead of seeing him in his mother's house with a bruised face (cf. *Lady 1*, p. 147) or with the dogged expressionless look of an animal (cf. *Lady 2*, p. 316),

[14] Cf. Stephen Gill, 'The Composite World: Two Versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*', *Essays in Criticism* 21 (1971), pp. 347-364.

Connie, in the third version, meets him in London with an almost gentleman-like manner:

> There he stood, tall and slender, and so different, in a formal suit of thin dark cloth. He had a natural distinction, but he had not the cut-to-pattern look of her class. Yet, she saw at once, he could go anywhere. He had a native breeding which was really much nicer than the cut-to-pattern class thing. (*Lady 3*, p. 274).

Nor was Lawrence's promotion of Mellors merely a question of manners; he also made other changes, when he found his hero humiliated and underprivileged.

In the first two versions, Lawrence still endeavours to retain Parkin's working class background. Although the expelled gamekeeper is occasionally found speaking good English, his connections with industry remain unchanged. After he is driven out of the Wragby wood, he has to labour in the mine under degrading conditions and with exhausting drudgery. Because of his direct contact with Sheffield workers, Parkin is exposed to socialist ideas, which Lawrence originally expected to be a solution to the social problem. But in the second version, Parkin begins to keep his distance from bolshevism because he finds it too destructive. In these two versions, Lawrence still shows some vague belief in socialist reforms and the hope that the working class participants might possibly restore human vitality for social reconstruction. But his opinion of the working class was not always positive. When his confidence in the socialist solution collapsed, he began to feel that he might have degraded Parkin by sending him into a factory. Parkin's resentment against society, therefore, seems inadequate even for changing his own miserable fate as a miner.

In the second version, it is also felt that there is condescension in Connie's love for Parkin and that the reason for her love is more physical than moral. He has a beautiful, live body, but his social position and irritating dialect do not seem to make her feel any sense of potential force.

Moreover, his war service has left him with painful scars rather than useful experience. When Connie visits him in his worker's accommodation, the poor conditions make her feel suffocated (cf. *Lady 2*, pp. 344-346), and then when they rush into the wood which belongs to an old squire, they are disturbed by the keeper (cf. *Lady 2*, pp. 370-371). As a result, Parkin's unsettled future has to be arranged by Connie, whose money will help him get a farm as their place of settlement. Lawrence seems to feel embarrassed by Parkin's predicament of being unable to find even a tiny place which could be called home. In the third version, these plots are recomposed. Mellors does not go to Sheffield at all. Lawrence perhaps decided that Mellors should be spared this humiliating workman's position, which can only disable the dynamic individual. He seems to have realised, when he reached the end of the second version, that a realistic solution for a workman was not pleasant or possible. So, instead of trying his future in Sheffield, the gentleman-like Mellors is now doing a job at the Grange Farm, expressing hopeful prospects for his future.

To make Mellors a more ideal character, Lawrence also began to give him past experiences, which would contribute to his capability as a phallic master. Comparing the characterisation of the hero between the second and the last version reveals how Mellors is endowed with the knowledge of emigration and overseas territories. In fact, this knowledge is transferred from Connie to Mellors, so that the effect varies greatly from the second version to the third. In the second version, it is Parkin who wants to emigrate to Canada, but Connie disapproves of settling in any of the colonies, because she has been to some of them and to Europe as well. Her lover, Parkin, has never been abroad:

> She had an unconquerable aversion from leaving Europe. She had been overseas. He had not. She knew what it meant. She did not want to break with the past, even for her child's sake. She had no faith in the newness of new countries. It was exile, always exile. (*Lady 2*, p. 369)

Lawrence had early realised that his 'savage pilgrimage' in search of utopia was not a solution. So, in the final version, when Connie suggests emigration, the position is reversed: Mellors, who has been to the colonies as a soldier, has more experiences than Connie who, though having been to European countries, has never visited any colonies. This time, it is Mellors who hesitates over the choice:

> '... We can go to another country, shall we? To Africa or Australia. Shall we?'
>
> She was quite thrilled by her plan.
> 'You've never been to the colonies, have you?' he asked her.
> 'No! Have you?'
> 'I've been in India, and South Africa, and Egypt.'
> 'Why shouldn't we go to South Africa?'
> 'We might!' he said slowly.
> 'Or don't you want to?' she asked.
> 'I don't care. I don't much care what I do.' (*Lady 3*, pp. 215-216)

As Connie now finds in the third version, Mellors is 'a lieutenant and an officer and a gentleman' (*Lady 3*, p. 216). His ruthless indignation against society and civilisation is caused by his disgust with the worship of material things which has killed human vitality. Now when he has at last got a woman and a farm, his gentlemanly qualities revive. His education is also quite impressive; Connie glimpses his book shelves, and comes to the conclusion that 'he was a reader after all.' (*Lady 3*, p. 212)

