

THE THREE VOICES OF D.H. LAWRENCE

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts in English
in the
University of Canterbury
by
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University of Canterbury

1979

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A Note of Thanks

I wish to thank everyone who has directly or indirectly enabled me to study on the Commonwealth Scholarship awarded by New Zealand, especially Mrs. Esme Lyon, Mr. Simon Ellis and Sr. Lina, who recommended me for the award, and those people who nominated me for the scholarship. I am very grateful to the University Grants Committee, particularly to Miss Dorothy Anderson, the secretary, who has shown a real interest in my study and my welfare. I am forever grateful to Professor J.C. Garrett, whose warmth and encouragement have attracted me to Canterbury, and whose enthusiasm for literature I find most inspiring; and to Dr. Cherry Hankin, my supervisor, for her encouragement and advice. I also want to thank all my New Zealand friends who have made my stay here a very pleasant one, especially Dr. and Mrs. Gordon Spence for their friendship; Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Cheung, under whose hospitable roof this thesis is written; Ms. Kathy Jacques, who has kindly proof-read my thesis; and Mrs. Helen Deverson who types it. My greatest debt, above all, is to my parents, my siblings and friends, who have alleviated my homesickness by writing to me regularly and given me much moral support.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this product of my struggle - a real struggle - into "verbal consciousness" (to use Lawrence's own expression) in a second language to two great novelists - Charles Dickens and D.H. Lawrence - who first made me fall in love with English literature some ten years ago.

ABSTRACT

Several critics have mentioned the demon and the prophet in D.H. Lawrence's work, but very few people have examined the role these two figures play in Lawrence's individual novels. It is my objective in this thesis to identify the three voices of Lawrence - that of the demon, the prophet and the artist - in four of his novels, which include his first novel (The White Peacock), his last novel (Lady Chatterley's Lover), and representatives of his best and worst novels (Women in Love and Kangaroo respectively).

References to Lawrence's biography and non-fictional work will be made to cast light on the causes for the predominance of one voice over the other, and the effect of the predominance on the writer's art. It is found that both the demon and the prophet are indigenous and essential to Lawrence's fiction, because they provide the artist with the inspiration and impetus to write. But when the demon or the prophet is not kept in check, the result is either the lack of coherence and understanding, or the abundance of didactic preaching. In both cases, the artist fails to establish an aesthetic distance between himself and his alter ego in his novels.

SELECTED CHRONOLOGY

- 1901: met Jessie Chambers; unofficially engaged in 1904.
- 1906-1910: The White Peacock.
- 1910: broke betroth with Jessie; engaged to Louie Burrows; Mrs. Lawrence died in December.

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- 1912: met Frieda and eloped to Europe.
 - 1913: Sons and Lovers.
 - 1913-1915: The Rainbow.
 - 1914: married Frieda.
 - 1915: "The Crown".
 - 1916: Women in Love; Goats and Compasses.

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- 1917: medical exams, and expelled from Cornwall.
 - 1917-1919: Studies in Classical American Literature.
 - 1918-1919: Movements in European History.
 - 1919: "Foreword to Women in Love"; to Italy.
 - 1919-1920: Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious.
 - 1921: Fantasia of the Unconscious.
 - 1922: arrived at Australia in April; to New Mexico in August; Kangaroo.

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- 1923-1925: Essays on art, morality and the novel (Phoenix).
 - 1925: returned to Europe.
 - 1926: last visit to England.
 - 1926-1928: Lady Chatterley's Lover.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations are used for the following novels in the foot-notes and the quotations are all taken from the Penguin Edition:

K: Kangaroo

WP: The White Peacock

S & L: Sons and Lovers

W in L: Women in Love

Lady C: Lady Chatterley's Lover

INTRODUCTION

"The Lion and the Unicorn
Were fighting for the Crown"

This is the epigraph introducing the first of the "Crown" essays by D.H. Lawrence. It provides the key to both Lawrence's vision of life and his art. To Lawrence, the perpetual fight between the lion and the unicorn embodies the essence of life, which is a "dialectic process of opposites"¹ - a constant struggle between the dualistic forces in life, darkness and light, Love and Law, or the Flesh and the Spirit. Similarly, the essence of art lies in the passionate struggle within the artist. "When a young painter studies an old master", Lawrence writes in one of his critical works, "he studies, not the form ... but he studies chiefly to understand how the old great artist suffered in himself the conflict of Love and Law, and brought them to a reconciliation"². To take the master at his word, I am going to examine four novels by Lawrence with an eye for the conflict and the attempt at reconciliation.

The conflicts in D.H. Lawrence the artist have a biographical and psychological origin. They stem from the demon in Lawrence the man, and inspire both the prophet and the artist. "One sheds one's sickness in books - repeats and presents again one's emotions to be master of them"³, writes Lawrence who acknowledges the demon in him and the exorcising power of art. At the same time, Lawrence also recognises the apocalyptic

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1. Miroslav Beker, '"The Crown", "The Reality of Peace" and Women in Love', in The DH Lawrence Review Vol. 2 #3, (Fall 1969) p.261. (From now on: The DHL Review).
 2. D H Lawrence, "Study of Thomas Hardy", in Selected Literary Criticism, ed. by Anthony Beal, p.186. (From now on: SLC).
 3. Aldous Huxley's introduction to Selected Letters, ed. by Richard Aldington, p.5.

impulse in him and the moralistic value of art. To him, art is naturally didactic: "every novelist who amounts to anything has a philosophy ... any novel of importance has a purpose"⁴. The novelist fails as an artist not because of his didactic purpose, but he fails when his "didactic purpose" is at odds with his "passional inspiration"⁵, or when he "puts his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection"⁶. Like the lion and the unicorn, the demon and the prophet in Lawrence are perpetually at war with each other, and yet the demon is necessary to the very existence of the prophet, and "each opposite [is] kept in stable equilibrium by the opposition of the other"⁷. Hence, the artist's business is to keep both the demon and the prophet in check, so as "to gain a reconciliation between the aspiration and the resistant"⁸.

F.R. Leavis contends that Lawrence had put something behind him for good in Sons and Lovers, and that having conquered his emotional disorder with his intelligence, Lawrence was "freed for the work of the greatest kind of artist"⁹. In other words, Lawrence's greatness as an artist was achieved only after he had succeeded in exorcising the demon in him. Frank Kermode has noted that Lawrence became more conscious of his prophetic role after Sons and Lovers, and that henceforth Lawrence "would have not only to develop it, but reconcile it with his narratives"¹⁰. Eliseo Vivas distinguishes two Lawrences in his study on Lawrence's novels. Using Lawrence's own terminology, Vivas calls

4. DHL, "The Novel", Phoenix II, ed. by Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore, p.416.

5. Ibid.

6. DHL, "Morality and the Novel", SLC, p.110.

7. DHL, "The Crown", Phoenix II, p.366.

8. DHL, "Study of Thomas Hardy", SLC, p.187.

9. R.L. Leavis, D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, p.20.

10. Frank Kermode, Lawrence, p.7.

the two Lawrences "the liar" and "the poet". He argues that Lawrence succeeds as a novelist when he achieves the impersonality of the poet, but when "bullying passion and autocratic ideology take over, the product is a 'dribbling lie'"¹¹. I am grateful to these critics for drawing my attention to the three voices in Lawrence's novels - the voices of the demon, the prophet and the artist. In identifying these voices in the novels under study, I hope to find out how each voice contributes to the success and failure of the novels. Biographical facts will be drawn upon to explain why a particular voice is dominant in a certain novel. It may be true that "Lawrence's biography does not account for Lawrence's achievement", as Aldous Huxley says¹²; nevertheless, I believe that Lawrence's biography certainly helps to illuminate Lawrence's work and accounts for his artistic decline after Women in Love.

The four novels chosen for this study fall comfortably into the four stages into which one may divide Lawrence's career as a novelist¹³. The White Peacock (1906-10) is Lawrence's first novel, and Lady Chatterley's Lover (1926-8) is his last. In between I have chosen Women in Love (1916), which is regarded by most critics as Lawrence's richest and best novel, and Kangaroo (1922), an example of Lawrence's inferior leadership novels written after he had reached his high watermark¹⁴. Apart from the development of Lawrence's artistic method, I hope to chart the constant struggle between the voices and to understand the effect of the struggle on Lawrence's work.

11. Eliseo Vivas, D.H. Lawrence, The Failure and the Triumph of art, p.10.

12. Huxley, op.cit., p.7.

13. See Julian Moynahan, The Deed of Life, Keith Sagar, The Art of D.H. Lawrence, and Reloy Garcia, "The Quest for Paradise in the novels of D.H. Lawrence", The DHL Review Vol.3 #2, (Summer 1970), pp.93-114.

14. See "Chronology".

CHAPTER 1: THE WHITE PEACOCK

The three voices of Lawrence are as old as Lawrence's art. In his first novel, The White Peacock, the young artist is very much at the mercy of the demon who haunts the book but provides the inspiration. The prophet emerges as the story unfolds and becomes more confident towards the end of the novel. The seesawing between the demon and the prophet accounts for the emotional uncertainty of the protagonist, especially in the first half of the novel, and his passion for analyses in the second half of the book.

I. The Demon

The demon that haunts the young Lawrence and upsets the artistic balance in his early novels finds an objective correlative in the central image of his first novel. The white peacock, "all vanity and screech and defilement", perched on "an old bowed angel" (p.175; p.174), is the symbol of the generic domineering woman, by whom the male characters are destroyed. Lady Crystabel, Mrs. Beardsall and Lettie are all versions of the white peacock. Their fault lies in their possessive nature, and their common crime is the denial of the animal in man. Lady Crystabel and Mrs. Beardsall have gone against themselves in choosing the "natural man". (Annable is associated with the wood, and Frank Beardsall has a lot of physical charm; but both are beneath their wives in social status.) In their marriage, both women are unable to reconcile the conflict between their heads and hearts. In their denial of the animal in their husband, these women drive their men to "other

pleasures" and finally to death. But Lettie's refusal of George (the farmer) in preference for Leslie (the mine-owner) is an alternative to the other women's choice. In opting for money, culture, and class, Lettie is untrue to part of herself - the part that responds to the virility of George. Hence her choice is destructive all round: George is driven to drink and Leslie to politics, while Lettie herself broods over her children and gets her compensation from the power associated with motherhood. This is the universalised picture of "woman's career" (p.323). In drawing up this "map", Lawrence is trying to understand the conflict between his parents and his mother's strange power over him. Again and again, Lawrence goes back to these early experiences for inspiration and repeats them in his works. The life-denying wife and possessive mother loom over Lawrence's first three novels, like the white peacock perching over the angel. With the death of Mrs. Morel in Sons and Lovers, Lawrence finally manages to "shed his sickness". The passive Cyril of The White Peacock then gives way to the Salvator Mundi in Birkin of Women in Love, whose relatively strident voice rises to a scream in the bitter Somers of Kangaroo, and still reverberates in the voice of Mellors in Lawrence's last novel, Lady Chatterley's Lover. This is the history of the prophet in Lawrence's novels. Like Annable (who is the murdered father returning to teach the son¹ the bitter lesson he has learned), these prophet-figures are actually the tormented males turned prophets. We do not need Freud to remind us that "a thing which in consciousness makes its appearance as two contraries is often in the unconscious a united whole"²: the demon and the prophet

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1. Annable treats Cyril "as an affectionate father treats a delicate son" (WP, p.173). Also see Daleski's interesting analysis of Lawrence's love-hate relationship with his father in The Forked Flame, pp.36-38.
 2. Sigmund Freud, Papers on the Psychology of Art.Literature. Love.Religion, p.168.

are the two sides of the same coin.

The incompatible marriage of Lawrence's parents not only provides the emotional conflicts in The White Peacock; it also affects Lawrence's conception of the characters in his books. The men and women in The White Peacock are polarised into either lions or unicorns. The lions are the mindless, sensuous and uncultured (or "natural") figures of darkness; these include Annable, Frank Beardsall, George, Meg and Mrs. Annable. The unicorns are the intellectual, cultured figures of light; they are represented by Leslie, Lady Crystabel and Mrs. Beardsall. Consequently, most of the characters tend to be enigmatic: they represent types rather than individuals. Annable, for instance, is described as Pan in the wood (p.155), while the female characters fall into the classical dichotomy of the Rose and the Lily. Mrs. Annable and Meg are nothing but symbols of sensuality and fertility, while Lady Crystabel and Mrs. Beardsall represent the untouchable women who frustrate their husbands' sexual instincts, and hence kill the men in them.

Even the very few characters who are capable of considerable internal conflict degenerate into symbols in the process of the story. Leslie only lives as a character when he appears in his role of the tormented lover; apart from that he is but a mere symbol of the "child-man" in the mining tycoon - a recurrent type in Lawrence's subsequent novels³. Lettie and George are powerfully portrayed in their suffering right from the beginning. Yet, towards the end of the novel, Lettie retreats into the background and becomes a stereotype of the fearful mother figure, while George's changes and emotional conflicts are seldom dramatised and often reported at a distance. The demon's struggle

3. Leslie, Gerald (W in L) and Clifford (Lady C) are variations on the same type: aristocratic or socially privileged, and outwardly powerful, but emotionally dependent on their women for nurture to survive.

to understand the fascinating power of motherhood overshadows the emotional conflicts of the main characters. Thus the description of passionate experiences and felt life gives way to long essays, analyses and generalizations. In universalising the "career of women", the prophet attempts to appease the demon, to the detriment of the art. Mrs. Beardsall nearly attains the stature of the tragic heroine in her regret and grief over her "crime"; but most of the time she is a characterless figure. Despite her experience (perhaps because of the experience) of her unhappy marriage, Mrs. Beardsall never interferes with or advises Lettie on her marital decision. The demon cannot resist introducing Mrs. Beardsall's story (which is the marriage of Lawrence's parents under thin disguise)⁴. Unfortunately, the artist fails to integrate it into the tapestry. The Beardsall story is only linked to the rest of the novel thematically. Once the plot gets started, Mrs. Beardsall is forgotten altogether. The potentials of the Beardsall story are not fully exploited either. The possible effects of that marriage on the personalities of Cyril and Lettie are left to the imagination of the reader: somehow the connection is missing.

Another example of the demon dragging unassimilated materials from real life into fiction is the love story connected with Emily, who is based on Jessie Chambers, Lawrence's first lover. By the time Lawrence wrote The White Peacock in 1906, he had known Jessie for five years and had been unofficially engaged to her for two years. The year after the third version of The White

4. Mrs. Lawrence's maiden name was Lydia Beardsall; her initials are shared by Lettie, whose story is an alternative to Mrs. Lawrence's. According to Aldington (in Portrait of a Genius, but ..., p.5.), Lawrence's father believed that his ancestors had been French. In the novel, Frank Beardsall is driven to France and is taken to be a Frenchman on his return. Hence, the autobiographical element is stronger than we suspect.

Peacock was completed, Lawrence broke his "betrothal of six years' standing" to Jessie Chambers⁵. In writing about Emily, Lawrence was trying to understand the intense emotional nature of his fiancée, who according to Richard Aldington was the most important person in Lawrence's life after his mother from about the age of fifteen to his early twenties⁶.

In her [Emily's] every motion you can see the extravagance of her emotional nature. She quivers with feeling; emotion conquers and carries havoc through her, for she has not a strong intellect, nor a heart of light humour; her nature is brooding and defenceless; she knows herself powerless in the tumult of her feelings, and adds to her misfortunes a profound mistrust of herself. (p.117)

The intelligence displayed in this analysis is substantiated by the artist's dramatic skill in the following paragraph which describes Emily's nervousness in her attempts to dance "properly" with Lettie (pp.117-8). The analysis is also supported by the numerous observations and brief scenes showing Emily's great fear and revulsion of the physical, (examples include the episodes over the killing of the cat, the rabbit chase and the dead dog) and the intense emotionalism she shows in her dealings with children and babies. The character of Emily

5. Jessie Chambers appears again in S & L as Miriam, whose intense emotionalism is presented as even more repulsive. S & L, which was started a month prior to the breaking of the engagement, presents a less sympathetic view of Jessie. Yet the character Miriam is better integrated into the narrative. It is interesting to compare the portrayal of Emily and Miriam, and their relationship to the main plot. While the artist in S & L shows more skill in incorporating the Jessie-Miriam figure into the story, the demon prevents him from presenting the character with fairness. In WP, on the other hand, Emily is presented as the only one of the Nethermere youths who enjoys a happy marriage. From Lawrence's biographies, we know that Lawrence submitted his first novel to the criticism of Jessie Chambers, and that the very title of the novel was suggested by her. But to what extent the portrayal of Emily is influenced by this fact is difficult to say. Besides, the investigation into the details of the genesis of the book is beyond the scope of this present thesis.
6. Richard Aldington, Portrait of a Genius, but..., p.19.

is very well-drawn, but the artist fails to make a connection between Emily's nature and the unsuccessful love affair of Cyril and Emily. In fact, the love story between Cyril and Emily is almost an adjunct to the main narrative. The fine character analysis of Emily also seems to be contradictory to the role she plays at the end of the book. Of all the relationships in the novel, Emily's marriage is the only satisfactory one. It is significant that the novel begins and ends in Emily's household (that is, her parents' farm and her husband's house.) Embedded between these two domestic scenes is the story of George's decline, which is highlighted in the stackyard scene. Emily's husband, Tom Renshaw, silhouetted "against the sky, amid the brightness and fragrance of the gold corn, and ... his wife who was passing in the shadow of the building", are presented in a beautiful tableau charged with poetry. The unicorn in Emily is reconciled to the lion in Tom. Hence the woman who is usually associated with the light of the intellect is seen in the shadow of the building, while Tom who has been described previously as "exceedingly manly: that is to say he did not dream of questioning or analysing anything" is now seen amid the brightness of the gold corn. Therefore, we may conclude that the relationship between Tom and Emily is meant to be a touchstone to all the other unsuccessful marriages. However, the symbolic role of Emily at the end of the novel is at odds with the realistic presentation of her in the early part of the book. The demon's impulse to bring in raw materials from real life again fails to be reconciled to the artistic purpose of the novelist.

