THE SYMBOLIC MODE OF D.H. LAURENCE

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Lawrence wrote in *Apocalypse*:

We have lost almost entirely the great and intrinsically developed sensual awareness or sense-awareness, a sense-knowledge of the ancients. It was a great depth of knowledge arrived at direct, by instinct and intuition as we say, not by reason. It was a knowledge based not on words but on images. The abstraction was not into generalisations or into qualities, but into symbols.

In this passage, he has defined those qualities which characterise his own writing, for Lawrence believes that "the novel as a tremulation can make the whole man alive, tremble ..." and so tries "to reveal the relation between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment". Thus to capture the old sense-awareness, to convey the living moment and to awaken, in the reader, a sense of his emotional self, he turns to the image and symbol. As Hough so truly says, in each of Lawrence's novels "there is .... a consistent movement in his writing from naturalism to symbol,

from actuality to myth ..."  

One must, however, understand the nature of the symbolic pattern which Lawrence uses to express his ideas and to portray his characters in their conflicts. The structure of his novels depends on a network of images and naturalistic descriptions which, in the novel, develop to a symbolic level. The symbols, which emerge naturally from the development of the novel and are built from images and quasi-symbols, are what Eliseo Vivas terms "constitutive symbols". That is, they are:

... a creative synthesis of empirical matter in dramatic and moral terms and it functions categorically .... and because the finished product is an ordered whole it is endowed with significance, not in the sense that it stands for something else, but that it stands for itself, that in itself it has .... order, coherence, self-sufficiency and interrelatedness ...  

When Lawrence remains true to his perceptions and ideas and allows the symbols which express this awareness to develop naturally from their source, he achieves the creative synthesis of which Vivas speaks. When he ignores the "sense-knowledge" which derives from his intuition and builds a system of images and symbols in a rigid pattern similar to the pattern of the chase figures on which he comments also in Apocalypse, he produces the pseudo-symbol

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6. *Apocalypse* op. cit. p. 87
and so defeats his own purpose of creating the ebb and flow of life and allows his means to override his end.

The purpose of the following chapters is to examine the symbolic mode as used by Lawrence in *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, *The Plumed Serpent* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and to estimate, in each of these novels how far the author captured "the sensual awareness" by examining the relationship of the symbolic pattern to the characterisation and the ideas expressed and to see if, in the course of his career, there were any developments or changes in Lawrence's use of this mode.
I. IN QUEST OF THE RAINBOW

I
don't care about physiology of matter - but somehow - that which is physic - non-human, in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element - which causes one to conceive a character in a certain moral scheme and make him consistent.

This letter of D.H. Lawrence has caused much comment and has produced certain erroneous conceptions of the characters in The Rainbow. Thus Aldington writes:

Under his analysis his characters seem to dissolve out of life as individuals into elemental states of passion or ecstasy or rage or misery.

while Graham Hough claims "It is not a great novel of character, for Lawrence is more interested in the phases than in the people who enact them ..." Such utterances overlook the quite naturalistic portions of the book: Anna, the small girl, accompanying Tom Brangwen to market; Tom Brangwen on the night of Lydia's confinement; Ursula teaching Standard Five, St. Philip's Church School. They

also assume a non-differentiation in the varying love affairs of Tom and Lydia, Anna and Will, Ursula and Skrebensky that is not justified. True, Lawrence is aiming to describe a deeper strata of human emotion than has formerly been treated; true, at the level to which he delves much must be similar but, in The Rainbow, the similarities and differences are drawn with much care.

The difficulties encountered by critics in comprehending the complex nature of the characters and their problems seem to derive from the method Lawrence uses in setting forth his novel. The message of The Rainbow, the nature of its characters and the terms of their conflicts are portrayed through a system of images and symbols which gains in complexity as the novel progresses. What is meant by this statement may, perhaps, be seen best by examining the three different phases of the book - the marriage of Lydia and Tom Brangwen, the marriage of Anna and Will, and the development of Ursula.

The relationship of Tom and Lydia is less complex than those of their descendents. Tom, in the same way as Anna and Ursula desires the strange and unknown in his life and so marries the foreign Lydia Lensky. This marriage is his success in life. He becomes centred in his Polish wife. Despite the vaguely unfulfilled feeling he retains, he has attained something positive.

The growing love and knowledge of each in relationship with the other, both before and after their marriage, is
conveyed by a parallelism between the emotional states of
the husband and wife and the external forces of Nature.
Thus, when Tom Brangwen proposes to Lydia, he leaves the
vicarage in "clanging torment" of passion. He feels the
intimacy of her embrace, yet is troubled by her utter
foreignness. As he walks home, the sky reflects the man's
inner turmoil:

Big holes were blown into the sky, the moonlight
blew about. Sometimes a high moon, liquid-brilliant,
scudded across a hollow space and took cover under
electric, brown-iridescent cloud-edges. Then there
was a blot of cloud and shadow. Then somewhere in the
night a radiance again ... 4

Lydia, after Paul Lensky's death, suffers a spiritual null-
ification. Her whole life becomes dark and terrible; "she
was like one walking in the Under-world, where the shades
throng intelligibly but have no connexion with one ..." 5
Gradually she emerges from her separate existence. This
process is developed also by a parallel with the natural
world. As she regains a consciousness of the living world
around her, she becomes aware of flowers and is troubled by
the light of the sea - incidentally, here may be noted a
light-dark opposition which increases in importance as the
novel develops. She has to notice how the flowers blow in
the wind, how the sea changes in colour at dawn and, in her
re-awakening, she, herself, is likened to the natural world.

p. 49 - Hereafter cited as *The R*
5. *The R* p. 51
The warmth flowed through her, she felt herself opening, unfolding, asking as a flower opens in full request under the sun, as the beaks of tiny birds open flat, to receive, to receive.

After the marriage, the emotional states of the Brangwens find their counterpart in the cycle of the seasons. Lydia's pregnancy develops through the autumn into the winter and, as the year progresses, so Anna's fretfulness and Brangwen's heaviness of heart increase.

The darkest days of the year came on, the child was fretful, sighing as if some oppression were on her, running hither and thither without relief. And Brangwen went about at his work, heavy, his heart heavy as the sodden earth.

The simplicity of their existence is expressed through the farming life itself. Tom can derive a joy in life in working the earth while even Anna's restless soul can be put at ease by the sight of the munching cows. In the background of this rural life, however, is the awareness of the emergence of a new mechanical world. Thus a canal runs across The Marsh, the fumes of the mines sometimes reach the farmers as they harvest, while the same landowners encounter the grimy colliers returning home. Yet this side of life remains in the background, to become prominent in the life of the grandchild, Ursula, where, as a symbol, it is central; as a condition of life, unable to be ignored.

There is still a ghostly or unreal quality about the

6. The R p. 56
7. The R p. 72
8. The R p. 73
9. The R p. 73
10. The R p. 12-13
mechanical world in this first phase:

... the canal embankment ... rose like a high rampart near at hand, so that occasionally a man's figure passed in silhouette, or a man and a towing horse traversed the sky. 11

Underlying Lawrence's treatment is a certain orthodoxy. Dickens uses the landscape frequently to express the mood of a scene. Thus he uses the fog on the marsh effectively in Great Expectations, and the mist in A Tale of Two Cities. Hardy is concerned with the parallelism of the natural forces with human nature too. In his novels, these natural forces serve as the oracles of fate and establish an ethical standpoint against which the characters are judged. They are used also for purely theatrical effects. Thus Tess, in Tess of the D'Urbervilles, reaches the end of her struggle with life and inexorable fate beneath the ruined arches of the Druids. The storm and the hayrick fire combine with tempestuous force in Far from the Madding Crowd, paralleling Oak's own emotional state. Yet Lawrence's use of this method goes further. In The White Peacock, he uses scenery in the old manner, mainly to establish atmosphere, but, even there, there is a hint of his furthering of this technique to express, in concrete form, the deepest psychological responses of people to life in varying situations. This hint is seen in Lettie's response to the reappearance of her father:

11. The R p. 12
Lately, however, she had noticed again the cruel pitiful crying of a hedgehog caught in a gin, and she had noticed the traps for the fierce little murderers, traps walled in with a small fence of fir, and baited with the guts of a killed rabbit. 12

With Lydia and Tom, the inner response is constantly linked with the outer world. The natural forces express the psychological reality. What is more, the images and parallels, here used, form the starting point in the development of a total symbolism in The Rainbow as a whole.

The relationship of Anna and Will is more complex. They find it far less easy to establish a stasis in either their physical and sexual relationships or in their spiritual needs. Thus Lawrence delves deeper into the roots of their conflicts, dissecting each phase of their emotional adjustment. The parallelism, used predominantly in the former phase, gives way, for the most part, to a more complex set of images. The metaphor and simile are the basic means used to depict Anna and Will's struggle, although the state of the natural world does tend to parallel the life of the young couple. Thus when they first meet:

The sun shone brightly on little showers of buttercup down the bank, in the fields the fools-parley was foamy, held very high and proud above a number of flowers that flitted in the greenish twilight of the mowing-grass below 13

But, as has been noted, Lawrence's use of simile and

13. The R p. 110
metaphor is more important.

The imagery resolves, for the most part, into a dichotomy of light and dark images. On one hand, this dichotomy is developed in the conflict between Will's love of the church structure and the church mystery and Anna's adherence to the natural world. On the other, it is developed completely in terms of nature. It occurs first in the courtship scenes. Thus Anna reflects on the church which so fascinates Will:

And the land seemed to be covered with a vast, mystic church, reserved in gloom .... Almost it hurt her, to look out of the window and see the lilacs towering in the sunshine ...

and Will, walking home from Brangwen's, finds "the stars in heaven whirling fiercely about the blackness of his head ..."

When he goes over the canal bridge:

The evening glowed in its last deep colours, the sky was dark blue, the stars glittered from afar, very remote and approaching above the darkening cluster of the farm, above the paths of crystal along the edge of the heavens

This contrast between the light and the dark, expressed in these passages, is, for the most part, in terms of the heavens, and reaches a culmination in the harvest scene which is also the culmination of their pre-marriage life.

In the sky is a golden moon. In contrast, the landscape is grey and in shadow, the air is silver. All has the mystical quality previously suggested in Will's awareness

14. The R p. 113
15. The R p. 116
16. The R p. 121
of the stars and the far off heavens. At first, Will is the shadow - "He was coming, walking shadowily with the gossamer dusk ..." 17 - while Anna is associated with the moon and light - "Then she turned away towards the moon, which seemed glowingly to uncover her bosom every time she faced it." 18 — then he is in the moonlight and she in the shadow. As they finally converge, he is silvery and shadowy from the moonlight while she shines and glitters. This is their coming together, but Lawrence still stresses their apartness that meets only for a brief moment.

After marriage, this dichotomy is intensified in the conflict of Will and Anna, which leads to the death of Will's soul. From now on, Will is usually equated with darkness and Anna with light; "She seemed to have sunlight inside her. Her heart beating seemed like sunlight upon him." 19 Will, on the other hand, has periods when he feels "black and clinched". With this contrast are associated the shining flower and the blind mole images. It is through these metaphors that Lawrence conveys their conflict:

Then, when he came, she rose with her hands full of love, as of flowers, radiant, innocent. A dark spasm crossed his face. As she watched, her face shining and flower-like with innocent love, his face grew dark and tense 20

or:

He remained at Yew Cottage, black and clinched, his mind dead. He was unable to work at his woodcarving. He went on working monotonously at the garden, blindly like a mole. 21

17. The R p. 122
18. The R p. 122
19. The R p. 148
20. The R p. 182
21. The R p. 152
This mole comparison becomes associated with underworld and death imagery. Thus "he felt as if he were in a black violent underworld" 22; "something clayey and ugly" 23; and always Lawrence emphasises the blindness of Will, the mole who finally is buried beneath the fecundity of his wife.

Again there is a culmination of the light - dark conflict but where it was creative in the harvest scene, it is now destructive. In the cathedral, Anna destroys Will's dark world. She soon notices the contrast of the cathedral world and her own natural world:

After all, there was the sky outside, and in here, in this mysterious half-night, when her soul leapt with the pillars upwards, it was not to the stars and the crystalline dark space ... 24

She makes him aware of this and so the "half-night" becomes dead for him, "a shapely heap of dead matter - but dead, dead." 25

Yet the darkness of Will is not always defeated by the "sunlight" of Anna. In the image of the cat, he is triumphant. As the cat he waits for darkness and then compels her to him and in this world of darkness their marriage is real. 26

As can be seen from previous examples, the animal

22. The R p. 151
23. The R p. 154
24. The R p. 90
25. The R p. 92
26. The R p. 216
image is very important in conveying the relationship of
the two. The cat and the mole have been mentioned. Also
important, however, are the metaphors of animals of prey.
Although images of the tiger and leopard are used, the bird
image is predominant. Where the light-dark images gave
the sense of opposition in the flux of life and death,
spirituality and sensuality, the hawk-eagle images convey
the fierceness of the battle. They also imply the earthly,
natural quality of the fight as compared with the conflict
between Ursula and Skrebensky, where the moon and sun are
opposed to the earth and ashes.

Paralleling the development of the light-dark
opposition, the bird images grow in intensity as the battle
between the couple becomes fiercer and more deadly. The
bird is first equated with Will in the courtship scene in
the dairy:

"It was quick, cleanly done, like a bird that
swoops and sinks close, closer..." 27

Even at this juncture, in the use of "swoop" and "sink"
Lawrence hints at a predatory quality in Will. The bird
next occurs in conjunction with the serpent - both being
figures in Will's wood-carving. As the bird lifts its
wings for flight, the serpent swipes up to it. 28

When Will approaches Brangwen to ask if he may marry Anna,
he is like a "caged hawk" 29 and Anna, when the object of

27. The R  p. 117
28. The R  p. 121
29. The R  p. 126
his anger, is "like a bird being beaten down." 30 When she has made the first break in his belief in the church and she tries to win him back, his eyes "remained intent, and far, and proud like a hawk's ..." until "He came to her fierce and hard, like a hawk striking and taking her ..." 31

Already, the meaning of the church has been discussed in relation with the opposition between light and dark. It has a more central significance, however, in understanding Will's nature and in comprehending Ursula's later break from and disillusion with the church and her father.

It represents a mystic streak in Will's nature that is beyond Anna. In her childhood, Anna could feel a mystery in the rosary beads but she shunned it; 32 now she resents Will's communion with the symbolic lamb which, to her, resembles the toy lambs of the annual fair. 33 She cannot understand, so she must destroy. For Will, within the church, there is the meaning which Anna can sense without it. In it, he feels eternity and resurrection and the rainbow which Ursula will have to seek so painfully outside it:

Away from time, always outside of time! Between east and west, between dawn and sunset, the church lay like a seed in germination, silenced after death. Containing birth and death, potential, with all the noise and transition of life, the cathedral remained

30. The R p. 154
31. The R p. 162
32. The R p. 106
33. The R pp. 159–60
hushed, a great involved seed, whereof the flower
would be radiant life inconceivable, but whose beginning
and whose end were the circle of silence, spanned round
with the rainbow 34

His sense of mystery and his creative urge are also
represented by his wood-carving of Adam and Eve. Again
there is a development within Will, seen in his changing
attitude towards the carving.

He begins the carving as he first feels his love for
Anna. Adam is asleep as if suffering, Eve is a "small
vivid, naked female shape ... issuing like a flame ..." 35
He seems aware of the life present in the female, in Anna.
The carving progresses during the honeymoon period and he
wishes to finish his Eve "tender and sparkling" 36 but he
is now aware of the elusive quality of his woman, her light
and radiance with which the Lord must still wrestle — with
his own soul. Will is aware too, now, of his own participa-
tion and his sense of conflict. As the battle heightens
and he becomes dark, blind and mole-like, he is unable to
wrestle with it at all and, finally, he destroys the work.

Will is, however, allied to the death process from the
beginning, as Lawrence shows by counterpointing the gloomy
inside of the church with the shining lilac, and the
limited sweep of the roof with the eternal arch of the sky.
The deadness of the Adam—Eve panel also has its counterpoint.

34. The R pp. 201-02
35. The R p. 120
36. The R p. 149
Directly juxtaposed with its destruction is the quickening of Anna's womb:

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

Directly, it occurred to her that she was with child.

Thus, in a sense, Will fails himself and Anna by worshipping the artifact instead of living in the flesh. He fails in the same way as Skrebensky does later and as Gerald does in *Women in Love*, by rejecting the living for the dead.

But Will's problem is more complex. Anna is also responsible for his failure. He did have an awareness of the mystery and, instead of helping him to sense it in the living universe, Anna deliberately destroys the root of his awareness and leaves Will with a hollow symbol. The responsibility for his failure to live thus lies with both of them. That the possibility was within him is seen in Lawrence's use of the flower image even in his description of Will's ultimate defeat:

He was aware of some limit of himself, of something unformed in his very being, of some buds which were not ripe in him, some folded centres of darkness which would never develop and unfold whilst he was alive in the body.

Ursula presents a more difficult problem, for Lawrence. In examining Lydia and Tom, and Anna and Will, he is concerned

37. *The R* p. 175
only with love and its consummation in marriage. This is, after all, for Lydia and Anna, an end in itself while, for Tom and Will, it becomes so by their absorption into the female element. Ursula, however, wishes to follow the rainbow, where her mother decided to stay at home to breed children. What is more, she is born into a world where the avenues to explore are increasing. Besides, the conflict between the old, agrarian world and the new, mechanical world can no longer be ignored. Thus Lawrence presents Ursula's search in some detail. He looks at the various solutions offered. The problem of love still remains the most important question but it is no longer the only one. Furthermore, in delineating the two earlier marriages, Lawrence traces the development of the relationships to their ultimate culminations, but Ursula is only to find the promise of an answer to her problems at the end of the book. She still has far to go.

To present this complexity, Lawrence uses two principle approaches. On the one hand, he develops further the metaphor and symbol method used earlier in the book, this mainly in the treatment of her affair with Skrebensky. On the other, he presents a series of scenes and episodes, revealing the different phases of the quest. This latter partakes partly of the imagistic method but it depends, for the most part, on a more conventional treatment. It is interesting to examine this side, however, as in Women in
Love, Lawrence fuses it with the symbolic and metaphorical level, almost completely.

Ursula, during the part of her life portrayed in The Rainbow, experiences a series of illusions, followed by a complete disillusionment. The greater her illusion the greater is the subsequent reaction.

Thus, her first illusion concerns her father:

But to Ursula, everything her father did was magic ... he was always a centre of magic and fascination to her. She seemed to run in the shadow of some dark, potent secret of which she would not, of whose existence even she dared not become conscious, it cast such a spell over her, and so darkened her mind. 39

But a father-love is a normal part of childhood. What is different in Ursula's case is the intensity with which she endows it. Yet her father also calls forth the unnatural response which causes her to be conscious too early. The disillusionment partly stems from Ursula's growing awareness of his attitude to her.

Early on, the inherent conflict emerges from the scene of the potato setting and Ursula's small wrong-doings, such as walking across the seed-bed. Roused to an intense pitch of emotion, her reaction is extreme and she believes soon that the world is malevolent, "even her adored father". 40 There follow Will's escapades with Ursula at the canal and at the fair where both wills strain against each other - Ursula's disillusionment develops to a new intensity here from her father's reaction to Anna's scorn:

His golden-brown eyes glittered, he had a strange, cruel little smile. And as the child watched him, for

39. The R p. 239
40. The W p. 224
the first time in her life a disillusion came over her, something cold and isolating. This disillusionment progresses gradually throughout Ursula's childhood, culminating in the complete alienation of woman in love.

A more important disillusionment, thematically, is that which derives from Ursula's relationship with her Uncle Tom. This again follows the familiar pattern of extreme devotion deriving from his romantic quality - "To Ursula he was a romantic, alluring figure" to extreme repulsion:

He too had something marshy about him - the succulent moistness and turgidity and the same brackish, nauseating effect of a marsh where life and decaying are one.

This phase of her disillusionment follows the metaphorical pattern. From seeing Tom as "romantic and alluring" at first, Ursula becomes aware of his animal-like qualities after Brangwen's funeral and, from this point, this aspect of the man is emphasised, culminating in Ursula's view of him as something utterly decayed.

The full significance of Uncle Tom is closely allied with Ursula's disillusion with Winifred Inger. Winifred is the female teacher to whom Ursula turns with adoring heart. With her, she is brought into contact with the woman in the man's world. She also meets, in this teacher, the sceptic who can strip all religion to two basic human emotions, fear and love. With her, Ursula gains contact

41. The R p. 236
42. The R p. 245
43. The R p. 351
with a new view of life, at the opposite extreme of her
tmother's fecundity, but, as against her mother's fecundity,
Ursula recoils.

The essential corruption of the relationship is hinted
at early. There is definitely a latent sexuality in their
attraction for each other. This is especially clear in the
swimming scene:

Oh, the beauty of the firm, white, cool flesh! Oh,
the wonderful firm limbs. If she could but hold them,
lift them, press them between her own small breasts.

Ursula, herself, becomes increasingly aware of the unnatural-
ness of the relationship and the corruption. As Lawrence
develops this awareness, he also links Winifred with the
industrial life: "At the bottom of her was a black pit of
despair". Now Tom and Winifred become one as human
symbols of the mechanical world and it is as such that
Ursula rejects them. Like the machine, they are monstrous
and dead:

Hatred sprang up in Ursula's heart. If she could
she would smash the machine. Her soul's action should
be the smashing of the great machine.

and

Her coldness for Winifred should never cease ....
She saw gross, ugly movements in her mistress, she saw
a clayey, inert, unquickened flesh, that reminded her
of the great prehistoric monster.

It may be noted here that Tom is also allied to this
mechanical world by profession, being manager of a colliery
in Yorkshire, and it is in this capacity that he finds his
His only happy moments, his only moments of pure freedom were when he was serving the machine. Then, and then only, when the machine caught him up, was he free from the hatred of himself ... 48

On the one hand then, Ursula's rejection of Tom and Winifred marks the close of another phase in her quest further, but, on the other, it symbolises/rejection of the mechanical life now rapidly developing in the world. In a sense, her later rejection of St. Philip's school and of College derives from the same cause. All embody the mechanical, imprisoned world. As a symbol of this, they may be compared with Ursula's loosing from the Church, which becomes a symbol of the old agrarian life, the goal towards which the former Brangwen wives strove.

In her exploration of a further world apart from love, Ursula's next disillusionment is school-teaching. This too follows a pattern of high fantasy followed by horrid truth. At first:

... she would be the gleaming sun of the school, the children would blossom like little weeds, the teachers like tall, hard plants would burst into rare flower 49

Yet before long, where she was to be the master, she is the slave:

Her heart was so black and tangled in the teaching, her personal self was shut in prison, abolished, she was subjugate to a bad, destructive will. 50

This time, Ursula rejects the horror by a form of escapism.

48. The R p. 350
49. The R p. 367
50. The R p. 384
She does not allow teaching to crush her as it has done the Harbys but is able to disentangle her soul from its meshes and teach while abstracted from it.

This section of Ursula's development is treated the most naturalistically of all: the scenes of helplessness before Standard Five, the bullying headmaster, the thrashing of Williams. But, even here, there is a symbolic thread. The school is yet another machine imprisoning the free souls of man. This is emphasised by Lawrence's contrast of the imprisoned man with the tethered wild horse. Thus Ursula notes of Mr Harby "that he was like a persistent strong creature tethered" 51 while she herself was:

... like a young filly that has been broken in to the shafts, and has lost its freedom. And now she was suffering bitterly from the agony of the shafts. ... To shafts like these she would never submit for long. But she would know them. She would serve them that she might destroy them 52

College suffers the same fate. At first it seems the shrine of priests at which she worships but, by her second year, she sees it as a second-hand shop which "was only a little side-show to the factories of the town" 53

This pattern of illusion and disillusionment recurs in her love affair with Skrebensky. As a girl, she sees him as one of the Sons of God. With him, she feels herself to be above the world or in a magic land, yet even by Fred's

51. The R p. 388
52. The R p. 406
53. The R p. 434
wedding, she realises that her soul is apart from him. 
But during their separation she builds up a greater illusion of his soul and power:

He seemed like the gleaming dawn, yellow, radiant, of a long, grey, ashy day. The memory of him was like the thought of the first radiant hours of morning. And here was the blank grey ashiness of latter daytime ... He could open to her the gates of succeeding freedom and delight ...

This vision finally disappears, however, to leave him as one with the world of ash, more dead for having left it for a time.

What is interesting in the pattern is the building up of different episodes, presenting different facets of Ursula's progress, while a link is maintained by a thread of image - the prison. Thus Tom and Winifred are imprisoned in the small industrial town and thus in mechanical life; school is a prison and College is the side-show to the same type of prison; Skrebensky is to be the door of freedom from these bars. This foreshadows the development of the love of Ursula and Birkin, Gudrun and Gerald in different episodes linked by the constants, a set of developing symbols and images. Here, however, the treatment is less far from the conventional, is still in an embryonic form. This is least true of the love affair with Skrebensky, where the pattern is developed almost entirely in terms of images and symbols.

54. The R pp. 438-39
Ursula, throughout all these episodes, is presented descriptively by a series of images. Where the eagle concept of Will and Anna's love was important in understanding the conflict, and the mole-cat images were necessary in extending the nature of Will's darkness, the images used of Ursula are mainly secondary. They establish the essential and unchanging nature which exists behind the change and development of her character.

The images used of Ursula give a sense of her wildness, her delicacy and her intangibility. Thus she is compared with or described as the deer afraid of dogs, the flower, an illumined cloud, a dryad, a bird, a ball of down, a moth, glimmery gossamer and a filly. When Skrebensky kisses her, he alights on her as the butterfly does on the flower, and when she walks in joy, her feet are as "breezes in motion" 55

Her other-worldliness is also stressed in her tendency to fantasize. Where Anna, as a child, was aware of the geese as geese 56, and as a young mother, of the blue caps as blue caps, 57 Ursula translates her surroundings into another world. The old parish room changes magically:

She flitted silently along the terraces, where jewelled lizards basked upon the stone, and did not move when her shadow fell upon them. In the utter stillness she heard the tinkle of the fountain, and smelled the roses whose blossoms hung rich and motionless. So she drifted ... past the water and the swans, to the noble park, where, underneath a great oak, a doe all dappled lay ... 58

55. The R p. 300
56. The R p. 68
57. The R p. 194
58. The R p. 266
Magic is, in fact, Ursula's keyword. The kingfisher is, for her, the "witness of the order of enchantment",59 and her grandmother's romantic tales of Poland become symbols for her.

It is against this background, which carefully underlines Ursula's strange and elusive nature that the two central sets of symbols also stand: The Church on one side and the Moon, Sun and Sea on the other.

The Church is the fading symbol of Ursula's life. At first it is central. Sunday is special, the day set apart from the week. Her whole year is also lived in terms of the Christian cycle - the great joy of Christmas to the pain of the Crucifixion, to the Resurrection. Yet even at its height, the Church symbol is doomed in Ursula's world. Consider her conception of Jesus:

To her, Jesus was beautifully remote, shining in the distance, like a white moon at sunset, a crescent moon beckoning as it follows the sun, out of our ken.60

Even now, she cannot associate the Church with the everyday. Already Christ symbolises the cosmos which later draws her to itself. This conception is doomed, because, unlike her mother, she cannot ignore the mystic side of her nature, and unlike her father, she cannot dissociate the mystery from life. For Ursula naturally turns towards life and "the flesh" and away from death and "the word".

59. The R p. 268
60. The R p. 275
Thus, although she understands the symbols of the Church as her father does, she is like Anna in desiring fulfillment in the flesh. In her attempt to fuse the weekday world and the Church, her vision of Christ becomes erotic rather than spiritual:

So he must gather her body to his breast, that was strong with a broad bone, and which sounded with the beating of the heart, and which was warm with the life of which she partook, the life of the running blood. 61

Thus the Church image is already disintegrating before she meets Skrebensky for she has come to realise that "she was playing false, accepting the passion of Jesus for her own physical satisfaction". 62 But it is Skrebensky who brings about the final dissolution. He strips the Church of its magic and she must turn elsewhere for a religion.

The inner dissolution of the symbol is marked by the outer disarray:

Everything seemed wonderful, if dreadful, to her, the world tumbling into ruins, and she and he clambering unhurt, lawless over the face of it all. 63

This is the rejection of the past life with all its values, as is the rejection of Tom and Winifred, the rejection of the present with all its mechanical values.

The moon especially, but also the sun, and sea symbolise Ursula's aspiration for something perfect, wonderful and remote. As Lydia reawakens, conscious of the

61. The R p. 286
62. The R pp. 287-88
63. The R p. 297
flowers and the light of the sea, Ursula grows to consciousness with a knowledge of the moon and the sea. As Will's love grows, the stars reel above him and as he and Anna come together Anna feels as if "her bosom were heaving and panting with moonlight," 64 but Ursula becomes one with the moon and one with the stars:

He served her. She took him, she clasped him, clenched him close, but her eyes were open looking at the stars, it was as if the stars were lying with her and entering the unfathomable darkness of her womb, fathoming her at last ... 65

The symbol of the cosmos has here reached its height; the old life of the Church has faded completely. These two symbols stand at either end of Ursula's development, marking her transition from the past, through the present, to the future.