Because Mellors is to become the phallic keeper in Lawrence's phallic utopia, his personal experiences vary a great deal from the second version to the third. The second version only gives Parkin some working class sexual experiences. He is shocked by seeing Bertha's maidenhair at eleven or twelve (cf. *Lady 2*, p. 225) and paralysed ever since in his sexual desire. The guilty consciousness from this experience makes him vulnerable to Bertha's seduction, which traps him into an unhappy marriage with her. He has had hardly any mature sexual experiences at all before Connie comes to him (cf. *Lady 2*, p. 229). But the third version abundantly enriches this aspect: before marriage, Mellors took the first girl at sixteen and then

changed to a teacher older than he was. Like Paul Morel who feels frustrated by such experiences, Mellors could never get sexual revival from the pure love these girls consented to offer. At the age of twenty-one, he married Bertha Coutts, who, though wanting sex, did not take it as a mutually recreating activity. Mellors was left in fear of sexual relationships, which he thought could only be exhausting for man and advantageous for woman. He had also experienced a maternal threat; he is both pestered by his mother's attempted mental control and his wife's physical insatiability. Not to be defeated by either of them, Mellors manages to shake off both controls and, in order to eliminate these threats, retreats into a natural seclusion only to emerge as mentally and physically robust. His sexual frustration is no longer a psychological wound caused by an adolescent incident; it is now derived from a typical Lawrentian sexual crisis (cf. *Lady 3*, pp. 200-202), but he succeeds where Paul was defeated. He will appear as an integrated individual, capable of undertaking a complete union with his woman. Through these experiences, Mellors finally achieves the kind of balance and harmony which Lawrence himself wished to maintain. But this also turned the realistic gamekeeper into a mythical figure winning a legendary victory.

The final version also tells a different story about Mellors's sexual orientation. His pre-war sexual experience results in a feeling of failure, and the frustration is extended to a hatred for lesbian women. On the other hand, he has nothing against homosexuality (cf. *Lady 3*, p. 203). Like Birkin in his relationship with Gerald, Mellors also has a pleasant love for his colonel when he serves in the army (cf. *Lady 3*, p. 216). This homosexual love has been influential and beneficial to Mellors. The colonel is an unmarried man, and his attitude to the narrowness of the English middle classes has decisively influenced Mellors's attitude towards life. His coldness and

solitary mentality are fostered by the colonel's love for his military refuge. But since Mellors survives the war, he is to be launched into life again. The dead ashes in his phallic roots will catch the forked flame revived by Connie's coming to him. With his hatred for lesbians and with his experience of homosexual love, Mellors is qualified to take the mastership in their relationship. Even when Connie returns from abroad reporting her pregnancy, the child does not suggest that Connie has the advantage over Mellors that the pregnant Anna had over Tom. In fact, the third version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* gives a significantly different treatment to a love-making scene during her pregnancy from that presented in the first two versions. In the first version, Parkin is fully aware of the power of the 'naked moon' as an overwhelming force of pregnancy when Connie says:

> 'Love me and hold me and wait for me. I'm going to have your child.' (*Lady 1*, p. 155)

In the second version, he does not take her because the feeling that he is of secondary importance keeps him back. Connie offers him the mastership by saying: 'I care more about *you* than the child,' but he hesitates to take this authority and answers: 'Well, I can wait.' (*Lady 2*, p. 330) In the first two versions, Lawrence was still attempting to enhance Parkin's lower-class position. But the class gap always intrudes to interfere with Lawrence's effort. He had to either lower Connie's ladylikeness in her admiration of Parkin's primitive nobility, or make Parkin show a sarcastic zest to cool down her enthusiasm. The two short quotations above give examples of this duel predicament. Connie wants the coming child to become a permanent symbol of their love, while Parkin, aware of her benefit in having the child, calmly waits for the outcome of their relationship.

In the third version, Mellors's fear and indifference disappear, as he trusts his own integrity rather than a promised future. As the natural keeper of a vital phallus, he ensures their relationship with love and tenderness,

which have overcome his emotional crisis and given him a dignified mastery of their harmonious union:

> And he realised as he went in to her that this was the thing he had to do, to come into tender touch, without losing his pride or his dignity or his integrity as a man. After all, if she had money and means, and he had none, he should be too proud and honorable to hold back his tenderness from her on that account. (*Lady 3*, p. 279)

With the working class man so deified, Connie need have no shame in telling Clifford that she is pregnant by his gamekeeper, a confession she does not dare to make in the first two versions. The solution is indeed a mythical one: the modern Adam and Eve are expelled from their Eden, the pheasant hut, where they have eaten the forbidden apple and nailed their lifelong oath, and now they are moving to a utopian farm where, as Lawrence hoped, they will live together happily ever after.

Lawrence faced great contradictions in portraying the character of the gamekeeper. He wavered between different approaches: he moved from a realistic to a mythological portrayal, but here and there he tried to keep Mellors as a man rather than mythicise him as a saviour. Lawrence tried to connect his characters' awakened sexuality to the laws of nature, and was reluctant to isolate their phallic relationship from the real life of the phenomenal world. Being an idealised phallic keeper, Mellors represents a quietist, who is able to communicate with the great cosmos. But compared with a Taoist sage from the *Yin-Yang* School, Mellors's understanding of the 'Interrelation of Heaven and Man' is not yet self-conscious:

> In Huang-lao Taoism also, the Taoist sage is able to draw on his mystic gnosis to control the world. There is nothing mystical, however, about the knowledge of the expert in correlative cosmology. He can clearly comprehend the interrelationships of natural and human forces. The world is entirely scrutable and thus entirely open to an understanding of its inner connections. The cosmologist is thus able to find the appropriate 'technology' for aligning the human realm with the realm of nature. He does not 'control' nature but his knowledge of how to 'align' the human with the natural immeasurably enlarges his ability to control the human world. (Schwartz, pp. 368-369)