Reflecting on his early experiences as a novelist, Lawrence wrote that he had been "tussling away for four years" on the task of "getting out The White Peacock in inchoate bits, from the underground of my consciousness"⁷. The "inchoate bits" cohere

7. Op.cit, p.95.

when the artist presides over the demon's struggle; they fall apart when the emotional disorder is not conquered by intelligence. Several unassimilated episodes in The White Peacock betray the inability of the young artist to understand his own demon. Cyril's display of lavish sentiments for his sister Lettie is not only embarrassing; it also draws attention to Cyril's exceedingly protective attitude towards his sister:

On an afternoon a short time after our visit to Cossethay, Lettie sat in the window seat. The sun clung to her hair, and kissed her with passionate splashes of colour brought from the vermillion, dying creeper outside. The sun loved Lettie, and was loath to leave her. She looked out over Nethermereto Highclose, vague in the September mist. Had it not been for the scarlet light on her face, I should have thought her look was sad and serious. She nestled up to the window, and leaned her head against the wooden shaft. Gradually she drooped into sleep. Then she became wonderfully childish again - it was the girl of seventeen sleeping there, with her full pouting lips slightly apart, and the breath coming lightly. I felt the old feeling of responsibility; I must protect her, and take care of her. (p.59)

This trait in Cyril's personality is consistent with the other characteristics he has shown elsewhere such as his strong attachment to his mother and professed hatred for his father. The bathing scene between George and Cyril is another unassimilated episode which tempts the reader to interpret Cyril in a psycho-analytical light⁸. The homosexual overtone in this scene fits in with the rest of the picture: Cyril is never attracted to any woman physically; his affections for the opposite sex are reserved for his mother and sister; the love affair with Emily has never been realised and its failure is not accounted for; Alice playfully calls Cyril "Sibyl" and throughout the course of the novel, Cyril is haunted by the strange power of

8. The bathing scene in WP, like the wrestling scene in W in L, is usually taken as evidence of the protagonist's latent homosexual tendency.

women - the white peacocks. In Freudian terms, Cyril is the young man suffering from mother-fixation. At any rate, this is pure speculation on the part of the reader who tries to reconstruct the missing links so as to make sense of these inchoate bits. Although the artist has failed to analyse these passions, his sensibility has enabled him to present his passions as something experienced and immediate.

II. The Prophet

Like the demon, the prophet may upset the artistic balance between the head and the heart in a novel. The preacher in The White Peacock is not qualified to be called "prophet". He starts timidly but becomes more confident as the story progresses. Despite its unobtrusive presence, the impulse to preach has done much harm to the artistic formation of the novel. It is responsible not only for the "essays" on motherhood in the last part of the book, but also for the most serious artistic fault of the novel, which lies in the incompatibility between the artistic purpose and the mode of narration chosen.

The first person narration dictated by the prophet in Lawrence is not only undesirable but inappropriate, with regard to the type of novel Lawrence professes to write. Unlike the observer of social manners and the recorder of historical events, Lawrence is interested in what goes on below the surface in man. In a letter to Edward Garnett (June 5th, 1914), Lawrence writes:

Somehow, that which is physic - non-human in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element ... it is the inhuman will, call it physiology ... that fascinates me.

Given this new orientation of interest, the novelist should have adopted a narrative mode that would enable him to transcend the consciousness of the individuals and render the internal views of his characters. The young novelist does not foresee his

problems. He is attracted to the first person narrative because the philosophical stance of the detached observer and commentator is flattering⁹. (Cyril, the alter ego of the novelist, is "delikit" like the novelist; he also has the detachment of the philosopher and the sensitivity of the poet.) Besides, it enables Lawrence to justify his own indulgence in the beauty of Nature. Those rhapsodies and meditations on Nature are strictly speaking unrelated to the plot or theme, but they may be considered as means to depict the narrator's character. Nevertheless, the compensation is too little compared to the damage.

First of all, as a character Cyril is too nebulous to be real. Secondly, he is superfluous to the main story, which is the drama between George, Lettie and Leslie. Thirdly, because his role as the narrator requires his presence at every scene, it means that he has to be a witness of the intimacies and quarrels between the lovers. Examples of this embarrassing peeping-Tom-stance are numerous. Whenever Lettie goes off for a stroll with her lover, she has to drag Cyril along, because the narration demands his presence. As the narrator, Cyril has to overhear every word between the lovers at the proposals (both Leslie's and George's); he also has to preside over all the temptation scenes and give a blow-by-blow account of the lovers' "quivering" conditions. On the other hand, when the narrator becomes conscious of his awkward position, he grows rather squeamish and holds back information. For example, we are never told what actually takes place between

9. The unusual detachment and philosophical stance of Cyril strikes me as an imitation of the tone of Pierre, the narrator of War and Peace. According to the reading list of Lawrence (in The DHL Review, Vol.3, #3, 1970), Lawrence finished reading War and Peace by May, 1909. But it is quite likely that he was only re-reading it, because Lawrence tended to re-read some books. Moreover, it is recorded that Lawrence gave Louie Burrows a familiar volume of Tolstoy in 1907. However, the significant point is that in Lawrence's critical work later ("The Novel"), he criticises Pierre as a dull character. He writes: "Pierre is quite nicely related to ideas, tooth-paste ... he's not quick enough". Never again in Lawrence's novel do we find the Pierre type of narrator after WP.

the lovers when Leslie stays overnight at the cottage.

"I don't see why - why it should make trouble between us, Lettie", he faltered. She made a swift gesture of repulsion, whereupon, catching sight of her hand, she hid it swiftly against her skirt again.

"You make my hands - my very hands disclaim me," she struggled to say.

He looked at her clenched fist pressed against the folds of her dress.

"But - ", he began, much troubled.

"I tell you, I can't bear the sight of my own hands", she said, in low, passionate tones.

"But surely, Lettie, there's no need - if you love me - "

She seemed to wince. He waited, puzzled and miserable.

"And we're going to be married, aren't we?" he resumed, looking pleadingly at her. (pp.204-5)

This is titillating indeed. What actually happens that night is important to our understanding of Lettie. We gather from her flirtations with both George and Leslie (e.g. her reference to Dr. Slop after tickling Leslie's nose, and her insinuating references to the forbidden apple) that Lettie is in no way a "coy mistress". It is difficult to reconcile the Lettie in the paragraph quoted above with the bold woman who tells George teasingly that he "ought to have been a monk - a martyr, a Carthusian" (p.43).

The problem of the first person narrative mode is present as early as Chapter 1. Credibility is forfeited as Cyril assumes the omniscient narrator's privilege and tells us what goes on in the mind of Leslie. The narrator, moreover, is not even physically present at the scene to know what Lettie says to her young man! As the story progresses, the novelist becomes more aware of the limitations of the first person narration and observes more closely the rules of credibility. The resort to the epistolary method is one way of reporting events which take place in the narrator's absence. Yet it

means that the letter-writers have to be extraordinarily articulate if they are going to do a good job. Despite these attempts, the novel is still beyond repair, unless it is re-written in a different mode of narration. Often the letters are merely strung together, and there appear great lapses of time in the narrative¹⁰. Unlike the first person narrator in the Bildungsroman, Cyril cannot serve as a unifying force, since he is not directly involved in the main action. The fragmentary nature of the novel becomes more apparent in Part III, as the main characters are no longer held together in Nethermere. After The White Peacock, Lawrence never returns to the first person narration in his subsequent novels. He has learned from his mistake.

The prophet causes trouble only when he is too closely identified with the author himself. When enough aesthetic distance is established between the prophet-figure and the novelist, the result is quite different. The enigmatic Annable is a more-than-life figure. He is described as "some malicious Pan" in the wood. In his quick, witty exchange with Leslie, he is like the wise fools of Shakespeare:

"Have you ever been a groom?" [asked Leslie.]

"No groom but a bridegroom, sir, and then I think I'd rather groom a horse than a lady, for I got well bit - if you will excuse me, sir."

"And you deserve it - no doubt."

"I got it - an' I wish you better luck, sir. One's more a man here in th' wood, though, than in my lady's parlour, it strikes me."

10. In his article "Juno and The White Peacock: Lawrence's English Epic" (The DHL Review, Vol.3 #2. Summer 1970, p.120), Evelyn J. Hinz argues that fragmentation in Part III is a stylistic device to reflect the loss of personal contact characteristic of the modern world. I think Hinz is reading too much into the work and is trying to rationalise what is in actual fact a lack of artistic control.

"A lady's parlour!" laughed Leslie, indulgent in his amusement at the facetious keeper.

"Oh, yes! 'Will you walk into my parlour - ' "

"You're very smart for a keeper."

"Oh, yes sir - I was once a lady's man. But I'd rather watch th' rabbits an' th' birds; an' it's easier breeding brats in th' kennels than in th' town."

"They are yours, are they?" said I.

"You know 'em, do you sir? Aren't they a lovely litter? - aren't they a pretty bag o' ferrets? - natural as weasels - that's what I said they should be - bred up like a bunch o' young foxes, to run as they would."
(pp. 155-6)

That he regards his children as animals is very important, as he is to be taken as the paragon of the "natural" man, the antithesis of the "cultivated" lady. Annable gets onto his soapbox and becomes the prophet when he answers Leslie's accusation that he is a bad parent:

"I - why? It's natural! When a man's more than nature he's a devil. Be a good animal, says I, whether it's man or woman. You, sir, a good natural male animal; the lady there - a female un - that's proper - as long as yer enjoy it." (p.156)

To Cyril, Annable is "a man of one idea: that all civilization was the painted fungus of rottenness" (p.172). Cyril also points out that Annable is "fundamentally very unhappy", but finds his "power to communicate his unhappiness" endearing. (p.173). All these observations contribute to the apocalyptic aura of the gamekeeper. Annable's renunciation of modern civilization and his advice to the world - "to be true to your animal instinct" - prefigures the Saviour in the gamekeeper of Lawrence's last novel. Yet unlike Mellors, Annable the prophet is not getting away uncriticised.

In the presentation of Annable, the artist gets the upper hand of the prophet. Annable's self-justification of being a "natural breeder" is repudiated by the domestic scene at the kennels immediately following the encounter in the wood.

Annable's sin as a negligent parent is dramatically rendered in the chaos at home where his 'litter' of children runs wild. The juxtaposition of these two scenes is a brilliant way of deflating Annable's prophetic flamboyance. In letting action comment on words, Lawrence is using the dramatist's skill¹¹. There is also much unconscious pathos in Mrs. Annable's speech:

"Ah!" she said, "Tha's got a funny Dad, tha' has, not like another man, no, my duckie. 'E got no 'art ter care for nobody, 'e 'asna, ma pigeon - no, - lives like a stranger to his own flesh an' blood." (p.159)

Like Meg, Mrs. Annable engages our sympathy. That Mrs. Annable is presented as a victim of her "natural" husband is comment enough on the unsatisfactory message preached by the prophet Annable.

The prophet is undoubtedly present in Lawrence's first novel. At this stage, however, the novelist is busy trying to understand his own demon and the forces around him. His writing is prompted by the need to purge himself of the things "from the underground of [his] consciousness". At the same time, there is the impulse to help other people to understand themselves better. "What really torments civilized people," wrote Lawrence at the end of his life, "is that they are full of feelings they know nothing about; they can't realise them, they can't fulfil them, they can't live them."¹² Therefore, as a novelist, Lawrence feels that it is his duty "to know the feelings inside a man, and to make new feelings conscious"¹³, so that his readers may benefit from his revelation. This is the prophetic impulse behind all

11. The juxtaposition of these two scenes in WP is as effective and subtle as the juxtaposition of Jacques's cynical speech, with the immediate appearance of Orlando carrying Old Adam in his arms, in Shakespeare's As You Like It, Act II, Scene vii.

12. DHL, "The State of Funk" in Phoenix II, p.567.

13. Ibid.

his works. In The White Peacock, Lawrence has not fully grasped the meaning of the feelings tormenting him. Hence the tentative and non-committal tone of the "apprentice-prophet". When Annable the father-figure offers him an answer, the young prophet is not entirely convinced. However, as Lawrence's career reveals, the prophet in his novels is gradually assuming the role of the father-prophet, till he is identified with the father and replaces him in the last novel. Mellors is allowed to preach unimpeded; in fact he has the full approval of the novelist. In Lawrence's first novel, on the other hand, the novelist's reservation has helped to keep the prophet in check, thus achieving a better balance. Nevertheless, this equilibrium alone does not make The White Peacock a better novel than Lady Chatterley's Lover: we still have to examine the maturity and sense of craftsmanship of the artist.

III. The Artist

The White Peacock has "every fault that the English novel can have", but its author has "got genius"¹⁴. This was the verdict passed by Hueffer, who recommended the novel for publication despite its faults. What are these faults and wherein does the genius lie? This is the subject of our present investigation.

As it has been shown in the previous sections, some of these faults are caused directly by the interference of the demon or the prophet. Some, however, are caused by the experimental nature of the novel, and the immaturity of the artist as a novelist. "I don't want a plot, I should be bored with it," said Lawrence to Jessie Chambers with whom he was discussing the idea of his first novel¹⁵. In abandoning the convention of a plot, Lawrence is trying to do something new with fiction.

14. Aldington, p.71.

15. Op.cit., p.95.

Lawrence is not interested "in the human and social destiny of his characters" but the "universal mana" that manifests itself in Nature and Man, writes Hough¹⁶. The universal mana flowing through the characters, in the ebb and flow of their emotional undercurrents, is presented in concrete and dramatic terms. These "psychic drama(s)", as Stephen Miko calls them¹⁷, are always anchored firmly in the ordinary everyday realism. The antagonism Cyril's mother and sister feel for Emily, for instance, is just detectable in the brief conversation between these three characters in the opening chapter:

"Where have you been, Cyril, that you weren't in to dinner?"

"Only down to Strelley Mill," said I.

"Of course," said mother coldly.

"Why 'of course'?" I asked.

"And you came away as soon as Em went to school?" said Lettie.

"I did," said I. (p.20)

Another form of antagonism, shown by George to Leslie, is more complicated. Annoyed by the appearance of Leslie who comes to take Lettie home, and agitated by Leslie's sense of superiority, George deliberately exaggerates his uncouthness, in defiance of Leslie's gentility, and much to the embarrassment of his sister Emily.

At this point he [Leslie] became aware that he was monopolising the conversation, and turned to George, just as the latter was taking a piece of cheese from his knife with his teeth, asking:

"Do you play tennis, Mr. Saxton? - I know Miss Saxton does not."

"No," said George, working the piece of cheese into his cheek. "I never learned any ladies' accomplishments."

Leslie turned to Emily, who had nervously been pushing two plates over a stain in the cloth, and who was very startled when she found herself addressed.

... When supper was over Leslie looked at Lettie to inform her that he was ready to go. She, however,

16. Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, pp.31-32.

17. Stephen Miko, Toward Women In Love, p.33.

refused to see his look, but talked brightly to Mr. Saxton, who was delighted. George, flattered, joined in the talk with gusto. Then Leslie's angry silence began to tell on us all. After a dull lapse, George lifted his head and said to his father.

"Oh, I shouldn't be surprised if that little red heifer calved tonight."

Lettie's eyes flashed with a sparkle of amusement at this thrust.

"No," assented the father, "I thought so myself."

After a moment's silence, George continued deliberately, "I felt her gristles -."

"George!" said Emily sharply.

"We will go," said Leslie.

George looked up sideways at Lettie and his black eyes were full of sardonic mischief. (pp.31-32)

George's triumph here is a short-lived one, because at the end of this tug-of-war between the lion (George) and the unicorn (Leslie), the aristocratic mine-owner triumphs over the peasant-boy. To reverse the classical allusion quoted elsewhere in the novel, we may say that the "apple of discord" is offered by Lettie to Leslie at last. However, in Chapter 8 (Part I), Lettie, the Eve-figure, is still dangling the apple in front of George. Set in the kitchen of the Saxton farmhouse, the apple-peeling scene (a very common routine in itself) is a good example illustrating the ebb and flow of the emotional undercurrents in the characters. The apple Lettie offers George is interpreted by George as the "forbidden apple":

"Mother," he [George] said ... as if jesting. "She [Lettie] is offering me the apple like Eve." (p.114)

The "letter-reading" of the peel is also significant: it is Lettie's clever way of provoking George. To the imperceptive spectator (like Mr. Saxton) who is unaware of the undercurrents, this scene is as ordinary as the mill-pond introduced right at the beginning of the novel: "the water lay softly, intensely still", but below the surface, the "shadowy fish" are by no means motionless.

In The Dark Sun, Hough writes that there is "a consistent movement in his [Lawrence's] writing from naturalism [he means realism] to symbol, from actuality to myth"¹⁸. While Hough is right in distinguishing these two modes of writing in Lawrence, he does not define what he means by "consistent movement". If Hough means that the realistic descriptions of scenery and people tend to lend themselves to a larger symbolic or mythical interpretation, he may be right. But if he means that Lawrence started writing in the realistic mode in his early novels, and progressed towards the other mode in his later novels, then this is rather doubtful. Lawrence's first novel lends itself comfortably to the mythical readings of Gajdusek and Hinz¹⁹, while Lady Chatterley's Lover (Lawrence's last novel) is like a modern fable written in the realistic mode. In fact, the two modes co-exist in most of Lawrence's novels, and the mythical or symbolic is always firmly anchored in the realistic.

Always, as it is with Lawrence, whenever the prophet is held in check, the artist is able to distill the materials offered by the demon, and embody his vision in objective, dramatic terms. The various scenes with animals in Part I - George and the field bees (Chapter 1), the trapped cat (Chapter 2), the rabbit chase (Chapters 5 and 6) - are functional. They cast light on the characters involved. George's cruelty and Emily's repulsion against raw and physical life are well-established. Unfortunately, these traits in the characters are not integrated into the general pattern of the novel. Besides,

18. Hough, p.15.

19. See Robert E. Gajdusek, "A Reading of The White Peacock", in A D.H. Lawrence Miscellany, ed. by Harry T. Moore; Gajdusek, "A Reading of 'A Poem of Friendship', a chapter in Lawrence's The White Peacock", The DHL Review, Vol.3 #1 (Spring 1970) pp.47-62; and Hinz, op.cit.

they even contribute to the ambiguity enveloping the message preached by the prophet: "Be a good animal". If isolated, these episodes are in themselves well-handled situations. They point towards the symbolic method, which is better developed and integrated into the general structure and thematic pattern of the novel. A good example of this is the depiction of the wood in Chapter 1. On a hot day, Cyril came down to the brook:

One or two butterflies, indistinguishable against the blue sky, trifled from flower to flower and led me up the hill, across the field where the hot sunshine stood as in a bowl, and I was entering the caverns of the wood, where the oaks bowed over and saved us a grateful shade. Within, everything was so still and cool that my steps hung heavily along the path. The bracken held out arms to me, and the bosom of the wood was full of sweetness. (p.18)

The wood is described as a refuge from the "hot sunshine", offering man "a grateful shade". As light and darkness have very specific connotations in Lawrence's writing, the reference to the sun and shade here is most significant. This wood, which is Annable's refuge from Lady Crystabel's "world of light", is still and cool and full of the sweetness of its vegetation - a symbol of fertility. Straying into the wood, Lettie comes across "hosts of little white flowers". She bends over them and asks what they mean. "They are so still," Lettie says. "Something out of an old religion, that we have lost. They make me feel afraid" (p.154). Here she almost stumbles upon the answer. But Lettie is the white peacock in the book. It is as if she were fated not to find the answer. It is women like Lettie whom Annable is attacking:

"Look at the women looking at us. I'm something between a bull and a couple of worms stuck together ... tell a woman not to come in a wood till she can look at natural things." (p.157)

The lady who comes into the wood and finds the answer is the last lady in the novels of D.H. Lawrence - Lady Chatterley.