The intricacies of the image-symbol method are best seen by examining Ursula's love affair with Skrebensky. As the central issue in Tom and Lydia's life was their love, and also in Anna and Will's life, so Ursula's experience with Skrebensky marks the most significant portion of her development. This love affair shows Ursula's breaking away from the old world - Skrebensky completing the break with the Church - and it shows her reaching towards her highest aspiration, as she destroys Skrebensky, a representative of the "grey, ashy world".

64. The R p. 122
65. The R p. 465
As has been seen, Anton is, at the beginning, her
goal in her flight upwards. As previously, the course of
this love is traced through the familiar images.

The flower image represents Ursula's opening towards
Skrebensky's love. As the earlier flower images, in
connection with Anna, emphasised the delicacy of the love,
Ursula's images emphasise her essential pride in the wild-
ness and erectness of the flower. Thus: "Like a flower
shaking and wide-opened in the sun, she tempted him and
challenged him..." 66 or "Here she would open her female
flower like a flame, in this dimness that was more passion-
ate than light" 67 and, later, equating her flower-quality
with the supremacy of womanhood:

She became proud and erect, like a flower, putting
itself forth in its proper strength... she was Woman,
she was the whole of Woman in the human order. All-
containing, universal, how should she be limited to
individuality 68

Closely associated with the flower image is the corn-
harvest. As a background, it is important in the book.
In the harvest-time, Will and Anna come together, and, in
the harvest, Ursula's youthful love grows. Thus Fred's
wedding is at harvest close when "To Ursula, it was as if
the world had opened its purest, softest flower." 69

Like the flowers, the cornstacks reach a new dimension

66. The R pp. 302-03
67. The R P. 304
68. The R P. 344
69. The R p. 307
when associated with Ursula - the mystical dimension. To Skrebensky, when she first destroys him under the moon, they are transfigured:

... silvery and present under the night-blue sky, throwing dark substantial shadows, but themselves majestic and dimly present. She, like glimmering gossamer, seemed to burn among them, as they rose like cold fires to the silvery-bluish air.

The bird and wild animal imagery was important in Anna and Will's conflict, but the bird was dominant, whether the victim or the proud hawk. With Ursula's love, there is a different element. The wild beast image is important in their second stage of love. Here it is the snarling beast of the jungle that represents the bestial, destructive and sensual love that they are experiencing. This image occurs first when they meet again after many years:

He was a great rider, so there was about him some of a horseman's sureness and habitual definiteness of decision, also some of the horseman's animal darkness ... She could only feel the dark, heavy fixity of his animal desire.

As his kisses and love sink into her, Ursula partakes too of the animal quality - "her eyes dilated and shining like the eyes of a wild animal ..." 72; "She was free as a leopard that sends up its raucous cry in the night" 73; "Two quivering, unwilling creatures, they lingered on the edge of the darkness." 74

And she sees the rest of the

70. The R p. 321
71. The R p. 443
72. The R p. 448
73. The R p. 449
74. The R p. 451
world in this light. Thus she thinks of her professor "You are a lurking, blood-sniffing creature, with eyes peering out of the jungle darkness, snuffing for your desires ..." 75

This animal imagery links closely with the light-darkness opposition of Ursula's love. Again this opposition differs from the conflict of Anna and Will. The darkness is intrinsically separate from the light. On the one hand, it is the darkness of Ursula's world with Skrebensky outside the limited world light and as opposed to the artificial and thus mechanical light. In this way, the darkness represents for her the unknown and the strange:

This inner circle of light in which she lived and moved, wherein the trains rushed and the factories ground out their machine produce and the plants and the animals worked by the light of science and knowledge, suddenly it seemed like the area under an arc-lamp, wherein the moths and children played in the security of blinding light, not even knowing there was any darkness, because they stayed in the light." 76

During her relationship with Skrebensky, it becomes associated with the jungle and so the darkness symbol becomes merged with the wild beast metaphor.

There is another dimension to this light-dark imagery, however. This is the opposition of the radiant light of the heavens and the grey-ash light of the world. Here the light is the extension of the darkness envisaged by Ursula and quoted above. Before she has been like "a seed buried

75. The R p. 448
76. The R p. 437
in dry ash" "dark and unrevealed" 77 and now she has emerged into an awareness of the infinite cosmos. It is this light that Skrebensky cannot share and so he must return from the jungle darkness to the grey ash world. The opposition of "flame" and "ash" is an important image here, for "flame" is the quality of Ursula, that which is living and striving upwards. The "ash" of the world of Skrebensky is dead. This element of the dichotomy may be related to the theory elaborated by Birkin in Women in Love, of the emergence of new life after complete corruption and dissolution. Hence the jungle-darkness is both a source of death and life. It may mark a new beginning, or an end in itself, as it did for Skrebensky.

The dual function of these symbols has not been completely distinguished in The Rainbow, however, as may be seen especially in an examination of the light-darkness opposition of Will and Anna, as contrasted with the opposition discussed here. The darkness of Will definitely has affinities with the corruption through which Ursula passes, while Anna's light relates to the more intense light of Ursula. Yet here the two exist together, in a seesaw harmony, instead of forming a phoenix-like cycle, the pattern established in the Ursula-Skrebensky relationship. Again, Will's darkness integrates both the darkness of the

77. The R p. 437
jungle and of the grey ash, in the use of the mole and cat images, whereas, here, the two kinds are distinct. The duality of the symbols is not, in fact, clarified completely until *The Plumed Serpent*.

Before it has been noticed that, in the marriage of Tom and Lydia, the industrial world, although present, played little part. Now it is of the utmost importance.

Associated with the light-darkness opposition of the jungle, it draws together Ursula's rejection of the mechanical world in her experiences with Winifred, Uncle Tom, school-teaching and College, and her rejection of the world and its belief and morality, in her liaison with Skrebensky. Even early in their love, in Ursula's girlhood, the insistent presence of the industrial world is already stressed:

Ursula and Anton Skrebensky walked along the ridge of the canal between. The berries on the hedges were crimson and bright red, above the leaves. The glow of evening and the wheeling of the solitary peewit and the faint cry of the birds came to meet the shuffling noise of the pits, the dark, fuming stress of the town opposite ...

The opposition is extended when they first lie together:

Coming out of the lane along the darkness, with the dark space spreading down to the wind, and the twinkling lights of the station below, the far-off windy chuff of a shunting train ..., the glow of the furnaces along the railway to the right, their steps began to falter. They would soon come out of the darkness into the lights. It was like turning back. It was unfulfilment ... they lingered on the

78. *The R* p. 309
edge of the darkness, peering out at the lights and
the machine-glimmer beyond. 79

In Anna and Will's love, there are two culminations
where the conflict and love reach a solution and where the
various images fuse. In Ursula and Skrebensky's love, there
are three such scenes, the first and last being destructive.
In each, there is a progression in Ursula's reaching forward
to the cosmos.

The first such scene takes place at the wedding.
Underlying the whole scene is the symbol of water. It,
like the darkness, is the unknown. It is powerful and all
absorbing:

They were both absorbed into a profound silence,
into a deep fluid underwater energy that gave them
unlimited strength. All the dancers were waving
intertwined in the flux of music, passed and repassed
before the fire, the dancing feet danced silently by
into the darkness. It was a vision of the depths
of the underworld, under the great flood. 80

The flood of this dance washes Ursula and Anton into a new
world, as it were. In this scene, the images of the moon
and the water fuse as Ursula strains towards the former.
"her body opened wide like a quivering anemone, a soft,
dilated invitation touched by the moon". 81

The key-note to the following passage is its
paradoxical nature. The landscape and Ursula share in
this quality and Anton is forced to the outside. Thus,
while the shadows of the cornstacks are of the normal world,

79. The R p. 451
80. The R p. 318
81. The R p. 319
the cornstacks themselves are "majestic and dimly present"; while the moon and Ursula are "cold and hard and compact of brilliance" they yet produce a paradoxical fire - "all was intangible, a burning of cold, glimmering, whitish-steel fires". The stack stung him keenly with a thousand cold, sharp flames. Ursula like "glimmering gossamer" was "burning and brilliant and hard as salt, and deadly". Thus Ursula is the fire and the steel dagger and the poison, and she is cold, hard and brilliant, yet she is as intangible and as elusive as the moon and it is at this point that Skrebensky recognises both her elusiveness and his own consequent destruction.

The second crucial scene is Ursula and Skrebensky's night on the downs. Here Ursula transcends Anton. In the first scene discussed, although Anton is corroded, he still holds Ursula back from the moon:

But he must weave himself round her, enclose her, enclose her in a net of shadow of darkness, so she would be like a bright creature gleaming in a net of shadow, caught.

Now, however, Ursula uses Anton to have intercourse with the stars, this scene being quoted above. As the sun rises, she finally leaves him in soul. It may be noticed

82. The R p. 320
83. The R p. 321
84. The R p. 321
85. The R p. 321
86. The R p. 321
87. The R p. 320
that the water symbol underlies the passage, emphasising the unknown and strange depths of the experience. Ursula communicates now with the sun and the dawn, for here the experience is her realization of the new world, rather than her destruction of Skrebensky:

The rose hovered and quivered, burned, fused to flame, to a transient red, whilst the yellow surged out in great waves flung from the ever-increasing fountain, great waves of yellow flinging into the sky, scattering its spray over the darkness, which became bluer and bluer, paler, till soon it would itself be a radiance, which had been darkness.

The sun was coming. There was a quivering, a powerful, terrifying swim of molten light. Then the molten source itself surged forth, revealing itself. The sun was in the sky, too powerful to look at ... everything was newly washed into being in a flood of new, golden creation. 88

The third scene marks the true end of their liaison. Now Skrebensky is destroyed, as Ursula gives herself to the moon. In this scene of destruction, the moon is again dominant and likewise the water. The saltiness of the sea, the shadow of the darkness and the light and the whiteness of light are the central images. Ursula strives towards the unknown and further, as is seen in her encounter with the sea:

The salt, bitter passion of the sea, its indifference to the earth, its swinging, definite motion, its strength, its attack, and its salt burning, seemed to provoke her to a pitch of madness, tantalising her with vast suggestions of fulfilment. 89

Her surrender to the cosmos and Skrebensky's

88. The R pp. 465-66
89. The R p. 478
destruction are seen entirely in the symbolic terms:

The sands were as ground silver, the sea moved in solid brightness, coming towards them, and she went to meet the advance of the flashing, buoyant water. She gave her breast to the moon, her belly to the flashing, heaving water. He stood behind encompassed, a shadow ever dissolving. 90

This is the culmination of Ursula's striving forward towards the promise of the new world. There follow, however, two more scenes, important in their symbolic connotations - the horse nightmare and the rainbow vision.

The horse scene has been foreshadowed, as Sagar illustrates, by previous implications in the imagery:

The imagery which reaches its climax here has been present throughout the novel - in the heaving of the horses the Brangwens held between their thighs; in the darkness which was 'passionate and breathing with immense unperceived heaving' (316); in the 'triumphant, flaming, overweening heart of the intrinsic male' which would never beat again in Skrebensky; in the body of the earth which 'seemed to stir its powerful flank beneath her as she stood' ... 91

In this scene, the actual physical charge of the horses is fused with the conflict in Ursula's soul. She must decide whether to return to Skrebensky or not. She finally escapes the physical love of Skrebensky, however weakened she may be. To gain the full import of the scene, it is necessary to examine Lawrence's statement on horses in...

90. The R p. 479
his philosophy:

For example, a man has a persistent passionate fear-dream about horses. He suddenly finds himself among great physical horses, which suddenly go wild ... Examining the emotional reference we find that the feeling is sensual, there is a great impression of the powerful, almost beautiful physical bodies of the horses, the nearness, the rounded haunches, the rearing ... It is a great sensual reaction at the sacral ganglion... But this intense activity from the sacral ganglion is male ... So that the horse dream refers to some arrest in the deepest sensual activity in the male ... 92

In so far as this scene refers to Ursula's struggle as to whether she will follow out her dreams or yield to the physical love of Skrebensky it is a powerful externalization of the struggle. Yet, despite its dramatic force, the scene lacks continuity with the previous developments. It ignores the fact that Ursula has destroyed the male quality in Skrebensky, that is represented by the horses, and is aware of having done so. Her earlier decision to join Anton has been made in terms of being the good housewife.

Her vision of the rainbow also presents a continuity problem when considered in terms of Ursula's consciousness. Previously the images and symbols have been carefully interwoven to present a consistent picture. Thus the images and symbols in connection with Ursula all stress her elusive and imaginative nature but none of the images suggests that Ursula has a consciousness outside herself. In fact, her withdrawal upon herself is stressed. Suddenly she is

conceived as having a world vision, having previously had only an egoistical insight. It is the latter insight that again predominates in Woman in Love, and forms part of her unresolved conflict with Birkin. She is willing to separate herself from the world completely for his love while he cannot submerge his "Salvator Mundi" instincts and his desire for wider relationships.

II

In the previous discussion, the characters and their relationships have been studied with a view to showing the subtle differentiations in characterisation developed through the imagery. Lawrence is interested, however, in more than character. He is also attempting to show the developing aspiration in a family through the generations and the nature of love as related to it. In this development, he tries to emphasise the essential continuity of the pattern.

It may be noted that, although the effect achieved with the images in each phase may be very different, the basic constituent of that image remains constant - likewise with the more complex symbols which develop from image to their full growth of symbol within the book.

Consider, first of all, the images. The flower throughout is connected with a blossoming as the result of love. Thus Lydia reawakens to her world through an awareness
of flowers; Anna's love is seen as the unfolding of a flower while its blighting by Will, in his dark moods, is seen as the withering of the flower. In fact, Anna's whole life becomes that of the flowers, "the lilies of the field", in her complete preoccupation with babies and living. Ursula's flower, in her love, is the proud and challenging flower.

The wild animal too is a basic image in the conflict of love or its consummation. In the quiet domestic life of Lydia and Tom where the emotions are strange and intangible, owing to the foreignness of Lydia, the cows form a domestic, quiet background of completed peace. As has been seen, in the phase of Will and Anna, the bird is primarily important, especially the bird of prey. With Ursula and Skrebesky, the bird of prey is replaced by the animal of prey, the ferocious jungle beast.

The corn-harvest is important too. It is part of the cycle of the year, central to Tom and Lydia's depiction and it is against this background that Will and Anna come together. With Ursula and Anton, the corn-stacks take on a mysterious and destructive quality, so prevalent in their love.

The symbols of the cosmos develop naturally alongside these images to their full power within the development of the light-dark opposition, in a similar manner. Thus, after Tom proposes, the light of the moon and the shadow of
the cloud conflict:

... then the terror of a moon running liquid-brilliant into the gloom for a moment, hurting the eyes before she plunged under cover of cloud again. 95

Lydia emerges to light from darkness, an important influence being the sea. Here the images are at their most naturalistic but already they have been linked with the human consciousness and struggle. With Will and Anna, the various elements are brought into conjunction in the harvest scene only to fall apart again into separateness when Anna rejects the further quest and Will allies himself with dead matter. It has already been discussed how the moon, with its casting of light and shadow, mingles with the souls of the young lovers to bring them together but it has not been discussed how the ebb and flow of water acts as an undercurrent in the passage. Will and Anna, swept by a deeper force than their conscious selves, move in the rhythm of the waves:- "And there was the flaring moon laying bare her bosom again, making her drift and ebb like a wave." 94

or:

There was only the moving to and fro in the moonlight, engrossed, the swinging in silence, that was marked only by the splash of sheaves, and silence, and a splash of sheaves. And ever the splash of his sheaves broke swifter, beating up to hers, and ever the splash of sheaves recurred monotonously, unchanging, and ever the splash of his sheaves beat nearer. 95

Ursula's consciousness of the forces beyond grows in terms

94. The R pp. 122-23
95. The R pp. 124-25
of the moon, the water and the other great elements, developing into full significance in her understanding and apprehension of their power and meaning.

The symbol of the Church, likewise, develops. In the case of the cosmic forces the movement is ever upwards. The Church movement is more complex, moving on the upper level in an arc, with a lower straight movement. On the upper level, it forms, for the older world, a symbol of aspiration, reaching its height in Will's living awareness of its meaning. Its downward curve begins with his loss of this sense and continues with Ursula's destroying of the symbol. It recurs only as a vital force in Rouen where the first significant break is made in the liaison with Skrebensky when Ursula is recalled to a time before the young man by the sight of the cathedral. On the lower strata is the constant awareness of the essential deadness of the church as symbol, in its limited finiteness. The two levels meet in Anna's rejection of the lamb as a symbolic utterance - a feeling that the lamb is meaningless on such a level - and Ursula's replacement of the lamb by the lion - a feeling that the Church is no longer a sufficient symbol.

There is outside all this and basically independent of the character development per se a symbolism of two themes which encompass the book, giving it unity and the characters universal validity.

The first theme is that of rebirth. It is developed
quite naturally within the scope of the story, and although
it does not form an integral part of the characters' develop-
ment it does give their lives validity in the promise of
eternity. Within the first phase, it is present in the con-
tinuing cycles of the seasons and in Lydia's realization that
living continues despite the death of individuals. In the
second phase, it is expressed by two symbols. The first
is the phoenix story on the butter stamp Will creates:

In it he carved a mythological bird, a phoenix,
something like an eagle, rising on symmetrical wings,
from a circle of very beautiful flickering flames that
rose upwards 96

It is the recurrent resurrection story. The second is the
symbol of the seed within the fruit, which is introduced in
the chapter on Will and Anna's honeymoon:

The next day, he was with her, as remote from the
world as if the two of them were buried like a seed
in darkness. Suddenly, like a chestnut falling out
of a burr, he was shed naked and glistening on to a
soft, fecund earth, leaving behind him the hard rind
of worldly knowledge and experience.

Inside the room was a great steadiness, a core of
living eternity 97

During Ursula's development the image of the seed con-
tinues. Here the idea is explicitly stated in Ursula's
growing love of botany:

When she knew that in the tiny brown buds of
autumn were folded, minute and complete, the finished
flowers of the summer nine months hence, tiny, folded
up, and left there waiting, a flash of triumph and
love went over her 98

96. The R p. 116
97. The R p. 145
98. The R p. 335
The image of dawn is also important. Within this is also seen the yearning after something unknown, the aspiration. Within this image the two themes meet:

Out of the far, far space there drifted slowly into her a passionate, unborn yearning. There are so many dawns that have not yet risen. It seemed as if, from over the edge of the sea, all the unrisen dawns were appealing to her, all her unborn soul was crying for the unrisen dawns. 99

The idea of rebirth and eternal life on earth becomes an overt message from the author in his treatment of Christ's resurrection. Elsewhere the theme blends into the texture of the novel, but here it becomes obtrusive:

The Resurrection is to life, not to death. Shall I not see those who have risen again walk here among men perfect in body and spirit, whole and glad in the flesh, living in the flesh, loving in the flesh. 100

The second thematic symbol is the Rainbow. It is the symbol of aspiration in the novel, and structurally, marks the end of one phase, the beginning of another. Although the pattern of aspiration determines the development of the characters, the rainbow symbol itself is not integrated within the development. It belongs to an outer framework. The book opens with a description of the Brangwen men and women, the men communicating with the earth and the women looking upwards. Here the aspirations are simple but they represent the first resting place of the rainbow. The rainbow which marks the end of the first phase is also a

99. The R p. 433
100. The R p. 281
homely one. It marks the stability and truth of consummated love:

She was no longer called upon to uphold with her childish might the broken end of the arch. Her father and mother now met to the span of the heavens, and she, the child, was free to play in the space beneath, between 101

The second phase marks a new achievement. Anna does not reach the far rainbow but she produces the being who will. Her vision marks another important thematic development, however — Tom and Lydia exist within the rainbow; Anna, in the fulfilment of her sensual being, sees it:

"Dawn and sunset were the feet of the rainbow that spanned the day, and she saw the hope, the promise." 102

The third phase belongs to Ursula who is, by the end of the book, ready to reach out towards the Lawrentian rainbow. Against greater odds than her forbears she has faced and conquered the "grey ash of the industrial world" and the final vision is Lawrence's optimistic message that it is possible for all human beings to do likewise. This belief in a resurrection into a new life was very strong in Lawrence and, in one of his letters, he expresses this idea in images similar to those used in The Rainbow:

There is a morning which dawns like an iridescence on the wings of sleeping darkness, till the darkness bursts and flies off in glory, dripping with the rose of morning.

There is the soaring suspense of day, dizzy with

101. The R p. 97
102. The R pp. 195-96
sunshine, and night flows away utterly forgotten.

There is evening come to settle amid the red-hot bars of the pine trunks ...

Another dawn, another day, another night - another heaven and earth - a resurrection

The Rainbow, as can be seen, is based on a structure of symbol, image and metaphor. It has in a sense a thesis but this thesis binds the work together in its own symbolic terms. The essential pattern of the book is the flow and development of image and metaphor which delineates three generations of Brangwens, so alike in a common humanity, but so different in their awareness and the range of their aspiration.

103. Op Cit "1st Dec., 1915" p. 286
II THE SYMBOLIC STRUCTURE OF "WOMEN IN LOVE".

Women in Love is the novel of Lawrence's that arose out of World War I. The novel echoes the deep disillusionments he experienced concerning humanity and the modern world. Yet while Lawrence displays present society as in a condition of disintegration, he also attempts to formulate a new group of values. This gives rise to great complexities in Women in Love, especially in the presentation of the diverse elements of Lawrence's theories.

The essential nature of the material of this novel is opposition. Within each relationship there is an ambiguity - an attraction and a recoil - while, on the social scale, there is an opposing of the old worn-out world and the new ideal of Birkin. Again, there is immense variety in the manner in which the conflicts are portrayed, ranging from the simple parable, the image and the objective correlative to a semi-allegorical ending.

The essential contrasts will be examined first, as they lie at the root of all the situations and conflicts portrayed. There is the opposition of the creative and the destructive described by Lawrence in The Symbolic Meaning:

Love is the mysterious force which brings beings together in creative conjunction or communion. But it is also the force which brings them together in
This idea, basic to the development of the novel, is presented primarily in symbolic terms, the two central symbols being those of water and the flower. Birkin outlines their meaning in "Water-Party".

We always consider the silver river of life, rolling on and quickening all the world to a brightness, on and on to heaven, flowing into a bright eternal sea, a heaven of angels thronging. But the other is our real reality - ... You see it rolls in us just as the other rolls - the black river of corruption. And our flowers are of this - our sea-born Aphrodite ... she is the flowering mystery of the death-process ... Aphrodite is born in the first spasm of universal dissolution - then the snakes and swans and lotus - marsh-flowers and Gudrun and Gerald - born in the process of destructive creation ... we are fleurs du mal: we are not roses of happiness, and there you are 2

An opposition and a duality is present already, in the basic symbols of the book.

Thus Gudrun is associated constantly with the mud flowers. She draws them and "knew how they rose out of the mud, she knew how they thrust themselves, how they stood stiff and succulent against the air" 3 whereas

3. W in L p. 132
Ursula can exclaim: "I think I am a rose of happiness." 

On the social level Bohemian London is drawn into this contrast with Birkin's letter to Halliday in which he claims they too are fleurs du mal. During the course of the book, the rose symbol develops in significance. At first, it is used in connection with the individual or society but, by the closing chapters, it has become symbolic of the impersonal force and essence of life found in the mountains near Innsbruck:

Gudrun saw all their loveliness, she knew how immortally beautiful they were, great pistils of rose-coloured, snow-fed fire in the blue twilight. She could see it, she knew it, but she was not of it.

The dual nature of the water symbolism is also very important in the novel. Gerald experiences death by water, first when his sister drowns, and later in the frozen mountains. Yet Birkin and Ursula's achievement of new being is also seen in images of water:

After a lapse of stillness, after the rivers of strange dark fluid richness had passed over her, flooding, carrying away her mind and flooding down her spine and down her knees, ... a strange flood, sweeping away everything and leaving her an essential new being ... There were strange fountains of his body, more mysterious and potent than any she had imagined or known ... 6

The basic contrast of the book is that of dissolution

4. Win L p. 193
5. Win L p. 452
6. Win L p. 354
and creation. Lawrence is, however, also interested in defining the nature of this dissolution which he sees as Northern. It is a dissolution caused by an over-consciousness of the mind, an overuse of the will. It is in contrast with the African degradation which is a purely sensual dissolution. The second is symbolised by the statuettes in Halliday's flat. They embody the complete truth of this depravity. The Northern dissolution, which forms one strand of the book's thematic development, finds an early expression in the Northern ice image. Thus Mrs Crich is "a white flower of snow" 7; Minette is seen as "some fair, ice flower" 8; and Gerald himself is described thus:

There was something northern about him that magnetised her. In his clear northern flesh and his fair hair was a glisten like sunshine refracted through crystals of ice. And he looked so new, unbroached, pure as an arctic thing. 9

When these essential contrasts are realised, the function of the Pompadour scenes, the Breadalby house-party, and the crises at Shortlands becomes clear. Each serves as a metaphor of the decadent modern world. What is more, the Bohemians, Gerald and Hermione, who are all seen in reaction against the older world - which, in the case of the last two, is also represented - in their very recoil, represent a further stage in the process towards

7. Win L p. 245
8. Win L p. 76
9. Win L p. 16
complete disintegration. As such each of these worlds represents a snare which Birkin and Ursula must avoid in their search for a new life.

The Bohemian world represents the modern world at its most obviously dissolute and the imagery used establishes its nature. Minette, the Bohemian girl, is described thus:

She had beautiful eyes, flower-like, fully opened, naked in their looking at him. And on them there seemed to float a curious iridescence, a sort of film of disintegration, a sullenness, like oil on water. 10

Gerald also sees her as a panther. The animal terms and disintegration images serve also to describe the servant at Halliday's flat:

... bending in a slow, strange, leopard-like fashion ... But Birkin felt a slight sickness, looking at him, and feeling the slight greyness as an ash or a corruption, in the aristocratic inscrutability of expression a nauseating bestial stupidity. 11

As has already been noted, Minette is compared with an ice flower and Birkin, in his letter describes them all as "fleurs du mal". The central image of their dissolution is, however, the African statuette. Its significance applies generally to the novel but it serves also as an ironic comment on the lives of the Bohemians. It is art, but the art of complete corruption and dissolution. 12 So they too are corrupt and dissolute in their art. Gerald emphasises this corruption by wishing to pay Minette for sleeping with him. The irony is extended in Birkin's letter where he

10. W in L p. 71
11. W in L p. 89
12. W in L p. 287
terms them "fleurs du mal". Blind to the full significance of the statuettes, they are also blind to their Northern corruption. Only Birkin comprehends the nature of both his friends and the statuettes.

Perhaps of even greater interest than the description of the Pompadour world per se is the elucidation of the characters of Gerald, Birkin and Gudrun in relation to it.

Birkin, in spirit, is the most detached from Bohemia. As his letter shows, he recognises the nature of the group and he quickly leaves them again, after his return to London. Yet he is linked with them and is considered one of them. He shares rooms with Halliday and serves, it seems, in a Father Confessor role to Minette and Halliday.

Gerald belongs too, because of his nature, and, like the Bohemians, in his liaison with Minette, is described in terms of the jungle predator. He is seen as a destructive force and this quality is emphasised further by the image of electricity which has, however, a dual role, as shall be seen in the discussion of Ursula and Birkin's love.

Thus: "The electricity was turgid and voluptuously rich, in his limbs. He would be able to destroy her utterly in the strength of his discharge" 13 and "Every one of his limbs was turgid with electric force, and his back was tense like a tiger's with slumbering fire". 14

13. Win L p. 70
14. Win L p. 83
Gudrun, like Birkin, is ambivalent in her attitude to this world. As Birkin tells Gerald, she knows of it and is known in it, because of her role as artist, but she is not one of the intimates. Yet the corrupt force has a curious attraction for her:

She loathed its atmosphere of petty vice and petty jealousy and petty art. Yet she always called in again, when she was in town. It was as if she had to return to this small, slow central whirlpool of disintegration and dissolution. 15

A similar pattern emerges in a study of Hermione's world, Breadalby. As in the case of Bohemia, dissolution and corruption are the key words in an examination of it. The artificiality of this high life is also stressed, seen first in a description of the house. Thus Ursula and Gudrun's sight of it is as of an old-fashioned painting:

... they looked across the dip, where the fish-ponds lay in silence, at the pillared front of the house, sunny and small like an English drawing of the old school, on the brow of the green hill, against the trees. 16

Where the corruption of Bohemia lay in its sensuality, the decay of the aristocracy lies in its will to know. Hermione reveals this fault at its extreme, but her guests also live their life in the mind rather than from the breast and loins. Thus the imagery used is no more complimentary than that applied to the Bohemians. "... it seemed to Ursula they were all witches, helping the pot to bubble ... this ruthless mental pressure, this powerful,

15. W in L p. 429
16. W in L p. 91
The essentially mechanical nature of the activity is summed up in Ursula's view that their talk was "like a rattle of small artillery" and its artificiality in Birkin's reflection:

... how known it all was, like a game with the figures set out, the same figures, the Queen of Chess, the knights, the pawns, the same now as they were hundreds of years ago.