In fact, Lawrence wishes to endow the character with some special

capacity of communicating with Nature, but this potential is not realised since it is restricted by Lawrence's attempt to remain within realistic characterisation. As Michael Squires points out, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* fails to fully express the cosmic dimension of sexuality (cf. Squires, p. 177). Comparing this alleged limitation of Lawrence with the doctrine of Taoism, I find that Lawrence was not yet ready, in his novel, to fully commit his phallic union to cosmic nature, at least not as fully as is required by Taoist quietism. He could not have accepted the Taoist doctrine of Inaction, which is the basic assertion of original Taoism. As a seeker for truth, Mellors is created to be actively involved with the creation of a new life. His reference to Nature is used as a means of revelation and his ultimate purpose is not to submit human beings to nature, but find out the right way for their survival and development. As Lawrence still hoped to regenerate England with natural love and relationship, his character, Mellors, continues his mission to seek for a phallic utopia for man and woman. But Lawrence failed once again to create a successful utopia, and his confidence now only remained in the rhythmic cosmos, and he wished to use its law to support his belief in phallic marriage. In *A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'*, which he wrote shortly after the novel's publication, he expresses his ultimate understanding of the connection between sex and Nature:

> Sex is the balance of male and female in the universe... Sex goes through the rhythm of the year, in man and woman, ceaselessly changing: the rhythm of the sun in his relation to the earth.
>
> Marriage is the clue to human life, but there is no marriage apart from the wheeling sun and the nodding earth, from the straying of the planets and the magnificence of the fixed stars. (*Propos*, p. 323)

Reinforced by its association with the laws of nature, Lawrence's search for utopia went on after he completed the last novel. As his health was declining, the desire to finalise his utopian ideas became desperately strained and the images of his idealised characters also grew more and more abstract. In his last mythological novella *The Escaped Cock*, his notions of

sexual resurrection become obscurely religious, but remain rebellious and paganistic.

§7.5 Sexual Resurrection

Resurrection has been an archetypal theme since the ancient times and was later established as a permanent Biblical issue. Because of its great influence on Western literature, many literary works have in various ways adapted the story of the Christian resurrection. The concept of rebirth seems part of a universal collective unconsciousness, since every nation seems to call upon it, especially when the national integrity is facing corruption or danger. Even in classical Chinese philosophies, which were independent of Biblical influence, the idea of revival was strongly asserted. The Taoist idea of a return to Nature also implies a belief of resurrection. In *Lao Zi*, Nature is referred as the 'Mother' of all creations, and the idea of returning to infancy, or even to the womb, is claimed to enable man to reach harmony and perfection (cf. *Way*, pp. 169 & 209). In the book of *Lie Zi*, the wind-riding traveller faces death with the confidence that 'when he dies, he goes to his rest, rises again to his zenith.' (Graham, p. 23) As a traveller himself, Lie Zi regards death as a destination, a home-going, which is a rest for a gentleman. Only a mean man has to submit to it (cf. Graham, p. 26). Taoist rituals are usually held to celebrate rebirth and renewal to answer the call of the great cosmos for achieving harmony between *Yang* and *Yin*[15]. The theory of *Yang-Yin* harmony is even practised by Chinese alchemists in their endeavour to discover the secrets of Nature so as to restore health and acquire longevity[16].

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[15] Cf. Michael R. Saso, *Taoism and the Rite of Cosmic Renewal* (Washington State University Press, 1972), pp. 33-34.

[16] Cf. James R. Ware, tr., *Alchemy, Medicine, Religion in the China of A. D. 320: The Nei P'ien of Ko Hung (Pao-p'u tzu)* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1966), pp. 226-229.

Writers of different times and with different cultural backgrounds have proved by their works that the idea of resurrection is an everlasting theme because it regenerates a declining tradition and helps to retain a new mental balance. The theme of resurrection can be treated in various ways, and writers have found that mythological materials are sophisticated enough to convey new ways of thinking. Influenced by James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, many twentieth-century writers consciously used mythology as a powerful medium in their literary expression. It is perhaps not too much to say that Lawrence's *The Escaped Cock* should be counted as typical of this method.

The Escaped Cock[17] is Lawrence's last fiction, and was written separately in two parts at two different times. The first part, entitled 'The Escaped Cock', was written in mid-April 1927 and published in *Forum*, in February 1928. Five months later, the second part was composed. But it was not until 1929 that both parts were published jointly in book form in Paris. In 1931, under the title of *The Man Who Died*, this novella was published in Britain. According to Gerald Lacy, the editor of the first critical version published in 1973, the new title does not seem to have had any authorial sanction (cf. *Cock*, p. 7). For this reason, Lacy edited his new version from the manuscripts, published texts and the correspondence, and restored not only the unauthorial deletions the old published versions had made, but also the original title. In fact, the difference in title does not really matter very much, because 'The Escaped Cock' seems more suitable for the first half, and 'The Man Who Died' for the second. Until the Cambridge edition of this novella[18] comes out, the Lacy edition is perhaps the most reliable.