She has to leave "the world of light" behind in her husband's house, and come into "the world of darkness" in the wood. There she meets her prince (the prince of Sleeping Beauty) and comes back to life on his terms. The myth of Sleeping Beauty is casually referred to by Leslie who says,

"Lettie is scolding me for kissing her when she was playing Sleeping Beauty."

"The conceit of the boy, to play Prince!" said my mother. (Mrs. Beardsall)

"Oh, but it appears I was sadly out of character," he said ruefully. (pp.60-61)

Indeed, because Leslie is only a false prince. The real prince is to come in the form of Birkin in Women in Love, which opens with Ursula waiting to be brought into life by her prince (W. in L., p.10). "Sleeping Beauty" is in fact the myth that inspires a lot of Lawrence's short stories²⁰ and his famous last novel, which is in fact an elaborate version of the ancient myth re-written in modern terms.

That Lawrence is more interested in "the non-human in humanity" does not mean that he cannot portray lively, recognisable characters and social personalities. Among the minor characters, Emily, her father Mr. Saxton, and Alice are lively specimens. Emily, as I have shown in Section I, is an interesting character in her own right. Mr. Saxton is a typical example of the down-to-earth, robust farmer; he is remembered for his warmth, ease and sense of humour. Alice, who only appears briefly in a few scenes, establishes herself firmly in our mind as a witty, vivacious girl slightly on the "vulgar" side:

She [Alice] was a short, plump girl, pale with daring, rebellious eyes ... with an admirable father, and a mother who loved her husband passionately, was wild and lawless on the surface, but at heart very upright and

20. In The Virgin and The Gypsy, The Horse-dealer's Daughter, and The Fox, for example, the female protagonists are awakened into a new life by their "princes".

amenable ... Lettie generally deplored Alice's outrageous behaviour, though she relished it - if 'superior' friends were not present. Most men enjoyed Alice in company, but they fought shy of being alone with her. (p.37)

This general description of Alice is well borne out by her subsequent appearances. The letters she writes also carry the stamp of her personality - her "bubbling state" and garrulosity make those letters the liveliest bit of narration in the book.

But the most vividly and dramatically realised character is Lettie, who refuses to fit into the polarised picture of women dictated by the demon. As the embodiment of the external conflict between the lion and the unicorn, she engages our sympathy in her sufferings. In contrast to the passive male characters, Lettie is presented as the only active character consciously taking her fate into her own hands. George's physical attraction for her is real. So are his shortcomings:

"You never grow up," says Lettie to George, "like bulbs which spend all summer getting fat and fleshy, but never wakening the germ of a flower " (p.42). Lettie's indictment may be too harsh, but her sense of dissatisfaction is understandable.

"You are blind; you are only half-born; you are gross with good living and heavy sleep. You are a piano which will only play a dozen common notes. Sunset is nothing to you - it merely happens anywhere. Oh, but you make me feel as if I'd like to make you suffer." (p.42)

And make him suffer she does. Those scenes in which Lettie tries to wake George up to music, painting and sexual love are brilliantly drawn. George's failure in passing those "tests of culture" has assisted Lettie in making her marital decision. What Leslie represents (i.e. money, culture and class) is as real as what George has (i.e. vitality and manliness). Failing

to get both, Lettie settles for the former. "She could take a role in life and play up to it," says Emily of Lettie, referring to Lettie's ability to play in the charades. Lettie's choice of Leslie has a certain playfulness in it. Commenting on their courtship, the narrator writes:

After the evening at the farm, Lettie and Leslie draw closer together. They eddied unevenly down the little stream of courtship, jostling and drifting together and apart. He was unsatisfied and strove with every effort to bring her close to him, submissive. Gradually she yielded, and submitted to him. She folded round her and him the snug curtain of the present, and they sat like children playing a game behind the hangings of an old bed. She shut out all distant outlooks, as an Arab unfolds his tent and conquers the mystery and space of the desert. So she lived gleefully in a little tent of present pleasures and fancies. (pp.170-171)

The analysis here is fully substantiated by concrete and dramatic presentation. In fact, the portrayal of Lettie is one of the best character studies Lawrence has ever done. The scene in which Lettie asks the invalid Leslie to let her go (II, Chapter 5), for instance, is one of the most touching human situations depicted in the book. The wilful and vainglorious woman in Lettie, who "taunted Leslie and thwarted his wishes" (p.90), has come to full knowledge of the moral responsibility involved in what she has taken to be a game. The childish behaviour of Leslie, moreover, touches her maternal instincts. Finally, she decides to play up to her role.

Lady Crystabel, the obvious prototype of the white peacock, is a distant picture in the background. Striding proudly across the stage is Lettie, who brings the symbol of the white peacock to life. Right at the beginning, in the opening chapter, we are given a glimpse of the peacock in her:

Then she tossed her head, and all the fine hairs that were free from bonds made a mist of yellow light in the sun.
(p.21)

This picture of the peacock/woman betrays the writer's ambivalent feeling, which is a mixture of admiration as well as resentment.

In Part II, the image of the peacock perching on the angel is foreshadowed in Lettie's position with Leslie:

Lettie [was] standing on the top bar of the stile, balancing with her hand on Leslie's head ... she turned round, and leaped with a great flutter, like a big bird launching, down from the top of the stile to the ground and into his arms. (p.152)

Alice calls Lettie "Juno" playfully (p.206). In the various scenes in which Lettie plays the seducer and tormentor to her lovers, her role as the white peacock comes to life. However, as it has been pointed out (in Section I), this vivid character study is not sustained in Part III, because of the interference on the part of the wild demon and the meddling prophet.

Some minor faults in characterisation betraying the lack of artistic maturity lie mainly in the introduction of too many minor characters and in subjugating these characters to the dictate of a certain thesis. Sometimes these characters are introduced to fill up the social milieu (e.g. the wedding guests), sometimes for comic relief (e.g. Alice's grandmother), and sometimes as a mouthpiece for the author (e.g. Miss Wookey). The long descriptions and historical accounts of these characters are often extraneous to the main story and detract our attention from the central narrative. Nevertheless, the scenes in which they appear are usually well-done. The fault then is the lack of co-ordination, which applies equally well to the rhapsodies on Nature scattered profusely throughout the novel.

Most of the early reviewers of The White Peacock have noticed Lawrence's sensitive response to and the poetic rendition of the beauty in Nature. One of them observes that "Nature is the protagonist of the drama, and ... the author has drawn her character with uncommon care. We realize her in all her moods, and she is as interesting as she is convincing."²¹ In

21. See "Henry Savage in Academy", in D.H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage, ed. by R.P. Draper, p.42.

actual fact, Nature is more like the omniscient observer, Cyril, than the active participant of Hardy's malevolent Nature. Nature in The White Peacock serves as a backdrop and a contrast: against its permanence and timelessness, the petty human dramas are enacted. It also plays an important role in the central dichotomy of Nature vs. Culture, or Country vs. City. This dichotomy runs through almost all of Lawrence's novels. As the artist matures, he learns to be more selective and seldom falls into the kind of indulgence he displays in his first novel. The over-exuberance and sentimentality in the verbal landscape paintings in The White Peacock betray the artist's juvenile response to the Symbolist Movement. The opening paragraph of the novel is an attempt in mood painting. The conscious attempt at poetic effect is apparent in the forced alliteration in the last sentence of that paragraph: "the millrace murmured to itself of the tumult of life...". Other signs of juvenile writing are the over-use of personification and the animation of inanimate objects: "the table looked lonely, and the chairs mourned darkly for the lost companionship of the sofa" (p.15). This appalling description of the Saxton kitchen is as bad as some of the best and most beautiful passages on Nature, where the writer lapses into the pathetic fallacy all too readily. For example, after Annable's accident, Cyril reports that the earth "covers her face with a thin veil of mist, and is sad". Like many long rhapsodies on Nature, the detailed description of the wood (p.27), which begins with a Wordsworthian simile comparing the flowers to the Milky Way, is not really related to the theme or the story. In fact, the story is often bogged down by these long renditions of the country scenery.

Critics like Gajdusek and Hinz try to make more sense of the role played by Nature in The White Peacock. Gajdusek sees

Nature as the background upon which Lawrence plays "with forms, introducing an 'elegy', a 'poem', and a 'symphony' into his prose"²². Hinz argues that The White Peacock has an internal structure which is built upon the seasons, suggesting a cyclic pattern as against the linear movement on the level of plot²³. While Gajdusek's exposition of the rich texture and intricate multi-levelled symbolism of The White Peacock is invaluable, his claim for "structure" is not convincing. Neither is Hinz's attempt to create order out of the conglomeration of rich materials in The White Peacock a success. The "tri-partite pattern" suggested by the three-part structure of the book is found to have corresponding counterparts at various deeper levels. Hinz argues, for instance, that Part I is dominated by the single (the emphasis is Hinz's) and lonely figure of the father; that the double lives of Annable are the central concern in the second section; and that the unhappy fortunes of the trio - George, Cyril and Leslie - are the focus of the third part²⁴. This apparently is a gestalt reading prompted by the critic's enthusiasm to defend the novel.

To conclude, the artist in Lawrence is slowly finding his way in the perplexing maze of novel-writing. Having abandoned the convention of plot, Lawrence fails to organize his massive materials with some kind of unity. Even the first person narrator, who is a possible unifying force, fails to hold the parts together, as he is minimally involved in the central action. In addition to that, the artist betrays his immaturity

22. Gajdusek, "A Reading of The White Peacock", Op.cit., p.188.

23. Hinz, "Juno and The White Peacock: Lawrence's English Epic", op.cit., pp.115-135.

24. Ibid., p.125.

in not exercising his selective power. Too many characters, episodes and descriptive passages are irrelevant to the theme or the central story. The chapter headings, with heavily-charged symbolic meanings and classical allusions, often serve the local purposes only and fail to establish some form of organic coherence. Moreover, they also betray the novelist's self-conscious effort in creating those middle-class characters, who are extraordinarily learned in classical and modern art. A more serious consequence of this is the contradiction created between what is proposed by the prophet, and what is caused by the demon and accepted by the artist. Haunted by the class-consciousness of the demon, the artist forgets what the prophet teaches, and applauds the show of knowledge and culture. The fine balance the artist strikes in his presentation of Annable is upset, because the demon is allowed to interfere.

CHAPTER 2: WOMEN IN LOVE

As I have pointed out in the Introduction, Sons and Lovers (1912) marks the watershed in Lawrence's life-long struggle with his demon and prophet. The successful exorcism of the demon in Sons and Lovers was helped by several events in Lawrence's life: the death of his mother (1910), the elopement with Frieda (1912), and their subsequent marriage (1914). The psychological severance of the umbilical cord was paralleled by Lawrence's flight from his mother country. Away from England, the artist was ready to look back at his early English life from a fresh perspective. Hence the development from the passionate autobiographer in Sons and Lovers, to the dispassionate chronicler in The Rainbow, and the objective dramatist in Women in Love.

Although Women in Love, as most critics agree, is representative of Lawrence at the peak of his career as a novelist, the book is not without faults. These faults, in the final analysis, are blemishes caused mainly by the presence of the demon (who, though subdued, is still present) and the prophet (who is beginning to establish himself in the temple of Lawrence's fiction). The problematic demon/prophet in this novel is Birkin, the alter-ego of Lawrence in Women in Love.

I. The Demon

The white-peacock image of woman that inspires and haunts Lawrence's early novels has receded to the background after Sons and Lovers, but another demon has come forth¹. In the Pro-

1. This new demon is a more terrifying one to Lawrence, who tries to fight it by condemning and suppressing it as soon as it is identified. In The White Peacock, this demon first appears in the ambiguous bathing scene of Cyril and George, where it is not fully recognised by the author.

logue to Women in Love², this demon that troubles Birkin (and Lawrence) is identified and described in explicit terms:

All the time, he [Birkin] recognised that, although he was always drawn to women, ... yet it was for men that he felt the hot, rushing, roused attraction which a man is supposed to feel for the other sex ... yet the male physique had a fascination for him, and for the female physique he felt only a fondness, a sort of sacred love, as for a sister. (Phoenix II, pp.103-4)

The first impulse on recognising the demon then is to suppress it:

He wanted to cast out these desires yet a man can no more slay a living desire in him, than he can prevent his body from feeling heat and cold ... But to be so divided against oneself, this is terrible, a nullifying of all being. (p.106)

The suffering is genuine and the struggle is real. After several attempts to suppress his desire for men, such as going into "violent excess with a mistress" and forcing himself to love Hermione physically, Birkin gives up in despair and remains divided:

His a priori were: "I should not feel like this," and "It is the ultimate mark of my own deficiency, that I feel like this." Therefore, though he admitted everything, he never really faced the question. He never accepted the desire, and received it as part of himself. He always tried to keep it expelled from him. (p.107)

In projecting his own feelings onto Birkin, Lawrence is trying

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- 1.(contd) In The Rainbow, the demon is presented as lesbianism and condemned. In casting his own demon into a minor female character, Lawrence tries to shed his "sickness", but in vain. Therefore, he takes up this theme again in the next novel - Women in Love (which together with The Rainbow was conceived as The Sisters originally). Here he wants to face the problem squarely.
 2. The Prologue, now collected in Phoenix II, was suppressed by Lawrence and was not published until 1963. In the same year while he was writing Women in Love, Lawrence also finished Goats and Compasses, which is a philosophical work on homosexuality. The book was destroyed at the advice of some friends. This is enough proof that Lawrence was profoundly preoccupied with the problem of homosexuality in those years.

to understand and be master of his own emotions. But the attempt is arrested in the execution. The banning of The Rainbow (because of the lesbian swimming scene) deterred Lawrence from an honest discussion and presentation of the homosexual problem. Thus the suppression of the prologue and the sublimation of Birkin's homosexual desires for Gerald into Blutbrüderschaft. The suppression of this subject has deprived Lawrence of the chance to bring into the realm of fiction an important human problem that has been present (but tabooed) since the ancient Greeks. It also accounts for the ambivalence surrounding Birkin's relationships with Hermione and Gerald, and the resort to mystical language, which sometimes lapses into bathos. Hermione's sudden outburst of violence in Chapter 8, for instance, would not seem so melodramatic, had we been given the background information in the Prologue. As regards Birkin and Gerald's relationship, the emphasis in the novel is quite different from that described in the Prologue. In Chapter 2, for example, we are told that Birkin and Gerald

burned with each other, inwardly. This they would never admit. They intended to keep their relationship a casual free-and-easy friendship, they were not going to be so unmanly and unnatural as to allow any heart-burning between them. They had not the faintest belief in deep relationship between men and men, and their disbelief prevented any development of their powerful but suppressed friendliness. (p.37; emphasis mine)

Jeffrey Meyers, who notes the "covert and defensive, even ironic" nature of this passage, says that "Lawrence's uneasiness with this intensely personal theme is revealed as the novel thrust forward - not away from - the development of their 'suppressed friendliness'"³. Besides excising the explicitly sexual descriptions of the love between Birkin and Gerald, Lawrence also insulates their relationship with a kind of

3. Jeffrey Meyers, "D.H. Lawrence and Homosexuality", in D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, Poet, Prophet, ed. by Stephen

mystical fogginess. The intense and extraordinary emotional experience recorded in the wrestling scene is difficult to comprehend without the forthright analysis in the suppressed Prologue. After the bout, Birkin tries to persuade Gerald and himself to believe that such physical intimacy between men is healthy and normal. "I don't know why one should have to justify oneself," says Birkin in the course of justifying himself. But this kind of assertion is strictly Birkin's only. The novelist himself is sufficiently distanced from the character, so "the trembling instability of the balance", which to Lawrence is the "morality in the novel", is maintained⁴. It is most significant that the novel ends on a question concerning the suppressed sexual issue. Ursula asks why she is not enough to Birkin, who replies:

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

"I don't believe it," she said. "It's an obstinacy, a theory, a perversity."

"Well -" he said.

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

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

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

"I don't believe that," he answered. (p.541)

The "suspended form" adopted by Lawrence here, according to Alan Friedman, attests to "the difficulty, necessity, validity, and the dignity of maintaining through the course of life an unresolved, suspended experience"⁵. The unresolved question is

3.(contd) Spender, p.142.

4. DHL, "Morality and the Novel".

5. Alan Friedman, "Suspended Form: Lawrence's Theory of Fiction in Women in Love", in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Women in Love, ed. by Stephen Miko, pp.40-49.

in no way evidence of the artist's slip; instead, it is used as a means to capture the essence of life. The artist's blemishes, as we have seen, are caused not so much by the presence of the demon, but rather by the frantic effacement of it.

The suppression of the Prologue and the original concept of Birkin's character is also responsible for a difficulty we encounter in reading Women in Love. On the one hand, Lawrence seems to approve of Birkin's love for Gerald, which despite the excision still has homosexual overtones. On the other hand, Lawrence condemns the kind of homosexual activities practised by Halliday and Loerke. One hesitates to accuse Lawrence of being inconsistent, because he may be making a distinction between these two types of homosexual love. By referring to Lawrence's essay on Whitman, George Ford is able to distinguish the Blutbrüderschaft Birkin proposes from the deathly degeneracies evoked in Birkin's contemplation on the African way of corruption⁶. However, within the novel, this "nice discrimination" (as Ford calls it) is not established.