More, however, is implied in Birkin's image. The Hermione of the world wish for power - power over society, their men and other women. But such cannot themselves see the subtleties of life. This is seen by comparing this extract with a portion of Lawrence's *Apocalypse*:

Direct thinking in symbols, like a game of chess, with the king and queen and pawns, is characteristic of those men who see power as the great desideratum.

As in the presentation of Halliday's set, the animal image is again used to describe the bestiality or the lack of comprehension - as it was the tiger and panther there, it is here, however, the cat, the seal and such sleek animals. Gerald provides a link at this point. The tiger of passion in "Crème de Menthe", he is seal-like in his defeat in "Water-Party".

More interesting in a study of the mechanically intellectual world, however, is a study of Hermione herself. On the one hand, she is the epitome of the mechanical woman yet, on the other, she is seen as vainly struggling

17. *Win L* p. 101
18. *Win L* p. 93
19. *Win L* p. 110
against her captivity:

... seemed almost drugged, as if a strange mass of thoughts coiled in the darkness within her, and she was never allowed to escape. 21

She has willed herself to know, in all aspects of life, and has escaped the stupidity of the old Establishment, epitomised by her brother, who parrots her in everything, but this escape has led her only closer to her destruction and so her struggle is against the very knowledge that she has gained. The images used of her tend to divide into these two elements.

Her adherence to the past is seen in the images of the pythoness and the priestess, and the leaf on the tree, the latter linking her with all modern society which is described by Birkin as a rotten apple. These images convey also the hopelessness of her position:

She was a priestess without belief, without conviction, suckled in a creed outworn, and condemned to the re-iteration of mysteries that were not divine to her ... She was a leaf upon a dying tree. What help was there, then, but to fight still for the old, withered truths, to die for the old, outworn belief, to be a sacred and inviolate priestess of desecrated mysteries. 22

Connected with her role as pythoness is her desire to know and possess, her overpowering of males and her need of them. This is dramatised in several ways.

The catkin scene, in which Birkin reveals to her the secrets of the flowers, serves as an objective correlative

21. Win L p. 17
22. Win L p. 329
against which she can examine the problem of knowledge. Thus an argument develops between Birkin and Hermione concerning the over-consciousness of modern society. Hermione seems to adopt Birkin's standpoint, disparaging the role of the mental awareness while Birkin opposes her. Suddenly he turns and denounces her for possessing the very faults that she is decrying:

"You want it all in that loathsome little skull of yours, that ought to be cracked like a nut .... As it is, what you want is pornography - looking at yourself in mirrors, watching your naked animal actions in mirrors." 23

This scene not only reveals Hermione's dependence on the will and knowledge, as is clearly presented both in her own statements and in Birkin's denouncements but also reveals the tortured confusion in which she lives, unable to escape from the fetters that she has made herself.

Her treatment of Mino serves as a metaphor for her treatment of Birkin, in her desire for power over the male:

She lifted the cat's head with her long, slow, white fingers, not letting him drink, holding him in her power. It was always the same, this joy in power over any male being. 24

Her insecurity and confusion are emphasised in the storm image and also in the chasm image which is important in the depiction of Gerald and Gudrun. Her insufficiency is seen in relation with her need for Birkin who has caused much of this nausea and uncertainty. This is seen

23. Win L p. 46
24. Win L p. 337
early in the novel, as Hermione enters the church:

And then, he was not there. A terrible storm came over her as if she were drowning. She was possessed by a devastating hopelessness. 25

and reaches a climax when she finally tries to destroy Birkin:

Her whole mind was a chaos, darkness breaking in upon it and herself struggling to gain control with her will, as a swimmer struggles with the swirling water. 26

Ursula’s reaction to the Bredalby world is seen most clearly in her struggle against Hermione for Birkin. In this conflict, Hermione represents completely the old, dissolute world that still has Birkin within its intellectual grasp. Ursula is aware of Hermione’s priestess qualities but, being very much the female herself, she is also aware of Hermione’s true barrenness and failure to live:

It did seem as if Hermione, like the moon, had only one side to her penny. There was no obverse. She started out all the time on the narrow, but to her, complete world of the extant consciousness. In the darkness, she did not exist ... She must always know. 27

Hermione represents for Ursula all which she is reacting against. For her, Hermione is a refined Winifred Iger who may, at times, dominate her will, but who must be defeated at all costs. This is why she resents so strongly Birkin’s continuing attentions to his former

25. Win L p. 19
26. Win L p. 116
27. Win L p. 328
mistress. Hermione is not just a female rival. The values which she represents are those very values against which Ursula and Birkin are reacting and from which Birkin especially cannot free himself. When he allows Hermione to decorate his rooms at the Mill, he is really acquiescing in an attitude to life that he should be rejecting. Ursula recognises this clearly when she examines Birkin's belongings which were almost all chosen by Hermione, and when she watches Hermione bullying Minu, as if acting entirely within her rights. Part of Birkin's difficulty is that he recognises the torment that exists within Hermione, which is, in a lesser degree, his own torment:

But her mind remained unbroken, her will was still perfect. It almost sent Birkin mad. But he would never, never dare to break her will, and let loose the maelstrom of her subconsciousness. 28

Until he escapes her influence, however, he can never escape his own intellectuality. His fight with Ursula over Hermione is thus central and it is only when he accepts Ursula's full claim as regards himself and returns to her the rings, which are the pledges of the new life, that he is entirely free.

If the Bredalby world provides the terms of the conflict of Birkin and Ursula, the world of Shortlands provides Gerald and Gudrun with theirs. Shortlands represents the corruption and dissolution of industrial life. This study

28. Win L p. 156
falls into two parts. On one side, the coal-industry, as it affects the countryside and the minds of both Gerald and Gudrun, is examined. On the other, the coal-magnate and his family, who are enmeshed in the industry of their own making, are considered.

It is stressed several times that the coal dust has invaded the whole district, including the landscape itself:

On the left was a large landscape, a valley with collieries, and opposite hills with cornfields and woods, all blackened with distance, as if through a veil of crepe. 29

It is seen as an underworld and Gudrun describes the colliers as "ghouls". The artificiality seen in "Bredalby" is evident here also - "Everything is a ghoulish replica of the real world, a replica, a ghou, all soiled, everything sordid." 30 More important, however, is the effect on the minds of the human beings, of the colliery life, and here the key word is "mechanical" or "instrumental". Gudrun describes the miners thus:

She could hear the voluptuous resonance of darkness, the strong, dangerous underworld, mindless, inhuman. They sounded also like strange machines, heavy, oiled. 31

Gerald's conception is the more frightening:

It was like being part of a machine. He himself happened to be a controlling, central part, the masses of men were the parts variously controlled. This was merely as it happened. As we get excited because a central hub drives a hundred outer wheels— 32

29. Win L p. 12
30. Win L p. 11
31. Win L p. 128
32. Win L p. 255
This passage reveals one aspect of Gerald's character. Like Hermione, he presides at the sacrifice. He is the self-made God of the Machine and has deliberately created his own destruction. Like Hermione's life this is part of a reaction against former values. His father was like Ransom's Captain Carpenter - chivalric but distinctly out of date. He tried to make the Christian ideal work in the new industrial world. Gerald accepts the modern evaluation of man as machine. Yet also, like Hermione, he is the victim at his own ceremony. Having destroyed the human soul, he suffers and spends the rest of his life trying to regain it.

Gudrun stands in much the same relationship to the industrial world as she did to Bohemia. As she is compelled to return to the Pompadour despite her revulsion from it so she must return to Beldover. Here she frees herself to mingle with the colliers on Friday evenings and like "any other common lass" finds herself a boyfriend with whom she wanders along the crowded market place. She insists on kissing Gerald where the colliers kiss their sweethearts, under the railway bridge. In fact, for a moment, she realises she has embraced a higher form of collier in turning to Gerald:

Under this bridge, the colliers pressed their lovers to their breast. And now under the bridge, the master of them all pressed her to himself.

33. W in L p. 250
34. W in L p. 130
how much more powerful and terrible was his embrace than theirs in the same sort! 35

The fate of the Crich family itself also resembles somewhat the fate of Hermione. It is as if Nemesis has overtaken them for helping create industrial society. The main image associated with them is that of imprisonment while the only escape seems to be death. The main struggle, within the family, is the struggle between Thomas Crich and his wife. Mr Crich manages to protect his conscious soul from discovering his torment but it is there. His wife is the tormentor and she is also his victim.

She was like a hawk that sullenly submits to everything. The relation between her and her husband was wordless and unknown, but it was deep, awful, a relation of utter interdestruction. And he, who triumphed in the world, he became more and more hollow in his vitality, the vitality was bled from within him, as by some haemorrhage. She was hulked like a hawk in a cage, but her heart was fierce and undiminished within her, though her mind was destroyed. 36

The hawk image extends from Mrs Crich to Gerald also. Likewise Birkin sees in him the creature at bay, another term applied to Mrs Crich. Both are seen too as wolves, she as an "old unbroken wolf". 37 The imagery connection between Gerald and his mother emphasises Gerald's lack of true place in the world. As she is a misfit, so is he, despite his attempts to be purely conventional. Winifred is the only Crich, closely observed, who is not destroyed and her escape is by making the whole world into a game so

35. Win L p. 373
36. Win L pp. 244-45
37. Win L pp. 15-16
that she may annul her deepest emotions.

The Crich family are disordered and broken by the old values. Hermione is at the edge of the chasm while Halliday's friends are unaware of their position. All, however, are enmeshed by decayed values and are also representative of them. The common factor of disintegration inherent in each of these aspects of society and the similar necessity to destroy in each the values underlying the corruption finds expression in the "beetle" image. Minette only fears "the black beetle", the miners, to whom Sudrun is attracted and from whom she recoils, are like beetles and so is Mademoiselle, Minifred's repulsive governess. This image represented to Lawrence a nightmare that must be killed, as can be seen in a letter that he wrote in 1915, at much the same time as he wrote this novel:

"To hear these young people talking really fills me with black fury: ... They are cased each in a hard little shell of his own, and out of this they talk words. There is never for one second any outgoing of feeling, and no reverence, not a crumb or grain of reverence ..."

"They made me dream in the night of a beetle that bites like a scorpion. But I killed it - a very large beetle. 38"

"These portions of the novel, symbolic as they are of the decadent modern world, are central in comprehending"

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38. Op cit "To Lady Ottoline Morrel. Monday, 19 April, 1915" p. 228
the full import of the personal struggles of the main protagonists with life. The revolt against existing values becomes complete in its comprehension of social as well as personal issues, while the concrete and vivid portrait of twentieth century England provides a firm basis from which Lawrence may elaborate his theories of life through the relationships of Birkin and Ursula, Gerald and Gudrun — especially his theories of amelioration, propounded by Rupert Birkin. Thus it is from this standpoint that one may study the interrelationships of Gerald, Gudrun, Birkin and Ursula.

Again, within the study of the personal relationships, Lawrence makes use of contrast. There are four sets of opposition — Ursula and Gudrun, Gerald and Birkin, Ursula and Birkin and Gerald and Gudrun.

Ursula and Gudrun are contrasted almost completely in metaphorical terms. Lawrence is depicting a relationship of antagonism and attraction, the dual quality of the response being most clearly portrayed in the symbolic tableau of Naomi and Ruth:

The interplay between the women was real and rather frightening. It was strange to see how Gudrun clung with heavy, desperate passion to Ursula, yet smiled with subtle malevolence against her, how Ursula accepted silently, unable to provide any more either for herself or for the other, but dangerous and indomitable, refuting her grief.

39. W in L p. 102
Such a quality is clear in Gudrun's envy of Ursula after her marriage and in her refutation of what seems, to her, childlike in Ursula's aspirations for a new world.

The main function of the contrast between the two women is to elucidate their essential natures, thus clarifying their relationships with the men. The apartness of Ursula and Gudrun from the rest of the world is stressed primarily. This is, for the most part, shown in terms of dress and colouring. The bright colours worn by the women contrast sharply with the grey-black colouring of the landscape:

Ursula had an orange-coloured knitted coat, Gudrun a pale yellow. Ursula wore canary yellow stockings, Gudrun bright rose. The figures of the two women seemed to glitter in progress over the wide bay of the railway crossing, white and orange and yellow and rose glittering in motion across a hot world settled with coal-dust.

It is stressed that the bright clothing that they wear to the garden-party also flouts convention and Gerald, after the death of his sister, wishes that Gudrun would not look so like a "macass" when the conventional pattern would dictate mourning-dress.

This apartness is shown also by their withdrawal from the crowds at the Crich party. This is another of those realistic scenes with a symbolic overtone which, as has been seen, was used in the depiction of modern society. In
realistic terms, the women merely take a boat and row to a secluded spot. Yet their desire for apartness from the world is stressed in Gudrun's description of the "foul" boat-trip up the Thames and Ursula's delight in being free, once they are away from the other visitors. This scene also serves to emphasise Gudrun's separation from Ursula and her own sense of grief. Thus there is the scene of Ursula's singing and Gudrun's swaying in eurythmic movements. Ursula's song is quite out of tune with Gudrun's intense movements, but the dance, at first, is Gudrun's attempt to link herself with Ursula's self-sufficiency.

This dual contrast of Ursula and Gudrun against the world and also against each other is directly stated elsewhere in terms of the image of the whetstone. This image underlines the cruelty of the separation where the above stresses the grief, in Gudrun's soul:

The two sisters were like a pair of scissors, snipping off everything that came athwart them; or like a knife and a whetstone, the one sharpened against the other. 41

Lawrence also wishes to penetrate to the essential nature of Gudrun's failure and Ursula's triumph, in his contrast of the two. Thus, as he shows their unity, he shows their entire difference from each other. The most explicit example occurs in the chapter "Sketch Book" where Gudrun paints the mud-flowers: "What she could see was mud, soft, oozy, watery mud, and from its festering chill,

41. *in L* p. 56
water plants rose up, thick and cool and fleshy." 42

and Ursula watches the butterflies:

Ursula was watching the butterflies, of which there were dozens near the water, little blue ones suddenly snapping out of nothingness into a jewel-life, a large black and red one standing upon a flower and breathing, with his soft wings, intoxicatingly breathing pure, ethereal sunshine ... Ursula rose and drifted away, unconscious like the butterflies. 43

This contrast reflects the central symbolic dichotomy of the novel - the river of corruption and "les fleurs du mal" as opposed to the river of life and the rose. Gudrun is here explicitly connected with the mud flowers, just as before she was linked implicitly with them in her attraction towards the collier life. Ursula's contact is with the silver river and the rose of life, for Birkin links the butterfly with the concept of creative life in the following chapter: "And besides, look at elder-flowers and bluebells - they are a sign that pure creation takes place - even the butterfly". 44

Gudrun and Ursula serve as foils to each other, both elucidating, in these metaphorical terms, the nature of the other. As such, their relationship plays a part in the complex of interrelationships of the novel which highlight the contrast between dissolution and creation and which demonstrate the proximity of the two streams to each other. The relationship of Birkin and Gerald is of a slightly

42. Win L p. 132
43. Win L p. 132
44. Win L p. 143
different nature and, in a sense, stands out from the main investigation of the novel. Where Ursula and Gudrun's relationship adds to and is subservient to the men-women relationships, the friendship of Birkin and Gerald is an investigation of male friendship which Lawrence believed was as essential as marriage for the completion of a man's life. Here one might recall that, in The Rainbow, Ursula rejected a comparable relationship, when she recoiled from Winifred Inger. This helps explain her antagonism towards Birkin's desire for a male friendship with Gerald.

Lawrence, for the most part, abandons the metaphorical treatment in considering the relationship between the two men. Their friendship is developed through a series of dialogues, the most important of which are those which occur after the wedding, on the train to London and during Birkin's illness. Birkin becomes increasingly aware of his attraction towards Gerald and the need for a bond between them, while Gerald, as he finds himself attracted towards his friend, tends consciously to recoil away from him. This development is marred by an overuse of authorial intrusion and, indeed, the love between the two only becomes fully convincing in two scenes, where Lawrence abandons the high philosophical tone for the former metaphorical approach. The first is "Gladiatorial" where the two men fight. Here the physical and mental attraction is externalised in the proximity of the men as they wrestle,
where the intensity of their feeling can be intertwined with
the naturalistic description of the fight. Such an inter-
mixing of the two levels can be seen in the following
passage:

He seemed to penetrate into Gerald's more solid,
more diffuse bulk to interfuse his body through the
body of the other, as if to bring it subtly into sub-
jection, always seizing with some rapid macromantic
fore-knowledge every motion of the other flesh ....
Like some potency, casting a fine net, a prison,
through the muscles into the very depths of Gerald's
physical being. 45

The sexuality of the attraction is very evident, as was
the sexual element of Ursula's love for Miss Inger in the
swimming scene in The Rainbow.

The other scene occurs after Gerald's death when
Birkin, on viewing the body, realises that there is nothing
more in Gerald, that he was defeated by death and that, in
that death, a part of himself died too. Here, the complete
dissolution of Gerald is described, by Birkin's contrast-
ing him with the dead animal for whom death is final. By
the extreme antipathetical note of the simile, Lawrence
implies more effectively than anywhere else the depth of
the destroyed love:

It was the frozen essence of a dead male. Birkin
remembered a rabbit which he had once found frozen
like a board on the snow. It had been rigid like a
dried board when he picked it up. And now this was
Gerald, stiff as a board, curled up as if for sleep,
yet with the horrible hardness somehow evident. 46
Lawrence does use the relationship also, however, to depict the very different natures of each in much the same way as he contrasted Ursula and Gudrun. In this contrast, he elucidates various characteristics of the two men, which lead to the failure of one and the victory of the other. Their essential difference lies in Gerald's desire to fit into this world, and Birkin's determination to escape from it. Several scenes depict their difference. Gerald, on hearing of the race to the church at his sister's wedding, is annoyed, because convention has been flouted. Birkin, however, is delighted by the spontaneity shown by the couple. Again, after his affair with Minette, Gerald is upset because he has not paid her. He would like to classify such peccadilloes firmly under the conventional category of whoremongery. Birkin feels it is all beside the point. He feels that convention is meaningless and, thus, the keeping of forms has little point and, indeed, kills the inner living self. The parable also reveals this difference - the parable of the national hat; which Birkin feels is probably worth letting be stolen, in order to keep one's freedom; while Gerald insists that if one allowed the stealing of the national hat, one would allow licence of all sorts. Again he is the stickler for rules and convention. His conflict is revealed in his relationship with Gudrun rather than with Birkin. The parable method, described above, is used once elsewhere - in the
episode of the easily-duped canaries. Both are another variation on Lawrence's search for an external correlative of the inner emotion, but there is an artificiality about them, which is out of place among the realistic and naturalistic correlatives that dominate this novel's structure.

The men-women relationships are the most important thematically, however. The contrasts so far described, except for the theme of "Blutbrüderschaft", subserve this working out of the theme of love in dissolution or in creation. Already, in their connection with the social world and with sister or friend the essentials of the protagonists' characters have been seen. Now it only remains to examine the conflict between the two pairs.

Gudrun and Gerald demonstrate love in dissolution. As has been already seen, they are shown as connected with the old world, Gudrun being drawn to it as by a magnet and Gerald forming a centre of the industrial framework. What is more Gudrun, at least, has been shown as in conflict. It is only in the relationship of one with the other, however, that the extent of each's attempt to escape from his doom is fully shown.

Gudrun's vital connection with dissolution is established by a series of images. Her connection with the mud-flowers is described above. This flower imagery extends further, however, to embrace the image of the dead flower.
Thus she exclaims: "'Don't you find that things fail to materialize? Nothing materializes! Everything withers in the bud.'" Gudrun is also shown as on the edge of a chasm: "'Oh! it doesn't matter,' said Gudrun, somewhat superbly. 'If one jumps over the edge, one is bound to land somewhere.'" Her ability to adapt to the chasm is clarified by the subterranean image. This connection is implied in her joy at the miners' ghoulishness and is recognised by Gerald as he watches her as Ruth, while the image reaches a climax in her departure with the sewer rat, Loerke. Also depicted by an image is her fear of the new world, for example, in the lanterns at the Crich party - she accepts the primroses with their roots in the earth but rejects, in fear, the cuttlefish. The cuttlefish is linked later with the moon, the great dynamic force of life:

Ursula was aware of the bright moon leaping and swaying, all distorted, in her eyes. It seemed to shoot out arms of fire, like a cuttlefish, like a luminous polyp, palpitating strongly before her.

The Gudrun imagery is directly linked with that describing Gerald by the "chasm" metaphor. While she faces the chasm with a semi-bravado, he cannot. Thus she will finally adapt; he will die. The chasm image is directly associated with Thomas Crich's sickness and death. As Gerald's whole life was built on reaction to his father, the

47. Win L p. 9
48. Win L p. 10
49. Win L p. 278
old man's death causes the substance of his son's life to disappear: "For now he felt like a pair of scales, the half of which tips down and down into an indefinite void." 50

and:

And all the time he was like a man hung in chains over the edge of an abyss. Struggle as he might, he could not turn himself to the solid earth, he could not get a footing. He was suspended on the edge of a void, writhing. 51

Reinforcing the image of the void is that of the mask.

Through this image particularly Lawrence portrays the nightmare state of Gerald's life. Quite early this concept is introduced with:

He looked at his own face. There it was, shapely and healthy and the same as ever, yet somehow, it was not real, it was a mask... His eyes were blue and keen as ever, and as firm in their sockets. Yet he was not sure that they were not blue false bubbles that would burst in a moment and leave clear annihilation. 52

and it intensifies as Mr Crich's death becomes imminent and, in Gerald's mind, joins with the image of the relentless and eternal sea:

... so that life was a hollow shell all round him, roaring and clattering like the sound of the sea, a noise in which he participated eternally, and inside this hollow shell was all the darkness and fearful space of death. 53

Here again the imagery links Gerald and Gudrun, for she too is caught in the relentless and eternal series of waves:

50. W in L pp. 370-71
51. W in L p. 390
52. W in L p. 261
53. W in L p. 363
She seemed to be hearing waves break on a hidden shore, long, slow, gloomy waves, breaking with the rhythm of fate, so monotonously that it seemed eternal. 54

Equally important, in connection with Gerald is the concept of Cain. This is stressed again and again. Birkin, in talking to Mrs Crich at Shortlands, gives Cain's cry and remembers it is really Gerald, the slayer of his brother, who is Cain. Here, and later, Lawrence indicates that the accidental killing forms, in fact, part of a pattern. Gerald is a destructive force. Thus Ursula says:

'Perhaps there was an unconscious will behind it... This playing at killing has some primitive desire for killing in it, don't you think?' 55

Birkin also sees in Gerald the desire to kill or perhaps even to be killed. This urge relates, what is more, to Gerald's need for mechanical convention and order:

'And I,' said Gerald grimly, 'shouldn't like to be in a world of people who acted individually and spontaneously, as you call it. We should have everybody cutting everybody else's throat in five minutes.'

'That means you would like to be cutting everybody's throat,' said Birkin. 56

Gerald's desperate desire to rescue his sister, Diana, marks symbolically a great struggle against his will for death. He is responsible for the water in "Water Party" and his failure to save Diana indicates his failure to turn from death to life.

54. W in L p. 390
55. W in L pp. 53-54
56. W in L p. 36
From this point, Gerald moves progressively towards dissolution. The love that he brings to Gudrun is the love of death, while he himself only retains life by drawing it from Gudrun. His desire to kill her finally stems from this source and also from the collapse of convention in his life, which, as he has indicated to Birkin, is all that keeps the death will under control:

A strange rent had been torn in him; like a victim that is torn open and given to the heavens .... How should he close again? This wound, this strange, infinitely-sensitive opening of his soul, where he was exposed, like an open flower, to all the universe ... 57

The only way in which Gerald can conceive of protecting his new emotional being is in destroying utterly the very source of his new life either in Gudrun or himself. Either way leads to complete death. Birkin expresses this idea as he recollects his own desire for an abiding bond with the dead man:

Those who die, and dying still can love, still believe, do not die. They live still in the beloved. Gerald might still have been living in the spirit with Birkin, even after death...

But now he was dead, like clay, like bluish, corruptible ice. 58

Certain of the images used in depicting Gerald's connection with Northern disintegration have been discussed, such as the ice imagery and the hawk-eagle concept - which

57. W in L p. 501
58. W in L p. 540
link him with the dual nature of his mother as victim and
destroyer. Two other images are central also, especially
in relation to his conflict with Gudrun.

The first is that of electricity. This serves to
describe his passion-cruelty in the Minette episode. It
is also a basic image in the love between him and Gudrun.
Throughout the early contacts, it is stressed that he
annihilates Gudrun to be reborn himself. Thus:

So she lay cast upon him, stranded, lifted up against
him, melting and melting under his kiss, melting into
his limbs and bones, as if he were soft iron becoming
surcharged with her electric life. 59

This is directly contrasted with the life-giving quality
of Birkin and Ursula's love where a circuit of electricity
is set up between the two. Alongside the imagery of
electricity is that of poison. Images of drugged wine
and the poisoned apple indicate further Gerald's connection
with death while the wine images also serve to indicate
Gerald's drawing of life from Gudrun:

The exultation in his voice was like a sweetish,
poisonous drug to her. Did she then mean so much to
him? She sipped the poison. 60

and "she was all slack and flowing into him, and he was the
firm strong cup that receives the wine of her life" 61 or
"This was the glistening forbidden apple, this face of man." 62

59. Win L pp. 373-74
60. Win L p. 371
61. Win L p. 373
62. Win L p. 374
The imagery used is very important in delineating the qualities of Gudrun and Gerald and the nature of their relationship. For the most part, however, their love is dramatised in external happenings which act as symbols of the inner life. The first such scene is Gudrun's sight of Gerald diving into the water. Gerald is at the height of his power, separate and indomitable:

He was alone now, alone and immune in the middle of the waters, which he had all to himself. He exulted in his isolation in the new element, unquestioned and unconditioned. 63

At this point, it must be stated that water is an important symbol for Lawrence and the meanings he gave it elsewhere seem to be present in this scene and in later scenes. Lawrence defines the meaning of water in The Symbolic Meaning:

Aphrodite, born of the waters, and Apollo the sun-god, these give some indication of the sex distinction. It is obvious, however, that some races, men and women alike, derive from the sun and have the fiery principle predominant in their constitution, whilst some, blonde, blue-eyed, northern, are evidently water-born, born along with the ice-crystals and blue, cold deeps, and yellow ice-refracted sunshine. 64

Within Gerald, both elements of the water symbolism may be seen at work. On the one hand, it is his natural element, as he is the northern type with his blond hair that refracts the sunshine. In his death he is returning to this native element. Yet the sex-distinction that Lawrence mentions

63. W in L p. 51
64. The Symbolic Meaning Op Cit. p. 135
is also evident in the water symbolism of the novel. Gerald's first symbolic death in "Water-Party" and his death at the end are connected vitally with water and both are caused by woman. It is Gudrun, through the instruments of ice and water, who really kills Gerald at the end of the book.

In coming back to the scene at hand, it may be seen that a direct connection is established between Gerald and Gudrun, both by his awareness of the Brangwen girls and by Gudrun's envy of his freedom.

The scene with the Arab mare further establishes this connection. Gudrun cries out to Gerald that he must be proud, as he forces the horse to stand while the train rushes by, whereas Ursula later taunts him, claiming a horse should be allowed to fulfil its own being. The cruelty, evident in Gerald, is established beyond a doubt in this scene, and his mechanical power is also emphasised:

He bit himself down on the mare like a keen edge biting home, and forced her round ...

But he held on her unrelaxed, with an almost mechanical restlessness, keen as a sword pressing into her. Both man and horse were sweating with violence. Yet he seemed calm, as a ray of sunshine. 65

Gudrun, by acclaiming him, links herself not only with Gerald but also accepts the values he evinces.

The Arab mare scene penetrates even deeper into the natures of Gerald and Gudrun. It must be linked with

65. In L pp. 123-24
Lawrence's definition of the horse-fear, quoted in the last chapter. Here Lawrence describes the horse as representing the blood-consciousness and the power of the loins. This is consistent with Gerald's failure for, in asserting his will over the horse, he suppresses the power of the lower consciousness. He reveals his affinity with the modern world in his insistence on the will. Like Hermione, he wants:

... to clutch things and have them in your power. And why? Because you haven't got any real body, any dark sensual body of life. You have no sensuality. You have only your will and your conceit of consciousness and your lust for power, to know. 66

This scene helps explain why, by making himself God of the machine and by subjugating his men to the mechanical will, Gerald only brings about his own destruction. Lawrence explains further the connection between the will and death in The Symbolic Meaning:

This has been the fallacy of our age - the assumption that we, of our own will and by our own precept and prescription, can create the perfect being and the perfect age. The truth is, that we have the faculty to form and distort even our own natures...... And the things we can make of our own natures, by our own will, is at the most a pure mechanism...... on one side a monster ... 67

Gudrun can understand the desire of the will and can acclaim the victim. She acquiesces in Gerald's wish to make perfect his horse through his own will. In part, by supporting Gerald here, she gives herself to the machine. This scene marks the beginning of her connection with modern

66. Mind p. 46
67. The Symbolic Meaning op. cit. p. 56
disintegration and corruption. In giving herself to Loerke, she completes the process, for he sacrifices even his Art to the machine:

'Nothing but work! ... No, it is nothing but this, serving a machine, or enjoying the motion of a machine — motion, that is all. — You have never worked for hunger or you would know what god governs us.' 68

"Water-Party" develops further the growing relationship between Gerald and Gudrun. Up to this point, the two have moved closer together, through Gudrun's recognition of her affinity with Gerald. Here, however, one becomes aware of the elements in their relationship which lead ultimately to Gerald's destruction.