To achieve a new revelation, Lawrence explores the traditional

[17] D. H. Lawrence, *The Escaped Cock* (Los Angeles: Black Sparrow, 1973). Hereafter *Cock*.
[18] The Cambridge edition of this novella has already been advertised as *The Escaped Cock*.

theme of resurrection through a sexual approach. The cock symbol in the story is a mythological symbol of the phallus, as Keith Sagar has noted, and comes directly from Lawrence's Etruscan experience[19]. Lawrence's initial encounter with the symbol came from a visit he paid to a toy shop in Volterra, where, as Earl Brewster recollected, they saw a toy rooster escaping from an egg. Brewster remarked that the rooster might suggest a title - 'The Escaped Cock - a story of resurrection'[20]. Lawrence later adopted this idea and created the first part of the novella under this title. This Etruscan rooster is no doubt a symbol of revival, but how did Lawrence come to understand it also as a symbol of sexuality? Does the symbol itself suggest anything about sexual renewal?

In April 1927 when Lawrence was writing the first part of the story, he was visiting Italy where he had been many times. Some Etruscan emblems might have caught his attention as he travelled, and Evelyn Hinz suggests that a bronze icon in the Vatican Museum could possibly have intrigued Lawrence[21]. The icon, called 'The Saviour of the World', is designed as a bust with human shoulders and chest. The neck and the head are strictly human, but on the top of the head, a cock's crest is erected. In this way, the icon is converted into a combination of man and cock. The most extraordinary part of the icon is the face, which is designed as an erect phallus in the place of a cock's beak. If Lawrence saw this icon, he would have immediately associated the escaped cock with the sexual resurrection of man. Although we have no evidence that Lawrence had come across this particular bust, we may assume that he had at least seen something similar. Even before this, as he wrote to Earl Brewster on 27 February 1927, he had

[19] Cf. Keith Sagar, *D. H. Lawrence: Life into Art* (Harmondsworth: Viking, 1985), p. 297. Hereafter *Life into Art*.

[20] Earl & Achsah Brewster, *D. H. Lawrence: Reminiscences and Correspondence* (London: Martin Secker, 1934), p. 123.

[21] Evelyn J. Hinz and John J. Teunissen, 'Savior and Cock', *Journal of Modern Literature* 5 (1976), p. 295, fig. 1.

already depicted the phallus in many of his pictures and he positively believed 'that the phallus is a great sacred image: it represents a deep, deep life which has been denied...' (*Letters 5*, p. 648).

With this compound symbol of sexuality and resurrection, Lawrence started his peculiar exploration of the idea of regeneration. As the story begins, the cock is associated with a man awaking from a long sleep. The cock is tied by the leg: 'Body, soul and spirit were tied by that string.' At the same time, the man 'awoke from a long sleep in which he was tied up.' (*Cock*, pp. 14-15) This is the man who died and it is not very difficult to identify him as Jesus Christ who has revived from a death-like sleep. In this story, he is awakened by the crow of the cock, with a full awareness of the phenomenal world around him. But for a moment, he feels numb and cold, his wounds still hurting. The death sleep has paralysed his limbs, but has also relieved him from his former task of teaching and salvation. If he wants to lead his own life now, he has to be healed first so that he can be risen physically as a living human being. He proclaims the difference of this resurrection:

> 'When I am healed, I shall know better. But my mission is over, and my teaching is finished, and death has saved me from my own salvation.' (*Cock*, p. 24)

As he steps into this new life, the man who died takes the cock as his emblem, which he believes to be full of a revivifying virtue. When he finds in the cock a strong wave of life confined by a cord of circumstance, he decides to free it from the conventional tether tied to its leg. But it is not the sort of spiritual salvation conducted by an ecclesiastic. Instead, the new Jesus places the cock among hens so that the bird can fight to win its own kingdom. This is the new salvation he proclaims, which means he will no longer violate the law of nature. A physical revival is obviously more significant to him now than a spiritual resurrection which he has tried for

ages to achieve in vain. The healed and risen body is thus appreciated:

> And he knew how rare was the risen body, the twice-born limbs rare, rarer far than the twice-born spirit, which could house in greedy flesh. (*Cock*, p. 28)

A symbol of the Christian resurrection, the man who died has established a connection between sexuality and religion. But his own body remains untouchable when the first part of the story ends. He has to enter his own life with loneliness. It seems that the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ is not completely realised in the first part. The Christ-figure remains a sort of cosmic interference which comes to give life a primal push in order to revive its proper circulation. Life and the living universe are thus connected, but Christ still stays outside normal human life, with only a promise that he will come back to life as an ordinary man.

In the second part of the story, this promise is realised. The untouchable Christ is cured by a female healer of his physical sterility. It is reported that Lawrence read Frazer's *Adonis, Attis and Osiris* in June 1928 after he had finished the first part of the story (cf. Sagar, p. 106). When he started writing the second part, it was obvious that he had laid the cock symbol aside because he thought its resurrection had been completed. He concentrates in the second part on the resurrection of Christ, which he describes in terms of Egyptian mythology. Lawrence chose 'Isis in Search' as the female healer of Jesus Christ. In the Egyptian story of resurrection, Isis is Osiris's wife.