Another demon that has found its way into Lawrence's fiction is detected in the obscure passages that describe what (with the hindsight of Lady Chatterley's Lover) is called "intercourse in the Italian style"⁷. In Women in Love, the demon appears twice. Its first appearance is veiled by the mystical and bathetic language employed to describe Ursula's reaction at the inn in "Excuse":

There were strange fountains of his body, more mysterious and potent than any she had imagined

6. George Ford, "Dies Irae", in Miko, *Op.cit.*, p.36.

7. See Lady C, Chapter 16. This demon first lurks behind the vague description of Will and Anna's sexual encounter in The Rainbow.

or known, more satisfying, ah, finally, mystically - physically satisfying. She had thought there was no source deeper than the phallic source. And now, behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body, from the strange marvellous flanks and thighs, deeper, further in mystery than the phallic source, came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches . (p.354)

What this "life-source" is has invited much speculation from critics⁸. All we know is that it is deeper than the phallic source, and that it is "the deepest, strangest life-source of the human body, at the back and base of the loins" (p.354). The artist seems to be at a loss for words at the sudden interruption of the demon. Later on in the Tyrol scene in "Continental", the artist is more ready to incorporate the theme prompted by the demon into the relationship of the lovers. By making Ursula reflect on Birkin's "shameful" act, the artist assumes the self-effacing stance of the dramatist:

How could anything that gave one satisfaction be excluded? What was degrading? Who cared? Degrading things were real, with a different reality ... Wasn't it rather terrible, a man who could be so soulful and spiritual, now to be so - she balked at her own thoughts and memories: then she added - so bestial? But after all, why not? ... She was free, when she knew everything, and no dark shameful things were denied her. (p.464)

The questioning, the "flows and recoils" and the argumentation - contained within the consciousness of Ursula and rendered in the form of an interior monologue - are characteristic of the general inquiring spirit that permeates the book. However; even if the artist has satisfied the aesthetic demands here, the episode still points to a central contradiction in the book. Birkin, who has rejected "the African process", is now presented as succumbing to it⁹. The unresolved contradiction in Birkin "may be enjoyed as a colourful trait in a fictional

8. See the source of references given by Ford, *Op.Cit.*, p.37.

9. Vivas, *op.cit.*, pp.261-7.

character", and "fiction can be great when it is tentative and exploratory, making us aware of the puzzling complexities of choice confronting the characters", writes Ford¹⁰. But, as Ford continues to say, if the mastermind behind the novel is a muddle, the novel will not stand. That Lawrence himself is confused and disturbed by this demon is apparent, because he harps on the same theme again even more stridently in his last novel, some twelve years later.

II. The Prophet

The prophet in Women in Love does not only find a voice in one of the protagonists; he is dominant throughout the book. His presence is felt in the predominant tone of the novel, and especially in the abundance of apocalyptic images in the book. There is mention of the Deluge, Sodom, the Dead Sea Fruit, the avenging angels coming to sweep the sinful away and the fruit of man rotting upon the boughs of life; society is seen as drifting down the river of dissolution and people are described as flowers of mud. That Lawrence had contemplated calling the novel Dies Irae and The Latter Days also underlies the fact that the compelling force behind the author of Women in Love was prophetic in nature.

Written in 1916, Women in Love is very much a product of the war. Like Blake and Carlyle, Lawrence responds to the cultural crisis in apocalyptic language, observes Sanders, who recognises Lawrence as a successor to a long tradition of apocalyptic writers in English literature¹¹. Besides inheriting their imagery and style of response, Lawrence also shares their view on the value of art, which is embodied in Ursula's criticism of the decadent artists represented by Gudrun and

10. Ford, op.cit., p.38.

11. Scott Sanders, D.H. Lawrence: The World of the Major Novels, p.95.

Loerke:

"As for your world of art and your world of reality," she [Ursula] replied, "you have to separate the two, because you can't bear to know what you are ... The world of art is only the truth about the real world, that's all - but you are too far gone to see it." (p.485)

Through Ursula, Lawrence is making a statement about his mission as an artist: his art is committed to the real world and his goal is to save man. Hence the apocalyptic stance of the artist in Women in Love¹².

Lawrence's sense of mission has directly influenced his approach in writing Women in Love, as well as the form of the novel and its characterisation. In his letters to Edward Garnett written in 1913 and 1914, Lawrence made several references to the new style he employed in writing The Sisters. He said that he no longer enjoyed the "violent style [of Sons and Lovers, which is] full of sensation and presentation"; instead, his new approach was rather "analytical"¹³. This new emphasis, which is prompted by the prophet's passion to understand the sick world and to offer cures to mankind, points towards a possible danger: the precedence of the head over the heart may upset the artistic balance of the novel. The artist in Women in Love in general has succeeded in embodying ideas in dramatic terms and substantiating his analyses with sufficient emotional interest. But it is still evident that sometimes the narration is arrested by long analyses made by the omniscient narrator. Chapter 17 is an obvious example of the domination of the head.

12. Hough suggests that the social mobility Lawrence enjoyed after his marriage with Frieda and the association with people of some public importance had encouraged Lawrence to believe that "he was a saviour charged with the mission of converting the English ruling class ... [and] these years see the debut of Lawrence the prophet". (Hough, op.cit., p.89.)

13. Harry T. Moore, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, p.259. (From now on: CL).

With the exception of the opening episode (the Brangwen sisters buying honey from Mrs. Kirk) and a reproduction of the brief exchange of words between Mr. and Mrs. Crich, the whole chapter is a long account about the Crich family. This historical account is interspersed with the narrator's analyses on the battle of will between Crich and "his wife, the destroyer" (p.241), on the father's failure in deifying himself, on the son's different idea about running the mine, and on the spiritual void Gerald faces after he has perfected the new system that he introduces. Although the analyses are perceptive and the problems on which these analyses focus are central or at least related to the thematic concerns of the novel, the presentation is far from satisfactory. The prophet's compulsion to get at the roots of the "malady of modern civilization"¹⁴ is stronger than the artist's interest in showing the emotional conflicts between the husband and wife, the father and son, or the mine-owner and the miners. Consequently, the dramatic skills exhibited elsewhere in the novel are suspended: the novelist resorts to telling instead of showing.

The prophet in Lawrence, however, is the chief source of inspiration for the subject matter, structure and form of Women in Love. The prophetic impulse in Lawrence to seek salvation for man during those years of war was expressed in his utopian dream (Rananim) in real life, and the search for utopia in his fiction. It is this search for utopia, a new way of life and new values that is the real subject-matter of Women in Love. Yet unlike the proper utopian novels, Women in Love does not depict utopia found; instead, it shows man's passionate search for utopia which is not presented as a reality but nevertheless a possibility. The search for utopia

14. Leavis, op.cit., p.181.

also gives rise to the special structure of the novel - its locative principle of structure¹⁵ and its suspended form. It is significant that the story ends not only with a marriage and a death (the traditional ways of ending a novel), but also a journey. In Ursula, we are told,

... the sense of the unrealized 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 unrealized. (p.437)

while to Birkin,

... the wonder of the transit was over-whelming. He was falling through a gulf of infinite darkness, like a meteorite plunging across the chasm between the worlds... What was beyond was not yet for him. He was overcome by the trajectory. (p.437)

The journey leads them to another cul-de-sac and a death, but the couple is not discouraged from going on "the quest of Rupert's Blessed Isles", which is Gudrun's sarcastic way of putting it (p.494). The novel, in a way, is the dramatization of man's undying "Faith in the Mystery" - that "deep life trust" embodied in Birkin. It is this faith that makes life possible to Birkin; it is also this faith that sustains an otherwise "so end-of-the-world" novel.

In The White Peacock, we have seen how the demon's polarized view of man and woman has affected the characterization in the novel. In Women in Love, however, it is the prophet in Lawrence who is responsible for the fixed and symbolic roles of the characters. Birkin is the prophet; Gerald is the doomed man, Cain; Gudrun, we are told, is a mud-flower, but lucky Ursula is the Rose of Happiness; Hermione, Loerke and the Bohemians of London are presented as different types of corruption in man. It seems possible to divide these characters into two camps: those embodying positive values and those

15. H.M. Daleski, The Forked Flame, p.128.

who are representative of corrupted humanity. But interestingly enough, most of the characters in the latter are able to transcend their narrow roles and come to life despite the metaphysical scheme in the novel. The only characters who turn out to be unsatisfactory are Ursula, the embodiment of man's regeneration, and Birkin, the prophet.

Compared to her portrayal in The Rainbow, Ursula's character here is relatively colourless and less individualised. The only instances in which Ursula asserts her old self are her quarrel with Birkin (Chapter 23), and the fight she puts up with her father (Chapter 27). Apart from these, most of the time she is presented as an exceedingly receptive character, who serves as a partner for Birkin with whom he can thresh his ideas. Although Ursula is in no way a passive listener, her criticism of Birkin's outrageous and unconventional ideas is based only on commonsense which makes her a touchstone among all the emotionally over-charged characters. Moreover, her symbolic role as the only Rose of Happiness among all the mud-flowers is rather arbitrary. We are told that she is capable of enjoying "the ecstasy of bliss in the foreknowledge" of an unknown paradise (p.437), but we are not shown how she has attained this kind of equilibrium and faith which the other characters lack. It seems that Ursula's presence (as a foil to the mud-flowers) is demanded only by the metaphysic in the novel, and that as an individual, she is less interesting and dynamic than her sister, Gudrun, who represents corruption.

A more serious fault is found in the portrayal of Birkin, who is the self-dramatisation of the prophet in Lawrence. The presence of the prophet is not necessarily detrimental to the novel; but when the novelist identifies himself with the

prophet-hero, the aesthetic balance can seldom be maintained. The result then is didactic preaching. Birkin's arbitrary views on corruption and dissolution are shared by the author, who actually adopts Birkin's imagery of "snow-abstract annihilation" and "burning death-abstraction" (p.286). The affinity between Lawrence and Birkin is dangerous enough in places like this, because Birkin becomes the spokesman of the novelist and is allowed to preach unimpeded. However, the most obvious example of this lack of aesthetic distance in Women in Love is in the ludicrous description of the "fulfilled" Birkin (in Chapter 23) as an Egyptian Pharoah steering his car with a sort of "second consciousness"! The "insistence and over-emphatic explicitness" in this passage, as pointed out by Leavis, betrays the "uncertainty of value of what he [the prophet in Birkin/Lawrence] offers"¹⁶. Yet serious lapses like this are rare in Women in Love, because despite the affinity between the novelist and Birkin, the artist in Lawrence is well aware of the danger and makes a conscious effort in tempering or questioning what the prophet preaches. Nevertheless, the prophet is in no way checked, nor does Lawrence wish to silence his apocalyptic hero.

Lawrence's most successful effort in registering his detachment from Birkin lies in his deliberate invitation of "a kind of emperor's-clothes reaction"¹⁷, from a chorus of critics led by Ursula. As early as in Chapter 1, we are told that Ursula has very mixed feelings about Birkin who "attracted her, and annoyed her". Gudrun puts her finger on the right spot when she says that Birkin has "no real critical faculty - of people" (p.23). About a hundred pages later, Ursula comes

16. Leavis, op.cit., p.177.

17. Frank Kermode, "The Novels of D.H. Lawrence", in Spender, op.cit., p.86.

to the same conclusion:

It was something diffuse and generalized about him, which she could not stand. He would behave in the same way, say the same things, give himself as completely to anybody who came along, anybody and everybody who liked to appeal to him. (p.143)

This is a consistent characteristic of Birkin, who is compelled by the "Salvator Mundi" in him to save the whole world, which includes the decadent Bohemians in London. The letter-reading scene at the cafe - an episode taken from Lawrence's own life - confirms this. Lawrence's skill in substantiating words with actions (or telling with showing), and presenting characters in dramatic situations, as well as his capability of self-mockery, are indeed remarkable.

Another device used by the author to show detachment from Birkin is humour. It is significant that the tragedy of Gerald is counter-balanced by the relatively happier love story of Birkin and Ursula, in which humour is sometimes used to deflate Birkin's bravado. A good example of the artist's use of humour is in the description of Birkin's flight to the hillside after his attack by Hermione. The novelist, who is deeply affected by the emotional intensity expressed by Birkin, is suddenly aware of the extravagance in his hero's behaviour:

He [Birkin] climbed out of the valley, wondering if he were mad. But if so, he preferred his own madness, to the regular sanity. He rejoiced in his own madness, he was free... He was walking now along the road to the nearest station. It was raining and he had no hat. But then plenty of cranks went out nowadays without hats, in the rain. (pp.120-1)

It is amazing what the insertion of one word - "cranks" - can do to an otherwise over-sympathetic and emotionally unrelieved passage depicting the protagonist's tumultuous "inscape". However, the note of defence and defiance is still audible in the first few lines of the extract quoted above.

Critics have often drawn on the contradictions in Birkin's

thoughts. These contradictions are there because Birkin is the embodiment of both the demon and the prophet in Lawrence. The most obvious pair of conflicting views expressed by Birkin lies in his idea of star-equilibrium in man-woman relationship and his raving-on about male supremacy and female submission. To indicate his awareness of the contradiction (and hence detachment from his hero), Lawrence makes Ursula say this of Birkin:

He says one thing one day, and another the next -
and he always contradicts himself. (p.330)

Since Birkin is the leading "thought-adventurer" in this novel, he is allowed to test his theories, to blunder and to start again, as he progresses. Part of Birkin's charm as well as his fault lie in his readiness to question himself, and in the unquenchable spirit of inquiry, which accounts for the exploratory and open-ended nature of the novel. The portrayal of Birkin as a character is brilliant: instead of being an old bore or a mere sounding-board for the author's ideas, he is a prophet fleshed with enough human frailty to be interesting, irritating and charming. However, as a prophet, Birkin is rather muddled and unreliable. His uncertainty as well as occasional outbursts of misanthropic feelings (which are shared by Lawrence himself) undermine the conviction he exhibits and the values he offers. Given the bleak outlook of the corrupted world, the only hope then to Birkin seems to lie in the regeneration of men through love. Birkin holds forth:

The old ideas are dead as nails - nothing there.
It means to me there remains only this perfect union
with a woman - sort of ultimate marriage - and there
isn't anything else. (p.64)

The note of despair and the resort to love as the only hope left, in a world where faith does not exist, is reminiscent of Arnold's "Dover Beach". But even this final resort is not

always reliable, as testified by Lawrence's relationship with Frieda, on which his faith was built. The note of despair in Birkin and his utter sense of disgust with mankind crop up again and again in the course of the novel. In Chapter 5, for instance, he expresses his wish to see an end of humanity:

Let mankind pass away - time it did... Humanity is a dead letter... Let humanity disappear as quick as possible. (p.65)

A few chapters later, Birkin again gives vent to his misanthropic feelings; his bitterness permeates the apocalyptic language he uses to describe humanity (p.140-1). These are unique examples showing that the demon in Lawrence has undermined both the confidence of the prophet as well as the equilibrium of the artist. No wonder Kermode feels that the prophetic note on which The Rainbow ends has disappeared towards the end of Women in Love; and instead, the despair as exhibited by Birkin is "sometimes hysterical in its intensity"¹⁸.

III. The Artist

The greatness of the artist in Women in Love lies in his mastery over both the demon and the prophet, and his dramatic skill in injecting his "theory of being" or "metaphysic" with his "living sense of being"¹⁹.

It is true that Women in Love bears the violent imprint of its historical moment. The violent spirit brooding over the novel affects both the characters' behaviours and the language used to describe them; even the structure, "the fragmented, episodic form of the novel", says Sanders, "mirrors the surrounding moral and political chaos." However, this does not attest to Lawrence's loss of artistic control. Instead, it reflects the artist's sensitive response to the

18. Kermode, op.cit., pp.83-4.

19. DHL, Phoenix, p.479.

social trauma and spirit of the age. In fact, Women in Love was regarded by Lawrence as his triumph over the chaotic outside world. Talking to the Murrays about the new novel he was writing in 1916, Lawrence said:

The world crackles and busts, but that is another matter, external, in chaos. One has a certain order inviolable in one's soul²⁰.

Except for the occasional lapses discussed in the previous sections, Women in Love on the whole is in fact an amazing record of the artist's great triumph over both his personal and social demons, if we consider the kind of "death" Lawrence underwent in the years immediately preceding the birth of this novel. "In 1915 the old world ended," wrote Lawrence in recollection. "The spirit of the old London collapsed [into] a vortex of broken passions, lusts, hopes, fears, and horrors."²¹ That same year also saw the publication and immediate suppression of The Rainbow, which was an even greater blow to Lawrence. It was in the same year, too, that Lawrence witnessed his first zeppelin. In those war years, he also suffered the humiliation of being summoned for medical examinations, rejected and subsequently suspected of being a German spy. However, during that long "exile" in Cornwall, where he wrote Women in Love, the artist was able to keep all these deeply-felt but irrelevant episodes out of his fiction. All his pent-up feelings, grievances and vehemence were held back till the novel was finished²².

Another example of the artist's triumph over the demon lies

20. Aldington, op.cit., p.185.

21. DHL, Kangaroo, Chapter 12.

22. Unfortunately, they found their way into the various forms of writing Lawrence did in the subsequent years. This partly explains why after Women in Love Lawrence never reached the kind of performance he had accomplished earlier.

in Lawrence's treatment of the white-peacock theme. The old demon symbolised by the white peacock no longer dominates the artist, although it remains a major source of inspiration for Lawrence. Gerald, for instance, is reminiscent of George, Frank Beardsall and Annable - all of them are dependent on and therefore destroyed by women. In The White Peacock, the son-figure (Cyril) is a sympathetic but passive "witness" of the "murder" of the father-figures (i.e. Beardsall as well as George and Annable to whom he shows some filial feeling). In Women in Love, the son (Birkin) has taken on the role of the prophet/saviour. Weeping over the frozen corpse of Gerald, Birkin

suddenly ... lifted his head and looked straight at Ursula with dark, almost vengeful eyes.

"He should have loved me," he said. "I offered him." (p.539)

The son offers to save the father from the mother (or woman) in vain. That man is doomed to be destroyed by the Magna Mater seems to be Birkin's conclusion right from the beginning. This explains Birkin's irrational and almost laudible action in stoning the reflection of the moon.

But in Women in Love the domination of man by woman is taken for granted as a premise. It is as inevitable and universal as the reflection of the moon on water. Compared with the image of the white peacock, the moon is a more powerful symbol of female power. In The White Peacock, the artist betrays his own resentment of woman by borrowing Annable's image of woman for the title of his book. In Women in Love, the artist's detachment is evident in the more subtle presentation of the death of man at the hand of woman. How quietly the artist puts his point across, without the invective language and noisy protest of Annable:

The bodies of the dead were not recovered till towards dawn. Diana had her arms tight round the neck of the young man, choking him.

"She killed him," said Gerald.