Gudrun challenges Gerald in her dance before the Highland cattle. Like the horse, the cattle have a symbolic, sexual meaning: "In the bull the centres of power are in the breast and shoulders .... The woman's fear of the bull is a great terror of the dynamic upper centres in man." 69 Gudrun herself is drawn towards this power which emanates from the breast:

whilst she drifted imperceptibly nearer, an uncanny white figure .... ebbed upon them, in the slow hypnotizing convulsion of the dance. She could feel them just in front of her, it was as if she had the electric pulse from their breasts running into her hands. Soon she would touch them, actually touch them. 70

She is impelled to reject them, however, just as she later

68. W in L. p. 477
69. Fantasia of the Unconscious ... op. cit. p. 9
70. W in L. p. 157
rejects Gerald. She will only partially surrender to the power, that she unveils in him, and her struggle against him is symbolised in her act against the bullocks and in her striking of him.

At the same time as Gudrun’s position is defined, Gerald’s ultimate defeat is symbolically presented. As Gudrun strikes him, Gerald loses his support. His will is defeated by the lower consciousness:

For some seconds he could not speak, his lungs were so suffused with blood, his heart stretched almost to bursting with a great gush of ungovernable emotion. It was as if some reservoir of black emotion had burst within him, and swamped him. 71

As she defeats the bullocks, symbols of the powers of the breast, by frightening them away, so she overcomes Gerald by releasing the depths of emotion within his breast. Yet the release that Gudrun gives him is not purely destructive. She releases him also into life, as opposed to the death represented by the will. Thus Gerald also finds peace within their conflict:

Now he had let go, imperceptibly he was melting into oneness with the whole. It was like pure, perfect sleep, his first great sleep of life. He had been so insistent, so guarded all his life. But here was sleep, and peace, and perfect lapsing out. 72

The final defeat results from his own failure as well as from Gudrun’s opposition. With her, he may possibly have found life, but he is unable to grasp it. Here, this

71. Win L p. 191
72. Win L p. 199
is symbolised in Diana's death, as has been discussed earlier. Later, at Innsbruck, the same pattern occurs. Brought to a partial and painful awareness, Gerald is unable to grasp what has been offered and instead destroys it.

"Rabbit" defines the nature of the relationship further. In this scene, each recognises the corruption latent in the other. Words like "abhorrent" and "obscene" predominate. The rabbit gives an "uncearthly abhorrent scream" 73; Gerald and Gudrun form "a league between them abhorrent to them both. They were implicated with each other in abhorrent mysteries" 74; the rent on Gudrun's arm makes Gerald think of "the obscene beyond" 75 and as he watches the rabbit run wild he has "a queer, faint, obscene smile over his face." 76 Both sense, in this mutual recognition, something hellish and demoniacal. The scene is further heightened by storm images - "Then her colour came up, a heavy rage came over her like a cloud" 77; "He had the power of lightning in his nerves" 78; - and by references to the unearthly and magic - "she seemed like a soft recipient of his magical, hideous white fire" 79; "round and round like a furry meteorite ... as if the rabbit were obeying some unknown incantation." 80

Here Lawrence indicates the direction of the love is down the river of corruption. Yet this darkness is ambivalent.
Thus, as in *The Rainbow* Ursula moves through this dark to a new light, so she and Birkin, in this novel, pass through corruption and darkness to life. Birkin comes to Ursula, from the very beginning, at the source of her corruption and, at Innsbruck, she too accepts this obscenity which she had rejected in "Water-Party".

But his face only glistened on her, unknown, horrible. And yet she was fascinated. Her impulse was to repel him violently, break away from this spell of mocking brutishness. But she was too fascinated, she wanted to submit, she wanted to know. What would he do to her? 81

But finally, they turn to the fecundity and creativity of Southern Italy.

For Gudrun and Gerald, the darkness does not lead to new light. It destroys Gerald who is not quite corrupt enough. At Innsbruck, Gudrun sees him as "remote and candid, unconscious ... this innocent, beautiful state of unconsciousness ...." 82 Gudrun gives herself completely to the process of disintegration and, with Loerke, proceeds yet further down the dark river. As in "Water-Party", the hint of what is to come co-exists with the present "hellish recognition". Gerald senses his own destruction in Gudrun's very acknowledgement of their affinity.

He felt again as if she had hit him across the face - or rather as if she had torn him across the breast, dully, finally. 83

81. *in L* p. 463
82. *in L* p. 507
83. *in L* p. 273
In "Death and Love" the growth of the relationship reaches its peak. Gerald's life, built up around him by his own mechanical will, has collapsed with his father's death. Built in reaction to Thomas Crich's life, it has lost its last human reality. At this crucial juncture, Gerald turns to Gudrun. He brings into her bedroom, however, clay from his father's grave. Even in seeking life, he cannot escape from death. Gudrun too is aware of the element of death in the relationship. To rescue Gerald, she has to accept her own annihilation:

Into her he poured all his pent-up darkness and corrosive death, and he was whole again ... And she, subject, received him as a vessel filled with his bitter potion of death. She had no power at this crisis to resist ... 84

From here on, their relationship leads inevitably to Gerald's destruction. The pattern of his death has already been discussed. At Innsbruck, he and Gudrun face their final conflict and, as Gerald's only support against existence is now Gudrun herself, it is inevitable that he shall be defeated.

Gudrun moves on to a new phase, in her progress towards utter degradation. She prepares to leave Innsbruck with the troll-like Loerke. Birkin defines the role that she plays earlier in the novel. He has been reflecting on the Southern disintegration of the African, represented by the statuette in Halliday's flat:

Thousands of years ago, that which was imminent in

84. W in L pp. 388-89
himself must have taken place in these Africans: the goodness, the holiness, the desire for creation and productive happiness must have lapsed, leaving the single impulse for knowledge in one sort, mindless progressive knowledge through the senses ... 85

This "mystic knowledge in disintegration and dissolution" has yet to be fulfilled in the Northern races who "would fulfil a mystery of ice-destructive knowledge, snow abstract annihilation". 86 Birkin and Ursula turn from this process and Gerald is killed by it. Only Gudrun continues to follow it to its very source. This is why she turns to Loerke. As has been seen, he has given himself completely to the machine. Birkin recognises that he is at the very edge of "the bottomless pit", a "gnawing little negation". 87 Gudrun sees in him "the rock bottom of all life ... a pure, unconnected will, stoical and momentaneous. There was only his work." 88 With him, she can reach to the final mystery of northern disintegration.

Ursula and Birkin's relationship is depicted differently from that of Gudrun and Gerald. This difference results from the role played by Birkin. He not only participates actively in the events of the novel but also comments on and explains the theories of life around which the book is structured. Thus, much of Birkin's commentary serves to elucidate the meaning of the other episodes. Such is seen in his explanation to Ursula of the two rivers of life, the

85. W in L p. 285
86. W in L p. 286
87. W in L p. 481
88. W in L p. 480
two streams being demonstrated in the two love affairs.
Similar is his reflection on the African statuette - here
he elucidates the theory of the Southern and Northern dis-
solution, thus explaining the significance of Gerald's death
and Gudrun's continuing quest. He describes too the meaning
of the new form of love and clarifies its difference from the
old form. To an extent, such clarifications and explana-
tions are necessary within the book, as Lawrence's theories
diverged from the philosophy of contemporary English writers.
Yet *Women in Love* is basically a novel, not a book of
philosophy and it becomes necessary to see how Birkin's two
roles fit into the development of his love affair as a
whole.

The first method is conventional enough, although
effective. Lawrence, while presenting Birkin's views
seriously, satirises them slightly. He is, at one level,
"Salvator Mundi" and, at another, "a Sunday-school teacher,
a prig of the stiffest kind." 89 This duality is presented
in Ursula's continual commentary on his views which combines
with her gradual acceptance of them. The satire is most
pointed in the scene at the Pompadour where Birkin's stiff-
ness and extreme seriousness are placed beside the mocking
levity of his detractors. Again the dual nature of Birkin
as saviour and preacher is illustrated neatly by a comparison
of his verbosity with that of the robin redbreast. Thus

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89. *WinL* p. 144
Ursula sees the small birds, whom Guðrún has equated with Birkin, as: "Stout short politicians lifting up their voices from the platform, little men who must be heard at any cost." She sees his mystic quality in a comparison of him with the yellow hammers:

Some yellow-hammers suddenly shot along the road in front of her. And they looked to her so uncanny and inhuman, like flaming yellow barbs shooting through the air on some weird, living errand, that she said to herself: 'After all, it is impudence to call them little Lloyd Georges. They are really unknown to us, they are the unknown forces.'

For the greater part of the novel, however, the role of Birkin fits in with the total structure by its dramatisation in an external picture. This method is first seen in the classroom episode where the whole discussion evolves from examining the structure of the catkin flower. This forms the prototype of several episodes during which Ursula and Birkin progress and develop. Their first serious conversation is in "An Island" when Birkin tells Ursula of the corruption of the human race. He compares their dry rot with the pure creation of the natural world. Ursula is, at the same time, both sympathetic and hostile. Both Birkin's theory and the present attitudes of the two people find symbolic expression in the floating of the daisies down the river. The daisies are the pure creation — "scattered broadcast on the pong, tiny, radiant things, like an exaltation, points of exaltation here and there."
trying to interpret them as democracies or as aristocratic systems is doing as the modern world does — forcing his will upon the unconscious state. As he says: "'Quite! It's a daisy — we'll leave it alone.'" Thus while this is the external expression of the theory, it also reveals how much Birkin himself is caught up in that which he deplores while it is Ursula who naturally accepts his views yet is superficially caught up with artificial ideas. This ambiguous situation is emphasised by the image of the flower:

"Why should you always be doing?" she retorted. 'It is so plebeian. I think it is much better to be really patrician, and to do nothing, but just be oneself, like a walking flower!

'I quite agree,' he said, 'if one has burst into blossom. But I can't get my flower to blossom anyhow. Either it is blighted in the bud, or has got the smother-fly, or it isn't even nourished.'

This image occurs later also, emphasising Birkin's need of Ursula. Thus, after they have really come together, he sees her "like a radiant, shining flower that moment unfolded in primal blessedness." whereas his soul "was dark and gloomy, it had only one grain of living hope, like a grain of mustard seed." 95

The Mino episode shows a further development of Birkin's concept. In this case, the external metaphor of his explanation of love as two souls in perfect equilibrium is the cat Mino and his mate, the promiscuous wild cat. Ursula

93. W in L p. 146
94. W in L p. 140
95. W in L p. 146
rejects Birkin's theory as mere pride but the essential difference of Birkin's concept and the old theory of possession and submission is seen in the contrast of Mino's lightly bringing his wild cat into submission, without trying to suppress her wildness completely and Gerald's forcing the mare to submit to the train against her nature and Hermione's attempts to control Mino utterly.

"Moony" is the most perfect example, perhaps, of the various elements of Ursula and Birkin's relationship. The moon-figure is central and is symbolic of many things. In Fantasia, Lawrence describes it as "the declaration of our existence in separateness" which "holds us to our own cosmic individuality, as a world individual in space" 96 while in Apocalypse, he stresses that:

... we have lost the moon, the cool, bright, ever-varying moon. It is she who would caress our nerves ... For the moon is the mistress and mother of our watery bodies, the pale body of our nervous consciousness and our moist flesh. 97

Elsewhere, he equates the moon and water, as the female elements. All these meanings are present in "Moony".

Ursula, wishing for death as an escape, because Rupert has made her aware of the process of dissolution, is whipped by the moon as Lawrence says will happen when one is out of harmony with it:

96. Fantasia of the Unconscious ... op. cit. p. 159
97. Apocalypse op. cit. pp. 48-49
But it seemed so mysterious with the white and deathly smile. And there was no avoiding it. Night or day, one could not escape the sinister face. She becomes aware of its creativity, as she watches Birkin stone it. As the reflection of the moon is shivered into pieces, the dark waves and the silver light conflict - this scene being thus connected with the symbol of the rivers of life. As the light finally merges into a whole, Ursula sees it as the rose, the flower of life:

Rapidly, like white birds, the fire all broken rose across the pond, fleeing in clamorous confusion, battling with the flock of dark waves that were forcing their way in. The furthest waves of light, fleeing out, seemed to be clamouring against the shore for escape, the waves of darkness came in heavily, running under towards the centre.

and

fell in with the whole, until a ragged rose, a distorted, frayed moon was shaking upon the waters again.

This scene is even more interesting in revealing Birkin's conflict, for, at one level of his consciousness, he seems to be trying to destroy the life principle which, in "An Island", he has confessed he cannot grasp. This episode is closely followed by his meditation on the destructive process of the world, and his decision to be saved by Ursula, the personification, for him, of the life principle. Also important in this connection is the identification of the moon with the female element. For

98. WinL p. 276
99. WinL p. 278
100. WinL p. 280
Rupert, Ursula represents true womanhood, even though she insists on decrying this status. The connection here made between Ursula and the moon is reminiscent of *The Rainbow* although there seems to be a shift of meaning between the two books. In the first, the moon primarily represents the mystic force of the unknown towards which Ursula is aspiring. It is here more closely attached to Lawrence's concept of true Womanhood and its link with life and creativity, and thus the moon becomes, in part, a symbol of Ursula. This latter connection is strengthened by the significance of the golden light in Ursula's eyes. Thus Birkin tells Ursula that it is the golden light that he wishes to possess, and, for him, it represents Ursula's link with creativity: "His mind saw again the lovely golden light of spring transfused through her eyes, as through some wonderful window." 101 When Ursula accepts her womanhood, she is transfigured by this light: "Her face was now one dazzle of released, golden light, as she looked up at him and laid her hand full on his thighs ..." 102

One cannot delve to all the meanings implicit in this scene, but, in the destruction of the moon's reflection, one does glimpse the various elements of Birkin and Ursula's quest. The search, however, is far from completed, at this point. Ursula recognises that in Birkin's action there was

101. *Win L* p. 282
102. *Win L* p. 353
hatred, while she herself cannot yet accept the soft, moth-like quality of Rupert's love but quickens still into hard passion, similar to that of Gudrun and Gerald.

"Exorcise" is the consummation of their quest. Here too, the progress towards full knowledge is cleverly delineated by use of the external symbol. By this stage, Ursula is vainly struggling against accepting Birkin's values, while Birkin has yet the last link to break with Hermione, who represents the part of him still tied to corrupt values. The bitter fight marks the last struggle before surrender. The rings, which Birkin gives to Ursula, are the symbols of the internal struggle and also represent what they are fighting for. Birkin describes their meaning as he sees them lying in the mud.

He could not bear to see the rings lying in the road. He picked them up and wiped them unconsciously on his hands. They were the little tokens of the reality of beauty, the reality of happiness in warm creation. But he had made his hands all dirty and gritty. 105

During the fight, Ursula realises that if she is going to reject Birkin, she will have to reject the rings with their pledge of a new life, and, even when she is at her most bitter, she is unwilling to throw them away. When she and Birkin reunite, she quickly asks if they have been found. With the acceptance of this pledge, Ursula and Birkin leave behind the outworn values.

105. *War in L.* pp. 348-49
What follows is the climactic point in their love. Together, they accept blood-consciousness and all that it means. This marks the culmination of Ursula's quest, begun in The Rainbow with her early awareness of the sons of God.

She saw a strange creature from another world in him. It was as if she were enchanted, and everything was metamorphosed. She recalled again the old magic of the Book of Genesis, where the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair. And he was one of these strange creatures from the beyond, looking down at her, and seeing she was fair. 104

She opens into complete flower, and, as an image of her personal life, the flower symbol reaches its culmination at this point. At the beginning of the novel, she felt that she was still a bud: "If only she could break through the last integuments! She seemed to try and put her hands out, like an infant in the womb, and she could not" 105 but now she has become "a paradisal flower ... beyond womanhood, such a flower of luminousness." 106 Ursula has reached her full growth. Birkin, even here, has not achieved all, but he too is reborn "like a thing that is born, like a bird when it comes out of an egg, into a new universe". 107 What she has not given him, Ursula cannot. The missing segment is in his relationship with Gerald.

As with the other portions of the novel, Lawrence has reinforced the delineation of Birkin and Ursula by the use of images. Certain ones have been discussed, such as the

104. W in L p. 352
105. W in L p. 10
106. W in L p. 353
107. W in L p. 351
golden light in Ursula's eyes. There are several others.

Most of the images used of Birkin emphasise his intangibility and otherness from the world of men. Ursula notices, as she watches Birkin arrive at the church, that "he played with situations like a man on a tight-ropede but always on a tight-ropede, pretending nothing but ease." 108 The uncertainty of Birkin in this position is caught more fully; however, in his depiction as an animal at bay: "He resembled a deer, that throws one ear back upon the trail behind and one ear forward, to know what is ahead." 109

The delicacy of the man is captured in the moth image, when he first kisses Ursula. Yet another type of image is applied to him. He is seen as a man, clothed with fire. Fire, according to Lawrence, is the male element which must combine with water for completeness; it is also seen as the fiery element which belongs to sensual people. Thus this comparison portrays his difference from other modern men, as exemplified by Gerald. Ursula first recognises this when Birkin enters her classroom:

Suddenly she started. She saw, in the shaft of ruddy, copper-coloured light near her, the face of a man. It was gleaming like fire, watching her, waiting for her to be aware ... She thought she was going to faint. All her suppressed, subconscious fear sprang into being, with anguish. 110

Considering that Birkin, at times, is seen as the new creative life, it becomes of deeper significance that he is

108. Win L p. 22
109. Win L p. 27
110. Win L p. 38
constantly ill before he becomes united irrevocably with Ursula, and that, on one occasion, Hermione directly brings on his illness.

Ursula's recoil from Birkin is often associated with a recoil from his physical illness, as if the element of her that subconsciously rejects him is that which has turned away from the ideals of the modern world. Her hardness and self-sufficiency, which envelop her at such times, are represented in the jewel image.

Recoiling upon herself, she became hard and self-completed, like a jewel. She was bright and invulnerable, quite free and happy, perfectly liberated in her self-possession... She was so radiant with all things in her possession of perfect hostility. 111

It must be noticed when she consciously withdraws from Birkin, that she is most open to his ideas.

In her moods of receptivity, she is most often likened to the flower, as has been seen above, and also to the dawn: "There was a living, tender beauty, like a tender light of dawn shining from her face." 112 Elsewhere, she is equated with the butterfly, a swan, the shoot of a plant and "a caught flame". She is always seen in terms of life and pride and creativity. The rose of life is the most direct of these images, being a central symbol of the novel, and, likewise, her connection with the moon, as has been seen already.

This last finds expression too in the lanterns at the Crich party, as well as in the golden lights of her eyes. As

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111. W in L. p. 39
Birkin says, when he looks at the lantern: "You've got the heavens above, and the waters under the earth."

As in *The Rainbow*, the strength of the symbols and metaphors derives from the accumulation of their total significance in a gradual manner. Thus the flower image develops in this work to its full power. At the beginning of the novel, its function is purely metaphorical, being used to describe Gudrun's feeling of waste and Ursula's sense of unfulfilment. With its association with the river symbolism, it too becomes symbolic. This role is extended in such scenes as Gudrun's drawing the mud-flowers and Ursula's floating of the daisies. In "Excursus", it reaches its climax, in association with the individual. In "Continental", it assumes cosmic significance. Even more noticeable in this novel than in *The Rainbow* is the development of further images and symbols, in an extension from a central image.

Thus associated with the flower symbol are the images of the butterfly, the moth, dawn and the jewel. The moon and flower symbols also merge, each extending the significance of the other. Again, in the Alpine setting, the symbol of the flower in association with that of mountains implies the presence of life as well as death.

The chasm image develops along similar lines, although not with the same delicacy as the flower imagery. From the first, the concept of the chasm is present in Gudrun's fears.
for the future. It is linked too with Gerald and is finally seen in association with Loerke. There tends to be a static quality in the use of this symbol, however, and, in its extension to the mask-figure, a certain artificiality. The same criticism might be applied to the northern ice image. The chasm image itself reaches its peak in its connection with Gerald's nightmare state after his father's death. The quality found here in it, however, is present much earlier in the mask image, which so closely parallels the chasm image in meaning. One must ask therefore if there is any development of the concept of Gerald's emptiness in these figures. The imprisoned feeling that invades both Gerald and Gudrun is expressed perfectly in two images that extend from the central chasm figure, however - those of the eternally moving waves and the eternally ticking clock.

The other images of the novel develop also in the above manner, all becoming associated with life, death or both.

The visit to Hohenhausen remains to be discussed. It has been left until now because this section seems to stand apart from the rest of the novel. The fate of Gerald and Gudrun has been delineated symbolically while Ursula and Birkin have reached their fullest fruition before leaving England. This last section can serve only to affirm or to deny facts already ascertained. Yet it is not extraneous. The tone of the whole book is highly symbolical, despite
the level of realism sustained throughout. This last section could be seen too in realistic terms but is, in fact, even more highly symbolical than the rest of the novel. It seems to be almost an allegory, a journey of the protagonists to Hades. Thus Birkin and Gerald's relationship has parallels with the Orpheus-Eurydice story whereas Gudrun has certain resemblances to Persephone. These parallels are not meant to be followed exhaustively but they do highlight the allegorical nature of the Alpine journey.

This interpretation is supported by the overtones of imagery on Ursula and Birkin's trip to the mountains. Ursula sees their landing in France as:

Strange and desolate above all things, like disembarking from the Styx into the desolated underworld, was this landing at night. 113a

while, on the train journey, she feels as if she has entered another world:

... that it seemed she had no indentity, that the child she had been, playing in Cossethay churchyard, was a little creature of history, not really herself. 114

The direct references to the underworld made here are not found in association with Hohenhausen, but it too is seen as a different world. It is the "navel" of the earth where one will either perish or be saved:

But the cradle of snow ran on to the eternal closing-in; where the walls of snow and rock rose impenetrable, and the mountain peaks above were in heaven immediate.

113a W in L p. 438
114. W in L p. 440
This was the centre, the knot, the navel of the world, where the earth belonged to the skies, pure, unapproachable, impassable. 115

The promise of life is seen in the comparison of the mountain peaks to the rose which, as quoted before, Gudrun could recognise but could not grasp. Gerald realises almost immediately that, for him, there is no way out.

It is at this point that Loerke enters. He is associated with the underworld immediately: "then there was a thin, dark-skinned man with full eyes, an odd creature, like a child, and like a troll, quick, detached" 116 and later: "And she could see in his brown gnome's eyes the black look of inorganic misery which lay behind all his small buffoonery." 117 Birkin recognises that he has gone further in the process of dissolution than anyone else. Thus, on a symbolic level, when Gudrun agrees to go with Loerke, she has, in a sense, sold her soul to the devil. It is he who escalades Gudrun's final victory over Gerald, in his dissolution into ice. His full significance in connection with Gudrun has already been discussed.

Birkin and Ursula's hope is continually contrasted with Gerald's doom and Gudrun's quest. They can see the promise of life in this eternal crux:

They saw the golden lights of the hotel glowing out in the night of snow-silence, small in the hollow, like a cluster of yellow berries. It seemed like a bunch
of sun-sparks, tiny and orange in the midst of the
snow darkness. 118

Likewise, it is emphasised that Gerald could never have left
to find new creation in South Italy as Birkin and Ursula do.
South Italy becomes symbolic of the new creative life which
these two alone have adopted:

Now suddenly, as by a miracle, she remembered that
away, beyond, below her, lay the dark fruitful earth,
that towards the south there were stretches of land
dark with orange trees and cypress grey with olives,
that ilex trees lifted wonderful plumy tufts in shadow
against a blue sky. 119

The symbolic overtones are very heavy in this last
section, but they are present throughout. The achievement
of the novel is that Lawrence has depicted realistically his
modern England but, by means of significant episodes and by
the reinforcement of the simple image and metaphor, prevalent
in the first two sections of The Rainbow he has overlaid a
social satire by a universal philosophy, presenting a positive
solution to complement his destructive criticism. The
fusion of the two elements was made possible by his poetic
technique which employs symbol and metaphor and the
external correlative.

118. W in L p. 459
119. W in L p. 488
I

The theme of *The Plumed Serpent* might be described as the search for God or the central mystery. Ramón has spent his lifetime searching for it and the religion he creates around Quetzalcoatl is, for him, the outward manifestation of his discovery of the godhead. Cipriano has found it within Ramón and in the symbols of the new religion while Kate searches throughout the novel for the mystery and, at the end, partly discovers it through the help of the other characters. On the social level the Mexican nation is corrupt because it has lost the central mystery of life and the story deals also with the regeneration of a people. As the religion, constructed by Ramón from the old Aztec pantheon, is the touchstone for this search in all parts and aspects of the novel, and as the symbols evolved in the religion govern the symbolism of the whole, it would be as well to establish the nature of this religion and the symbols associated with it before considering the other aspects of the novel.

The idea of dichotomy is, perhaps, the most important concept of it. This does have a basis in the Aztec religion where the idea of duality is important. Mrs Zelia
Nuttall demonstrates how this idea is present in the eternal combat of Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli;¹ is an important element of Quetzalcoatl's name and nature, the word "coatl" meaning "twin" as well as "serpent" and the god being invoked as:

Our lord Quetzalcoatl the Creator and Maker or Former, who dwells in heaven and is the lord of the earth [Tlaltecuhtli]; who is our celestial father and mother, great lord and great lady, whose title is One-Tecuhtli [literally, two-lord = twin lord] and One-Cihuatl [literally, two-lady = twin lady];² and in the gods' division by Mrs Nuttall into the God of the Below - Mictlantecuhtli - and the God of the Above - Huitzilopochtli - Quetzalcoatl uniting the two, as the "Divine Twin".³ Lawrence exploits the idea of the Above and the Below. Thus he represents Quetzalcoatl as the Lord of the Two Ways:

I am Quetzalcoatl of the eagle and the snake.  
The earth and air.  
Of the Morning Star.  
I am Lord of the Two Ways - ⁴

And not only is he the Lord between the Above and the Below but also between the night and the day:

Lo! I am always here!  
Far in the hollow of space

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² Nuttall, p. 32 - Sahagún, book VI, chapters 25, 32, 34  
³ Nuttall, p. 58  
I brush the wing of the day  
And put light on your face.  
The other wing brushes the dark  
But I, I am always in place.  

This dichotomy is given a special twist by Lawrence,  
however, and its affinities are rather with Fantasia of the  
Unconscious than with the old Aztec religion. Thus the  
Above and the Below, the day and the night meet with the  
breast and loins respectively. The breast is the centre of  
the upper sympathetic and spiritual consciousness while the  
loins may be equated with the lower, blood-consciousness.  
Thus Ramón exclaims:

And say to thy strength: Lo, the night is foaming  
up my feet and my loins, day is foaming down from my  
eyes and my mouth to the sea of my breast. Lo, they  
meet! My belly is a flood of power, that races in  
down the sluice of bone at my back, and a star hangs  
low on the flood, over a troubled dawn  

and, elsewhere, tells his people: "But as in the morning  
the Morning-star stands between earth and sky, a star can  
rise in us, and stand between the heart and the loins."  
To estimate the importance of the division of the body into  
the Above and the Below one must turn to Lawrence's own  

philosophy:

The first seat of our primal consciousness is the  
solar plexus, the great nerve-centre situated behind  
the stomach. From this centre we are first dynamically  
conscious. For the primal consciousness is  
always dynamic and never, like mental consciousness,  
static.  

5. The P. S. p. 190  
6. The P. S. p. 192  
7. The P. S. p. 212  
8. Fantasia op. cit. p. 29
Lawrence continues to explain that the cardiac plexus forms the second sympathetic centre, situated in the breast. The former is the sensual mode of consciousness, found predominantly in the southern child while the latter is spiritual, being characteristic of the northern child. The best human being is he who achieves an equilibrium. From this, one may deduce that Lawrence, in employing the Aztec idea of dichotomy, is expressing his own concept of the perfectly balanced human being where the physical and spiritual tendencies are in the correct proportion. One may note here a very close link with Birkin's reflections on Southern disintegration, represented by the statuette, and Northern spiritual decadence, seen in Gerald and Guðrun.