> She was looking for the fragments of the dead Osiris, dead and scattered asunder, dead, torn apart, and thrown in fragments over the wide world. And she must find his hands and his feet, his heart, his thighs, his head, his belly, she must gather him together and fold her arms round the re-assembled body till it became warm again, and roused to life, and could embrace her and fecundate her womb. (*Cock*, p. 38)

This touching and healing force must have interested Lawrence. He always believed that the force of love could generate a physical renewal of man and woman, and that it was even capable of reviving a sterile

Christianity. In the ritual scenes of their sexual contacts, Isis and Jesus touch and heal each other. The warmth and excitement passes mutually between their bodies. The sexual communication is mysterious, but also substantial. When he touches Isis as Goddess and woman, Jesus feels 'this girl of Isis is a tender flame of healing.' (*Cock*, p. 46) In response to Jesus as Christ and the man, Isis feels that her sexual partner is an 'inward sun that streams its rays from the loins of the male Osiris.' (*Cock*, p. 38) As the ritual scenes suggest, Lawrence attempts to express not only a sexual communication between man and woman, but also a mental dialogue between man and religion. In other words, Lawrence expects to achieve an integration of mind and body through this physical vitality.

Lawrence has a special interest in the use of mythology, which becomes increasingly keen in his later fictions such as 'The Woman Who Rode Away' and *The Plumed Serpent*. As we can see in *The Escaped Cock*, this interest in mythology has now overtaken his previous naturalist and realist presentation of sexuality, and the novella is fully devoted to the mythological theme of resurrection. He had already explored various relationships between human beings, such as the son-to-mother relation in *Sons and Lovers*, man-to-woman in *The Rainbow*, man-to-man in *Women in Love*, woman-to-woman in 'The Fox' and man-to-power in the leadership novels. But in this last novella, he resumes the exploration of the man-to-nature relationship which had already appeared in many of his novels, by investigating the relationship between human being and the cosmos. To Lawrence, the sexual relationship between human beings corresponds to the relationship between human beings and the cosmos. So, Lawrence affirms sexuality as a universal essence, which should exist in our ordinary life and also on a higher level of our intelligence.

From this viewpoint, the second part of the story seems more

important than the first. The escaped cock in the first part can only represent the phallic consciousness of human beings redeemed and restored to the phenomenal world. Its connection with religion is not fully realised until Lawrence further clarifies the theme by underlining the recovery of the sacred wounds. It is only in the second part that Lawrence achieves both a physical regeneration of man and woman and a symbolic resurrection of a sterile Christianity. As the ideological superstructure of Western culture, Christianity is supposed to have an access to the cosmos. But Lawrence asserts that it cannot achieve this eternity and immortality, unless it is vitalised through a sexual resurrection.

Isis is another woman character that Lawrence allows to conceive a child. When Jesus the man starts his communication with Isis the Goddess, Isis the woman also accepts the man as a sacred being. The sacredness and the life find their shared value in the child symbol. So the child is a regenerating seed that Jesus has sown in life, not necessarily for the good of Christianity, but definitely for the good of the younger generation. The child does not have to be blessed or redeemed by Christ, because he will be naturally born into the world. Before Jesus steps into his boat of new life, which will carry him through eternity, the child has already been plunged into a true life of flesh and blood. He will inherit the flesh and blood of the ancient master, but will not rely on his second coming for salvation. If we see Lawrence in his portrayal of the Christ-figure, we might interpret this as his contemplation of his own coming death and hopeful resurrection. In August 1929, seven months before his death, he treated this preparation further in 'The Risen Lord'[22], which Keith Sagar has called 'an outline for a third part to *The Escaped Cock*' (*Life into Art*, p. 322). Lawrence's wish

[22] D. H. Lawrence, 'The Risen Lord', in *Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished, and Other Prose Works* (pp. 571-577), ed. Warren Roberts & Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1968). Hereafter 'Lord'.

for resurrection is very clearly expressed:

> And Jesus was risen flesh-and-blood. He rose a man on earth to live on earth. The greatest test was still before Him: His life as a man on earth. Hitherto He had been a sacred child, a teacher, a messiah, but never a full man. Now, risen from the dead, He rises to be a man on earth, and live His life of the flesh, the great life, among other men. This is the image of our inward state today.
>
> This is the image of the young: the Risen Lord. The teaching is over, the crucifixion is over, the sacrifice is made, the salvation is accomplished. Now comes the true life, man living his full life on earth, as flowers live their full life, without rhyme or reason except the magnificence of coming forth into fulness. ('Lord', pp. 574-575)

Facing death, Lawrence was obliged to contemplate the collapse of his individual being. That is why he started his dialogue with the cosmos through religious symbolism. At the same time, Lawrence realised that his lifelong struggle for the free expression of sexuality had been a consistent revolt against puritan convention, and that his insistence on sexual balance and harmony was derived from his disgust at this dehumanising tradition. So he could not find his own way of resurrection in a traditional Christianity, which blessed only its obedient adherents. He looked for it rather in the Apocalypse, which offered a narrative of revolt to the humble, the poor, the oppressed and the persecuted. He thus created Jesus in his own rebellious image and hoped that in this way he might become part of the tradition. To ensure that his last word in his doctrine of sexuality would survive him, Lawrence in his illness persisted in writing his last book *Apocalypse*[23], which was at last completed and published in 1931, one year after his death.

Lawrence's initial impulse in writing *Apocalypse* came from his reading of one of Frederick Carter's manuscripts on the Book of Revelation. *Apocalypse* was planned as an introduction to one of Carter's books, but eventually it grew into an independent book itself. *Apocalypse* is

[23] D. H. Lawrence, *Apocalypse and the Writings on Revelation*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Hereafter *Apocalypse*.