The moon sloped down the sky and sank at last. The lake was sunk to quarter size, it had horrible raw banks of clay, that smelled of raw rottenish water. Dawn roused faintly behind the eastern hill. The water still boomed through the sluice. (p.212)

Here the occasion prompts the thoughts, but in The White Peacock, the novelist has to drag in an external object (a peacock passing by) to articulate his character's feelings. The dead bodies in this scene have been the objects of the search at Shortlands. They are central to the scene. That the girl should have her arms round the neck of her rescuer is not surprising either. It is quietly stated by the narrator as a matter of fact. Even Gerald's statement that "she killed him" is supported by literal fact. The sweep of the camera, from the human drama to a larger frame of reference in the natural world, has a quieting and distancing effect. The artist's control over the turbulent drama is superb. Even Gerald's death at the end of the novel is logical and inevitable in novelistic terms. Unlike Annable's death, Gerald's death at the hand of Gudrun is foreshadowed early in the novel. At the water-party, Gudrun delivers the first blow at Gerald and says she will strike the last as well. Despite her warning (or rather challenge), Gerald goes ahead towards his own destruction. His end, dramatised in the moving description of his death journey up on the ski-field, is a murder by woman as well as a suicide. Lawrence's ability to present us such a complex and balanced study of Gerald proves that the artist is in complete control over the white-peacock demon.

As mentioned earlier, most of the characters in Women in Love have triumphed over the metaphysical scheme laid down by

the prophet, Gerald, Hermione and Gudrun, for example, are too real to be mere symbols, and too complex to be just types. In fact, they defy categorisation. First of all, let us look at Gerald.

Of all the characters, Gerald is the only one whose family history and personal development are documented in detail, because in Gerald, Lawrence is trying to diagnose the malady of a civilization²³. His wanderings as a young man, his reforms in the mine, his attempts to find diversion in women and his disastrous relationship with Gudrun chart his struggle to find some sort of centre for his life. ("Wherein does life centre for you?" Birkin asks him.) The desperate struggle is an outcome of the spiritual void which is the stamp of the age, and of Gerald's inability to let go. This little detail about Gerald on the train is quite revealing:

Even though he was reading the newspaper closely, he must keep a watchful eye on his extreme surroundings. (p.58)

The defensive attitude is characteristic of Gerald. Hence the urge to impose his will and order on the chaotic and therefore dangerous outside world. Whether it is the mine, people or a mare, he has to use them to be sure of them, as he declares (p.154). But Gerald has "reserves of power and strength that cannot possibly be described as merely negative or corrupting", writes T.B. Tomlinson²⁴. The tragedy of Gerald is not the lack of purpose and "go", but the mis-application of his "go". Again it is Gudrun who makes this perceptive observation about Gerald: "The unfortunate thing is, where does his go go to,

23. Leavis, p.181.

24. T.B. Tomlinson, "Lawrence and Modern Life: Sons and Lovers, Women in Love", in Critics on D.H. Lawrence, ed. by W.T. Andrews, p.65.

what becomes of it?" It is also Gudrun who confronts Gerald with the truth about himself. The truth is so terrifying that he turns his back to it and freezes into unconscious:

The great tides of darkness were swinging across his mind, he could hardly stand upright. A terrible weariness overcame him, he felt he must lie on the floor. Dropping off his clothes, he got into bed, and lay like a man suddenly overcome by drunkenness, the darkness lifting and plunging as if he were lying upon a black, giddy sea. He lay still in this strange, horrific reeling for some time, purely unconscious. (p.499)

Even Gudrun is frightened at the sight, and so she tries to warm him back to life. But Gerald feels that

A strange rent had been torn in him; like a victim that is torn open and given to the heavens, so he had been torn apart and given to Gudrun. (p.501)

Despite his inborn deficiency, there is still a spark of hope in Gerald, because he can and has opened up to Gudrun, who unfortunately takes advantage of his dependence on her.

Gudrun's giving is a way of gaining power over Gerald, who is after all only an instrument to her:

In him she knew the world, and had done with it. Knowing him finally she was the Alexander seeking new worlds. (p.508)

Their relationship has been described as mutually destructive from the beginning till end:

But always it was this eternal see-saw, one destroyed that the other might exist, one ratified because the other was nulled.

"In the end," she said to herself, "I shall go away from him."

"I can be free of her," he said to himself. ... But for the first time there was a flaw in his will.

"Where shall I go?" he asked himself. (p.500)

The void hits him in the face now; he has nowhere to go but to drift into the wilderness of the snow:

... he wanted to go on and on, to the end. Never again to stay, till he came to the end... So he drifted on and on ... (pp.531-2)

The description of Gerald's death journey is powerful, because

his "drifting" in the snow is an act contrary to his usually "purposive" self. There is, embodied in the snow, an intensified sense of emptiness and purposelessness, which is normally covered up in Gerald's deliberate strife towards a purposive life. Like the tragic heroes in Greek drama, Gerald is doomed from the beginning; thus the blood stain of Cain. Like them, he also inspires pity and fear. What other words can be better than "pity" and "fear" in describing the feelings evoked by a passage like this:

The passion came up in him, stroke after stroke, like the ringing of a bronze bell, so strong and unflawed and indomitable. His knees tightened to bronze as he hung above her soft face, whose lips parted and whose eyes dilated in a strange violation. In the grasp of his hand her chin was utterably soft and silken. He felt strong as winter, his hands were living metal, invincible and not to be turned aside. His heart rang like a bell clanging inside him. (p.451)

Gerald here is depicted at once as both the manifestation of this fearful passion in man as well as its victim. In moments like this, Gerald is both generic man and larger than man.

Just as Gerald has transcended the limitations of his role as an industrial magnate in a materialistic society, so have Hermione and Gudrun refused simple classification into types. The polarisation of women into extremes represented by Light and Darkness, for instance, no longer works with the highly complex female characters in Women in Love. As Miko has observed, Gudrun's sensual propensities are masks for her tendencies towards "abstract willing", and Hermione's insistence upon consciousness and knowledge are disguises for her yearnings for purely sensual gratification²⁵. Of all the minor characters in Lawrence's fiction, Hermione is one of the most memorable. Her quiet bossiness, the subtle assertion of her will, her sense of superiority are brilliantly suggested and

25. Miko, Towards Women in Love, p.276.

shown in every description of her movement, her voice and her behaviour. However, despite his successful portrayal of Hermione's repulsive nature, the artist still manages to elicit sympathy for her by probing below her glamorous armour to show us her sense of insufficiency - "the void" which is the common disease shared by most characters in the novel.

Sanders suspects that Gudrun is conceived out of Lawrence's need to repress the homosexual feelings originally expressed by Birkin. In his study on Lawrence, Sanders remarks that Gudrun is in many respects Lawrence's alter ego, and that Women in Love records, at the deep level, not two heterosexual love relationships, but a struggle between heterosexual and homosexual love²⁶. This observation is interesting- for it points at Lawrence's skill in getting his own fascination for the male physique out of his system. By transposing to Gudrun Birkin's feelings (as stated in the Prologue) towards the two types of men - "men with eyes like blue-flashing ice" (the Gerald type) and "man with dark eyes" (the dark, sensuous miners of Beldover) - Lawrence is in no way violating the original credibility of Gudrun's character. In fact this has added depth to the portrayal of Gudrun: her attraction to these two types of men prefigures her attraction to the two kinds of corruption identified in the book - the Arctic and the African. Hence she dallies with the miners and challenges their master; when the master is conquered, she chooses to follow a social outcast and to swim down the "river of dissolution" with the "sewage rat". The long description (especially in the last chapters) of Gudrun's feelings and thoughts towards Gerald are indicative of Lawrence's psychological insight and imaginative understanding of the character he has created. Therefore, to regard

26. Sanders, pp.126-8.

Gudrun merely as Lawrence's alter ego, and the novel as the expression of a struggle between heterosexual and homosexual love is to do great injustice to a fascinating study of Gudrun as a woman in love.

Women in Love is remarkable for its fertility of ideas, but this quality has not made the book a mere novel of ideas. Although the initial approach of the artist is "analytical", as Lawrence himself says, the diagnosis is presented in concrete, vivid and dramatic terms. The new style in Women in Love is in fact a combination of telling and showing. The telling or analysis is done by both the narrator and the characters. The intrusion of the omniscient narrator is minimum, and is often incorporated into the consciousness of the characters, so that it is in fact the characters themselves doing the analyses. For instance, the fault in Birkin's character (his lack of discrimination of people) is pointed out by the Brangwen sisters. The novelist's job then is to prove or disprove the verdict passed on Birkin by the sisters, and he does it by a brilliant piece of "showing" (i.e. the letter-reading scene). Even the characters' physical appearances are rendered through the eyes of the other characters, so that at the same time we learn something of the perceivers too. The presentation of Gerald in Chapter 1 is a good example showing how the narrator can shift his point of view to that of his "receptor" with great fluidity. The passage starts with a matter-of-fact description of Gerald's physical look:

He was of a fair, sun-tanned type, rather above middle height, well-made, and almost exaggeratedly well-dressed.

It is followed by the narrator's own insight into the character:

But about him also was the strange, guarded look,

the unconscious glisten, as if he did not belong to the same creation as the people about him.

Then with a short sentence - "Gudrun lighted on him at once" - we glide into the consciousness of one of the on-lookers at the wedding. From now on the impression is strictly Gudrun's:

There was something northern about him that magnetized her. In his clear northern flesh and his fair hair was a glisten like sunshine refracted through crystal of ice. And he looked so new, unbroached, pure as an arctic thing. Perhaps he was thirty years old, perhaps more.

At this point the narrator shows his agreement with Gudrun about that "sinister stillness in his bearing" without any abruptness in the transition:

His gleaming beauty, maleness, like a young, good-humoured, smiling wolf, did not blind her to the significant, sinister stillness in his bearing, the lurking danger of his unsubdued temper. "His totem is the wolf," she repeated to herself.

Then with great ease, the focus lights on Gudrun, and we are made aware of the undercurrents in the magnetic field of human interaction:

And then she experienced a keen paroxysm, a transport... a paroxysm of violent sensation. "Good God!" she exclaimed to herself, "what is this?" ... She was tortured to see him again, to make sure it was not all a mistake, that she was not deluding herself, that she really felt this strange and overwhelming sensation on his account, this knowledge of him in her essence, this powerful apprehension of him. (p.16)

The artist's supreme control is evident in the constant shift of emphasis and change of tone. A prolonged description of Gudrun's intense emotion at this stage is inappropriate. Hence, the camera is directed once more at the on-coming guests. The subsequent description of Hermione's entrance is one of the most fascinating portraits done in the realistic mode.

Hermione in her pale yellow silk and velvet, with grey feathers, brownish grey shoes and stockings, and rose-coloured

cyclamens is simply dazzling, "impressive ... yet macabre, something repulsive", we are told. Attention is drawn to her movement ("she drifted along with a peculiar fixity of the hips") and her bearing ("her long blanched face lifted up, not to see the world"), because they are revealing of her character. With the transition of the phrase "as if a strange mass of thoughts coiled in the darkness within her, and she was never allowed to escape", we are launched into an inside view of Hermione, with the narrator supplying us the background information about her education, her social life and an analysis of "the terrible void" in her. The mastery over the narrative techniques, such as the fluidity displayed in the shifting of narrative viewpoint here, is indeed the hallmark of a great novelist. The fluidity has almost a cinematic quality, except that the camera zooms in and out of the characters' minds, as well as from place to place.

The cinematic quality is apparent at the very beginning of the novel. Unlike his previous novels, which start with long descriptions of either the natural world (as in The White Peacock), or the mining town (Sons and Lovers), or even with a long historical account of the people and the land (The Rainbow), Women in Love opens with the Brangwen sisters talking about marriage - a major theme of the novel. The topic of their conversation reminds them of a wedding nearby, and they decide to go out to see it. The description of the journey through the sordid mining town to the church provides the sisters with a concrete social context. At the wedding, all the main characters are introduced, and almost immediately the two central relationships (between Gerald and Gudrun, Birkin and Ursula) are set up. Nor is this done in a purely descriptive and narrative manner only. With the dramatist's skill,

Lawrence brings the wedding scene to a little climax. Tension is built up as all the on-lookers are gathered in expectancy. Like the bride who is waiting for the groom, on a different level our "potential brides" (Gudrun and Ursula) are also waiting for theirs. The Sleeping Beauty motif, which is anticipated earlier on in the description of Ursula (p.10), is now dramatized in concrete terms. Finally the tension is resolved into laughter as the bride and groom start a race towards the church. The spontaneous action of the couple triggers off very different reactions from Birkin and Gerald (in Chapter 2), showing a significant difference in the two male protagonists, while the appearance of Birkin triggers off a discussion of his character between the sisters.

The narrative movement, the variety of tone and the presentation of characters and ideas in Chapter 1 are characteristic of Lawrence's new method developed in Women in Love. The analyses are often presented in dramatic form, or at least in the form of a dialogue. All the important ideas in this novel are mostly raised in the conversations of the characters. One thinks of the conversation in Ursula's classroom on spontaneity and intellectuality; the important conversation in the train, in which Birkin asks: "Wherein does life centre?"; the intellectual discussions among the Breadalby guests; and the "to-and-fro frictional" conversations and quarrels of Birkin and Ursula, through which they come to a better understanding of each other. Then there are the characters' comments on other characters and events, such as the conversations triggered off by the mare episode (Chapter 12) and by Mino (Chapter 13). In short, the novel is teeming with ideas, but the ideas are either embodied in action and people, or presented in dramatic terms, or at least put forward indirectly

through the characters. In many ways, the dialectic approach of Women in Love is reminiscent of the dialogue form started by Plato, taken up by Thomas Peacock and is now perfected by Lawrence. The dramatised talks are Lawrence's device to maintain the "trembling and oscillating of the balance" in the novel. Like an ideal novel in Lawrence's mind, which is "the book of life", Women in Love is able to present a multiplicity of viewpoints and the complexity of life, because the artist manages to keep his demon and prophet in rein.

In The White Peacock, Lawrence's experimental approach results in the lack of unity owing to the removal of the plot. In Women in Love, however, unity is sustained in a variety of ways. In abandoning the linear movement of the conventional plot, Lawrence devises a "locative principle of structure", which functions structurally as well as thematically. Geographically and socially, there are five foci in the book - Beldover, Shortlands, Breadalby, the London of the Bohemian gang, and the Tyrolese hotel - forming the basic "locative" structure of the book. Together they represent "all the strata and possibilities of social life at a given moment in historical Europe"²⁷, which the novel sets out to test. One after another, they turn out to be versions of the same story: they are representative of the spiritual dead-end of modern civilisation. The only way out, it seems, is to seek salvation beyond the realm of human activities - perhaps in the escape from the world of man to the world of Nature. In Women in Love, the Natural world is not just part of the physical background, as it is in The White Peacock. Instead, it serves a more significant function. The natural world is brought into focus in Women in Love

27. Keith Alldritt, The Visual Imagination of D.H. Lawrence, p.186.

wherever the protagonists reach a crucial moment in their lives. Birkin seeks the hills in his flight from Hermione; Gerald goes up to the snowy summit after the confrontation with Gudrun; and after resigning from their posts, Birkin and Ursula retreat into the mountains on the Alps. Mother Nature, in other words, is an alternative to humanity and the world of work. In fact, the central tension of the novel is set up between commitment to the world of man and abandonment of the corrupt world, which means either the retreat into the natural world, or the search for utopia. This theme is heightened in a conversation between the sisters up on the Alps. Gudrun thinks that Birkin's quest for utopia is an illusion, and that "the only thing to do with the world is to see it through" (p.493). But Ursula, voicing Birkin's opinion, says:

One wants a new space to be in, and one falls away from the old... one can't have anything new whilst one cares for the old. (p.492)

Hence the journey motif, the moving on, and the locative principle of structure in Women in Love.

The tightness of structure in this novel also lies in its contrapuntal narrative form - the two love stories are counter-pointed, compared and contrasted as they move along. Alldritt describes it as "a dance of opposites", which reflects "the uncertainty and seemingly untenable balance [on which] the continuance of human civilization is seen to depend".²⁸

Besides this, as many critics have observed, the intricate pattern of imagery and symbols is also a source of unity in this highly complex novel. But few critics have pointed out that its richness of colour, tone and verbal texture, as well as fertility of ideas and intellectual strength, are all part of an attempt to transcend the "familiar modes of visualisation

28. Alldritt, p.165.

[which] are no longer capable of doing justice to the life in things"²⁹. Above all, the many-sided and complex nature of modern living, and the unpredictability of man's human and material circumambience are fully reflected by the "suspended form", which is almost a hallmark of modern fiction. In short, Lawrence has captured the spirit of the age and reflects it in the very form of his novel.

29. Ibid., p.205.

CHAPTER 3: KANGAROO

Kangaroo, which served as a general dumping-ground for Lawrence's pent-up war-time feelings, is hardly a novel. Rapidly written, desultory in plan and mixed in content, Kangaroo is an example of the artist's resignation to the demon and prophet in Lawrence. Hence the complete disregard for artistic form, the abundance of essays and sermons, and the uncontrollable outbursts of irrational "black fury", which is the only source of energy in this otherwise uneventful and insipid novel.

I. The Demon

The dominant voice in Kangaroo is that of the devil, whose presence has provided Lawrence the impetus to write. Richard Lovat Somers, the self-portrait of the Lawrence in flight from the Old World after the war, is the devil-ridden hero of the book. In a chapter which reads like Lawrence's own confession, we are told that Somers

tried to write. ... But usually, nowadays, when he tapped his unconscious, he found himself in a seethe of steady fury, general rage ... (and that) he just felt generally diabolical. (pp.181-2)

This "bellyful of black devilishness" which has its origin in the war remains undigested, despite Somers's effort to digest it:

He had been trying that for three years, and roaming the face of the earth trying to soothe himself with the sops of travel and new experience and scenery. (p.290)

Therefore, Somers/Lawrence comes to the conclusion that the only way to get rid of the demoniacal fury is to "let loose the hell-rage that was in him" (p.290). One of the ways to dispel the "seven thousand devils" (as Lawrence describes

Somers's as well as his own plight) is to understand them by writing about them. When Lawrence is sufficiently detached from Somers, the self-analysis is usually admirable, as when the artist grapples with the old problem - the white-peacock demon - which provides one of the central conflicts and the chief emotional interest of the book.

The white-peacock demon, which has been duly subjugated by the artist in Women in Love, is let loose in Kangaroo to haunt the dreams of Somers. After a row with his wife, Harriet,

he dreams of a woman, a woman he loved, something like Harriet, something like his mother, and yet unlike either, a woman sullen and obstinate against him, repudiating him. (p.108)

This dream, in which the mother and wife are merged into one, is most revealing of the complicated feelings Somers/Lawrence has for woman. Somers's fear of the possessive woman in Harriet has resulted in his determination "to keep apart from her" by excluding her from his world of male activity:

He knew that her greatest grief was when he turned away from their personal human life of intimacy to this impersonal business of male activity for which he was always craving. (p.108)

As long as he is "in his full consciousness", he persists; but

when he was asleep and off his guard, then his own weaknesses, especially his old weaknesses that he had overcome in his full, day-waking self, rose up again maliciously to take some picturesque form and torment and overcome his sleeping self. (p.109)

However, Somers tries to comfort himself that dreams are "a kind of revenge which old weaknesses took on the victorious healthy consciousness, like past diseases come back for a phantom triumph ... [and that] this dream means that the actual danger is over" (pp.109-110). Despite his self-assurance, Somers still feels that "he would never take the move into activity unless Harriet and his dead mother believed

in him" (p.110). That Somers should need the approval of his mother and wife for his "male activity" means that the "navel string" (as he puts it) which ties him to woman is not broken yet.