Connected with the above concept and equally important in the arrangement of the whole novel is the doctrine of animism. This doctrine is very important in Lawrence's use of landscape, as shall be discussed later. The theory is first made explicit in Ramón's sermons and it would be as well to quote his words to see how powerful a role this idea plays in his concept of the universe:

... At the heart of this earth sleeps a great serpent, in the midst of fire .... It is the living fire of the earth, for the earth is alive. The snake of the world is huge, and the rocks are his scales, trees grow between them. I tell you the earth you dig is alive as a snake that sleeps. So vast a serpent you walk on, this lake lies between his folds as a drop of rain in the folds of a sleeping rattlesnake ... 10

9. Fantasia p. 30
10. The P.S. p. 209
A symbolic link is established between the two doctrines by the image of the serpent, which is here seen as representing the power of the earth and is elsewhere associated with the Beloved and with the power of the loins.

The doctrine is, like the idea of dichotomy, linked with the Aztec religion. Thus Lewis Spence, in *The Gods of Mexico*, reveals how intimately the religious rites were associated with the pleasing of the natives with the elements for rain and a good season so that food might grow. The strength of their belief in the livingness of the universe is clearest in the motive for blood sacrifices. These owe their origin to the idea that, if blood were spilled on the ground, it would revive the fertility of the earth. Eventually this evolved into the elaborate ritual of keeping the sun alive with human blood. The connection is seen in the festival of Panquetzalitztli where Huizilopochtli is honoured as the promoter of plant growth. Captives are slain in three groups to honour this god. 11 Lawrence, himself, expresses the belief that, for the Mexican people, the universe is a living adversary:

He could not see that the bird was a real living creature with a life of its own. This, his race had never seen. With black eyes they stared out on an elemental world, where the elements were monstrous and cruel, as the sun was monstrous, and the cold, crushing black water of the rain was monstrous, and the dry, dry cruel earth 12

12. The P.S. p. 232
With the exaltation of this feeling into a doctrine of animism, Lawrence creates the sense of wonder in the universe that he feels is so lacking, through the dissection of the world by scientific fact. At the same time, he is careful to dissociate the new concept from the blood rites, which he sees as a mark of Aztec decadence:

'But men forgot me.... And when they could not bear the fire of the sun, they said: The sun is angry. He wants to drink us up. Let us give him blood of victims.

'And so it was, the dark branches of shade were gone from heaven, and Quetzalcoatl mourned and grew old, holding his hand before his face, to hide his face from men. 13

Lawrence evolves from this concept two further tenets of the religion, which may, to an even more marked degree, be traced back to the Laurentian philosophy. The first is closely connected with the first doctrine in which Lawrence identifies the dichotomy of the Above and the Below with the consciousness of the breast and the loins. Not only does the human body share in this division but Lawrence also envisages it as taking on the power of the living universe. The idea is expressed in the "Welcome to Quetzalcoatl":

The snake has kissed my heel.
Like a volcano my hips are moving
With fire, and my throat is full.

Blue daylight sinks in my hair,
The star comes out between the two Wonders, shines out of everywhere; 14
Saying without speech: Look you!

13. The P.S. p. 133
14. The P.S. p. 365
Thus The Plumed Serpent establishes, in the dogma of the religion, a justification for the symbolic identification of the movement of the sea and the opening of the flower with the sexual act, imagery used throughout his writing, but perhaps with the greatest power, here, in the union of Cipriano and Kate.

The other concept takes a slightly different direction but is again a central Lawrentian dogma. Ramón, from establishing the livingness of the universe, moves to establishing its sanctity:

'And when the fire burns up and the wind is cold and you spread your hands to the blaze, listen to the flame saying: Ah! Is it thou? Comest thou to me? Lo, I was going the longest journey, down the path of the greatest snake. But since thou comest to me, I come to thee. And where thou fallest into my hands, fall I into thine, and jasmine flowers on the burning bush between us . . .

'Reive nothing away, and let nothing be reived from you. For reiver and bereaved alike break the root of the jasmine flower, and spit upon the Evening Star.' 15

In other words, life is a matter of meeting others at a central point rather than of the ravishment of one by the other. It is of the crime of absolute possession that Ramón accuses his wife, Carlota. The idea is far from new in Lawrence, and has already been discussed in considering Birkin's theory of love in Women in Love where the lovers meet in a pure conjunction and equilibrium, neither destroying the individuality of the other. The main difference
lies in Lawrence's stressing the fragmentariness of the
human soul in *The Plumed Serpent*, compared with its unity in
*Women in Love* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*.

If the doctrines of dichotomy and of animism, in the
religion of Ramón, owe their most important elements to
the Lawrentian philosophy rather than to the Aztec religion,
the place of the phallus owes even more. It is towards the
perfect relationship of man and woman that most of the
religious dogma leads. Thus Ramón exhorts his people in a
hymn:

I ask for nothing except to slip
In the tent of the Holy Ghost
And be there on the house of the cloven flame

....

Be with me there, my woman,
Be bodily there.
Then let the flame wrap round us
Like a snare

The flame, throughout the novel, has signified sexual union,
and this hymn is a plea to all, especially Kate, to establish
the Morning Star with the loved one. Ramón confesses to
Kate that to achieve ultimate victory he "needs the true
fulfilment with woman" 17 and he has told Cipriano that he
does not "believe in womanless gods". 18 Cipriano, himself,
can never reach the ultimate mystery without Kate while Kate,
herself, achieves renewal partly through her love-making with
the little general.

17. *The P.S.* p. 286
18. *The P.S.* p. 243
The necessity of physical love, in attaining the godhead, is emphasized throughout the novel. Lawrence also emphasizes the physical sensual element of the religion through other means. Thus, by the imagery he uses in Quetzalcoatl's invocation to Mexico, he describes the country in terms of the female body rather than of the spiritual ideal: "White breast-tips of Mexico / My bride"; "My bride between the seas / Is combing her dark hair." 19; "lying like a dark woman with white breast-tips." 20 Kate realises the physical nature of the religion first, in her sight of Ramón in his neon clothes. She is touched to the quick with a religious fervour, not by the sense of the spirit, but by the sight of the flesh:

With the blue sash round his waist, pressing a fold in the flesh, and the thin linen, seeming to gleam with the life of his hips and his thighs, he emanated a fascination almost like a narcotic, asserting his pure, fine sensuality against her. 21

and

... this was the beauty of John, that he had had; like a pomegranate on a dark tree in the distance, naked, but not undressed! Forever still and clothe-less, and with another light about it, of a richer day ... 22

It is true that the old religion that Ramón claims to be reviving, also sanctifies the sexual union. Zelia Nuttall writes that it became a sort of consecration, ultimately associated with cosmical philosophy and religious ideas, and

19. The P.S. p. 128
20. The P.S. p. 256
21. The P.S. p. 196
22. The P.S. p. 195
that it coincided with what was regarded as the annual union of the elements, the Above and the Below, heaven and earth. At the time of male and female rule, it seems that the priest, personifying heaven, and the priestess, personifying earth, had to have an annual sacred marriage rite. 23 The Aztec concept, however, is closely related to the notion of fertility and it is the child-bearing which is important, just as it is the crop which is important in the union of heaven and earth. Lawrence does not deny the importance of a vigorous race and, on one side, the "moment of coition" is all important for the creation of the new being. Toussaint exclaims:

'... all a man's hope, his honour, his faith, his trust, his belief in life and creation and God, all these things can come to a crisis in the moment of coition. And these things will be handed on in continuity to the child ...' 24

Yet, the central importance of the phallus, in the novel, is in the attainment of new manhood and new womanhood. The sexual act is important, per se, rather than important in the creation of more human life.

Lawrence, in his stressing of sensual love, seems to be revolting actively against Christianity as much as constructing a new basis for life. Hence Kate, as she gazes at Ramón's shoulders, realises that she feels shame and is the sinning Eve, only because she looks with western Christian

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23. Nuttall p. 102
24. The P.S. p. 72
eyes. The attack becomes more explicit when Ramón destroys the Christian idols. Here a solemnity of tone is spoiled by the anger in the author's voice. Lawrence describes Mary as "a doll in faded satin" and writes of her leaving the church:

Then the Virgin with the blue mantle and lace, and the golden crown. The women began to moan as she emerged rather rashily into the blazing sunlight.

The active antipathy of Lawrence towards the spirituality of Mary, the Virgin, is echoed in other writings, and perhaps most strongly in his description of Hester Prynne, the sinning Christian of Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter:

... woman is wasted into abstraction ... gone in a mental activity and a spiritual purity. Then behold, suddenly, she turns, and we have the Scarlet Woman, the Magna Mater with her fiery insignia of the sensual self in revolt, presented for worship upon the scaffold, worship in contumely and blame.

The sensual and sexual elements, central to the development of the novel, derive only a fraction of their meaning from the Aztec belief, the main load of their significance coming from Lawrence's firm belief in the power of true physical love, found even in The White Peacock, and from the increasingly open antipathy and hatred for the Christian ethos.

The essentially anti-Christian slant of the Quetzalcoatlian message is found mostly in the doctrine of the Everlasting Now, however, which is the last principle.

25 The P.S. p. 197
26 The P.S. p. 290
27 The P.S. p. 296
28 The Symbolic Meaning op. cit. p. 140
tenet of the philosophy underlying the Plumed Serpent. This aspect is introduced in Ramón's sermon to his own servants:

'The great Snake coils and uncoils the plasm of his folds, and stars appear, and worlds fade out. It is no more than the changing and easing of the plasm.

'I always am, says his sleep.

'As a man in a deep sleep knows not, but, is, so is the Snake of the coiled cosmos, wearing its plasm.

'As a man in a deep sleep has no tomorrow, no yesterday, nor today, but only is, so is the limpid, far-reaching Snake of the eternal Cosmos, Now, and forever Now.' 29

This concept is brought into opposition with the Christian religion where the Saviour is eternally dead and all has ended with a grave; 30 where no hope is to be found in the living moment, but only in the promise of an after-life.

It is also connected, however, with Lawrence's revolt against mechanical will. To gain the Everlasting Now, Ramón destroys the existing time system. He introduces instead the watches of the day and night. There is no exact time and each phase is marked by the drum, as it is:

Metal for resistance.
Drums for the beating heart. 31

One may see quite easily that the concept of the Eternal Now and the desire to destroy the mechanical will through the destruction of time are Lawrenceian philosophic tenets, arising from his anti-Christian attitude and his revolt.

29. The F.S. p. 189
30. The F.S. pp. 256, 134, 213
31. The F.S. p. 375
against mechanisation, rather than part of a reconstruction of an ancient religion.

The Aztecs, themselves, had evolved a very complicated time system with which to mark their hours, days and months. Although the system was different, it was as elaborate as the system Lawrence destroys. Thus, from the Tonalamatl or the Aztec "Book of Fate", one can deduce that their time system was based on a lunar cycle. There were twenty day signs or hieroglyphs repeated thirteen times - or two hundred and sixty day signs in all. They were divided into twenty groups of thirteen days each. Each number had a sign and, for the full description of each day, both the name and the number of that day was needed. Lawrence's system is a simplification that resembles the Aztec one mainly by the names given to the various watches. Lawrence has adopted this aspect too of the Aztec religion to serve his own ends.

The Everlasting Now was an essential part of Lawrence's own doctrines from an earlier date, as can be seen by considering a passage from The Symbolic Meaning where the idea is presented as a general principle and the meaning further elucidated:

... we can never construct or fabricate or even change our own being, because we have our being in the central creative mystery, which is the pure present, and the pure Presence, of the soul-present beyond all knowing or willing ...

32. Spence pp. 359-361
The reality of realities is the rose in flower, the
man and woman in maturity, the bird in song ....
In these, past and present and future are at one, the
perfect Now ...

After considering the basic concepts of the new religion,
which is ostensibly the resurrection of the old pantheon of
Mexico, one is forced to conclude that the doctrines are
essentially Lawrencean, the Aztec religion being used as a
convenient symbolic framework and its concepts being utilised
as far as they coincide with the former concepts. Hence
the ideas that govern The Flayed Serpent are not far removed
from those which governed The Rainbow and Women in Love and
were to govern Lady Chatterley's Lover. Thus, in examining
the development of the various characters and the symbolism
and imagery, associated with them, one may expect a similar
approach to that used in the English novels of Lawrence.

From here, one can examine further other aspects of
"the new religion" and see what role they play in the total
arrangement of the novel. The characters of the gods used
by Lawrence, the nature of the ritual he adopts and the
symbolism he uses in depicting the ideas described above all
play a part in Lawrence's description of the religion.

Quetzalcoatl is the principle god of Lawrence's pantheon
and he owes a good deal to his Aztec predecessor, on both
levels of the ancient god's conception. Nuttall presents
both aspects of Quetzalcoatl in her book:

33. The Symbolic Meaning op. cit. pp. 37-40
The god's name meant "supreme god whose substance was as invisible and intangible as air" but who was also revered as the god of fire. The constant reference to air in connection with the supreme divinity caused him to be also adored as the god of air and the four winds ... 

On the other hand, the divine title of Quetzalcoatl was carried by the culture-hero whose personality has been discussed and who was a Yucatec ruler and high priest. 34

Lawrence, in considering the divine aspect of his god, makes use of his connection with the air and wind, and acknowledges the derivation of his name which means "the feathered serpent" or "the divine twin". Both aspects are important in the concept of his duality. Thus, the god, personified in Ramón, is envisaged as brushing the night and the day, the Above and the Below with his wings. He is associated with the bird-air and the serpent-earth. At this point, Lawrence also makes use of another Aztec belief for symbolic purposes. Quetzalcoatl was believed to have become the Morning and Evening Stars after his death— that is, Venus. As such, he is known as the Lord of the Morning and of Twilight. 35 In The Plumed Serpent he becomes the Lord of the Two Ways and has achieved the perfect equilibrium. In the same manner, he represents the Centre, as envisaged by Mrs Nuttall, the unifying element of the Above and Below.

The second aspect of the god has not been neglected either. It is part of the legend of Quetzalcoatl that he was a great leader from another land who brought civilization to

34. Nuttall pp. 70-71
35. Spence p. 129
various regions of the Valley of Mexico but was finally driven away, back to his homeland by the rising of a hostile and evil people in Mexico. It may be noted that Ramón is of predominantly Spanish blood and that Kate sees him as European rather than Mexican - "'No! - He feels European!'" 36 It is his European nature that can understand the mystery of the godhead and transform it into an outward manifestation, as opposed to that of the nearly pure Indian-blooded Cipriano to whom the symbols themselves are the mystery. It is basically this which establishes Ramón's supremacy over Cipriano. Kate's participation in the Mexican pantheon can also be partly justified in this light. The myth also justifies Lawrence's use of Quetzalcoatl as a Saviour, as opposed to his role as the "invisible mystery".

Yet despite such correspondences, Quetzalcoatl of The Plumed Serpent owes his form to the demands of Lawrence's philosophy. The ancient god was envisaged as chaste. He seems, indeed, to have approached more closely the European concept of Christ than any of his fellow gods. Certainly one legend existed of a wife but Spence shows how that was of late origin.

Quetzalcoatl's status as a celibate god or priest would scarcely allow his name to be connected with matrimony and it is plain that Chalchihuitlicue, the water goddess, is in a sense merely a personification of the chalchihuitl stone, which was, perhaps, originally one of the symbols of the Quetzalcoatl

36. The P.S. p. 250
cult and which later became personified in female form thus giving rise to the myth in question. 37

In this novel, however, as has been shown, the sensual aspect of Ramón's nature is emphasised and also his need for perfect physical union with a woman. He achieves this with Teréza and she is to be exalted to the place of goddess by his side. This alteration in the character of the god changes him from a Mexican to a purely Lawrentian manifestation, especially as the other features of the god as saviour, although justified in the original myth, find a more obvious origin in the earlier works of Lawrence. Thus consider the closing passage of Aaron's Rod:

> All men say they want a leader. Then let them in their souls submit to some greater soul than theirs. At present, when they say they want a leader, they mean they want an instrument like Lloyd George. A mere instrument for their use. But it's more than that. It's the reverse. It's the deep, fathomless submission to the herbic soul in a greater man. 38

and Somer's view of Kangaroo in Kangaroo: "'Why, the man is like a god, I love him,' he said to his astonished self" 39 or:

> A sort of magnetic effusion seemed to come out of Kangaroo's body, and Richard's hand was almost drawn in spite of himself to touch the other man's body. 40

Ramón, as Quetzalcoatl, is the natural aristocrat, the true leader, whom the souls of others seek in submission. Thus

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37. Spence pp. 26-27
40. Kangaroo p. 152
his man Martin worships him, the artist draws new strength from his presence and Cipriano, Kate and Teresa exist within his spell. He is the leader Aaron describes and which Kangaroo just fails to be.

If Quetzalcoatl is essentially the Laurentian leader-hero, Huizilopochtli is also, when with his soldiers. He represents the war-god who disciplines men and metes out justice. He too sheds a magnetic aura over his men who submit with their souls.

Certainly the god created by Lawrence has links with the Aztec world. Spence gives the various names of Huizilopochtli. He is known as the "Terrible God", "The Raging" and is God of War. More sacrifices were made to him than to any other god. These aspects Lawrence represents in Cipriano's role as general - and in his role as judge when his captives are slain like sacrificial victims. Although Lawrence tempers the latter role slightly, for the victims are potential murderers and are killed as such, it is clear that he wishes to retain the other side of the picture, as can be seen by Kate's reflection:

So, when she thought of him and his soldiers, tales of swift cruelty she had heard of him: when she remembered his stabbing the three helpless peons, she thought: why should I judge him? He is of the gods.

He is also seen as promoter of plant growth and this function is assumed, in the novel, by Malintzi, or Kate, who

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41. Spence, p. 66
42. The F.S. p.409
exists, as a goddess, as much as Huitzilopochtli's other half as in her own right. Her sign is the flower and her green leaf tempers Justice with Mercy.

The Huitzilopochtli of Lawrence's novel also possesses many features belonging to Tezcatlipoca, the god with whom he was seen as in eternal combat, in the old legends. Thus the hymn of Huitzilopochtli describes him as assuming a number of forms. He is the red god of blood; the yellow god, "serpent-yellow shining of my sun"; the white god, "bone in the blood"; and the green god, denoting Malintzi's function. 43 In the old pantheon, it was Tezcatlipoca who assumed the various forms. Therefore, as the black god, he represented the rainy season; as the red, the torrid, dry season; as the white god, cold and frost; and when striped was the embodiment of fair weather. 44 It is notable too that this god was the giver of life or death, 45 the role assumed by Cipriano in his ceremony in the Church. Thus Lawrence, in combining characteristics of both gods, achieves a merger of the roles of war-god and judge.

Huitzilopochtli, as represented by Lawrence, is also, however, like the new Quetzalcoatl, closely associated with sexual regeneration. This role, in fact, is his most important one in the novel. Thus Lawrence presents him as the God of the Below, not of the Above, as in Nuttall's

43. The P.8. pp. 389-90
44. Spence p. 115
45. Spence p. 116
representation. As such he becomes identified with the earth, the serpent and the loins. His is the passional sex and he embodies blood consciousness. This role becomes especially clear in his communion with Kate in the church on the night of his initiation and is seen also in Kate's description of her sexual life with him:

Now she found herself accepting him finally and forever as the stranger in whose presence she lived. It was his impersonal presence which enveloped her. She lived in his aura, and he, she knew, lived in hers, with nothing said, and no personal or spiritual intimacy whatever. A mindless communion of the blood. 46

As God of the lower consciousness, he is seen, to a certain extent, in opposition to Ramón. The latter, although overwhelming in his physical presence and finding fulfilment only in marriage, is rather a creature of the breast than of the loins. His regeneration is normally spiritual. This is seen in his marriage with Terésa, where the sexual union is never described. Again, although, when he retires to his room to commune with the godhead, the imagery is almost entirely phallic, the renewal is also spiritual. 47

Lawrence, therefore, may be seen as creating his own gods, using elements from their original forms to weld a recognisable Lawrentian hero. The sexual motif is central in determining the forms that these gods assume. A similar pattern emerges when Malintzi is studied. Kessler, who interprets

46. The P.S. p. 440
47. The P.S. p. 181
"Malintzi" as a corruption of the name for the Moon Goddess, sees the relationship of the Gods as primarily the relationship of Lawrence's Moon, Sun and Earth:

Ramon is Quetzalcoatl, the Feathered Serpent or the Wind God; he is of the earth, earthy; thus his phallic postures and orgiastic trances become comprehensible as expressions of a psychological symbol ... and thus his role as inseminator of a new Mexican culture may be explained ... and Cipriano becomes the God of War who is the Sun God; also he becomes Kate's husband, that is, as the Sun he is the opposite dynamic pole to the Moon. Between the Sun and the Moon the Earth is suspended; and the earth is described by Lawrence in The Plumed Serpent as a gigantic living serpent, in short, the phallicus which is the principle of life itself in primitive ritual. 48

The part played by Malintzi can be interpreted more simply, however. In both the imagery used of her and in the designs of her costumes, Kate, as goddess, is linked with the flower, symbolic of new, unfolding life. She is seen as in dynamic connection with Huitzilopochtli - the passional sexual mystery being achieved by their union and his hard justice being tempered by her tender mercy.

The characters of the gods, as conceived by Lawrence, are closely associated with the characters of Ramón, Cipriano and Kate. The link between these two levels of the novel shall be discussed later, however.

At this point, the costumes and banners and the dances, depicted in the novel, must be considered briefly. Actually,

despite their colourfulness, they reveal no more of Lawrence's ideas than are found in the hymns and sermons and so only re-iterate, in another form, the central philosophy. Their use is basically artistic.

The costumes, worn by the adherents of the new faith, are a point in question. The peon clothing of Remón does not resemble at all the sumptuous dress of Montezuma, who, in Aztec times, was considered the living personification of Huitzilopochtli. Neither does Cipriano's war-paint correspond to the various war-paints of the Huitzilopochtli idols, nor to those of Tezcatlipoca. The significance of the clothing derives from Lawrence's protest against the modern industrial era. He feels that if people were to dress gaily, they would once more be able to be true men and women. Wells has expresses this idea in Lady Chatterley's Lover:

'An' I'd get my men to wear different clothes: 'appen close red trousers, bright red, an' little short white jackets. Why, if men had red fine legs, that alone would change them in a month.' 51

Similarly, he believes in the worth of handicrafts. The peons are all busy weaving the serapes themselves and the signs are also made by hand. Cipriano explains to Kate the meaning of this to the Mexican, as opposed to the Englishman:

The soul is also a thing you make, like a pattern in a blanket. It is very nice, while all the wools are

49. Nuttall p. 71
50. Spence p. 66, 92
rolling their different threads and different colours, and the pattern is being made. But once it is finished — then finished it has no interest any more. Mexico hasn't started to weave the pattern of her soul. Or she is only just starting: with Ramón . . . 52

The Mexicans, as they develop, must not weave their soul in and become mechanical, as England has done. The link is here with Morris and the later Victorians rather than with the Aztecs.

The dances are highly effective, artistically, especially the dance in the Flana, which resembles closely the dance described by Clavigero in Mrs Nuttall's book. 53 But the meaning Lawrence invests them with — "Of themselves, they dared not revive the old motion, nor stir the blood in the old way. The spell of the past is too terrible." 54 — seems a little forced. The dance forms a highly effective ritual and creates a religious atmosphere, in its context, especially in its link with the sexual imagery, but it has not, on its own, the depths of meaning that the symbolism of the religion has. In fact the main purpose of these portions is ritualistic. They add colour and life to Lawrence's depiction of his philosophy and artistically, are thus very effective. Considered purely from the point of view of the philosophy and the symbolism associated with it, however, they are redundant.

Lawrence, in presenting his philosophical ideas, uses

52. The P.S. pp. 247-48
54. The P.S. p. 273
the same symbolic method that he used in The Rainbow and
Women in Love. Many of the symbols used, in fact, are the
same as those used earlier. He does, however, give pro-
minence to those which derive from Mexican belief and he
often exploits their ancient meanings, in association with
his own concepts.

The first of these symbols is the tree, or more exactly
the Tree of Life. This has its place in the Aztec religion,
just as it has in European thought. It must be admitted,
however, that Lawrence's use is rather conventional and tends
to be banal. Such an example is:

Faith is the Tree of Life itself, inevitable, and the
apples of the eye, the apples of the chin, the apple of
the heart ... What do change and evolution matter?
We are the tree with the fruit forever upon it. And
we are faith forever. 55

and likewise:

Let the Tree of the Church spread its branches over
all the earth, and shelter the prophets in its shade,
as they sit and speak their knowledge of the beyond. 56

Nevertheless, the symbol does express two important
concepts, both in the religion and in the symbolism of the
whole. It represents, in another form, true life. Thus
Kate wishes to let herself drift towards life, with the big
sun and the stars, like a tree holding out its leaves. 57
Ramon envisages it as such also when he attempts to explain
his concept of the need for various saviours, to Cipriano:

55. The P.S. p. 136
56. The P.S. p. 278
57. The P.S. p. 113
... Ah! Cipriano: it's like an international pestilence. The leaves of one great tree can't hang on the boughs of another great tree. The races of the earth are like trees; in the end they neither mix nor mingle. 58

It also expresses the idea of heaviness and downpulling, an important image in Lawrence's conception of the Mexican people. He sees them as a sensual, inward-looking race and Ramón uses this image when he tries to explain to Kate that the downward pull is not necessarily evil:

Maybe they draw you down as the earth draws down the roots of a tree, so that it may be clinched deep in soil. Men are still part of the Tree of Life, and the roots go down to the centre of the earth. Loose leaves and aeroplanes blow away on the wind, in what they call Freedom. But the Tree of Life has fixed, deep, gripping roots. 59

Of greater interest are the symbols of the serpent and the bird. The serpent has a very important role in the Aztec religion. As has been seen, the name of Quetzalcoatl means "the feathered snake" and "coatl" is a homonym for "twin". Thus the serpent is the symbol or hieroglyph for the important idea of duality. In Mexico, it was also closely associated with the idea of time. Thus Clavigero represents it as encircling the calendar wheel. On the Calendar Stone of Mexico, it represents also duality, where twin serpents, whose heads and tails almost meet, are sculptured. The serpent is also found in this association in the Codex Borgia. 60

58. The P.S. pp. 260-61
59. The P.S. p. 87
60. Nuttall pp. 26-27
Lawrence uses the symbol in a variety of forms. The first main group of serpent images may be classed as "dragons of the cosmos". What this symbol means to Lawrence is seen in *Apocalypse*:

The usual vision of the dragon is, however, not personal but cosmic. It is in the vast cosmos of the stars that the dragon writhe and lashes. We see him in his maleficent aspect, red. But don't let us forget that when he stirs green and flashing on a pure night of stars, it is he who makes the wonder of the night ... 61

This dragon appears in both forms in the novel. The sun is represented as either. To Quetzalcoatl, he is tame:

I bound the bright fangs of the Sun
And held him while Jesus passed 62

but, to the Mexicans, possibly maleficent: "For the sun and the moon are alive, and watching with gleaming eyes" 63

Generally, the dragon of the cosmos is this dragon of destruction. The most extensive use of the symbol occurs in "What Quetzalcoatl Saw in Mexico". Here Ramón describes the various dragons who will destroy the Mexicans for their failure to live:

But you! what have you mastered, among the dragon hosts of the cosmos?
There are dragons of sun and ice, dragons of the moon and the earth,
   dragons of salty waters, dragons of thunder;
There is the spangled dragon of the stars at large.
And far at the centre, with one unblinking eye, the dragon of the Morning Star. 64

The other use of the serpent symbol prevails for the

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61. *Apocalypse* op. cit. pp. 164-65
62. *The P.S.* p. 128
63. *The P.S.* p. 225
64. *The P.S.* p. 271
most part - the serpent as the serpent of the Below. The
description of the earth as one huge dragon has been quoted,
and, whenever Lawrence is expressing power from below, he
uses this serpent image. "He sends the serpent of power up
my feet and my loins." 65 or "Out of the depths of the sky, I
came like an eagle, / Out of the bowels of the earth like a
snake" 66 and "The snake of my left-hand out of the darkness ..."). 67 It may be seen from these examples that Lawrence
associates the snake of the Below with the power in the
loins. Often the meaning is interchangeable between images
of the snake of the earth and of the body, but, in the same
hymn already quoted, the relation of the snake to the loins
is made quite explicit:

For I am Quetzalcoatl, the feathered snake,
And I am not with you till my serpent has
coiled his circle of rest in your belly. 68

It is obvious that these two sides of the symbol are
closely related and that they, in turn, relate to the broader
concept of the cosmic dragon, for all represent aspects of
the sensual nature in the world, which is found in the loins,
as opposed to the breast and as opposed to the mechanical
will of the head. The relation is most clear in Apocalypse:

First and foremost, the dragon is the symbol of the
fluid, rapid, startling movement of life within us.
That startled life which runs through us like a serpent,
or coils within us potent and waiting, like a serpent,
this is the dragon. And the same with the cosmos ....