Lawrence's pilgrimage towards both physical and spiritual wholeness. Physically, man achieves this wholeness in his harmonious relationship with woman, and for the spiritual wholeness, man has to merge comprehensively with the cosmos. As Lawrence recognises in the book: 'We and the cosmos are one. The cosmos is a vast living body, of which we are still parts.' (*Apocalypse*, p. 77) Lawrence wanted to make clear in his dying words that this wholeness with the cosmos is the essence of human existence. He had established individualism through the assertion of sexuality, but he had also found that this individualism would be incapable of surviving social deterioration without conforming itself to the law of the cosmos. So Lawrence will not leave his lifelong search for individual sexuality to the sterile soil, but wishes to trust it to a tradition which conforms to Nature's precept of revival:

> What we have been looking for in the Apocalypse is something older, grander than the ethical business. The old, flaming love of life and the strange shudder of the presence of the invisible dead made the rhythm of really ancient religion. Moral religion is comparatively modern, even with the Jews. (*Apocalypse*, p. 141)

After his philosophical apprehension of the cosmos, Lawrence is forced to realise that individualism is only a fragment of a vast unison. As Christianity and politics are also fragmentary elements of the universe, they, like individualism, basically refuse to conform to the law of the cosmos. To unite these fragments, the Apocalypse acknowledges their common revolt against convention and relates them to a collective wholeness. This organic connection is a rebellious and revivifying force, which enables an individual to achieve wholeness with the cosmos. Lawrence thus concludes *Apocalypse*:

> So that my individualism is really an illusion. I am a part of the great whole, and I can never escape. But I *can* deny my connections, break them, and become a fragment. Then I am wretched.
>
> What we want is to destroy our false, inorganic connections, especially those related to money, and re-establish the living organic connections, with the cosmos, the sun and earth, with mankind and nation

> and family. Start with the sun, and the rest will slowly, slowly happen. (*Apocalypse*, p. 149)

It has been claimed that Lawrence was impotent after 1925[24], but even before that time, he was very ill in health. Throughout his life, he was a comparatively weak man and more inclined to thought than action. What force of life, then, drove him to his mission as a priest of love and urged him to involve his doctrines in the controversial theme of sexuality? After an overview of his life and works, I find that in his intellectual career he had always been in search of an ideal moral stance that would support individualism. Lawrence's painstaking efforts were directed to the formulation of a humanistic faith. In his private life, as it were, he had never realised any youthful dreams of love, partly because of the interference of his mother, and partly because of the paralysis caused by industrialism. As a man of emotional sensitivity, he felt the Great War threaten his self-assertion as an individual being. Even his passionate elopement could sometimes throw him back into sensual frustration and depression. As a man of letters, he first observed that the unnatural growth of mother-love was a result of industrial sterilisation, and then started a painful search through frictional and conflicting relationships for an acceptable meaning of love. The rise of female emancipation in wartime gave him a nervous fear of female social domination, which he unreasonably associated with the devastating effect of the global catastrophe. His alternative religious and political experiments did not seem to provide lasting peace of mind, but at last he found his mythological resurrection in a unique expression of sexuality in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. He also advocated in his fiction the transformation of austere sexuality into a life of tenderness and love, bringing with it the prospect of cultural renewal. But because of his unconventional, though artistic, presentation of sexuality, he put himself in

[24] Janice H. Harris, 'The Many Faces of Lazarus', *The D. H. Lawrence Review* 16 (1976), p. 307.

a vulnerable position and exposed himself to the criticism of conventional society. But actually, without the paradoxical extremity of Lawrence's sexual presentation, conventional society would not have been so shocked at its own sterility. If Lawrence had not gone so far in the subject, the contrast between sexes and the importance of their reconciliation would not have been so effectively brought to light.

In his last years, Lawrence must have realised that he could not make any real change to conventional England. The 1920s saw him more often abroad, visiting Ceylon and Australia, and travelling between Europe and America. Spiritually tortured and literally persecuted, he at last died a foreigner in France and his ashes were buried in New Mexico, far from his home country. Lawrence was a great man searching for truth all his life. He died at the age of forty-five, comparatively young for a great thinker. His death-bed testament, *Apocalypse*, can hardly be called the conclusion to his lifelong struggle, because he had just started feeling his struggle single-handed and wished to join his force with the universe and Nature. The following words reveal that he was gradually moving in this new direction:

> I am part of the sun as my eye is part of me. That I am part of the earth my feet know perfectly, and my blood is part of the sea. My soul knows that I am part of the human race, my soul is an organic part of the great human soul, as my spirit is part of my nation. In my own very self, I am part of my family. There is nothing of me that is alone and absolute except my mind, and we shall find that the mind has no existence by itself, it is only the glitter of the sun on the surface of the waters. (*Apocalypse*, p. 149)

In this last mythological essay, Lawrence must have realised that the doctrine he tried to establish would not become a possibility for his contemporary era. He asserted the universal significance of his doctrine, but with very little expectation of contemporary recognition. He died disheartened and disappointed, without knowing when and where he would be recognised as a great priest of love. He could only trust this wish to the symbol of the phoenix which he had chosen for his works.