Like Birkin who centres his life on love, Somers acknowledges that "his marriage was the centre of his life"; but like Birkin, Somers too insists that a man should "go on to other things, outside of marriage" (p.113). This need to turn one's back to one's wife and to join other men is expressed in more explicit terms by Lawrence in his theoretical work written not long before Kangaroo:

Men, being themselves made new after the act of coition, wish to make the world new. A new, passionate polarity springs up between men who are bent on the same activity... It is now daytime, and time to forget sex, time to be busy making a new world¹.

The compulsion to make the world new gives rise to the saviour/prophet in Somers and his dallying with the idea of participating in the political life in Australia. The "passionate polarity" between men seems to be the demon's sly way of expressing the homosexual attraction between men. In Kangaroo, this demon is not identified (perhaps because of the suppression of Women in Love), but its shadow is cast over the relationships between Somers and the various male characters in the novel.

Jack Callcott's intense feelings for Somers, for instance, invite speculation. Left alone with Somers in the room, Callcott, we are told, looks at the other man with "glowing, smiling eyes ... eyes with something desirous, and something perhaps fanatical in them" (p.54). Interestingly enough, Somers is depicted as rather aloof, although he still

1. DHL, Fantasia of the Unconscious, quoted from Keith Sagar, The Art of D.H. Lawrence, p.105.

"vibrate[s] helplessly in some sort of troubled response"
(p.55).

The vibration from the two men had by this time quite penetrated into the other room and into the consciousness of the two women. Harriet came in all wondering and full of alert curiosity. She looked from one to the other, saw the eyes of both men shining, saw the puzzled, slightly scared look on her husband's face, and the glowing handsomeness on Jack's, and she wondered more than ever. (p.55)

The strong undercurrents are not clearly understood or accounted for. Like Harriet, the readers too are left wondering more than ever. In a similarly curious way, Somers is attracted to Kangaroo, from whom there comes "a sort of magnetic effusion", so that Somers's hand is "almost drawn in spite of himself to touch the other man's body" (p.152). But he finds Kangaroo's touch and "oozing" sort of love rather repulsive. Somers's refusal of Callcott's mateship and Kangaroo's love is consistent with his misanthropic disposition and frantic insistence on being apart from the rest of mankind. Nevertheless, Lawrence's denial of his own homosexual feelings through Somers is but another indication that the demon is still haunting him. Besides, our conclusion is further supported by Somers's recollection of his friendship with the Cornish farmer, John Thomas, whose name (with its Freudian connotation) is perhaps a slip of the pen on the part of the writer.

But the demon that has done the greatest harm to the novel is the one that strikes the harsh misanthropic note throughout the book. Sometimes, it expresses itself in Somers's quiet renunciation of the world of man and his wish to be cold like a fish:

... [to] be cold, as sea-things are cold, and murderously fierce. To have oneself exultantly ice-cold, not one spark of this wretched warm flesh left, and to have all the terrific ice

energy of a fish ... [to be] a fierce and fish-cold devil ... filled with cold fury of desire to get away from the cloy of human life altogether. (p.140)

Sometimes it shouts through Somers in a more strident voice:

Damn the man in the street... Damn the collective soul, it's a dead rat in a hole. (p.310)

Now and then, the demon which is "coiled up ... like a black cat in [Somers's] belly" bursts out, letting loose a whole "bellyful of black devilishness" like the "frenzied lava" in a volcanic eruption. To justify this explosion of black fury in his own soul, Lawrence reproduces verbatim an article on earthquakes from a Sydney newspaper, only to say that

If the mother earth herself is so unstable, and upsets the applecart without caring a straw, why, what can a man say to himself if he does happen to have a devil in his belly! (p.187)

Similarly, reflecting on his humiliating experiences in the war, Lawrence again speaks through his demon-hero:

Of course it was all necessary, the conscription, the medical examinations. Of course, of course. We all know it. But when it comes to the deepest things, men are as entirely irrational as women...

There is no arguing with the instinctive passional self. (p.289)

This is another example showing the head's loss of control over the "passional self", and when the head does function, we get a false universal picture of men's hatred of war based on Lawrence's own private reaction.

So then, why will men not forgive the war, and their humiliation at the hands of these war-like authorities? Because men were compelled into the service of a dead ideal. (p.292)

However, a close examination of the thirty-page-long account of Somers's war-time experiences (i.e. Chapter 13, which is totally irrelevant to the main story in the novel, but provides important insight into the black fury of the protagonist) shows that Somers's objection of war is not based on any

political or moral principles.

The identification of Lawrence with Somers in Chapter 13 is so close that the artist fails entirely to see the real reasons behind Somers's hatred of war. Admitting that Somers has no conscientious objection to war, the narrator goes on to say that it is the vast mob-spirit of the war that Somers is against. In actual fact, Somers's indignation boils down to a hatred of the medical officers to whose eyes and hands he has submitted his naked body. Somers says that

because they had handled his private parts, and looked into them, their eyes should burst and their hands should wither and their hearts should rot. (p.283)

The artist fails to see that the anger bursting out from the violent language here surpasses all rational bounds. He also fails to recognise that Somers's fear of persecution has amounted to a kind of paranoia. Nor do we feel that Lawrence has come to a clear understanding of his maddening sense of sexual insecurity, which originated in his bad health as well as his latent homosexual tendency, and was intensified by the humiliation of his being rejected by the army. The distance between the narrator and Somers tends to disappear, when Lawrence recalls the acute fear of having his beard cut:

Oh, yes, they intended to make him feel they had got their knife into him. They would have his beard off, too! But would they! He stood there with his ridiculous thin legs, in his ridiculous jacket, but he did not feel a fool. Oh, God, no. (p.283)

The sense of inferiority thus gives rise to the blatant bravado, as displayed in passages like this:

Let them label me unfit, he [Somers] said to himself. I know my own body is fragile, in its way, but also it is very strong, and it's the only body that would carry my particular self. (p.245)

This sense of deficiency also accounts for the instances of

Lawrence seeking self-compensation in his fictional world, in which his alter ego is a successful writer who is admired and courted by both man and woman alike.

The sense of hurt in Kangaroo is too strong to be rendered rationally. The kind of violent passions exhibited by the demon in this novel needs the strong restraining hand and intelligence of a detached artist. Unfortunately, in Kangaroo the heart is not always guided by the head. Consequently, we are given a vivid description of the "sickness" which besets Lawrence, but the diagnosis is far from being intelligent. In short, the demon's need to let off steam is greater than the artist's need to create order out of disorder in Kangaroo.

II. The Prophet

Kangaroo, Hough says, is "frankly a part of Lawrence's spiritual autobiography"²; it charts "the vagaries of Lawrence's thinking and feeling at a particularly distressed time of his life", Moynahan adds³. But it is, above all, a record of the contest between the good and bad angels in Lawrence, or a dialogue between his demon and his prophet.

Although Kangaroo, the saviour/prophet in this novel, is not a self-portrait of Lawrence, he shares much of Lawrence's own ideas. His long speeches on "authority" and "man's need for a father/leader" could be regarded safely as Lawrence's own preaching. Kangaroo's idea on the importance of mutability - "Commandments should fade as flowers do," says Kangaroo (p.126) - is endorsed by Lawrence himself, who picks up the imagery of the flower as a symbol of the lovely transient quality in life and elaborates this idea in Etruscan Places⁴. In his "sermon" on love (p.149), Kangaroo refers to

2. Hough, p.105.

3. Moynahan, p.102.

4. To explain the importance and the beauty of mutability,

the equilibrium between the earth and the sun as an example of "mutual" love - the very idea of "star equilibrium" which Lawrence first preaches through Birkin. Again, when Kangaroo mentions the phoenix as a bird that rises out of the ashes (p.147) - another pet symbol of Lawrence - we know that it is Lawrence himself speaking. Thus we may conclude that Kangaroo is the dramatic persona for Lawrence the prophet. However, as the course of the novel shows, Lawrence seems to have lost faith in this old prophet, whose idea of regenerating the world through love is regarded by Lawrence as ineffectual in the present world. Therefore, a new prophet is needed to preach a new message of salvation. Meanwhile, the demon has to be exorcised before the new prophet can be born; hence the confrontation between the demon and the prophet in the chapter called "The Battle of Tongues".

This chapter takes the form of a dialogue between Somers and Kangaroo, with Kangaroo preaching and Somers rebutting. Annoyed and frustrated by the stubbornness and scepticism of his difficult disciple, Kangaroo says:

There's some demon inside you makes you perverse, and
can't let you be the dear, beautiful thing you are.
But I'm going to exorcise that demon. (p.151)

To this, Somers retorts in "the very voice of the demon" (as the narrator puts it):

What you call my demon is what I identify myself with.
It's my best me, and I stick to it. (pp.152-3)

4. (contd) Lawrence writes by way of illustration. He refers to

the perfect rose [which] is only a running flame,
emerging and flowing off, and never in any sense
at rest, static, finished

and again to the water-lily, which
heaves herself from the flood, looks around,
gleams and is gone.

Somers sticks to his demon, because he feels that Kangaroo's kind of spiritual love is not "the only inspiration of creative activity" (p.148). Salvation, Somers holds forth, means

the re-entry into us of the great God, who enters us from below, not from above ... not through the spirit ... [but which] enters us from the lower self, the dark self, the phallic self. (p.150)

So Somers gives up the role of a social prophet and becomes a high priest of the dark God.

But Kangaroo is not the only one trying to make a saviour of Somers. Struthers wants Somers to bring out a Socialist paper for them, "a paper that calls to the constructive spirit in men" (p.222), and Jack Callcott feels that Somers is fated to come to Australia to play the saviour there. Somers turns down all their appeals at the end, and says:

I'm no good at saving. (p.319)

After his interview with Struthers, Somers says to Jaz:

I try to kid myself that I care about mankind and its destiny. And I have fits of wistful love for the working men. But at the bottom I'm as hard as a mango nut ... I don't really care about anything ... It seems like a trap to me, all this social business and this saving mankind. (p.225)

Underlying this declaration of indifference is a note of frustration caused by his disappointment with the Old World, which is the world he really cares about. Away from Europe, in self-exile, Somers

felt broken-off from his fellow-men. He felt broken off from the England he had belonged to. The ties were gone. He was loose like a single timber of some wrecked ship, drifting over the face of the earth. Without a people, without a land. (p.287)

Without a people, without a land, Somers the prophet feels alienated and impotent. In a fit of frenzy, he cries "Revenge!" against Europe in Timotheus's voice (Chapter 13). He preaches autocracy, because "the oh-so-pleasant democracy of the English lower classes frightened him" (p.288).

Deprived of an audience, he preaches at his wife, "like a dog barking, barking senselessly", we are told, "yap-yap-yapping about control and authority and the hand of the Lord" (p.386). To Harriet, Somers is more like a demon than a prophet: a "hell-bird, preaching, preaching at her" (p.385). Feeling that he has lost control over the world, Somers fancies that he should at least be the "lord and master" of his wife; hence the long essay recommending the lordship of husbands over wives. Despite Lawrence's attempt to distance himself from Somers (as in letting Harriet challenge and make fun of her "lord and master"), one feels that Lawrence takes Somers's proposal seriously, and that more often than not he is in fact preaching through his dramatic persona.

The questioning and painful search for new values and a new God by the disillusioned prophet in this novel is sincere; but the answer he offers in the concept of the dark God is unsatisfactory. At the end of Somers's long meditation on himself as a leader in the world, he suddenly comes to the conclusion that he

must open the doors of his soul and let in a dark Lord and Master for himself... break open his door to this fearful God who is master, and enters us from below, the lower doors; let himself once admit a Master, the unspeakable God: and the rest would happen. (p.196)

What this dark God is, we are not told clearly, because Somers himself is not very clear, as he confesses to Kangaroo (p.150), whose idea of loving one another to Somers is insufficient without a God (p.224). Therefore, in rejecting the old God of pure spirit and light, Somers envisages a dark God of the flesh. The age-old contest between the lion and the unicorn once more finds its way into Lawrence's fiction, but here in Kangaroo, the balance is upset because the artist puts his thumb into the pan of the dark God. Moreover, the preaching

on the dark God is done too didactically: it is completely unsubstantiated by the story. Nor is the sermon really related to what comes before or after it. Like the list of creeds starting with "Blessed are ..." (which is almost an after-thought added to the end of Chapter 13), most of the sermons are introduced arbitrarily and abruptly, whenever the "spirit" moves the frenzied prophet in Somers. The artist's failure to present his message in dramatic fictional terms betrays the inadequacy of Lawrence's faith in what he is preaching. We have to wait till the last novel of Lawrence to know what he actually means by this dark God. Meanwhile, Lawrence has to recuperate spiritually from the war, and to build up gradually his faith in mankind, his art, and the new values he offers.

The passion to analyse and preach in Kangaroo is so strong that Lawrence has to turn most of the characters into his mouthpieces. The chief spokesman for Lawrence of course is Somers, who holds forth page after page on the subjects of marriage, politics, religion, mob-psychology, the mistakes of humanity, and the difference between the Old World (Europe) and the New World (Australia). Kangaroo is another spokesman for Lawrence, whose sermons are rather long and tedious. Struthers, who appears only once in the book, is engaged in a dialogue (Chapter 11), which turns out to be a monologue punctuated by Somers's laconic statements of approval or disagreement. Even the narrator intrudes to present Lawrence's view, as when he turns an essayist altogether in that same chapter where Struthers introduces Whitman's idea of comradeship. The artist in Lawrence knows too well that thoughts alone do not make a novel, and hence in a half-hearted manner defends himself by justifying the abundance of essays in

Kangaroo, saying:

Now a novel is supposed to be a mere record of emotion-adventure, floundering in feelings. We insist that a novel is, or should be, also a thought-adventure, if it is to be anything at all complete. (p.308)

Therefore, Lawrence argues, it is perfectly all right for Somers to climb "a mental minaret or two in the interim" (p.313). But even this sounds like a poor excuse. So, in a sort of self-mockery, Lawrence describes Somers in this way:

He preached, and the record was taken down for this gramophone of a novel. (p.309)

In spite of his apologies and defences, Kangaroo is still a bad piece of work, which is more like a collection of essays and sermons than a novel.

III. The Artist

The suppression of Women in Love was the last straw for Lawrence, which snuffed the little flicker of hope he still had when he wrote that great novel. Completely demoralised, Lawrence turned his back upon humanity and said,

I hate mankind... I have got a perfect androphobia when I see people in the distance, walking along the path through the fields to Zennor, I want to crouch in the bushes and shoot them silently with invisible arrows of death⁵.

This poignant, almost homicidal misanthropy in the demon in Lawrence was near insanity, and it had an adverse effect on Lawrence the artist. As Lawrence himself said in a letter, one "can't have fiction without people". So he found it exceedingly difficult to write novels when he was "weary of humanity and human things"⁶. Consequently, he moved away from fiction for a few years⁷. When he did try his hand at

5. Letter to Koteliansky, 4 Sept. 1916; Encounter, Dec. 1953, p.31; quoted from Sagar, p.103.

6. CL, p.514.

7. Between 1917-1919, Lawrence produced only two full-length works, neither of them fiction. See Chronology.

fiction, the result was rather unsatisfactory. Kangaroo being a novel of this period - the nadir of Lawrence's career as a novelist - is the product of a demoralised and misanthropic artist, who has lost faith in both mankind and his art.

Therefore, the artist just writes down whatever the demon and the prophet prompt him to write, without selecting or organising his raw material, or caring about the form of his final product.

Despite Hough's efforts in defending the novel⁸, Kangaroo still strikes one as episodic and incoherent. One tends to agree more with Moynahan, who says that "from a formal point of view, the book is a heap of bits and fragments blown about on air currents of emotion"⁹. The formlessness is evident in the absence of a clear story-line. The episodic structure contains few eventful episodes. As Lawrence himself points out near the end of the novel, "chapter follows chapter, and nothing doing" (p.312). Nor is there unity in the themes or the use of imagery. Without a central theme or a sense of direction, the novel becomes rather diffusive, redundant and full of irrelevant details. Sometimes it reads like a philosophical and political treatise, as in the chapters in which Somers, Kangaroo and Struthers hold forth. Sometimes it is sheer journalistic chitchat, about life and manners in Australia. The bit explaining the meaning of the word "Pommy" (pp.164-5), for example, reads like a footnote put in by the writer of a travelogue for his overseas readers. Padding is

8. Hough tries to show that there is "an underlying unity of a kind not immediately obvious" (The Dark Sun, p.103). He argues that the themes on leadership in politics, dominance in marriage, and the emptiness of the virgin country are all linked together by the idea of submission and power. However, on the artistic level, this kind of coherence is not felt at all.

9. Moynahan, op.cit., p.102.

evident as in Chapters 6 and 8, in which Lawrence reproduces the correspondence between Kangaroo and Harriet, the letters Somers gets from Europe, and a whole article from the Sydney Daily Telegraph! Realistic details are not just over-abundant but also irrelevant, as in the description of what Somers and Harriet have for high tea, and what little articles of clothing Harriet and Victoria put on for the occasion (p.41). The Somerses' battle against rats, fleas and dirt is not only irrelevant but also introduced so suddenly (p.56) that one doubts if Lawrence ever read that chapter after he had written it. Another example of abrupt transition is the wrangle between Somers and Harriet in Chapter 4, which is merely cut short to move on to something else:

"Bah, you creature, you ought to be grateful," cried Harriet.

William James arrived one morning when the Callcotts were both out ... (p.79)

Examples like these are numerous in Kangaroo, showing the artist's complete suspension of his sense of coherence.

If we take just any chapter and look for its internal structure, and the presentation of ideas and characters, we shall find a jumble of things just crammed into a unit called "a chapter". Chapter 10, for instance, is entitled "Diggers", but the first eight pages of that chapter are about Somers's flight into the "fern-world" after "another ferocious battle with Harriet, and Victoria's infatuation with Europe in general, Somers in particular. The next five pages are a brief summary of the history and nature of the Diggers' Clubs, which is interrupted by Harriet's cry for help to rescue the tea-towel from the horns of a cow. What follows is a miscellany of unrelated things - Somers watching a pair of fishing birds, Somers coming across an old man, his encounter with the

people coming to the library, the monument nearby, the price of cabbage and cauliflower, and a monologue by an unidentified on-looker about an old aeroplane that has just taken off. It is almost impossible to imagine that the writer of this jumble could have written such a tightly-woven novel as Women in Love just a few years ago.