65. The P.S. p. 355
66. The P.S. p. 359
67. The P.S. p. 360
68. The P.S. p. 360
Such are the sudden angers that spring from within ourselves ... or a great desire of any sort ... It is something beyond him, yet with him. It is swift and surprising as a serpent, and overmastering as a dragon. 69

As there can be the benevolent or malevolent dragon, there is also the corrupt and the powerful reptile. This dichotomy will be discussed further, later on, but it is interesting to note that the division is made within the religious dogma, as well as without it. It is the "gold snake" of the Apocalypse that Ramón calls upon. 70

Opposed to the serpent symbolism and representative of the spiritual powers is the bird symbol, especially the eagle. This too has its roots in Aztec symbolism, although the type of bird varies and the antagonist, instead of being the serpent, may also be the ocelot, a symbol Lawrence uses a few times in this novel, although mainly for descriptive purposes. This duality is symbolised in one of the more important Aztec myths:

... and gradually to conceive the idea of an everlasting antagonism between the powers of the sky and of the earth, or light and darkness ... In this connection it should be observed that the mythical adversary of Tezcatlipoca, the ocelot, ... is Huitzilopochtli, whose idol, in the Great Temple of Mexico, represents him masked as a humming bird. 71

Lawrence, with his concept of the Above and the Below, as represented by the bird and the serpent, finds, in the Aztec mythology, a perfect echo of his own beliefs. As has been

69. Apocalypse op. cit. pp. 160-61
70. The P.R. p. 208
71. Nuttall pp. 25-26
stated, the bird, in this novel, represents the Above and the spiritual forces. For Lawrence, its power is centred in the breast. The full force of the symbol is seen when Ramón contrasts it with the earth-serpent:

O Bird! Bird of all the wide heavens, even if you drum your feathers in thunder and drop the white snake of fire from your beak back to the earth, again, where he can run in, deep down the rocks again, home, even if you come as the Thunderer, come! ... Bird of the Beyond, with thunder in your pinions and the snake of lightning in your beak, with the blue heaven in the socket of your wings and cloud in the arch of your neck, with sun in the burnt feathers of your breast and power in your feet, with terrible wisdom in your flight, swoop to me ... 72

This passage owes its particular descriptive power to its echoing of Lawrence's description of the Hopi Snake Dance in Mornings in Mexico. 73 Here the powers of the Above and the Below as distinct forces are emphasised. Elsewhere, the two symbols merge when Quetzalcoatl is described as touching with his wings the light and the dark. The reference is to both the feathers of the snake and the wing of the bird. 74

Like the snake symbol, the bird symbol may also represent corruption - corruption into the mechanical will. This too will be discussed more fully later on, but it is notable that the symbol is used early in the novel to denote the deadness of the American eagle as opposed to the living

72. The P.S. p. 211
74. The P.S. p. 190
bird of Quetzalcoatl. Villiers, a visiting American, is described in the following terms: "All his American will was summoned up, the bald eagle of the north bristling in every feather" 75 and:

He glared round coldly, like a bird that would stab with its beak if it got the chance, but would fly away at the first real menace. 76

Of lesser importance than the snake-bird symbolism, but still central, is the flower symbol. In Aztec symbolism, it represented the earth and the state and their divisions. Lawrence uses it, however, in the religious scenes - as well as in the development of character - in the same manner as he did in The Rainbow and Women in Love. In other words, it represents the blossoming of the soul. Actually, in the context under discussion, it is mainly important in the presentation of Malintzi. It is in Kate's resemblance to the flower that Cipriano envisions her as his goddess:

In the first time, you can feel the flowers on their stem, the stem very strong and full of sap, no' - and the flower opening on top like a face that has the perfume of desire .... Your body seems to me like the stem of the flower I told you about, and in your face it will always be morning, of the time of rains. 77

It is because of her connection with new born life that Malintzi's dress is decorated with up-turned flowers and her green leaf signifies mercy.

The flower symbol is used in other contexts but its

75. The P.S., p. 18
76. The P.S., p. 14
77. The P.S., pp. 198-99
use in these tends to be banal, especially when it is associated with the Tree of Life. At one point, Ramón describes Kate's first submission to the general as the growth of a new flower in Cipriano's garden. The banality is only too obvious:

'There is another flower opened in the garden of Quetzalcoatl,' said Cipriano in Spanish.

'Under the red cannae of Huizilopochtli,' said Ramón. 78

Several other symbols are important, although not so central to the depiction of the religion as those described above. There is the eye symbol which Lawrence uses, however, more in his descriptions of the Mexican people than in the religious dogma itself, although, in the Aztec religion, it is an important symbol, with its connection with the obsidian mirror, the mirror of justice. The most significant use is perhaps Kate's, when she defines the new and the old way of looking and sees her own failure:

They have got rid of that itching of the eye, and the desire that works through the eye. The itching, prurient, knowing, imagining eye, I am cursed with. 79

The eye is also depicted on the banners and standards. The sail on the boat of Quetzalcoatl is described thus:

It had the great sign of Quetzalcoatl, the circling blue snake and the blue eagle upon a yellow field, at the centre, like an eye. 80

The other symbols that must be considered relate to the

78. The P.S. p. 343
79. The P.S. p. 196
80. The P.S. p. 297
idea of dichotomy, as the snake and bird do. The first is
the darkness and light imagery, usually represented in the
division of night and day, and often expressed through the
snake-bird symbolism. Ramón's description of night entering
from the feet and day from the eyes has already been quoted.
The same idea is present in the hymn to Huitzilopochtli:

I am dark as the sunless under-earth

Lo! I am lord of the watches of the night
And the dream of the night rises from me like
a red feather. 81

Connected with the idea of light and dark is the light
and dark sun. The sun has already been noticed in connection
with the dragon image. Its significance extends beyond its
meaning in association with both these images, however, for
the dark sun represents the centre of the mystery and
creativity:

He looked up at the sun, and through the sun he
saw the dark sun, the same that made the sun and the
world, and will swallow it again like a draught of
water. 82

This symbol is directly derived from the Aztec idea.
Nuttall relates how the ancient Mexicans conceived of a
young day sun, depicted at festivals in blue and red on a
white field, and an ancient night or black sun, depicted in
the classical manner. 83

The Morning and Evening Stars express the idea of
eternal rest and equilibrium between the opposing forces of

81. The P.S. pp. 391-92
82. The P.S. p. 132
83. Nuttall p. 13
light and dark, day and night and the bird and the serpent. They are symbolic of Quetzalcoatl, who, as the Lord of the Two Ways, rests at this point, and of true fulfilment between man and woman, when each meets at the centre not ravishing the other in any way. In this symbol, Lawrence has, at last, found a means of expressing this concept which was presented in *Women in Love* through the conflict between Mino and his wild cat.

The symbolism used to express Lawrence's philosophic ideas presents, therefore, the idea of dichotomy and the concept of an eternal state of equilibrium. By using the animal imagery of the bird and serpent primarily, in expressing these ideas, Lawrence also evokes constantly the sense of the livingness of the universe. In fact, the ideas and the symbols, through which they are depicted, are so closely interwoven that both become completely interdependent.

The formal expression of this religion forms a background against which the various events of the novel may be interpreted and evaluated. Also the symbols, examined here, pervade all portions of the book and, because they are so closely linked with the ideas they express, these ideas too, of necessity, affect every aspect of the novel. The careful interweaving of all levels of *The Plumed Serpent* results in a unity of conception and execution found nowhere else in Lawrence, as will be seen when the rest of the novel is examined.
In passing from a consideration of the philosophy of life promulgated in the religion of Quetzalcoatl to its presentation in the rest of the novel, one will notice that the symbolism and imagery used forms a dichotomy. Duality was an essential concept of the religion and the imagery and symbolism of former novels tended to divide into two streams also. Thus there is the light-dark opposition in The Rainbow and, in Women in Love, the opposition of the rivers of life and the rose and the mud flowers. Here there are several basic contrasts which underlie all the imagery used. There are the oppositions of light and darkness; heaviness and lightness; the sensual downward pull and the northern mental will; and softness and sharpness. These contrasts are essential in understanding the nature of the religious and sexual imagery and the use of landscape. The central division of the symbolism is, however, between life and sterility and all of it is resolved in terms of this.

These oppositions, especially the opposition of life and sterility, may be seen by examining the imagery which derives from the religious portions of the novel. The bird and the serpent are the central symbols and, as in the religious dogma, the bird represents spiritual consciousness and the serpent, blood consciousness. Thus already there is an opposition. Within each symbol, there is the further
contrast of life and creativity and decadence and death, however.

The serpent is especially representative of the Mexican fatality and, from the very beginning, is associated with the modern sensual death. Thus Kate, as she wanders through Mexico City feels: "It ought to have been gay .... But no! There was the dark undertone, the black, serpent-like fatality all the time." 84, "with its great under-drift of squalor and heavy reptile-like evil ... " 85 It is the motif of all the horror of bygone days that sleeps within the Mexicans, despite Christianisation:

Snakes coiled like excrement, snakes fanged and feathered beyond all dreams of dread .... He is not so dead as the Spanish churches, this all-enwreathing dragon of the horror of Mexico. 86

and Kate is aware of its presence within the eyes of her servant: "And then once more she came up against that unconscious, heavy, reptilian indifference." 87 It denotes the movement of the Mexican towards destruction rather than creation:

And the inevitable mistrust and lurking insolence, insolent against a higher creation, the same thing that is in the striking of a snake. 88

It may be remembered, however, that Lawrence claims that the red, angry dragon of the sky is also the green, benevolent reptile. In a similar manner, the serpent dormant within

84. The P.S. p. 56
85. The P.S. p. 33
86. The P.S. pp. 86-87
87. The P.S. p. 161
88. The P.S. p. 84
the Mexican contains the power for good also. It can represent the creative, sensual life and, as such, is descriptive of Cipriano, his proud horse who is described thus: "till its black belly glistened wet like a black serpent ..." ⁸⁹ and Teréza, Ramón's second wife, who has "serpent-delicate fingers". ⁹⁰

The same power for good or evil lies within associative images. Thus, on one side, the volcano image is used thus:

The slow, powerful, corrosive, Indian mockery, issuing from the lava-rock Indian nature, against anything which strives to be above the grey lava-rock level ⁹¹ and yet, on the other, can be used to describe the peculiar power of Cipriano's soldiers: "They seemed dark as lava and sulphur, and full of dormant, diabolic electricity. Like salamanders." ⁹² The concept of heaviness and the downward pull may also denote this southern decadence and yet it may express the search for a deep root in life.

Ramón urges Kate to find the downward direction of her nature and the function of the dance is to lead the people back to their true roots, the movements being based "upon the old, sinking bird-step of the Red Indians of the north". ⁹³ Kate is, however, fully aware that the modern Mexican wants: "To pull one down. It was what the country wanted to do all the time, with a slow reptilian insistence to pull one down." ⁹⁴

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The images of the reptile, the volcano and the downward pull are often associated with the description of the eye. In this connection, the concept being conveyed is that of death and lifelessness. Thus:

Their big, bright black eyes that look at you wonderingly, and have no centre to them. 95

And:

And in the horror and climax of death-rattles which is Mexico, she thought she could see it in the black eyes of the Indians. 96

The eye of the decadent Mexican reveals his primitiveness and blood-lust. Hence the adjective "inchoate" is found linked with the "eye" in many a passage, while the images of the knife, the dagger and the flint describe the latent cruelty:

But their blackness was inchoate, with a dagger of white light in it. And in the inchoate blackness the blood-lust might arise, out of the sediment of the uncreated past. 97

The expression of the eye also conveys the new life, produced by the regenerative power of Ramón's religion. Here, however, the images Lawrence uses are those of the Morning and Evening Stars. Thus, when Kate is being rowed to Sayula, she notices that:

He watched Kate's face with that gleaming, intense semi-abstraction, a gleam that hung unwavering in his black eyes, and which suddenly reminded Kate of the morning, or the evening star, hanging perfect between the night and the sun. 98

95. The P.S. p. 83
96. The P.S. p. 66
97. The P.S. p. 144
98. The P.S. p. 100
Yet despite the constant association of the serpent with death, in the description of the eye, the function of this symbol and the others just described is dual. They all convey the sensual, inward-looking nature of the Mexican and his downward direction. They are therefore descriptive of the Southern nature which may decay or find new life.

Other images, associated with them, have a more definite conception, however. The images of sharpness, the flint and the dagger mean only destruction. The Aztec idol and obsidian images generally refer also only to death. Thus Kate shudders when she sees the Aztec idols at the home of Mrs Norris 99, and, when she observes Ramón through the eyes of Carlota, she notices that he is rather like one of these idols, 100 while Mrs Norris is described thus.

... some of the experience of the Aztec idols, with sharp nose and slightly prominent eyes and an expression of tomb-like mockery, had passed into her face. 101

As can be seen in the last description, the gringo is also affected by the prevailing decadence of the Mexican.

Where the serpent and the images associated with it describe the Southern sensual nature, the bird and its associated images describe the Northern mechanical will. They also denote, however, the true spiritual freedom which is released within the breast of the Mexican, as well as the European, represented by Kate.

99. The P.S. p. 45
100. The P.S. p. 168
101. The P.S. p. 38
The opposition of the Southern sensual decay and the Northern spiritual decadence is brought out in those passages describing Kate's American friends. The description of Villiers, before quoted, illustrates this and likewise, the desire of Owen and Villiers to taste all the sensations of life. The latter urge is described by Kate:

... picking over the garbage of sensations and gobbling it up like carrion birds! ... like carrion birds, repulsive. 102

The latter function of the bird symbol, as representative of the spiritual forces of the breast, occurs more frequently, however, appearing early in the novel with the description of the cardinal bird, an image often used to describe the vivacity of Cipriano:

... everything about the place seemed muted, even the very stones and the water. Only those poppies on wings, the cardinal birds, gave a sense of liveliness. 103

This image is connected with the concept of the Morning Star also, as Kate meditates on the eyes of her crippled boatman:

... the small poised, perfect body of the bird that waves wings of thunder and wings of fire and night in its flight. But central between the flash of day and the black of night ... the still soft body of the bird poised and soaring forever. 104

The same bird image recurs in the description of the singing and dancing in the Plaza:

Then a voice in the circle rose ... and like birds flying from a tree, one after the other the individual voices rose ... like birds launching and

102. The P.S. p. 32
103. The P.S. p. 105
104. The P.S. p. 102
and coming in from a distance, caught by the spell. 105

In this scene, the Mexicanas are released from their usual heaviness and the new freedom is more appropriately described in terms of the bird than of the serpent. Kate, herself, is likened to the humming-bird, the symbol of Huitzilopochtli. Like the villagers, she desires to lose herself in the song.

Several images are associated with the bird symbol when it is used to denote life. Thus the song, as it soars up, is likened to the rushing wind — "a strong, deep wind rushing from the caverns of the breast from the everlasting soul". 106 — and, when, at the hacienda, Ramón urges his people to seek the new life, the wind tears through the mango trees.

Although it lacks the emotive quality of the bird symbol, the egg image is used too to describe life and its continuance. Lawrence expresses, through it, his faith in the power of the Mexican to find life once more:

'Mexico is like an old old egg that the bird of Time laid long ago; and she has been sitting on it for centuries, till it looks foul in the nest of the world. But still, Cipriano, it is a good egg.' 107

On the other hand, the United States is lost in its mechanical will:

'... it isn't alive. It is a nestful of china eggs, made of pot. So they can be kept clean.' 108

The same image is used in the description of Ramón and

105. The P.S. p. 136
106. The P.S. p. 156
107. The P.S. p. 203
108. The P.S. p. 204
Cipriano, when the former transforms his friend into the living Huitziloopochtli:

Ramón clasped the two knees with his hands, till they were warm, and he felt them dark and asleep like two living stones, or two eggs. 109

This last use seems, however, a little incongruous. The egg image is used in a lifeless manner, somewhat similar to most uses of the Tree of Life symbol. This tree symbol occurs also in conjunction with the bird. From the tree, the birds soars to greater heights. At this point, the bird is linked with the serpent images, for, as has been seen, the tree may denote the downward pull too.

Two other images, used in the religious passages, occur also within the general development of the novel. Although they are not linked directly with the serpent-bird opposition, they too express the concept of life and death. The first, the wild cat image, is very close to the serpent symbol in meaning. Through it, Lawrence conveys the heavy sensual horror of the ancient Aztec mystery. Kate, as she looks at Popocatapetl and Ixtaccihuatl, the great Mexican mountains, sees them thus:

Alien, ponderous, the white-hung mountains seemed to emit a deep purring sound, too deep for the ear to hear, and yet audible on the blood, a sound of dread. 110

Lawrence suggests, however, that the primitivism, expressed through this image, is closely connected with the creative

109. The P. S. 385
110. The P. S. p. 55
life latent within the religion and so the image describes
also the movements of Ramón when he opposes the bandits at
Jamiltepec and the nature of Cipriano, the living
Huitzilopochtli.

The flower imagery represents the blossoming of creative
life. Thus its meaning is the same as that of the flower in
The Rainbow and the rose in Women in Love and, within it, is
expressed the softness and freshness of the rainy season,
and the time of early morning:

'Your body seems to me like the stem of the flower I
told you about, and in your face it will always be
morning, of the time of the rains ... In Mexico, we
are at the end of the hot dry day.'

Its affinities, within this novel, are with the bird
symbolism. It is opposed to the heavy downward sensuality
of the serpent-wild cat images and normally describes Kate,
the European. The link between Kate, the goddess
Malintzi and the flower symbol has been discussed already.
The flower image is also central in the description of Kate's
personal quest. Thus, at the beginning of her search, Kate
reflects that she would like "to escape into her true lone-
liness, the influx of peace and soft, flower-like potency" 112
and "To be alone with the unfolding flower of her own
soul" 113. The flower represents, for her, the essence of
true creative being:

111. The F.S. p. 199
112. The F.S. p. 65
113. The F.S. p. 66
Out of the fight with the octopus of life, the dragon of degenerate or of incomplete existence, one must win this soft bloom of being, that is damaged by a touch 114

and she finds it in her union with Cipriano:

And Cipriano, as he sat in the boat with her felt the inward sun rise darkly in him ... and felt the mysterious flower of her woman's femaleness slowly opening to him, as a sea-anemone opens deep under the sea, with infinite soft fleshliness. The hardness of self-will was gone, and the soft anemone of her deeps blossomed for him of itself, far down under the tides. 115

At this point, Lawrence establishes a connection between the sexual and the religious imagery of the novel. This passage reminds one of Ursula's blossoming, when she is touched by the love of Skrebensky and Birkin. Here, however, the perfume of the flower is also significant in describing new life through sexual union. Thus Kate associates the flowers of Ramón's and Cipriano's souls with their perfume 116

and, in the church, when she is with Huitzilopochtli, she thinks:

The flaminess and the magnificence of the beginning: this was what Cipriano wanted to bring to his marriage. The reeling, powerful perfume of those invisible green flowers, that the peons call buena de noche: good by night. 117

As can be seen, the symbolism which derives from the symbolism of the religion is used to describe both the death and the new life of Mexico. Associated with it, on the one

114. The P.S. p. 65
115. The P.S. p. 367
116. The P.S. p. 367
117. The P.S. p. 408
hand, are a group of images which emphasise the decadence of Mexico, while, on the other, the sexual imagery expresses, for the most part, the new birth of the nation and its people.

The former group conveys Lawrence's dislike of the modern mechanical world and consists largely of animal images found elsewhere in his work. Thus he uses the dog image frequently. It is a term descriptive of the lowest Mexican and occurs first when Kate goes to the bull-fight:

Owen laughed uncomfortably, glancing down at the man between his knees as he might glance at a dog with rabies, when it had its back to him. 118

and: "They were mostly loutish men in city clothes, the mongrel men of a mongrel city." 119 At one point, Kate uses the image so vindictively that Lawrence immediately has to defend her from a charge of snobbishness. It is one of those moments when Lawrence allows his personal hatreds to spoil the artistry of the novel - as when the Christian idols are burned:

She hated bottom dogs. They all were mangy, they all were full of envy and malice, many had the rabies. Ah no, let us defend ourselves from the bottom dog, with its mean growl and its yellow teeth. 120

This particular image is later used symbolically of the murderers who tried to assassinate Ramón.

118. The P.B. p. 18
119. The P.B. p. 25
120. The P.B. p. 88
In the night I see the grey dogs creeping, 
out of the sleeping men 
Who are cowards, who are traitors, 
who have no dreams. 121

and so has a wide connotation of all that is vile. In this hymn, it is associated with the "ash" image, used so often in The Rainbow, to denote the living death of the mechanical world.

The insect imagery is used in a similar way. Kate describes the same Mexicans as "beetles", an important image in Women in Love, while other common descriptive terms are "scorpion", "louse" and "tarantula". The last is used specifically of the gringo who has discovered the secrets of the universe by losing his manhood:

"Like cunning ones, they stole it on the sly. They kept very still, like a tarantula in his hole. Then when neither sun nor moon nor stars knew he was there, Biff! - the tarantula sprang across and bit, and left the poison and sucked the secret ... the cunning gringos have it [the second strength], in the head, and in their books. Not we. We are men, we are not spiders." 122

The octopus and the cat both occur as images of the mechanical will and life. Thus the octopus symbolises, for Kate, the destructive power of life which prevents her from preserving her flower intact. She also uses this particular image to describe her recoil from the horror of Cipriano's sacrifices: "At the centre of all things, a dark momentous Will, sending out its terrific rays and vibrations, like

121. The P.S. p. 392
122. The P.S. pp. 378-79
some vast octopus." The cat used is the domestic cat, who, in love, ravishes the male - the old grimalkin of London society, who catches and swallows her mouse. It represents, therefore, that love which is all will, the love of ravished and ravisher, which Ramón knows with Carlota and which Kate knows with Joachim.

The metal imagery reinforces the animal imagery. Its use parallels that of the flint, dagger and obsidian images. The latter represent the blood lust of the modern Mexican while it indicates the regression of the Northerner into mechanical will. Ramón writes:

Metal for resistance.
Drums for the beating heart. 124

Thus the images of the cog-wheel and other metallic objects signify the supremacy of the mechanical will over the spiritual being within the American. Kate describes Gwen as:

Swept with an American despair of having lived in vain or of not having really lived. Having missed something. Which fearful misgiving would make him rush like mechanical steel filings to a magnet, towards any crowd in the street. 125

and says of Villiers that he is:

... like a cog-wheel in contact with which all one's workings were reversed. Everything he said, everything he did reversed her real life-flow ... 126

Also indicative of the death of the modern world is the

123. The P.S. p. 402
124. The P.S. p. 374
125. The P.S. p. 33
126. The P.S. p. 113
It is a predominant image in Kate's train journey and Kessler feels that it is meant to signify her journey through the underworld, in the same manner as the image did in Ursula's voyage through Hades, in Women in Love. The indications are not strong enough, however, especially as the ghost world is evoked on other occasions - as on the night of the dance in the Plaza - to suggest the living death of the modern world. The atmosphere of the underworld is also suggested after the burning of the idols, when the old world is dead but the new not born:

... the side of the lake, through filmy air, looked brownish and changeless. A cloud was rising in the south-west .... And as the canoa spread her sail to tack back, already a delicate film of shadow was over the chalk-white lake.

The use of the ghost imagery is thus more generalised than Kessler tries to indicate.

The sexual imagery, it has been noted, describes the emergence of new life from the ruins of the modern world. Yet this is not entirely true. Lawrence prepares very carefully for the resurrection of the old gods in his opening chapters. Thus he contrasts the corrupt and the sensual, creative serpents; the mechanical bird of the will and the soaring bird of the breast. In a similar manner, he contrasts images of sexual sterility with those of sexual regeneration.

127. Kessler op. cit. pp. 29-30
128. The P.S. p. 300
The book opens with the death of the sexual mystery. Thus, central in the description of the bull-fight is the degradation of the bull and horse, symbolic of the powers of the breast and the loins. Kate, as she watches the antics of the bull, thinks:

For the first time, a bull seemed to her a fool. She had always been afraid of bulls, fear tempered with reverence of the great Mithraic beast. And now she saw how stupid he was, in spite of his long horns and massive maleness. 129

and she notes the stupidity of the horse:

The horse stood with that feeble monumentality of a milk-horse, patient as if between the shafts, waiting while his master delivered the milk ... 130

These symbols revive only when the religion of Quetzalcoatl has permeated Mexican life and their recurrence indicates the new birth of the nation. Thus, in the chapter "Here!", Kate sees a bull being led into a small boat. Although man is its master, the bull loses none of its dignity. Later she comes across a female ass and her new-born foal – symbols of creativity:

The black foal, the mother, the drinking, the new life, the mystery of the shadowy battlefield of creation; and the adoration of the full-breasted glorious woman beyond him: all this seemed in the primitive black eyes of the man. 131

The sterility of Mexico is emphasised in its grotesque art and is described in symbolic terms. Kate sees Orilla, a small Mexican town, thus:

129. The P.S. p. 21
130. The P.S. p. 23
131. The P.S. p. 453
The street was stony, uneven, vacuous, sterile. The stones seemed dead, the town seemed made of dead stone. The human life came with a slow, sterile unwillingness, in spite of the low-hung power of the sun. 132

The landscape surrounding the town is likewise sterile and reveals the corruption of sexual life among the Mexicans. In fact, this imagery reaches a peak just before Kate is initiated first into the mysteries of Quetzalcoatl by the men in the lake. Kate's life too is described in these terms at the point when she is torn finally between the two ways of living. Ramón looks at her room and notices: "the rather weary luxury and disorder, and the barrenness of a woman living her own life." 133

As the religious dogma of The Plumed Serpent is closely connected with the role of the phallus, so the religious imagery is closely associated with the sexual imagery, when it denotes life. In fact, the division of the two, in this discussion, is largely artificial. Likewise it is hard to dissociate the general development of the novel and the development of the religious ideas at this point. The union of these strands may be seen by examining two scenes. The first is that when Ramón, in the isolation of his room, blacks out his mind in order to reach the godhead:

Only a powerful will stretched itself and quivered from his spine in an immense tension of prayer, stretched the invisible bows of the body in darkness with inhuman tension, erect, till the arrows of the

132. The P.S. p. 96
133. The P.S. p. 417
soul, mindless, shot to the mark, and the prayer reached its goal.

Then suddenly, the clenched and quivering arms dropped, the body relaxed into softness. The man had reached his strength again .... 134

The object of the prayer is entirely religious but the description approximates very closely to the male role in the sexual act and the image of the arrows is traditionally male. The close correspondence between sexual and spiritual fulfilment, in the mind of Lawrence, is obvious. The connection is explicit in the dance in the plaza:

She felt her sex and her womanhood caught up and identified in the slowly revolving ocean of nascent life, the dark sky of the men lowering and wheeling above. She was not herself, she was gone, and her own desires were gone in the ocean of the great desire. As the man whose fingers touched hers was gone in the ocean that is male, stooping over the face of the waters.

The slow, vast, soft-touching revolution of the ocean above upon ocean below, with no vestige of rustling or foam. Only the pure sliding conjunction. 135

The recurrent images, associated with sexual regeneration, are many, but the central ones are the "sea" and "flame". Both generally occur together. Thus, in the description of the dance in the plaza, the circles of men and women ebb and flow in the movement of the ocean, and, in the same scene, the new life is expressed through the image of the flame:

Kate had thought, so often, that the laughter of the peons broke from them in a sound almost like pain. But now the laughs came like little invisible flames,

134. The F.E. p. 131
135. The F.E. pp. 140-41
suddenly from the embers of the talk. 136

Again, when Kate, as Malintzi, and Cipriano, as Huitzilopochtli, meet in the temple, the flame and sea images express their union. The flame image seems to denote new life and youth and thus the virginity that Kate receives from the boatmen on the lake, from her partner in the dance and from Cipriano:

When the flame came up in him and licked him all over, he was young and vulnerable as a boy of fifteen ... The flame of their united lives was a naked bud of flame. Their marriage was a young, vulnerable flame ... He held her hand in silence, till she was Malintzi, and virgin for him, and when they looked at one another and their eyes met, the two flames rippled in oneness. 137

In this passage, it may be noted, that the flower image also recurs. It is found frequently in conjunction with the other images and it is in the intertwining of each of the images with the others that Lawrence creates a complex beauty in his description of the sexual encounters which seems neither forced nor repetitive.

The images of the sea, flame and flower underlie those passages where Lawrence wishes to describe, either explicitly or implicitly, sexual regeneration, but, by suggesting the various stages of sexual intercourse in the structure of these scenes, Lawrence makes even clearer the link between the creative powers of the religion and of the phallus.

136. The P.S. P. 181
137. The P.S. p. 409
Thus, as has been seen, Ramón's prayer is structured in these terms. A similar movement is suggested, in conjunction with both the ocean and the flame imagery, when he tries later to close himself once more away from the world. 138

In the church ceremony, the union is again suggested:

So that around the low dark shrubs of the crouching women stood a forest of erect, upthrusting men, powerful and tense with inexplicable passion. 139

while Kate's participation in the dance, despite the reversal of the male-female roles, seems to indicate the same use of this imagery:

She was beginning to learn softly to loosen her weight, to loosen the uplift of all her life, and let it pour slowly, darkly, with an ebbing gush, rhythmical in soft, rhythmic gushes from her feet into the dark body of the earth. Erect, strong like a stuff of life, yet to loosen all the sap of her strength and let it flow down into the roots of the earth. 140

The roles are reversed here because the earth, in both Aztec and European tradition, is female.