CONCLUSION

Human understanding of sexual phenomenon has been a long process from the early ages to modern time. When the ancients first found the difference between sexes, they had certainly made a discovery. This discovery was theorised in ancient philosophies to recognise its identity with Nature - not only in comparison with the male and female in the animal kingdom, but also with other natural phenomena, such as the Sun and the Moon, Heaven and Earth, Fire and Water, etc., as they are summarised in the Taoist theory of *Yang* and *Yin*. The Taoists' observation of sexual phenomena and their recognition of their correspondence with Nature led to the abstraction of the idea of sexual difference and the promotion of sex as a basic principle of universal existence.

In the development and expansion of human society, however, the theory of sexual balance was long ignored. The formation of human society was benefited by the understanding of sexual difference, but did not respect it. Eventually in most races and cultures world-wide, man became a superior sex over woman. As Engels reveals in his analysis of Morgan's study in ancient society, it was the division of labour between sexes that initiated a social basis with 'the man in the forest, the woman in the house'[1], and then gradually transformed it into civilised society with private property and political institutions. Engels argues that it was on a basis of material necessities and also at the sacrifice of women's subordination that society was first created, and it then established further moral standards in order to maintain a communal survival as well as to satisfy possessive desires (cf. Engels, 'Barbarism and Civilisation', pp. 179-

[1] Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State: In the Light of the Researches of Lewis H. Morgan*, 4th edition (1891), tr. Alick West & Dona Torr (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1940), p. 180. Hereafter Engels.

204). In the long history of human development, knowledge of sexuality has been extensively regulated and intensively controlled by social authorities in order to assure their civilised victory against primitive Nature and their legitimate subjugation of individuals and other societies. As Murdock points out, 'Society, therefore, cannot remain indifferent to sex but must seek to bring it under control', and as a result, social regulation of sex became 'a cultural universal'[2]. Since sex represents the flesh, it was taken by Christianity as the enemy of the spirit. This attitude was passed on from the church to the state, whose excessive power was sometimes exerted to restrict sexual behaviour. All this seems to have acknowledged sexuality only for its social value, which tends to deny the value of individuals and deprive them of their original connection with Nature. As a result of this disconnection, the progress of human civilisation, at various stages of its development, such as the Industrial Revolution and the First World War, resulted in the abuse of the natural attributes of human beings. Economic success and political achievements sometimes impaired human beings' natural correspondence with Nature. Ambition for power over fellow-men, as well as for the conquest of Nature, brought about inhuman suppression, social disturbances and devastating racial conflicts. Every time this happened, sounds of protest were heard from intellectuals who wished to persuade human beings to return to the original order of Nature - a genial rather than destructive Nature, of course.

The writers that I have compared with D. H. Lawrence in this thesis initiated or inherited the tradition of this protest. In spite of the fact that some of their ideas came from far-off countries with various social, political and cultural backgrounds and were formulated in different periods of history, Lawrence found them and continued their protest against social

[2] George Peter Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), p. 260.

conventions. In the conflict between man-made civilisation and original intuition, Lawrence distrusted the accepted virtues, by which society cited in denying sexual freedom to the individual, and urged respect for the personal and emotional tendency in love. He justified the freedom of self-liberated individuals through the presentation of their problems in sexual relationships, and his search for a new morality convinced him that certain uncorrupted primitive beliefs in sexual balance might provide this. First scared and then intrigued by the emergence of the modern woman, he scrupulously examined the problems produced by women's emancipation as well as by sexual freedom. He wished to end the agonised struggle for sexual liberation by asserting the significance of sexual balance, which he rescued from traditions that human civilisation had long discarded. While striving for the full liberation of free individual emotions, he vigorously rebelled against modern civilisation. His ideas of social reconstruction started from the reformation of individuals, built on a liberation of sexuality that would benefit the individual both in his personal independence and his social role. In modern society, the social and political life of the individual is widely connected with that of others, so diminishing the exercise of free will. Sexuality, which remains private but functions as a potential force of regeneration, reminds the individual of the significance of his own existence. While society exerts to subdue the individual by regulating sexuality in its conventional virtue, Lawrence emphasised the value of sexual freedom in its identification of the individual, but was still suspicious of its contribution under the conventional social form. Thus initiated the making of his utopia.

The influences on the making of Lawrence's utopia were various, and derived mostly from his contemporaries, who introduced to him psychoanalysis, and ancient and oriental philosophies. Apart from

renowned names such as Freud, Frazer, Wilde and Carpenter, who had all made great contributions to the ideologies of his time, the list should also include the equally forceful influence of other anthropologists (eg. Tylor and Nuttall), theosophists (eg. Blavatsky and Pryse) and, as I emphasise here, sinologists (eg. Waley and Bynner) and translators from Chinese (eg. Giles and Legge: *Yi Jing*, *Lao Zi*, *Zhuang Zi* and *Lie Zi*). These influences on Lawrence are various, but I have argued that one element in common to them all: they either directly or indirectly present the Taoist idea that the balance and consummation of *Yang*-*Yin* could regenerate a harmonious relationship between man and Nature. Although some of these works were not necessarily read by Lawrence and no conclusive evidence of direct influence exists, I find an astonishing similarity between certain of Lawrence's ideas and those of Taoism. I have shown that Lawrence's extensive use of oriental symbolism argues for his acceptance of oriental ideas, which seem to occupy a prominent place in his 'pollyanalytics'. These oriental influences caused Lawrence to appreciate and understand aspects of ancient philosophies inaugurated by Taoism, and encouraged him to reach a solution to his contemporary social problems, along lines similar to those advocated by Chinese sages. Like his predecessors, Lawrence insisted that human beings should persist in following Nature's intuitive guidance in opposition to the hectic development of human society. He therefore intuitively accepted Taoist theories of sexual balance and applied them in an attempt to solve the problems for his contemporaries. Such a Taoist influence should not be too readily dismissed in considering the utopian remedy Lawrence prescribed for the treatment and rescue of his contemporary society.