The misanthropic demon in Lawrence naturally affects the artist's portrayal of the characters in Kangaroo. Lawrence shows little interest in his characters (except in his alter ego), who are either mouthpieces of the author or stereotypes. Jack is a specimen of the average working-class male in Australia, while Victoria is the typical woman in the Colony who craves for the culture of Europe. Struthers and Kangaroo are as flat as the pasteboard figures in a novel of ideas. How Kangaroo could have enchanted so many people is beyond our comprehension, because in the novel he is presented as a sentimental mother-figure verging on bathos. Harriet is about the only character who comes to life, especially in her verbal warfare with Somers. However, she remains most of the time in the background, while the searchlight that fetches the inner life of the characters is focussed exclusively on Somers, who is possessed by either the demon or the prophet all the time.

Even in the presentation of Somers, the artist fails to make a good job of it because the novelist tends to identify himself too closely with his hero. There are examples of Lawrence adoring himself through the other characters. Jack Callcott recognises that Somers does not belong to the common run of man (p.54), and that he is "born a gentleman" (p.44). Victoria, a very common girl, is given the Lawrentian "mental vocabulary" to think of Somers as "some sort of God in the

fiery bush" (p.45)! Besides, the artist also seems to share the racial prejudices and fascist tendencies of his protagonist. More than once in the book, Lawrence lets Somers express his own anti-Semitic sentiments (p.237, p.251), and his failure to pass judgment on Somers's fascist views indicates Lawrence's loss of moral focus. The inability to distance himself from Somers also causes the novelist's failure to develop any emotional interest outside his own alter ego. Therefore, the potential dramas - latent in the political upheaval, the clash between the characters of different political ideas, the hushed homosexual relationships, and the abortive adultery between Somers and Victoria - are not materialised and are dealt with half-heartedly.

But Kangaroo is full of beautiful passages evoking the beauty of the Australian bush, beach, morning, night and dawn. As Harry Moore says, Lawrence writes with a style that is "concrete, sharp-colored, and kinetic"¹⁰. Lawrence's insight into the spirit of a place and people is remarkable, as shown in Somers's reflection on the contrast between Europe and Australia (pp.25, 168-171, 385), on the emptiness behind the freedom in the New World (pp.32-3), on the outwardness of the Colonies (p.146), and on the insufficiency of a virgin country as against the fullness of "a bride country - or a mother country" (pp.87-8). The perpetual conflict between the demon's urge to abandon the world and the prophet's sense of commitment to the world, which is powerfully presented, also provides a centre of interest in the book. However, without the detachment and intelligence of the artist, the result is the breakdown of artistic form and a head-on clash, instead of a trembling balance, between the demon and the prophet.

10. Harry T. Moore, The Priest of Love, p.353.

CHAPTER 4: LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

1925 saw the end of Lawrence's self-exile from Europe, and the renewal of his faith in mankind and in art. His last visit to England in the following year revived his sense of mission. The demoralised and peopleless prophet of the post-war years once more discovered the people he wanted to save. In an essay about his last visit to his home country, Lawrence wrote:

... the people I come from ... are the only people who move me strongly, and with whom I feel myself connected in deeper destiny. It is they who are ... "home" to me¹.

Again, in a letter, Lawrence said:

Curiously, I like England again, now I am up in my own regions. It braces me up: and there seems a queer, odd sort of potentiality in the people, especially the common people².

Confronted with a people separated by the deep gulfs between the classes, and a country deformed by industry, Lawrence felt that "it was like a spear through ... [his] heart", and that he ought to "buck up and do something for the England to come"³. What he did for "the England to come", then, took the form of a "resurrection story" - Lady Chatterley's Lover - which was to be Lawrence's last novel. Unlike his first novel (in which the demon provides the inspiration and the prophet attempts to offer solutions by universalising Lawrence's own personal problems), here in his last novel, it is the prophet who provides the inspiration and the demon who offers a private solution to the general social and cultural problems⁴.

1. "Return to Bestwood", Phoenix II, p.264.

2. CL, p.933.

3. CL, p.952.

4. It is most interesting to compare the three versions of Lady Chatterley's Lover. The first version emphasises the

I. The Demon

The marriage of Lawrence's parents, which accounted for the birth of the white-peacock demon in Lawrence's first novel, continued to be an important source of inspiration for the novelist till the end of his career. In the first version of Lady Chatterley's Lover, Connie's choice between the virile gamekeeper and her intellectual husband (which is reminiscent of Lettie's choice between George and Leslie in The White Peacock) highlights the gap between the two worlds represented by Lawrence's parents. Nowhere else in Lawrence's fiction is the polarised view of man (i.e., one is either a lion or a unicorn) expressed more explicitly than in the first version of his last novel:

She [Connie] sighed wearily. Apparently it was impossible to have a whole man in any man. Her two men [Parkins and Clifford] were two halves. And she did⁵ not want to forfeit either half, to forego either man.

But Lawrence wants to reconcile his father's world with his mother's world, so in the last version of this novel, he offers Connie a lover who is "a whole man", modelled to a large extent on himself. Mellors, who can speak both the King's English and the Derbyshire dialect, is not just a "phallos-bearer". He has access into the upper classes, although he is born into the working class and chooses to live outside the class system.

4.(contd) social reality of class differences between Connie and her lover, who identifies himself entirely with the working class and is a communist. In the next version, the lovers are presented as renegades from their respective classes. In the final version, the gamekeeper is in fact beyond class. It is significant that the nature of the drama has changed from a social to a more private (and thus more universal) one. As the social message is replaced by the sexual message, the realism of the first version gives way to the pastoral romanticism of the last version. The answer offered to the world by the prophet in Lady Chatterley's Lover is actually inspired by the demon's undying faith in the human instincts.

5. The First Lady Chatterley, p.71.

Moreover, unlike the taciturn Parkin of the early versions, Mellors is very articulate, and preaches his message of salvation both by words and by actions. To make him "a whole man", Lawrence presents him as a phallos-bearer with a highly-developed critical and intellectual faculty.

After almost two decades of battle with the white-peacock demon, Lawrence is sufficiently free from its power to stand back and examine the old problem once more in a more subjective manner. No longer does he hold woman alone as responsible for the destruction of man and the denial of his body. In Lady Chatterley's Lover, the blame is shared by both man and woman. Connie as well as Clifford and his intellectual cronies have all committed the crime of exalting the mind and denying the body. The one-sided picture of man as the victim of the white peacock in woman no longer persists, except in Mellors's recollection of his experiences with women, which is a good example to show how the old demon in Lawrence can still interfere with his work after so many years of taming and harnessing.

Like the first gamekeeper in Lawrence's fiction (Annable in The White Peacock), Mellors is presented as a typical victim of female power. The women he has ever met are either pure "lilies" who deny his body, or sensual "roses" who, in Mellors's opinion, emasculated him with their "blind beakishness" (p.210). Utterley disgusted with women, he seeks solace in the world and love of man⁶. His indictment against woman and generalisation of woman in Chapter 14 seem to have the full approval of the author. His prejudiced view that lesbian women are worse than homosexual men also goes uncommented on by the novelist⁷. The fear

6. We are not sure that Mellors's relationship with his colonel is a homosexual one, but we are told that reflecting on his past life, Mellors thinks of "the colonel who had loved him and whom he had loved" (p.147).

7. In fact this view is endorsed by Lawrence himself, who con-

of the white peacock in woman has given rise to the view that sex is used as a weapon by woman to assert "her ghastly female will" (p.292). Therefore, when the demon turns prophet in this novel, the message preached is the submission of the "hard bright female power" (p.141).

The demon's fear of female domination spoils the novel in several ways. For instance, in the following passage about Connie, the theme of female domination crops up in a most gratuitous manner:

She had always let herself be dominated by her elder sister. Now, though, somewhere inside herself she was weeping, she was free of dominion of other women. Ah! that in itself was a relief, like being given another life: to be free of the strange dominion and obsession of other women. How awful they were, women! (p.264; Lawrence's own emphasis.)

That Connie should feel so strongly against women is never accounted for; nor is it a consistent trait in her character. This is an obvious example of the demon gaining an upper hand of the artist.

Other examples of Lawrence betraying his own fear of woman are the frequent "jabs" he delivers at the "modern woman". We are told that what Mellors dreads in Connie is "her modern female insistency" (p.92). Similarly, Mrs. Bolton's bossiness is also explained away as "one of the signs of insanity in modern woman" (p.100). Again when Connie turns analytical and reflects upon her sexual activity with Mellors, the narrator tells us that "her tormented modern-woman's brain still had no rest" (p.121). What exactly a modern woman is we are not told, but we are told that "the celluloid women of today" (p.124) "talk a lot more than the men ... and they are a sight more cocksure" (p.314)⁸. It seems that Lawrence has a grudge against

7.(contd) demns lesbianism in The Rainbow, but is ambivalent about homosexuality practised by his male protagonist elsewhere. Please refer to Chapter 2, Section I.

8. Some of these grievances about the modern cocksure woman

her whenever he finds faults with women in general. Thus the artistic balance is again upset by the demon.

Another demon that has disturbed Lawrence and haunted several of his novels since The Rainbow appears again in his last novel in bolder profile⁹. In Chapter 16, we are told that Connie, on recalling her "night of sensual passion" with Mellors, feels that Mellors is like a "reckless devil":

And what a reckless devil the man was! really like a devil! One had to be strong to bear him. But it took some getting at, the core of the physical jungle, the last and deepest recess of organic shame. The phallos alone could explore it. And how he had pressed in on her (p.259).

What exactly this "recess of organic shame" is we are not told in explicit terms. But the allusion to Abélard and the Greek vases, when considered in the light of Clifford's remark about Mellors's practice with his wife ("... a strange avidity for unusual sexual postures ... to use his wife, as Benvenuto Cellini says, 'in the Italian way'" [p.280]), leaves us in little doubt that "the phallic hunt" is actually anal intercourse. That Lawrence refrains from an explicit description of this "night of sensual passion", while he can be so forthright in his description of the lovers' other sexual activities, indicates the writer's doubt about his own argument in justify-

8. (contd) are repeated in an article written after this novel, called "Cocksure Women and Hensure Men" (Phoenix II, pp. 553-555). One cannot help wishing that Lawrence had written this article earlier, so that he did not need to voice his grievances here and spoil the novel.

9. In The First Lady Chatterley, this demon is also mentioned:

She [Connie] thought of Parkin. He too had some demon in possession of him, something that frightened her and that she must keep away from. But it was an alive demon, not an obscenity. It was a pale, deadly sort of anger which walked in his soul like a ghost. (p.248)

This demon is not described or shown in action, but significantly it is associated with anger, which is the mood preceding Mellors's anal intercourse with Connie in the last version.

ing Mellors's unorthodox practice. The experience is overtly presented, and recognised by Connie, as a necessary purification "to burn out false shames" (p.258). As if Connie's reflection alone were not enough to drive his point home, Lawrence has to intrude to give his stamp of approval. He assures us that in the short summer night, Connie's shame dies, and goes on to generalise about the experience, making it a universal necessity for all of us. "Shame", Lawrence pontificates, "which is fear: the deep organic shame, the old, old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots of us ... can only be chased away by the sensual fire, at least it was roused up and routed by the phallic hunt of man" (p.258). Despite his insistence that his deep organic shame is in us all, there is something one-sided in the way the "purification" is presented in this chapter as Daleski has observed¹⁰. That sensual night of passion is entirely rendered in the consciousness of Connie only, and we learn nothing of Mellors's reaction. Hence, the purification applies only to Connie. Besides, the way Mellors bullies Connie into submission, making her a "physical slave" (p.258), is contradictory to what he generally stands for in the novel - tenderness. That Mellors has to assert his manhood in this manner could be attributed, perhaps, to his profound sense of insecurity with and fear of woman. However, this is never suggested by the novelist. In fact, of all the demons that ever disturbed Lawrence, this last one (who likes woman "in the Italian way") was never fully understood or exorcised by the artist. Therefore, when it makes a noisy comeback in Lawrence's last novel, the result is just as disastrous as before, because instead of trying to understand it, Lawrence turns to justifying it, showing once more that the "bullying passion" is not

10. Daleski, op.cit., p.306.

tempered by the intelligence of the head.

II. The Prophet

The prophetic impulse in Lawrence, which prompts him to write Lady Chatterley's Lover, is responsible for the didactic nature of his last novel. In a letter written in 1928, Lawrence described his new work as "a novel of phallic Consciousness: or the phallic Consciousness versus the mental-spiritual Consciousness"¹¹. This dichotomy - the phallic Consciousness (lion) versus the mental-spiritual Consciousness (unicorn) - is conceived as the basic conflict in the novel and inspires the antithetical structure (Wragby/the wood, Clifford/Mellors) of the book. Although the artist is aware that "man need not sacrifice the intellect to the penis, nor the penis to the intellect"¹², the prophet in Lawrence is so eager to do justice to the value symbolised by the phallus, that he often upsets the balance between the lion and unicorn in favour of the former¹³. Besides, Lawrence's insistence on the clean purpose of his "phallic novel" (as he calls it) is unfortunately not restricted to the letters and his essay "A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover", but finds its way into the novel as well. The authorial intrusion, as in the following passage which reads like a treatise on the novel, is a breach of the artist's integrity caused by the prophet's self-justification:

And here lies the vast importance of the novel, properly handled. It can inform and lead into new

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11. Earl and Achsah Brewster, Reminiscences and Correspondence, p.166, quoted from Daleski, op.cit., p.259.
 12. The First Lady Chatterley, p.156.
 13. In the same letter to the Brewsters (see footnote 11), Lawrence said:

...Of course you know which side I take. The versus is not my fault: there should be no versus. The two things must be reconciled in us. But now they're daggers drawn.

places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness, and it can lead our sympathy away in recoil from things gone dead. Therefore, the novel, properly handled, can reveal the most secret places of life: for it is in the passional secret places of life, above all, that the tide of sensitive awareness needs to ebb and flow, cleansing and freshening. (p.104)

One may conclude with certainty that what is stated here is Lawrence's aim in writing Lady Chatterley's Lover. He is determined to show his countrymen, through this "phallic novel" of his, the passional secret places of life, which have remained unexplored and neglected because of their wrong attitudes toward sex and the wrong values they place on intellectual and material success. This didactic purpose is responsible for the analytical approach and discursive manner of narration, certain faults in the presentation of characters, and the dogmatic nature of the novel, all of which make Lady Chatterley's Lover fall short of the high watermark Lawrence has reached in The Rainbow or Women in Love.

Unlike Women in Love which opens with a concrete human situation, Lady Chatterley's Lover starts with a generalisation about the human predicament after the war:

Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins ... [but] we've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen. (p.5)

Then the focus is suddenly narrowed to one lonely figure - the stoical female protagonist:

This was more or less Constance Chatterley's position. The war had brought the roof down over her head. And she had realized that one must live and learn. (p.5)

The rest of the chapter is a summary of Connie's family background, her pre-marital sexual experiences, and her marriage life with Clifford. The analysis of people's wrong attitudes towards sex, as displayed by Clifford, Connie and her young associates, is most incisive and thematically relevant. The predominant tone, however, is rather detached, sometimes ironic,

and sometimes "resigned to the point of flippancy", as Sagar says¹⁴. The irony at times even develops into a slightly mocking and even jeering tone, which is not a particularly congenial or desirable tone for the novelist who, according to Lawrence, is supposed to record the affairs of man "in a spirit of fine, discriminative sympathy" (p.104). The wry humour apparent in the description of the sexually gratified men in Chapter 1 could be expressive of the sisters' contempt for man's dependence on woman:

In the actual sex-thrill within the body, the sisters nearly succumbed to the strange male power. But quickly they recovered themselves, took the sex-thrill as a sensation, and remained free. Whereas the men, in gratitude to the woman for the sex experience, let their soul go out to her. And afterwards looked rather as if they had lost a shilling and found sixpence. (p.9)

But in the following passage, in which Clifford is mocked, the narrator's jeering viciousness is most unforgivable:

O last of all ships, through the hyacinthian shallows!
O pinnacle on the last wild waters, sailing in the
last voyage of our civilization! Whither, O weird
wheeled ship, your slow course steering. Quiet and
complacent, Clifford sat at the wheel of adventure. ...
O Captain, my Captain, our splendid trip is done! (p.192)

Lapses like these are not uncommon in this novel, betraying the novelist's lack of sympathy for some of his characters, and the prevalence of his head over his heart.

The analytical approach also determines the preference for "telling" to "showing". There is little description or dramatic rendition of the theme before the love story between Connie and Mellors takes shape. Therefore, the first few chapters are full of retrospective historical accounts and analyses, exposing the basic wrong values upheld by the people in the aristocratic and intellectual circles. Although the analyses are often perceptive, one feels that as a novelist Lawrence must substantiate

14. Sagar, op.cit., p.179.

his statements and conclusions by embodying them in more concret terms. This is something the artist has not always succeeded in doing, because the prophet who prefers to speak directly to the readers gets the better of the artist. When the prophet's influence is more subtle, his interference can be discerned in the presentation of the characters; but when he gets out of hand altogether, the result is didactic preaching through the narrator.

Most of the characters are either set up as targets for the prophet to aim at, or introduced as spokesmen or embodiments of his ideas. The Cambridge Group is dragged in, in the first few chapters, to illustrate what the prophet means by "mental-lifers". These characters are purely functional in the novel. Another important "dart-board figure" is Clifford, who is a conglomeration of all forms of wrongheadedness that modern civilization has encouraged. Born into an aristocratic family, he is moreover a "prostitute" to the "bitch-goddess of Success" (p.111). First he tries to satisfy her appetite "for flattery, adulation, stroking and tickling" (p.111), by writing popular novels. Then he attempts "to capture the bitch-goddess by brute means of industrial production" (p.111), by ravishing the land to get more coal. Into the bargain, he is made a cripple, which (as Lawrence said in retrospect) is symbolic of the "deeper emotional or passional paralysis, of most men of his sort and class today"¹⁵. Although the characterisation of Clifford in many ways is convincingly rendered, and the symbolic significance of his paralysis is integrated into the general thematic pattern of the novel (as several critics have shown¹⁶), somehow Clifford remains a two-dimensional character. Because

15. "A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover", Phoenix II, p.514.