Not only the earth is linked with the idea of sexual regeneration but also other elements of the natural world. The night air, which, in the hymns, is symbolically linked with the earth and loins, is described as the membrane and the storm which heralds the coming of the rainy season and the period of fertility is depicted thus:

The wind suddenly blew with violence, with a strange ripping sound in the mango-trees, as if some membrane in the air were being ripped. 141

138. The P.S. pp. 205-06
139. The P.S. p. 355
140. The P.S. p. 111
141. The P.S. p. 214
The lake, representative of life, is also described in terms of sexual imagery. It fulfills the male role, however: "He pulled rhythmically through the frail-rippling, sperm-like water, with a sense of peace." 142

Other sexual imagery, in the novel, belongs to the class of the conventional. The arrows of Ramón's soul have already been noticed. Kate, in "Malintzi", rebels at the thought of being merely the whetstone to Cipriano's knife or its lodestone or even its sheath. 143 Less conventional is Kate's description of her orgasm with Joachim, in terms of the fish on the hook. Terésa explains to Kate the relationship between herself and Ramón:

> I know where my soul is. It is in Ramón's womb, the womb of a man, just as his seed is in my womb, the womb of a woman. He is a man, and a column of blood. A am a woman and a valley of blood. 144

Again the imagery is conventional.

At this point, the use of landscape in *The Plumed Serpent* must be mentioned. In *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, it has already been used functionally but, in this novel, Lawrence probably reaches his peak, in the welding of plot and landscape into a symbolic connection. The lake, the mountains and the air have life of their own and, as the spirit of Mexico changes, so they change. The naturalistic descriptions embody the spirit of animism preached in the

142. The P.S. p. 102  
143. The P.S. p. 402  
144. The P.S. p. 428
sermons and hymns. The function of these descriptions is dual. Thus, on the one hand, one may trace the development of the new religion in the country. Lawrence feels, in fact, that the aridity and cruelty of the landscape, may have caused the sense of doom among the people. As the spirit of the people softens, the countryside, under the influence of the rainy season, blossoms into new life. On the other hand, the landscape serves as an external correlative for Kate's shifting moods and attitudes. The double progression may be seen in tracing the development through the novel.

The predominant atmosphere of dread and doom, in the opening chapters, and the sense of sterility both find expression in the description of the natural world. Kate reflects on the former, as she looks at the two great mountains, Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl:

... the undertone was like the low, angry, snarling purring of some jaguar spotted with night. There was a ponderous, down-pressing weight upon the spirit: the great folds of the dragon of the Aztecs, the dragon of the Toltec winding around one and weighing down the soul. And on the bright sunshine was a dark steam of an angry, impotent blood, and the flowers seemed to have their roots in spilt blood. The spirit of the place was cruel, down-dragging, destructive. 145

Most of the religious symbols of the novel are used in the description, their connotations adding meaning to the already fatalistic tone. Thus one senses the spirit of the ancient blood sacrifice and the power of the cosmic dragons, within

145. The P.S. p. 55
the mountains, while one is aware of the death of life, in
the spilt blood beneath the flowers.

These particular images recur frequently in the descrip-
tions of Mexico City. Several passages, dependent on the
serpent symbol, have already been quoted. Blood is also a
predominant image, especially in conjunction with descriptions
of the flower and the air. Thus the flowers at Mrs Morris's
are described as "red and velvety like blood that is drying
..." 146 and Kate feels that "there seemed a faint whiff of
blood in all tropical-scented flowers: of blood or
sweat." 147 while, when bandit raids strike the inhabitants
of Sayula back into impotent, reptile fear: "at night, like
clotting blood the air would begin to thicken again." 148
Even in the descriptions of the lake, there is a sense of
spilt blood: "the lymphatic milk of fishes, somebody said." 149

The sterility and corruption of the countryside and,
correspondingly, of the Mexicans, are emphasised when
Lawrence describes the landscape that Kate passes on her
train journey. The corruption may be seen in the description
of pulque:

But out of the Mexican soil a bunch of black-tarn-
ished swords bursts up, and a great unfolded bud of
the once-flowering monster begins to thrust at the
sky. They cut the great phallic bud and crush out
the sperm-like juice for pulque .... 150
By his choice of images, Lawrence hints at the corruption of sex, a subject which has been discussed at Ramón's dinner-party. Elsewhere he shows the corruption of manhood through tequila and pulque by direct example and condemnation - at Mrs Norris's and later in Sayula. The sterility is most obvious in the description of Orilla, quoted earlier, and it can also be seen in the surrounding countryside:

Beyond the trees and the level of the shores, big hills rose up high, blunt points, baked incredibly dry, like biscuit. The blue sky settled against them nakedly; they were leafless and lifeless save for the iron-green shafts of the organ cactus, that glistened blackly .... in the ochreous aridity.
This was Mexico again, stark-dry and luminous with powerful light, cruel and unreal. 151

Most of the novel is set at Sayula. Here an opposition is established between the life-giving waters of the lake and the cruel, dry mountains, although the opposition is not always clearly defined. Thus the lake, with its lymph-like surface, is touched with death, in the beginning, while later, the mountains seem softer under the influence of Quetzalcoatl. The lake is the centre of the creative regeneration. Here the new God meets his first disciples and Ramón intends to establish the core of the new world. Kate is also introduced to the Mexican religion on the lake, in her communion with the crippled boatman and the man of Quetzalcoatl. The life of the lake is expressed through the use of the active verb. Thus, as Ramón preaches to his
people, "the lake began to speak in a vast hollow noise" 152 and, when the idols are removed from the church, "the lake could be heard lapping" and rustling 153 while its surface is "pale and unreal, sun-blinded". 154 Its connection with regeneration is established in the imagery used of it. As has been noted, its surface is seen to ripple like semen and its role is therefore male. In contrast to this, the moun-
tains reflect the cruelty of the Aztec world in their heav-
iness and in their sharpness which recall the ritual, sacri-
ficial knife. Kate, as she is rowed to Sayulca, notices that: "the shores rose up pale and cruelly dry, dry to cruelty." 155

Kate, in her journey across the lake, becomes aware of its life-giving powers but she is also aware of the surround-
ing cruelty. The death feeling returns with full force at the hotel and now Kate feels the silence, "an aboriginal, empty silence, as of life withheld. The vacuity of a Mexican morning." 156 The landscape forms a large vacuum:

And the great, lymphatic expanse of water, like a sea, trembling, trembling to a far distance, to the mountains of substantial nothingness, ... The land so dry as to have a quality of invisibility, the water earth-filmy, hardly water at all. 157

When Kate visits Ramón's hacienda, she is again aware of the silence of the air and feels that perhaps the lake itself makes this silence. 158 The atmosphere is hazy also,
lending the surrounding countryside a mirage-like quality.

Kate, at this point however, approaches nearer the secret of Mexico. Her awareness is externalised also through the naturalistic description:

Among the dark and reddish leaves of the mangos, scarlet little birds were bustling, like suddenly-opening poppy buds, and pairs of yellow birds, yellow underneath as yellow butterflies, so perfectly clear, went skimming past. When they settled for a moment and closed their wings, they disappeared, for they were grey on top. And when the cardinal birds settled, they too disappeared ...

Even as the Mexican life is downward and creation is found in the loins, so the birds of the country are creatures of the Below.

As the novel develops, one becomes increasingly aware of the dual function of the landscape in relation to both Kate and the regeneration of the Mexican people. Kate's recoils from and her attractions towards the country and the Quetzalcoatlian religion determine the bias of most of the landscape descriptions, however. Thus, after the visit to Jamiltepec, her recoil from Ramón and his beliefs determines her reaction to the first blooms of the rainy season:

"Wonderful splashes of colour. But that was all: splashes" and she thinks:

Stiff, dry, unreal land, with sunshine beating on it like metal. Or blackness and lightning and crashing violence of rain.

No lovely fusion, no communion. No beautiful

159. The P.S. p. 195
160. The P.S. p. 227
mingling of sun and mist, no softness in the air, never. 161

This conflict between a sympathetic and a hostile attitude towards the Mexican life and the landscape continues throughout most of the book. It reaches a climax in Kate's vision of the bay. She becomes aware of the new life created in the landscape and the people, even though she has not fully accepted it yet. The heart beat of the drum seems to have worked a change in the air, and the landscape is one of softness, fecundity and peace:

And always the day seemed to be pausing and unfolding again to the greater mystery. The universe seemed to have opened vast and soft and delicate with life.

There was something curiously soothing even in the full, pale, dove-brown water of the lake. A boat was coming ... It looked like the boat of Dionysos coming with a message and the vine sprouting.

Kate could hardly remember now the dry rigid pallor of the heat, when the whole earth seemed to crepitate viciously with dry malevolence ... 162

The change is marked by the use of imagery. The morning, instead of being vacuous or pressing downwards like electricity, unfolds like the flower. The brownish colour of the lake is the soft brown of the dove instead of the dirty brown of the soil. The description is heightened by the religious connotation of Dionysos, the ancient god of vegetation, associated with fertility and the phallus.

Yet, although the naturalistic descriptions serve as an
external correlative to Kate's development, they do reflect the more generalised changes in the novel. Thus, there is atmospheric rain as Ramón lies wounded and erect clouds as he prays. Most notable, perhaps, is the combination of the storm scene with Ramón's sermon on the animism of nature. Thus, as he calls to the Bird of the Air to swoop:

Sudden gusts of wind tore at the little fires of flame, till they could be heard to rustle, and the lake began to speak in a vast hollow noise, beyond the tearing of trees. Distant lightning was beating far off 163

and as he disperses his people, having urged them to approach the elements as sentient beings: "The black wind was all loose in the sky, tearing with the thin shriek of torn fabrics, in the mango-trees." 164 The storm itself becomes translated into a fearful sign of the revolutionary change impending:

Away across the lake, south-west, lightning blazed and ran down the sky like some portentous writing. And soft, velvety thunder broke inward, strangely. 165

It is in the combination of the naturalistic description with the religious and sexual symbolism that The Plumed Serpent gains its strange power and beauty. Each element fuses with the other elements, reflecting the central theme in a variety of ways. Lawrence conveys his ideas also through what may be loosely termed the parable method.

This method is not so closely linked with the other symbolic

163. The P.S. p. 211
164. The P.S. pp. 213-14
165. The P.S. p. 214
levels but does play a relevant part in the total structure. It was used, as was seen, in *Women in Love* with a rather static result. In *The Plumed Serpent*, the success is more uniform.

What have been termed parables are those scenes which exist purely to illustrate a certain point of the novel, outside the general continuity of its development. The first scene to be thus considered is the bull-fight which has a self-containment of its own not found in the other scenes in Mexico City, although each can be said to carry a message concerning the modern degeneration and corruption. The bull scene, as was noticed before, shows the corruption of the Mithraic symbol of the bull and the equal decadence of the horse symbol. The point is emphasised in a variety of ways. Thus the President does not come and the bull-fight lacks an authoritorial head, the band does not really play while there were "certainly no sparkling ladies in high tortoise-shell combs and lace mantillas". 166 The ritual becomes a "game" of blood and gore. The desecration of ritual and ceremony is later emphasised in Villier's description of the toreador "lying on the bed like Venus with a fat cigar, listening to her lovers." 167 With the fall of ceremony, the right relationships have disappeared in all aspects of the modern life. Sex especially is perverted.

Later Lawrence uses the parable in adjusting the balance

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166. *The P.S.* p. 18
167. *The P.S.* p. 32
of emotion after Kate's experience on the lake with the crippled boatman. The savagery and primitivism, latent in the Mexican, is revealed in the tales of José and the bandits and of the manager of an estate who was stripped and castrated and mutilated generally.

The other parables, dealing with the corruption of life, reveal the victim-victimiser relationship of the Mexican and of modern man and woman. Thus Lawrence describes the habitual relationship of Mexican children in these terms:

... almost always, one boy in a murderous rage, pursuing his taunter till he had hurt him: then an abject collapse of the one hurt, the murderous frenzy transferred to him, and the first attacker fleeing abjectly in terror. One or the other always abject. 168

Similarly, a small boy persecutes a bird which dies through abject terror. This parable occurs after Kate's return from Jamiltepec and forms part of the recoil. Its symbolic implication becomes explicit in Lawrence's description of the bird, after Kate has set it free: "It lay wet and draggled on the pale moving sperm of the water, like a buoyant rag." 169 Kate realises that the victim-victimiser relationship is part of the Mexican character from Aztec times and that the persecutor and his victim are both to blame for this relationship.

The episodes concerning Juana and her family may be classed in this group. They play no role in the main

168. The P.S. pp. 156-57
169. The P.S. p. 230
development of the novel but, throughout, the family represents the ordinary Mexican in his relationship to life, society and the new religion. This portion of the novel is treated in a completely realistic manner and, one feels here more than anywhere else, Lawrence's wish to record his actual experiences. Yet the episodes do fit artistically into the novel by the parallel development of the family - from unregenerate Christians to almost as unregenerate followers of Quetzalcoatl - with the central development.

Where the above scenes are descriptive of the degeneration of life, Kate's encounters with the bull and the ass represent the new life. Their symbolic power has already been discussed and one may note that these scenes coincide with Kate's description of the Dionysos-like boat, thus adding to the impression of the creativity present in the landscape, following the resurrection of Quetzalcoatl.

As in former novels, Lawrence uses this symbolic method in delineating the nature and development of his characters. Thus Kate's progress is reflected externally in the changing landscape while her quest is further symbolised in the flower image. Cipriano is likened to the snake and the cardinal bird while Ramón is seen, at times, as an Aztec idol and, at others, as the panther.
In *The Plumed Serpent*, however, Lawrence goes a step further in this method. Ramón, Cipriano, Carlota and Terésa are envisaged in their functional role. Thus Ramón and Cipriano not only resurrect the old gods but, in their characteristics, approximate to the nature of that god, as depicted by Lawrence. Carlota and Terésa form an opposition, the former representing the old Christian womanhood and the latter, the new womanhood.

Ramón is the man with a vision. He wishes to bring to each nation its own saviour. Thus he writes to the clergy of Mexico:

> And men are fragile, and fragments, and strangely grouped in their fragmentariness. The invisible God has done it to us, darkened some faces and whitened others, and grouped us in groups, even as the zopilote is a bird, and the parrot of the hot lands is a bird, and the little oriole is a bird. But the angel of the zopilotes must be a zopilote, and the angel of the parrots, a parrot .... 170

As such, he represents the traditional prophet hero of Lawrence. Like Birkin, in *Women in Love*, his role is dual. On the one hand, he sets the philosophical framework of the novel and, on the other, participates within the action. This role extends naturally to his being literally the saviour which he presents Quetzalcoatl as being, in the sermons. Certainly, his compelling personality has affinities with earlier heroes and his relationship with Cipriano resembles Cyril's love for George, Gerald's

170. *The P.S.* pp. 375-76
attraction to Birkin and Somer's compulsion towards Kangaroo but his power transcends theirs, through Lawrence's identification of the human being with the god figure.

Lawrence emphasises the connection between Ramón and the Quetzalcoatl of the hymns and sermons in his descriptions of the physical aspect of the former. Thus, when Kate looks at him through Carlota's eyes, she feels that he resembles the Aztec idol itself:

Till it seemed to her that there was something cruel in Don Ramón's passive, masked poise. An impassive male cruelty, changeless as a stone idol. 171

He is again linked with the past when bandits attack Jamiltepec. His movements are like the wild cat's, which is one of the religious images, and his knife moves like a cardinal bird, an image used constantly of Cipriano to link him with the war god, Huitzilopochtli. As he lies wounded, he actually seems to pass into the past:

His brow was like a boy's, very pure and primitive, and the eyes underneath had a certain primitive gleaming look of virginity. As men must have been, in the first awful days, with that strange beauty that goes with pristine rudimentariness. 172

The primitive language, into which Ramón relapses at this point, does seem a little incongruous, for despite the symbolic identification with the past, he remains, for the reader, the sophisticated reformer. The mystic power, representative of the dark mystery belonging to the southern

171. The P.S. p. 163
172. The P.S. p. 310
peoples, which emanates from his body, likewise emphasises his connection with the Aztec past.

On another level, however, Ramón is presented very much as the vulnerable man and the resulting conflict between Ramón, the vulnerable, and Ramón, the Saviour, enhances his interest. This aspect, however, is treated in the traditional manner of dialogue and interior monologue, as may be seen by examining his relationship with Carlota.

At first, despite their present alienation, he is tormented by his wife’s presence, so that he even appears a little foolish when in her company. The reason is touched upon in one of the more moving passages of the book:

To Ramón, Carlota was still, at times, a torture. She seemed to have the power still to lacerate him, inside his bowels. Not in his mind or spirit, but in his old emotional, passionate self: right in the middle of his belly, to tear him and make him feel he bled inwardly. 173

This method is used consistently in depicting his doubts and worries. In this case, the psychological truth captured is too great for Lawrence’s use of Carlota as the dispensable representative of Christianity, for Ramón, in his monologue, has revealed his own guilt in the gradual disintegration of his wife’s soul.

Ramón’s relationship towards his sons is similarly treated. The diffidence of the elder son and the hostility of the younger is clearly portrayed against Ramón’s own

173. The F.S. p. 219
anguish which results from the position he has chosen to take as regards them. The exchanges between the characters are in quick dialogue. The only ritualistic effect is Ramón's use of the old language with its "thou" and "thee"s. Here it expresses the tenderness of his feelings, despite the harsh tone that the words often convey:

'She called thee her own. I do not call thee mine own. Thou art thyself. When thou art lovable, I can love thee. When thou art rash and impudent, nay, I cannot. The mill will not spin when the wind does not blow.' 174

When Ramón and Kate meet in their moments of recoil, their revulsion from humanity is also depicted through dialogue and other traditional means. Thus, after his interview with the Bishop, Ramón reveals to Kate his dispirited mood:

'Perhaps it is better to be a monkey than a fool. I object to being called a monkey, nevertheless. Carlota is a monkey, no more; and my two boys are prize young monkeys in sailor suits. And I am a fool. Yet what is the difference between a fool and a monkey. 175

In a similar manner, he confesses to Kate, near the end of the novel, that he fears his death is near and that he has been completely worn out by the struggle.

Lawrence's use of traditional methods in conveying Ramón's vulnerability is highly effective for these portions are highlighted by their contrast with the more symbolic treatment of events and characters elsewhere.

174. The P.S. p. 372
175. The P.S. p. 283
One also feels, at times, an affinity between Ramón and the much berated Christ. This parallel links with his above vulnerability as a man. He sees himself as a saviour and, where Quetzalcoatl can never die but is revived like the phoenix, Ramón feels himself more in Christ's position. His thoughts on betrayal are especially striking in this connection:

His people would betray him, he knew that, Cipriano would betray him. Given one little vulnerable chink, they would pierce him. They would leap at the place out of nowhere, like a tarantula, and bite in the poison.

Where Ramón is rounded out as a character, through the conflict between his old and new self, Cipriano is almost perfectly fused with the concept of the god Huitzilopochtli. From the beginning of the novel, he is linked, through imagery, with the ancient Mexican idol. It is worth quoting in full Kate's impression of him, as he eats, to notice the fusion of the symbols used to denote the dark sensual life of the god Huitzilopochtli and the downward reaching nature of the Indian-blooded Cipriano.

...the movement of his hand was so odd, quick, light as he ate, so easily a movement of shooting, or of flashing a knife into the body of some adversary, and his dark-coloured lips were so helplessly savage, as he ate or briefly spoke, that her heart stood still. There was something undeveloped and intense in him, the intensity and the crudity of the semi-savage. She could well understand the potency of the snake upon the Aztec and Maya imagination. Something smooth, undeveloped, yet vital in this man suggested the heavy-ebbing blood of reptiles in his veins.
That was what it was, the heavy-ebbing blood of powerful reptiles, the dragon of Mexico ...

They [eyes] were black, as black as jewels into which one could not look without a sensation of fear ...
... She felt somewhat as the bird feels when the snake is watching it. 177

He is also connected with the eagle, the eagle of the old god 178, and elsewhere is compared with the cardinal bird and the red poppy. The comparison with the living sacrificial blood, as opposed to the dark clotting blood of the heavy Mexican air, is obvious.

As the novel develops, Cipriano is linked more and more explicitly with his god. This may be seen in his power of regenerating Kate through the sexual mystery. As the God of the Below, symbolised by the dark and the reptile, he is intimately connected with sexual union and, in this role, he introduces Kate to the new love, as opposed to mental and spiritual union:

And talk, and thought, had become trivial, superficial to her: as the ripples on the surface of the lake are as nothing, to the creatures that live away below in the unwavering depths. 179

Kate actually sees, in him, the mystery of the old maleness. The scene marks a development in Kate's awareness of the Aztec mystery, but it also signifies a further stage in Cipriano's progressive identification with the resurrected Huitzilopochtli:

177. The P.S. p. 74
178. The P.S. p. 378
179. The P.S. p. 438
As he sat in silence, casting the old, twilit Pan-power over her, she felt herself submitting, succumbing. He was once more the old dominant male, shadowy, intangible, looming suddenly, tall, and covering the sky, making a darkness that was himself and nothing but himself, the Pan male. 180

In the chapter "Kate is a Wife", he is completely transfigured into the living God and the identification is complete:

And at that moment the light tipped over the edge of the mountain and spilled gold upon the surface of the lake. And instantly he was red as fire ...

The Sons of the Morning! The column of blood! A Red Indian ... As if on fire! 181

Here the symbolic meanings combine with the naturalistic description to make the transfiguration utterly convincing — more so than in Kate's earlier Pan vision.

It must be noted that Cipriano as General Viedma also represents Huitzilopochtli, in his role as the God of War. Again there is a development, however, to the point where Cipriano, through the religious imagery, becomes completely identified with the Black God. Thus his men come to feel that he is the most precious part of them and act, at all times, to protect him as their godhead. He gains much of this power through the dance and, in these dance scenes, the wild cat imagery is noticeable, with Cipriano "crouching and leaping like a panther", "as invisible as a lynx." 182

Lawrence does not completely ignore the more human

180. The P.S. p. 325
181. The P.S. p. 444
182. The P.S. p. 380
aspects of this character, however, even though Cipriano is not so fully rounded out as Ramón. Thus, as General Viedma, he tends to be a trifle self-important and, as seen in an earlier quote, Ramón fears that he may one day betray him. It is obvious, in Cipriano's conversations with his leader, that he desires temporal power rather more than spiritual ascendancy:

'Ramón,' said Cipriano, 'wouldn't it be good to be a serpent, and be big enough to wrap one's folds round the globe of the world; and crush it like that egg.' 183

It is his dependence upon Ramón for his spiritual power that means he is uninteresting to Kate as an individual, by himself. 184 He is but an instrument really, within the power of a truly great man.

Cipriano is further aligned with the ordinary Mexican of Indian blood by his naivety. For Ramón, the symbols of the religion are merely manifestations of the inner truth but, for Cipriano, they are the truth and contain the power of the truth. The element of childlikeness in his character is perceived by Kate, even at the moment when she gives herself up to him:

Strange how naïve he was! He was not like Ramón, rather ponderous and deliberate in his ceremonials. Cipriano, in his own little deeds tonight with her, was naïve like a child. 185

Despite these aspects of Cipriano, however, he is essentially conceived in terms of the Lawrentian god, Huizilopochtli,
just as Ramón, to a more limited extent, is conceived in
terms of the Lawrentian quetzalcoatl.

Serving as foils both to Ramón and to Kate are Ramón's
two wives, Carlota and Teresa. These women are conceived
almost entirely in terms of their functions, as the imagery
used to depict their natures, shows.

Carlota represents the "charitable giver" of modern
Christianity. Her love for Ramón is from the will and she
wishes to possess those whom she loves, as if they were
mechanical objects rather than living individuals. Kate's
description of the woman, as she comes to meet her, reveals
how Carlota's attitude is expressed even in her external
appearance:

And there above her was Doña Carlota, in white
muslin and with white shoes and stockings, her face
looked curiously faded by contrast. 186

Carlota, dressed in the white of Christian purity is a
living example of the Christian death.

Carlota, however, refuses to fit perfectly into this
functional role. Ramón's attitude to his wife and his
guilt as concerns her disintegration have already been dis-
cussed. One feels that Carlota loves in the wrong way
only because Ramón has betrayed her trust in him:

But her love had turned from being the spontaneous
flow, subject to the unforeseen comings and goings of
the Holy Ghost, and had turned into will ... Her
winsomeness and her elfishness departed from her, she

186. The P.S. p. 173
began to wither, she grew tense .... Even as the spontaneous mystery died in her, the will hardened till she was nothing but a will: a lost will. 187

Thus her anguish becomes real and her death tragic, for one feels that she is the truly sacrificial victim of the new religion. Ramón's final rejection of his wife seems cruel and unnecessary, in human terms, while Cipriano's condemnation is purely vindictive. The sympathy is drawn from the central protagonists at a crucial point.

Terésa fulfils her functional role completely and is thus a less interesting character than Carlota. She represents the true relationship of woman to man in the new religion, thus bringing Ramón's life to its fulfilment and revealing to Kate what is still lacking in the latter woman's transformation. Her affinity with the new life is stressed in the use of the serpent image and the sexual flame image in describing her appearance:

... she envied Terésa her dark eyes with the flame in them and their savage assurance. She envied her her serpent-delicate fingers. 188

and:

Terésa looked up quickly, and raised her head proudly, showing her brownish throat like a rearing crested snake. 189

Kate Leslie, alone, refuses to fit into any functional role. This forty-year old widow is searching for a new and meaningful approach to life and this novel traces her quest

187. The P.S. p. 220
188. The P.S. p. 429
189. The P.S. p. 451
as she progresses towards an acceptance of her true womanhood within the religion of Quetzalcoatl. The development is traced in two central movements. On the one hand, her initiation fits into the phoenix pattern. She dies to her old life to rise anew from the ashes. In this respect, her new birth parallels the resurrection of Quetzalcoatl who is described as literally rising like the phoenix to heaven to be prepared for his new birth. Her development is also depicted in the movement of the pendulum, with successive recoils away from the new life and attractions towards it. The recoil is either against Europe, with its mechanical will and hatred of true womanhood or against the new religion with its downward movement. Her attractions are respectively towards the creativity offered by Ramón and the softness and spirituality, latent within the English countryside. The two movements may be seen by examining the crucial stages in Kate’s progress.

Lawrence emphasises, from the beginning, that Kate has reached a turning-point in life and that she is spiritually prepared for a new birth. She states this explicitly in her reflections upon her fortieth birthday:

She was forty: the first half of her life was over. The bright page with its flowers and its love and its stations of the Cross ended with a grave. Now she must turn over, and the page was black, black and empty ... 190

190. The P.G. p. 56
She has already turned from Christianity and the approach to life that it implies.

Simultaneously, Lawrence delineates Kate's response towards Mexico, in which the inevitable recoil and attraction, that she feels towards the religion, is already evident:

Usually she was so good-tempered and easy. But something about this country irritated her and put her into such a violent anger, she felt she would die. Burning furious rage ....

Perhaps something came out of the earth, the dragon of the earth, some effluence, some vibration which militated against the very composition of the blood and nerves in human beings. Perhaps it came from the volcanoes. Or perhaps even from the silent, serpent-like dark resistance of those masses of ponderous natives

Kate, whatever her response, is already initiated into the secret of what constitutes modern Mexico. This is emphasised by her use of the reptile and heaviness images found in the hymns and sermons.

The journey across the lake marks Kate's initiation into the new life. She instinctively responds to the mystery of Quetzalcoatl and recognises how appropriate the image of the Morning and Evening Stars is. This mood is continued in the second boat-trip where she holds communion with the native boatmen.

... she could see the stillness, the humility and the pathos of grace in him; something very beautiful and truly male, and very hard to find in a civilised white man. It was not of the spirit. It was of the dark.
strong, unbroken blood, the flowering of the soul.

Then she thought to herself: After all, it is good to be here .... They can receive the gift of grace, and we can share it like a communion, they and I ... It is so much better than love: the love I knew with Joachim. This is the fulness of the vine. 192

She has recognised the power of the loins as opposed to the breast. In these two passages however, Lawrence exceeds the realistic framework in which the book is also set, especially in the latter. The mention of the Morning Star by Quetzalcoatl's man makes credible Kate's reflections on the boatmen's eyes. When Kate sees her communion with the strange boatmen as greater than her love for her husband Lawrence goes too far. At this stage, Kate has not been introduced into the new religion, a factor which makes her acknowledgement of the wonder in the ass owner's eyes, at a later stage, beautiful. Here the reflection is forced and the formal language, unnatural.

The dance in the plaza brings to a close this stage of Kate's development. During this first encounter with the new ritual, her will gradually gives way to the power of the blood and the lower consciousness until Kate becomes one with the greater womanhood.