Lawrence's utopian doctrine is imbued with Taoist ideas on sexuality and Nature. Firstly, both Taoists and Lawrence are among the minority of

writers, either in the East or in the West, who assert that sexuality has crucial effects on one's life, so that unnecessary suppression should be avoided lest it causes irreparable damages to one's psychic life and love. Orthodox tradition in most cultures demands the self-suppression of sexual desire and an unconditional submission of the individual to social discipline, but both Taoism and Lawrence are strongly opposed to this. Secondly, both of them accuse such orthodoxies of having denied the principle of sexual balance by violating the *Yang-Yin* harmony in Nature. They both justify a natural balance in sexual relationships, which they believe would not only endow human beings with physical and spiritual health, but also benefit the development of society. Thirdly, Taoist disciples are great admirers of Nature. While living in reclusion from society which they believe has corrupted and lost its harmonious relationship with Nature, they maintain their own free souls and seclude themselves in mountains and forests. Lawrence's utopians would have been glad to lead such a Taoist life, had they been able to afford such a seclusion, which had become a luxury in the early twentieth-century industrial countries. Fourthly, both Taoism and Lawrence criticise their ambitious contemporaries for using their creative power to usurp Nature's operation with a suicidal civilisation. In the Nature versus civilisation conflict, they both ratify Nature's superiority and advocate an intuitive human response to it. Following ancient beliefs in the primitive force of Nature represented by Taoism, Lawrence looked in oriental symbolism, theology and pagan rituals for the intuition of Nature which would restore power to his 'natural aristocrats'. This process is combined with, and mostly dominated by, his cautious presentation of sexual relationships. Fifthly, both Taoism and Lawrence believe that female intuitiveness in relation to Nature contains an uncontaminated force which is capable of enabling the male to regain an

instinctive power to regenerate an ageing body or a declining society. But while Taoists of the Sexual School aimed to achieve longevity through sexual encounters with woman, Lawrence emphasised the independence of the male and his consummation in sexual relationships. Lastly, both Taoism and Lawrence showed the same male 'chauvinistic' inclination by excessively favouring the male power and exaggerating its superiority over the female. Although they did not ignore, and even admired, the potential of female intuition and designated it as man's gateway to Nature, Taoists have never handed the heavenly key to woman, and in this sense their attitude manifests the typical characteristics of the Chinese patriarchal society. This, it can be argued, is a hidden influence on Lawrence. It is possibly because he was bewildered by this Chinese notion of woman, with its mysterious oriental sexism, that Lawrence was pushed into an over-reaction against woman. His anti-lesbian views, his searching for power in homosexuality and his desperate pursuit of male leadership may all have resulted from the Taoist warning that he should gain, rather than lose, phallic power in sexual relationships with woman.

Lawrence is known as a prophet of modern sexuality, though he had never been a practical contributor to such a social reform in his time. His ideas of social reform were either unrealistic or outrageous, but his probing philosophies are insightful and inspiring, and not only predicted the sexual freedom of today but also amplified the relationship between man and Nature. It is generally perceivable that Lawrence's prophecy about the liberation of sexual relationships between man and woman has been fulfilled. But it seems to me that his prediction about the relationship between man and Nature has not been accomplished. Having compared Lawrence with Taoism and revealed his similarity to its classical doctrines on Nature and man, I am convinced that Lawrence's theory of sexual

liberation has a wider application to the political and environmental issues of our globe today. His advocation of sexual freedom is a unique expression of freedom for individuals. Hence, the sexual liberation he urged becomes a way of encouraging respect for the quality of individuals against the manipulation of human rights by social authorities. But being also a dangerous force, sexual freedom cannot guarantee a sure respect for human rights. Therefore, Lawrence's ideas on individual independence and mutual respect between man and woman, under the principle of social and sexual balance, become the most important feature in his ethics of sexual liberation. The concept of balance is a very old understanding of Nature in ancient philosophies. But while Lawrence used it to criticise society for its indulgent developments, and attempted to use a force of Nature to regenerate human vitality, he actually warned modern society against destroying the balance between the pleasure of human life and the preservation of Nature. Lawrence's advocacy of sexual liberation is closely related to three major issues of today: freedom of the individual, respect for human rights, and preservation of Nature. Lawrence was one of the pioneers who promoted the three keys to the survival of humanity. His ideas, with the tradition he restored and the progress he upheld, is, among other things, an admonition to the modern world to adjust its self consciousness and re-evaluate its achievements. Lawrence is not a Taoist, but his doctrine belongs to the sect of Taoist philosophers, reiterating and promoting their ideas on sexuality, Nature and human existence.

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