16. See Daleski, pp.270-279, and Moynahan, pp.150-155.

he is a combination of so many types of people, it is difficult to envisage a consistent inner life in him or to present it in depth. Clifford's incapability of internal conflict makes him a pathetic figure that does not really engage our sympathy.

With the exception of the "dart-board figures", almost all the other characters are turned into convenient mouthpieces for the author at some stage of the novel. Even minor characters like Mrs. Bolton and Duncan Forbes are made to speak for Lawrence the prophet, as when Mrs. Bolton preaches the gospel of "touch" (pp.170-171) and when Forbes talks about "the hyena instinct of the mob against sex" (p.277). The real prophet of course is Mellors, but before he appears it is Dukes, the "oracle" of Connie (p.57), who is the chief spokesman for the author. In many ways, Dukes may be regarded as Mellors's forerunner, announcing the salvation of man through "the resurrection of the body", the salvation story which Mellors later acts out with his body. Through Dukes, Lawrence launches his severe attack at the "mental-lifers" which include Socrates, Plato, Protagoras, Alcibiades as well as Clifford and his cronies from Cambridge (pp.38-40). "One has to be human, and have a heart and a penis if one is going to escape being either a god or a Bolshevik" (p.41), thunders the prophet Tommy Dukes. "The resurrection of the body", according to Dukes's prophecy, will come when the "cerebral stone" is shoved away (pp.77-78), and "the only bridge across the chasm will be the phallus" (p.77). However, Dukes is too much a "mental-lifer" himself to practise what he preaches, so we have to wait for Mellors the "phallos-bearer", to show us how this chasm can be bridged. Once the real prophet/saviour takes over, Dukes becomes defunct, and is dropped from the story altogether.

But Mellors is not just the embodiment of what Dukes

preaches; he is Lawrence the prophet in a much fuller sense. Not only does he preach and show the possibility of salvation through the resurrection of the body; he also expresses Lawrence's utopian vision as well as shares his occasional apocalyptic and misanthropic moods. In one of his more optimistic moods, Mellors tells us his utopian dream. He envisages a community where people do not live for money, men wear bright red trousers, and women begin to be women again (pp. 288-289). Nevertheless, when he looks around at the people and the industrial world around him, he is totally disgusted:

... 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. (p.230)

But the prophet feels rather lonely and so yearns for some comrades with whom he can fight against the evil world:

Oh, if only there were other men to be with, to fight that sparkling thing outside there [the industrial world], to preserve the tenderness of life ... If only there were men to fight side by side with! But the men were all outside there, glorying in the thing, triumphing or being trodden down in the rush of mechanized greed or of greedy mechanism. (p.125)

His call however is answered by a woman - Connie - who wants to bear him a child in hope, but the disillusioned and frustrated prophet feels that it is "a wrong and bitter thing to do, to bring a child into this world", which "is doomed" (p.227, p.229). In making Mellors a conscious prophet oscillating between hope and despair, Lawrence has injected much life into his original taciturn gamekeeper of the first version. Yet, the danger lies in the novelist's tendency to preach too much through a character who is a self-dramatisation of the prophet in Lawrence himself.

Again and again, the prophet in Lawrence takes over and

speaks through Mellors, who has become a mere mouthpiece voicing the author's own hatred of money and class (p.289), declaring that "sex is really only touch" and that it is touch that brings people together (p.290). Overwriting, didactic preaching, and authorial intrusion are evident in the repeated note on the significance of contact, touch and tenderness. The message is hammered too strongly and too frequently to the point of being tedious. We are told that Connie's relationship with Clifford is "a negation of human contact" (p.17), that they are "utterly out of touch" (p.19); Clifford's writing "took place in a vacuum" where "there was no touch, no actual contact" (p.17); Connie's life at Wragby has "no substance to her... no touch, no contact" (p.19); Michaelis too is disconnected, "for he never noticed things, or had contact with his surroundings" (p.25). Mrs. Bolton preaches that "touch" can last longer than memory (p.171), while Connie, the new convert, also turns a preacher all of a sudden, and shocks Clifford with her speech:

Give me the body. I believe the life of the body is a greater reality than the life of the mind: when the body is really awakened to life. But so many people, like your famous wind-machine, have only got minds tacked on to their physical corpses. (p.245)

That Connie, who has been depicted so far as a gentle person and not without consideration for Clifford, should suddenly speak in such a venomous manner is out of character and her harshness jars with the value she has recently discovered in her relationship with Mellors - tenderness. The prophet is apparently getting out of hand. Similarly, seized by a near-hysteria to preach, the prophet forces Mellors to make this kind of declaration to himself in the middle of his love-making:

I stand for the touch of bodily awareness between human beings ... and the touch of tenderness. And she is my mate. And it is a battle against the money, and the machine, and the insentient ideal monkeyishness of the world. And she will stand behind me there. Thank God I've got a woman! Thank

God I've got a woman who is with me, and tender and aware of me. Thank God she's not a bully, nor a fool. Thank God she's a tender, aware woman. (p.292)

The insistently rhythmical "Thank God..." is almost obscene, as G.B. McK. Henry says¹⁷. The simplification of issues - rationalising all evil into the outside world of industrialism and mental-life, and offering "phallic consciousness" as a panacea - accounts for the prescriptive and didactic nature of the novel, which makes the novel read like a sexual tract at times.

Other considerable faults in the novel caused by the prophe include the over-use of four-letter words and the scene in which Connie and Mellors decorate each other's genitalia with flowers. Both are engendered by Lawrence's excessive reaction to censorship and prudery. His campaign to save those four-letter words from disgrace and to find a language in which sex can be described naturally and honestly has not been very successful. As Sagar has pointed out, Mellors uses these "obscene" words as deliberately and self-consciously as Dukes, and that the way he hammers them at Connie makes him look like a bully rather than a tender lover¹⁸. The little ceremony with the flowers, on the other hand, is rather pathetic and ludicrous, if not sentimental. In both cases, the artist's discretion is overcome by the prophet's passion to defy conventions and to bring sex into the open.

III. The Artist

To make the resurrection story convincing is the primary test for the artist in Lady Chatterley's Lover. Since the subject-matter - the sense of death and nothingness before the

17. G.B. McK. Henry, "Carrying on: Lady Chatterley's Lover", collected in Critics on D.H. Lawrence, ed. by W.T. Andrews, p.102.

18. Sagar, p.195.

waking (or resurrection), the process of waking, and the sense of life after the waking - is of such an intangible nature, the challenge is by no means an easy one. But the competent artist has accomplished his assignment by enhancing the sense of death-in-life and the sense of livingness in the description of the natural environment and the carefully-handled encounters and interactions of the protagonists. This Lawrence manages to achieve only when the prophet is well-harnessed.

As the social realism in the first version of the novel gives way to the pastoral romanticism in the final version, the novel takes on a new quality which is associated with the profoundly moving power of myths. As in a fertility myth, Connie's resurrection is paralleled by the general revival taking place in the natural world in Spring. The novel opens with Connie among the ruins of war symbolised by the smashed body of her husband. Her restlessness and the spiritually empty life at Wragby drive her away from the house into the wood, which has become her sanctuary.

Wragby was there, the servants ... but spectral, not really existing. Connie went for walks in the park and in the woods that joined the park ... But it was all a dream; or rather it was like the simulacrum of reality. The oak-leaves were to her like oak-leaves seen ruffling in a mirror ... [and herself a figure] picking primroses that were only shadows or memories, or words. (p.19)

The unreality and meaninglessness of her life with Clifford also drive her into an even more meaningless affair with Michaelis, who, like Clifford, is a writer with a passion for making "a display of nothingness" (p.53). Wragby to her is nothing but a dreadmill of words, with Clifford spinning yarns of nothingness, and his Cambridge cronies talking and spilling words all over the place. There are as many words at Wragby as there are dead leaves in the wood. They crumple up and turn to powder, "meaning really nothing" (p.52). "The fear of nothing-

ness" in Connie's life begins to affect her deeply, and she feels that her life is "just so many words. The only reality [is] nothingness, and over it a hypocrisy of words" (p.52).

The sense of deathliness in Connie's life finds an objective correlative in the state of things in the wood:

In the wood all was utterly inert and motionless, only great drops fell from the bare boughs, with a hollow little crash. For the rest, among the old trees was depth within depth of grey, hopeless inertia, silence, nothingness. (p.67)

In such a gloomy state, Connie walks to the gamekeeper's cottage with a message from her husband, and is shocked into life-awareness by the naked body of Mellors who is washing himself in the backyard. As Connie enters the gamekeeper's premises, she has crossed "the gulf between the unliving and the living", Moynahan says¹⁹. The initial mode of contact then is a visual one, but the "visionary experience" (p.68) is enough to shock her into life again. Thus far, the artist is in command and the sense of deathliness in Connie's life is well-captured. Unfortunately the meddling prophet tips the balance, by making Connie too conscious of the message she is supposed to receive in a non-mental way. We are told that

She wanted to forget, to forget the world, and all the dreadful, carrion-bodied people. "Ye must be born again! I believe in the resurrection of the body! Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it shall by no means bring forth. When the crocus cometh forth I too will emerge and see the sun!" In the wind of March endless phrases swept through her consciousness. (p.87)

The subtle effect achieved in the previous chapters is spoiled by the prophet's blunt and obtrusive statements here.

The evocation of Spring in the wood, and the allusion to Persephone in the subsequent pages are appropriate to the fertility myth, but there is something trite and self-conscious in the writing:

19. Moynahan, p.166.

Little gusts of sunshine blew, strangely bright, and lit up the celandine at the wood's edge, under the hazel-rods, they spangled out bright and yellow ... The first windflowers were out, and all the wood seemed pale with the pallor of endless little anemones, sparkling the shaken floor. "The world has grown pale with thy breath." But it was the breath of Persephone, this time; she was out of hell on a cold morning. (p.88)

This is reminiscent of the verbal-painter in the young Lawrence when he wrote his first novel. However, the description of the encounter between Connie and Mellors in the same chapter is an example of the artist at his best. The hesitation on both sides, the attraction as well as recoil in their interaction are handled delicately and convincingly. Their actual coming together in the next encounter is also one of the best and most touching episodes in the book. The fertility of the outside world - as embodied in the brooding hens and the sudden burst of wild life in the wood - shows up the sterility of Connie's own life.

How terrible it was that it should be spring, and everything cold-hearted, cold-hearted. Only the hens, fluffed so wonderfully on the eggs, were warm with their hot, brooding female bodies! Connie felt herself living on the brink of fainting all the time. (p.117)

As she crouches to watch the newly-hatched chickens prancing around, she partakes of their sense of wonder and mystery of life. This makes Connie come back to the hut a few days later. Knowing that Connie wishes to touch the little fluffy chicks, Mellors puts his hand into the coop to get one for her.

"There!" he said, holding out his hand to her. She took the little drab thing between her hands, and there it stood, on its impossible little stalks of legs, its atom of balancing life trembling through its almost weightless feet into Connie's hands. But it lifted its handsome, clean-shaped little head boldly, and looked sharply round, and gave a little "peep". "So adorable! So cheeky!" she said softly.

The keeper, squatting beside her, was also watching with an amused face the bold little bird in her hands. Suddenly he saw a tear fall on to her wrist. (p.119)

Filled with pity and tenderness for her, the keeper responds to Connie "without knowing":

He laid his hand on her shoulder, and softly, gently, it began to travel down the curve of her back, blindly, with a blind stroking motion, to the curve of her crouching loins. And there his hand softly, softly, stroked the curve of her flank, in the blind instinctive caress. (p.120)

What Hough calls the "universal mana" in Lawrence's fiction is seen here flowing through the wild life in the wood, to the new-born chickens, and finally to the human beings who too are slowly waking up to the tremendous life force in Nature. Without the interruption of the prophet, the artist is able to show us in concrete terms the ebb and flow of "the tide of sensitive awareness", cleansing and freshening "the passional secret places of life" (p.104). He has also managed to show us what real tenderness is, without alerting us to the didactic purpose of the book.

Other examples of the novelist's achievement lie in the alterations Lawrence makes in the final version of the novel with regard to the characterisation of Connie and Mellors²⁰. In the first version, Connie is described as tormented by her sexual needs: "I am possessed, I know I am possessed," she says (The First Lady Chatterley, p.24). Her reflection on Parkin and his wife is most revealing of what she herself treasures in the gamekeeper:

20. For a different view, please see Geoffrey Strickland, "The First Lady Chatterley's Lover", Encounter 36 (Jan.1971), pp. 44-52. Strickland, who argues that The First Lady Chatterley is the best of the three versions, does not realise that Lawrence has added depth and colour to the protagonists in the final version. Moreover, the kind of "social historian's vision" he applauds in the first version is not at all absent in the last version. Instead, those realistic details enhancing the differences between the classes are introduced more sparingly and effectively. Connie's resentment of Mellors's lack of delicacy in not turning his back when he buttons down his breeches (p.180) is a good example.

She did not mind, really, what things Parkin did or had done. She only minded the sharp intensity of his passion for her.

At the same time she loathed the squalor of other people. Not the wife so much. She understood the demon of a wife. The woman no doubt loved him. (The First Lady Chatterley, p.150)

In the final version, Connie's satisfaction with the gamekeeper is more than just sexual. Her initial resignation and passivity, her subsequent effort in willing herself into separateness, and her unconditioned submission of her body and will later are traced and shown with great psychological depth. Mellors too is portrayed in greater depth than Parkin. In bridging the gap between himself and Connie, Parkin has little to lose, but for Mellors, there is a great price, because it means that "his recoil away from the outer world" (p.91) will come to an end. In making Mellors a more sophisticated and articulate person, Lawrence presents us a more interesting character, but he also falls into the old trap of letting himself preach too much through his alter ego, as it has been shown in the previous section.

Whenever the doctrine is forgotten, the characters in Lawrence's novel usually come to life. A good example of this is Mrs. Bolton, who is not a particularly likeable person, but is drawn with great psychological insight, understanding and sympathy. Her mixed feelings about the upper class (as shown in her interactions with Clifford), her gossiping viciousness and vulgarity are vividly rendered. Lawrence's sheer power of mimicry is brilliantly displayed in his adaptation of Mrs. Bolton's turns of expression when her life is described. The scene in which Mrs. Bolton recalls her own marriage to Connie is a fine piece of fictional writing, showing "one of the unaccountable flows and ebbs of sympathy that exist between people" (p.168). Yet, the episode is spoiled by the interfer-

ence of the prophet, who turns Mrs. Bolton into a preacher of the gospel of "touch".

Even Connie, who is on the whole sufficiently distanced from the author, becomes a mere agent for the author to register his own feelings and thoughts, whenever the occasion to preach arises. In Chapter 11, for instance, page after page we hear the strident voice of Lawrence the prophet, attacking the ugliness and materialism of industrial England. The editorial commentary on the historical changes in England, despite its thematic relevancy, is not really incorporated into the narration. When the authorial impressions and thoughts are grafted into the consciousness of Connie in her trip through England, they still sound like a false note. This is another example of the artist's failure to keep the enthusiastic prophet in check.

In general, the artist in Lady Chatterley's Lover has managed to keep the demon quiet, despite a few lapses as when he shares the demon's racial and sexual prejudices. The sense of artistic patterning is displayed in the structural and thematic unity, the economy of words and the selection of episodes. Because of the single focus on Connie's love story, and the movement from realism to symbolism (as revealed in the rewriting of the novel), Lady Chatterley's Lover is the most fable-like novel ever written by Lawrence. This resurrection story would be a breakthrough for Lawrence after his long period of spiritual recuperation since Women in Love, if the prophet had not been shouting the moral at us too loudly.

CONCLUSION

To be alive, to be man alive, to be whole man alive: that is the point. And at its best,¹ the novel, and the novel supremely, can help you¹.

This is the belief of Lawrence the prophet. Therefore, the artist in Lawrence writes novels with the aim of leading "the flow of our sympathetic consciousness" away "in recoil from things gone dead", and into new places - "the secret places of life" which only the demon knows². Given his moralistic view of art, Lawrence the artist would have no inspiration or impetus to write at all had it not been for the presence of the demon as well as the prophet.

As it has been demonstrated in our present study, the three voices of Lawrence are indigenous to his fiction. The demon and the prophet, like the lion and the unicorn in Lawrence's metaphor, are perpetually at war with but necessary to the existence of each other. The effect of the see-sawing between them on Lawrence's art is most interesting, and a consistent pattern can be traced if we chart the "ups and downs" of these two figures in the four novels we have covered.

In the beginning of his career, Lawrence's primary aim is to understand his personal problems caused by the demon in himself by casting them into his fiction. Consequently, it is not surprising that his first novel should be dominated by the demon and is autobiographical in nature. As the head begins to understand the heart, the novelist gains confidence and begins to assume the role of the prophet, who in the first novel is rather diffident and hesitant. By the time Lawrence wrote his fourth novel, Women in Love, he was at the peak of his career.

1. DHL, "Why the novel matters", SLC, p.107.

2. Lady C, p.104.

The chief preoccupations in this novel are not just Lawrence's personal problems: they are the concerns of the whole human race. Mankind is seen to be at a cultural and spiritual end, which is dramatised convincingly in fictional terms. Paradoxically, Women in Love remains a great novel both despite and because of the prophetic urge in Lawrence. The faith and confidence of the prophet has a most decisive effect on the success of Lawrence's art. The validity of this statement is further proved by Kangaroo, in which the prophet's loss of faith has directly caused the artist's resignation. The artist in Kangaroo is hardly guided by the head, but is compelled to write by the "bullying passion" of the frenzied demon. However, as Lawrence gradually cast off his misanthropic demon and regained his faith in the instructive power of the novel, his fiction revived. Lady Chatterley's Lover, which is Lawrence's last novel, shows the artist at some of his best moments. Unfortunately, the over-enthusiastic prophet once revived tends to preach too loudly and upon many occasions drowns the voice of the artist altogether.

We may conclude that whenever the demon's voice predominates in Lawrence's fiction, his novel tends to be autobiographical, which often leads to the lack of distance between the artist and the devil-ridden hero. On the other hand, when the prophet speaks louder than the artist, Lawrence's work tends to be analytical and didactic. The see-sawing between the demon and the prophet is inevitable and essential to Lawrence's art. But, only when the artist manages to keep them in check and reconcile the conflicts between his heart and his head, can Lawrence maintain the fine trembling balance which to him is the morality of the novel. Of all the modern English novelists, D.H. Lawrence is the only novelist who admits again and again

that he is driven to write by his own demon, and that he writes with a conscious intention to teach. This is why he warns us repeatedly not to trust the teller but trust the tale - a caveat that has alerted me initially to the unreliability of the teller and subsequently to the discrimination and present investigation of the three voices in D.H. Lawrence's fiction.

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