At the same time, Kate is not without a withdrawal from the horrors of Mexico. Her recoil is brought about by the stories of Mexican killings, discussed before, and the

192. The P.S. pp. 116-17
changefulness of Juana and her family. She reacts against the centreless eyes of the natives and the heaviness of the peons who blight the frivolity of the city flappers.

The second stage of Kate's initiation into the new mystery is centred at Jambiltepec. At first she is suspended between Carlota, symbolic of the old life, and Ramón and Cipriano, symbolic of the new. Her attraction towards Carlota is, however, superficial, in response to Carlota's plea, which is based on what Lawrence feels is her debased charity-drive. Appropriately her response to the men is called forth by their physical and sensual powers. She finally allows herself to be drawn towards the new religion and, while she is in this sympathetic mood, Cipriano proposes.

The recoil follows almost immediately and, as the response to Ramón was greater than before, so is the corresponding repulsion. Banditry pervades the countryside. Kate becomes aware of the eternal victim-victimizer relationship of the Mexicans, as seen in her relationship with Juana, Concha's with Maria, the children's to each other and the urchin's to the helpless bird. Her antagonism is reduced when Cipriano makes her see the possibility of physical union with him but she is soon hostile again and, in her recoil against the whole of humanity, causes the European in Ramón to flare up.

There follows, within Kate, a spiritual death. This
middle period in her transformation begins after the denudement of the church:

Kate felt a bit like a mermaid trying to swim in a wrong element. She was swept away in some silent tides, to the old, antediluvian silence, where things moved without contact. Even the striking of the hours had ceased. As a drowning person sees nothing but the waters, so Kate saw nothing but the face of timeless waters. 193

She loses herself completely in the death process after the attack on Jamiltepec. When she shoots at the bandit, she allies herself with Ramón and his beliefs. As she is sprinkled with the blood from Ramón's knife it is as if she were baptised into the blood religion. Afterwards she finds herself completely estranged from the life of the world:

Only at the very centre of her sometimes a little flame rose and she knew that what she wanted was for her soul to live. The life of days and facts and happenings was dead on her, and she was like a corpse. But away inside her a little light was burning. ... Sometimes it sank and seemed extinct. Then it was there again. 194

In this period of death, she is able to marry Cipriano within the religion and she has her first glimpse of the mystery within him in the Pan vision. Kate's commitment to Ramón and Cipriano is highlighted by the juxtaposition of Carlota's death with her flowering for Cipriano in sexual union.

Yet Kate is not without a recoil from the religion, even at this point. When she is summoned to the church to

193. The F.S. p. 301
194. The F.S. p. 320
witness the first official ceremony of Quetzalcoatl she feels as if she were one of the ancient victims, prepared for sacrifice.

Following the spiritual death is the period of rebirth which is long and arduous, full of many recoils away from self-commitment. Counterpointed are Kate's greatest rejection and most utter submission. When Cipriano is initiated in the church, as the living Aztec god, she rejects him utterly as the Black Huitzilopochtli, the God of War and Sacrifice, who demands that she serve him, and turns almost completely back to the European concept of womanhood. Shortly after however, she accepts him as the Green Huitzilopochtli, within the church, and, with this acceptance, vows to accept him in all his aspects.

At this stage, Teresa furthers Kate's development. Although she is jealous of Teresa's relationship with Ramon and despises the Mexican woman a little, Kate realises, from her example, that she has to submit all her soul, not just her physical body in order to achieve the Morning Star. Lawrence stresses the sterility of Kate's hard-fought-for independence and the widow is forced to recognise, in Teresa, the greater woman. Her struggle now increases. The very constitution of her body is changing, as is depicted through the symbol of the blood:

For it was not her spirit alone which was changing, it was her body, and the constitution of her very blood. She could feel it, the terrible katabolism
and metabolism in her blood, changing her even as a creature, changing her to another creature. 195

She now desires to return to Ireland and escape her fate in this sensual country.

One feels, however, despite the overt antagonism, that the recoil against Mexico is subsiding and that her desire to return home is the last struggle against the acknowledgment to herself of the change that has occurred. Her vision of Cipriano as the living Huitzilopochtli marks her final defeat which she acknowledges to herself, at least, as she looks at the serpent:

So she wondered over it, as it lay in the hidden places of the earth. And she wondered if it was disappointed at not being able to rise higher in creation ... Perhaps not! Perhaps it had its own peace. She felt a certain reconciliation between herself and it. 196

She must, however, lower her pride sufficiently to accept openly her new life. Thus, despite her vision of life in the bull and the ass-mother, she continues to struggle. Nevertheless, her vision of the grimalkins of London society does seem redundant, for her real problem lies in communicating her desire to Cipriano and Ramón. The last hymn of Quetzalcoatl allows her to do this and in her cry to Cipriano - "You won't let me go!" 197 - the phoenix is finally reborn.

195. The P.S. p. 438
196. The P.S. p. 442
197. The P.S. p. 462
This novel reveals the careful blending of the symbolism and imagery with the philosophical ideas and character development to create a unified totality. By using the formal framework of the Quetzalcoatlian religion, Lawrence was able to give coherence to the differing quests of his main characters and of the Mexicans as a people. Despite the outcry of many critics against this particular novel, the ideas promulgated differ very little from those found in Women in Love and his welding of them into a formal background structure enabled Lawrence to present these ideas in a new and powerful manner.
Lady Chatterley's Lover marks a return in Lawrence's writing to the decay of agrarian England, with the new industrial society, and the consequent decay of its people, in their rejection of blood-consciousness and the adoption of cerebral knowledge. As in The Rainbow, the theme of rebirth is dominant, seen in Connie's awakening to new life, while the growing decadence of Clifford reflects similar concerns of Lawrence in his portrayal of Will and Tom Brangwen in The Rainbow and Gerald and Hermione in Women in Love.

Again the method of depicting these themes is essentially the same as that used in the earlier books. Symbol, and image are the main devices Lawrence employs for presenting the world of Lady Chatterley. Those used, however, are more reminiscent of The Rainbow than of Women in Love. Lawrence uses the landscape extensively to symbolise the inner movement, as he did in revealing Tom and Lydia's love and Kate's development, while the book is almost entirely devoid of the supernatural symbols used in the latter portion of The Rainbow and in Women in Love.
Perhaps some connection in method between the latter and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* may be seen in the symbolic use of Breadalby, Bohemia and Shortlands in *Women in Love* and a similar use of the Wragby world, Tevershall and the woods in *Lady Chatterley*.

This last novel of Lawrence fails, however, to reach the heights of its predecessors. The failure may partly lie in the simplicity of its conception. It may also result from what seem merely echoes of the former works, especially in the imagery used. The main problem seems, however, to be a certain static quality in the book. At one stage in it, Lawrence defines the novel as that which:

... properly handled, can reveal the most secret places of life: for it is in the impassional secret places of life, above all, that the tide of sensitive awareness needs to ebb and flow, cleansing and freshening. 1

*Lady Chatterley* often fails to ebb and flow and the symbols employed seem artifacts rather than the natural expression of an inner emotion.

These criticisms may be best understood by examining the structure of the novel, however, and the impingement of the various parts on the conception of the characters. The structure depends basically on the juxtaposition of the three settings, Wragby, Tevershall and the woods. Julian Moynahan sums up clearly the relationship of these

1. *L C's L* p. 148
settings:

This design is realized most powerfully and significantly in spatial terms, in terms of setting. The most enduring meanings the novel projects are inextricably bound up with the arrangement of three locations .... and their spatial relations with one another under a fume-laden atmosphere. 2

The three settings are spatially closely connected, thus emphasising their close symbolic connection.

Wragby Hall is the physical embodiment of the old aristocracy and also of the intellectual élite of the post-war period. Early in the novel, the character of this portion of society is established by Lawrence, in his description of the young Cambridge group:

... that stood for 'freedom' and flannel trousers, and flannel shirts open at the neck, and a well-bred sort of emotional anarchy, and a whispering, murmuring sort of voice, and an ultra sensitive sort of manner. 3

They are the group in society who live mentally and to whom sex is merely an accessory of life, a little sordid and to be ignored as far as possible in the main stream of one's existence. They represent the modern version of the old upper class and, in many of their characteristics, resemble Hermione's friends at Breadalby. Clifford and Wragby Hall, for the most part, represent this aspect of society, Lawrence showing, early in the work, Clifford's affinity with the old...

3. L.G.'s L p. 52
world, in the description of his novels:

... since the field of life is largely an artificially-lighted stage today, the stories were curiously true to modern life, to the modern psychology that is. 4

Lawrence partly establishes the nature of the young intellectual by the traditional method of conversation. Evening after evening, Clifford and his avant-garde friends discuss life. These scenes are more a vehicle for the author's views, however, which are mainly expressed by Tommy Dukes, but which are occasionally discovered by someone else in the circle. But imagery forms the central device of their depiction.

Animal imagery predominates. Their mediocrity is established through the fish image:

There's lots of good fish in the sea ... maybe ... but the vast masses seem to be mackerel and herring, and if you're not mackerel or herring yourself, you are likely to find very few good fish in the sea. 5 while their sexual attitude is compared with that of rabbits. Michaelis, the society intruder, is frequently characterised as a rat, even if an "heroic rat". 6 For the most part, this breed of people, who pander to success, are seen through the dog image, however. Success is the bitch-goddess while the men who seek her are the male dogs. The attitude of Clifford and his friends towards this goddess is compared with the attitude of the industrial class:

4. L C's L p. 59
5. L C's L p. 75
6. L C's L p. 118
The well-groomed showy dogs of amusement wrangled and snarled among themselves for the favours of the bitch-goddess. But it was nothing to the silent fight-to-the-death that went on among the indispensables, the bone-bringers. 7

Clifford is "very much of a poodle showing off" 8 while Michaelis is "an ownerless dog whom everybody begrudges its golden collar". 9

Although this imagery is as vivid as the earlier type, it lacks the variety of *The Rainbow*. There, with Will and Anna's love, various animal images reveal the various aspects of the love. Even those images which recur constantly during the book develop and change. Here, the animal imagery is constant and tends to be merely repetitious. The "bitch-goddess" comes to resemble a war-cry.

The degeneration noticeable in this use of imagery is even more evident in Connie's impressions of the Lido, which represents yet another aspect of the Sragby life. The animal imagery again depicts humanity. Thus "The Lido, with its acres of sun-picked or pyjamaed bodies was like a strand with an endless heap of seals come up for mating" 10 and "The men were like great dogs in white flannel trousers, waiting to be patted." 11 This is an echo of the swimming party at Breadalby but Lawrence misses the subtle individualisation of the various people which makes his portrayal of

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7. *L C's L* p. 154
8. *L C's L* p. 118
9. *L C's L* p. 71
10. *L C's L* p. 316
11. *L C's L* p. 317
Breadalby so vivid and real:

They all dropped into the water, and were swimming together like a shoal of seals. Hermione was powerful and unconscious in the water, large, slow and powerful, Palestra was quick and silent as a water-rat, Gerald wavered and flickered, a white natural shadow. 12

Tevershall and the other mining villages represent the industrial life of old England, in very much the same way as Baldover does in Women in Love. Lawrence stresses the way the coal-dust penetrates into all the surroundings:

... even on windless days the air always smelt of something under-earth: sulphur, iron, coal or acid. And even on the Christmas roses the smuts settled persistently; incredible, like black manna from the skies of doom .... At first, they fascinated Connie with a sort of horror; she felt she was living underground. 13

This is very reminiscent of Gudrun's walk through Baldover, when she compares the people's faces to something from the underworld and notices that the coal-dust has also settled on the countryside. Connie even experiences, at first, some of Gudrun's fascination with this world.

The descriptions of the town convey vividly Lawrence's hostility against industrial England, with its destruction of life and beauty. On the one hand, this is seen in the destruction of the old aristocratic way of life. Thus Tevershall impinges on the aristocratic home of Wragby: "It stood on an eminence in a rather fine old park of oak trees, but, alas, one could see in the near distance the

12. Women in Love p. 113
13. LC's L p. 56
The extent of the encroachment is revealed more forcibly in the description of Shipley Hall, another old aristocratic home which is physically replaced by "an array of red-brick semi-detached 'villas' in new streets". One is reminded, at this point, of the bourgeois dogs who replace the "ladies in high tortoise-shell combs", at the bull-fight, and of the reptile-like peons who oust the nobility from the plaza at Sayula, in *The Plumed Serpent*. Here, the guilt of both the aristocrat and the workers, in this corruption, is seen. Leslie Winter, the master, helps bring about his own downfall:

He had almost welcomed the colliers in his park. Had the miners not made him rich! So, when he saw the gangs of unshapely men lounging by his ornamental water ..., he would say 'The mines are perhaps not so ornamental as deer, but they are far more profitable.

As surely as the miners destroy the aristocrat, they destroy Wragby Woods. The woods are symbolic throughout of the true creative life. There the flowers and the animals quicken to new life every year — unlike men these days, as Connie observes. Connie early recognises their special power:

The wood was her one refuge, her sanctuary. But it was not really a refuge, a sanctuary, because she had no connection with it. It was only a place where she could get away from the rest. She never really touched the spirit of the wood itself .... if it had any such nonsensical thing.
Her creative regeneration throughout is paralleled by her increasing awareness of the life present within the woods— as shall be shown later. They represent, as well, the portion of old England which has not yet been completely desecrated by modern industrial life and so are seen in further contrast to the old aristocratic homes.

Yet Lawrence also presents the woods as the physical symbol of the eventual decay even of the creative life. As one is always aware of the pits in the Wragby Hall scenes, so one is aware of the proximity of the mines to the woods:

He turned into the dark of the wood. All was still, the moon had set. But he was aware of the noises of the night, the engines at Stacks Gate, the traffic on the main road. 19

and:

'I do! This is the old England, the heart of it; and I intend to keep it intact!'

'Oh yes!' said Connie. But as she said it, she heard the eleven-o'clock hooters at Stacks Gate Colliery. 20

Not only does Teverahall impinge on the woods, however, but it has also already invaded its refuge. The destruction of the creative life is symbolised by Sir Geoffrey's desecration of the woods to provide the war-effort with timber. Connie and Clifford stumble into one of his clearings which is described as "lifeless" full of "dead bracken" and "a spindly sapling". 21

19. L.C.'s L p. 166
20. L.C.'s L p. 87
21. L.C.'s L p. 86
Lawrence thus depicts clearly, through these three physical settings his belief in the decaying of the old, creative life before the onsurge of industrial life. Tevershall and the woods are contrasted with great delicacy. The Tevershall symbol is deficient, however, within the frameword of the whole novel, as was the Wragby setting. Too often, the depiction of industrial England is divorced entirely from the development of the characters and the other portions of the story. The clearest delineation of the Midland district is Lawrence's description of Connie's drive to Shipley Hall. As a description, it is both vivid and detailed. Lawrence, in describing the villages, the people in them and the old ancestral homes, conveys a picture in which:

... the utter negation of natural beauty, the utter negation of the gladness of life, the utter absence of the instinct for shapely beauty which every bird and beast has, the utter death of the human intuitive faculty was appalling. 22

But this picture is not seen at all through Connie's consciousness, although it well could have been, nor does it form a part of her developing awareness. It exists as an essay, connected with the novel by the tenor of its message but forming no integral part in the depiction of Connie's rebirth.

Thus the symbolic settings of the novel vary greatly in quality. In the Wragby Hall scenes, there is a distinct
falling away in the use of the evocative image while the Tevershall scenes are not fully integrated within the texture of the whole. The woods remain the only setting which fulfils its role satisfactorily, on the artistic level.

The treatment of the characters suffers from many of the same problems, problems connected quite often with the symbolic method. The main problem lies in the failure of Lawrence to fuse completely the roles of prophet and hero within the central protagonist, Mellors. Like Birkin, in *Women in Love*, and Ramón, in *The Plumed Garment*, he has rejected the present world and dreams of a new creative relationship between man and woman - he differs from the others, however, in his basic cynicism and bitterness - and, through him, Lawrence communicates the message of the novel. On the one hand, Mellors describes the illness of England:

> There, in the world of the mechanical greedy, greedy mechanism and mechanized greed, sparkling with lights and gushing hot metal and roaring with traffic, there lay the vast evil thing, ready to destroy whatever did not conform. Soon it would destroy the wood, and the blue-bells would spring no more. All vulnerable things must perish under the rolling and running of iron. 23

and, on the other, he defines the solution:

> Sex is really only touch, the closest of all touch. And it's touch we're afraid of. We're only half-conscious, and half-alive. We've got to come alive and aware. Especially the English have got to get into touch with one another, a bit delicate and bit tender. 24

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23. *L G*’s *L* p. 167
24. *L G*’s *L* p. 337
Where Connie can believe in complete salvation through her relationship with Mellors, he always remembers that the rest of the world lies outside. Through the contrast of his awareness with Connie's blind happiness, the gamekeeper's role as seer is partly integrated with his other role as hero. Connie provides him with an aura of reality.

When Lawrence removes him from his symbolic surroundings, the tenuous link between the two levels fails. In London, Oliver Mellors' insistence on the regeneration of England becomes vulgar. The tenderness of the wood scenes is missing and one can only agree with Mr. Leavis when he writes:

What may be called the hygienic undertaking to which it is devoted commands one's sympathies... But the willed insistence on the words and the facts must, it seems to me... have something unacceptable, something offensive, about it. 25

The dinner conversation between Sir Michael and Mellors resembles a childish delight in scribbling on toilet walls. This breakdown, perhaps, reveals how much the acceptability of Mellors' role depends on its integration with the symbolic setting of the woods and the connection with Connie, in his saving of her.

Mellors' role as seer has created other problems for critics. Birkin, in this role, had the intellectual background consistent with his intense sensitivity and insight. Mellors, however, comes from a working class home and works

as a servant. He has many resemblances to Annable of The White Peacock and Aaron of Aaron's Rod. In fact, this passage from Aaron's Rod is very similar to comments on Mellors' dialect:

He had a curious quality of an intelligent, almost sophisticated mind, which had repudiated education. On purpose he kept the Midland accent in his speech. He understood perfectly what a personification was - and an allegory. But he preferred to be illiterate. 26

In this regard, however, Mellors represents an improvement on the earlier models. His education and superior air are credibly explained, which is in sharp contrast with Annable's romantic history. He also has a tenderness missing in the earlier gamekeeper. Both factors thus maintain the credibility of the novel as concerns Mellors' character and Connie's attraction towards him. Furthermore, Mellors never seems to abandon the level of education and insight at which he has been placed, as Aaron does. In fact, it is in avoiding this extreme that Lawrence leans to the other, by showing Mellors as so uncouth and vulgar in London society.

It may be noticed that Mellors' central role as the seer is substantiated by traditional means - his character is most forcibly established by dialogue and his history is narrated as village gossip by Mrs Bolton and as fact by himself. There are no symbolic overtones here. In fact,

26. Aaron's Rod op. cit. p. 60
it is when Lawrence does use the imagistic method that he falters with Mellors. There are few occasions when he does employ the method but the images used appear as expiring echoes of his characterisation of Birkin. Thus, when Connie sees Mellors in the wood, she sees him as "Not the stuff of beauty, not even the body of beauty, but a lambency, the warm, white flame of a single life ..." 27 Later she compares him with the flower: "And the keeper, his thin, white body, like a lonely pistil of an invisible flower!" 28 and he also resembles the lonely and solitary animal. 29 At one point, he even becomes, for Connie, "the sons of God with the daughters of men". 30 Each of these images forms an isolated instance which often appears incongruous by its very unexpectedness. The images used of Birkin depended on a careful interweaving of the various concepts of solitariness, lambency and delicacy, leading to the climax of Ursula's vision of him as one of the sons of God.

Mellors' connection with the woods, perhaps, belies the above statement. His acceptability does depend largely on the woodland setting where everything is bursting into bud and where he is seen in his natural state, tending the hens or even shooting the poaching cat. Although, in many ways, this connection is as orthodox as the establishment of his

27. L C's L p. 112
28. L C's L p. 130
29. L C's L pp. 111; 135
30. L C's L p. 227
background, the symbolic overtones, applicable to the woods, do extend to him also.

Clifford presents a contrasting picture. Where Mellors represents creative and physical life, he represents decay and the mental life. In fact, the problem of Clifford's character extends from a clash between Clifford, the symbol, and Clifford as the protagonist who degenerates actively into industrial imbecility.

Symbolically, it has been seen, he represents the old aristocracy and the intellectual élite. His characteristics are theirs. Thus, even though it is not until during the war that he becomes crippled, the outer state thus forming a correlative to the inner, he is always uninterested in the physical life: "He had been virgin when he married: and the sex part did not mean much to him. They were so close, he and she, apart from that." 31 This attitude is even more revealingly demonstrated in his wish that Connie have a son, whoever the father. For him, sex equals physical satisfaction. In this symbolic role, Clifford fulfills his function suitably, although it has been discussed how the images used to describe this way of life lack variety and development.

When contrasted with Wragby Woods, however, he even gains a new vitality. He is contrasted against the woods so that the deadness and destructiveness of the mental life may

31. L.C.'s, p. 55
be revealed in this symbolic context. Thus Connie comments on his perception of the spring flowers:

She was angry with him, turning everything into words. Violets were Juno's eyelids, and windflowers were un-ravished brides. How she hated words, always coming between her and life ... sucking all the life-sap out of living things. 32

His destructiveness is dramatised when he and Connie walk through the woods in spring:

The chair puffed slowly on, slowly surging into the forget-me-nots that rose up in the drive like milk froth ... Connie, walking behind, had watched the wheels jolt over the wood-ruff and the bugle, and squash the little yellow cups of creeping-jenny. 33

The symbolic role is, however, static, which creates problems when Lawrence converts him from a cultural dilettante into an industrial magnate. Lawrence's statements that Clifford's mind is weakening as he gains new force in business are not substantiated at the crucial transition period by either imagery or traditional methods. Hough points out that Clifford's emotional narrowing serves as a contrast with Connie's emotional rebirth 34 but the change is not dramatised. For part of the book, Clifford is symbolic of the old aristocracy; for the other part, he is symbolic of the new industrial magnate. The result is that, at times, Lawrence appears hysterical and unjust.

He had become a practical man himself, and an amazingly astute and powerful one, a master ...
But this astute and practical man was almost an idiot when left alone to his own emotional life. He worshipped Connie. She was his wife, a higher being, and he worshipped her with a queer, craven idolatry, like a savage, a worship based on enormous fear, and even hate of the power of the idol, the dread idol. Lawrence's sacrifice of the character to the thematic symbol results in a lessening of the sympathy evident in his earlier works. Will, of The Rainbow, was also blind, worshipping the inanimate church, but Lawrence does not fail to reveal his sensitivity, even when Will is wrong. Hermione, in Women in Love, may represent modern mental woman, but the torment of her mind is revealed, as well as the blindness of her attitudes. Such moments as reveal Clifford's humanity are few and are quickly neutralised. Thus he is hurt by his father's desecration of the woods but Connie notices he is blind to the industrial menace which he soon aids in its progress.

Connie alone unfolds during the progress of the novel. In the beginning, she too follows the mental life:

Neither [Hilda nor Connie] was ever in love with a young man unless he and she were verbally very near; that is unless they were profoundly interested, TALKING to one another. This is why she marries Clifford. She feels that there is something fine in his rejection of the physical life. There follows Connie's gradual disillusionment and the loss of her vitality. The liaison with Mellors brings her to a new

35. L C's L p. 158
36. L C's L p. 56
birth in which her womb quickens and, for the first time, she can perceive the real meaning of life: "Give me the body. I believe the life of the body is a greater reality than the life of the mind." 37

With Connie, Lawrence returns almost completely to the method he used in delineating the love of Tom and Lydia in The Rainbow. Her rebirth is paralleled by the coming of spring in the woods. At first, as the disillusion of her life grows, the world becomes a non-reality. This is reflected in her view of the oak-trees:

The oak-leaves were to her like oak-leaves seen ruffling a mirror, she herself a figure somebody had read about, picking primroses that were only shadows, or memories, or words. 38

The grey-black colouring of the wood also reflects the grey-black state of her depression: "... the lid was down, there was a raw coldness. It was going to snow. All grey, all grey! the world looked worn out." 39 With her meeting with Mellors, she becomes aware of the existence of life. This awareness is once more paralleled in the seasons:

Constance sat down with her back to a young pine-tree that swayed against her with curious life, elastic and powerful, rising up .... And she watched the daffodils turn golden in a burst of sunshine that was warm on her hands and lap. Even she caught the faint, tarry scent of the flowers. 40

This preparatory section reaches a climax in the scene with

37. L C's L p. 231
38. L C's L p. 62
39. L C's L p. 92
40. L C's L p. 132
with the new-born chickens. With poignant realisation, Connie sees how separated she is from the creativity of the hens and other wood life. The first sexual encounter with Mellors coincides with her new emotional awareness.

As Connie's new life opens out, so the woods blossom into summer and she is now seen in opposition to Clifford, in terms of Wragby Woods. With the full fruition of summer, Connie experiences complete rebirth. The sea image, so important in *The Rainbow* also recurs here and, unlike many of Lawrence's echoes of former novels, it succeeds. Thus, as Connie walks to the hut, she realises that it is early summer and she associates the hyacinths with the sea. From here, the imagery of her rebirth develops naturally.

And it seemed she was like the sea, nothing but dark waves rising and heaving, heaving with a great swell. 41

and:

As she ran home in the twilight the world seemed a dream; the trees in the park seemed bulging and surging at anchor on a tide, and the heave of the slope to the house was alive. 42

Equally important in depicting Connie's development are the descriptions of her actual sexual encounters with Mellors. Although these scenes are far more direct and explicit than the corresponding scenes in *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *The Plumed Serpent*, there is a thread of

41. LC's L p. 226
42. LC's L p. 230
imagery which is reminiscent of that used in the former novels. As was seen, Connie first lies with Mellors after she has recognised her own barrenness in comparison with the creativity of the creatures of the wood. As the keeper observes her grief, he becomes aware "of the old flame shooting and leaping up in his loins." \[43\] Almost immediately, this image is linked with the image of water, a connection noticed frequently in *The Plumed Serpent*: "His heart melted suddenly, like a drop of fire." \[44\]

Throughout the early encounters, Lawrence emphasises the gentleness and softness of the relationship. Connie is learning to accept the role of the adoring and receptive female, as contrasted with the part played by the modern woman:

> She did not want it, it was known and barren, birthless; the adoration was her treasure. It was so fathomless, so soft, so deep and so unknown. No, no, she would give up her hard bright female power; she was weary of it, stiffened with it; she would sink in the new bath of life, in the depths of her womb and her bowels ... \[45\]

This soft and tender love is largely expressed through the sea image which reaches its culmination when Connie realises her womanhood:

> And it seemed she was like the sea, nothing but dark waves rising and heaving, heaving with a great swell, so that slowly her whole darkness was in motion, and she was ocean rolling its dark, dumb mass. Oh, and far down inside her the deeps parted

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43. LC's L p. 163
44. LC's L p. 163
45. LC's L pp. 185-86
and rolled asunder, in long, far-travelling billows ... till suddenly, in a soft shuddering convulsion, the quick of all her plasma was touched, she knew herself touched, the consummation was upon her, and she was gone. She was gone, she was not, and she was born: a woman. 46

Associated with it are the flame and the flower images.

Thus the flame expresses the passion that rises within each of them and combines with the sea imagery to convey the sensation of the orgasm:

Then as he began to move, in the sudden helpless orgasm, there awoke in her new strange thrills rippling inside her. Rippling, rippling, rippling, like a flapping overlapping of soft flames, soft as feathers, running to points of brilliance, exquisite, exquisite and melting her all molten inside. 47

The flower image, on the one hand, describes Connie's receptivity. In this connection, Lawrence uses the sea-anemone image in exactly the same manner as he did in The Plumed Serpent. On the other, it describes the creative power of Mellors, centred in the penis - "And only now she became aware of the small, bud-like reticence and tenderness of the penis." 48

Connie cannot be completely reborn, however, until, with Mellors, she has probed the depths of shame. Thus, on her last night with the keeper, through sensual passion, she reaches "the bed-rock of her nature, and was essentially shameless." 49 As in the depiction of Ursula and Skrebensky's liaison, the jungle imagery is predominant,

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46. L C's L p. 226
47. L C's L pp. 182-83
48. L C's L p. 226
49. L C's L p. 305
and Lawrence describes Connie's experience thus:

... the deep organic shame, the old, old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots of us, and can only be chased away by the sensual, at last it was roused up and routed by the phallic hunt of the man, and she came to the jungle of herself. 50

Lawrence, in the use of the sea, flame, flower and jungle imagery, captures again the beauty and power found in the corresponding descriptions in the earlier novels.

The progression of Connie through the depths of shame to new birth would seem to suggest the phoenix pattern. This pattern does not predominate during the novel, however, as it does in the rebirth of Kate and in the discovery, by Ursula, of the creative life, in her relationships with Skrebensky and Birkin. The central movement is from Connie's death in the industrial world to her quickening to life, under the influence of Mellors. This death differs from the phoenix death in that the latter is a period of preparation for the new life while the former can only kill the soul. The reduction to moral ashes, during the night of sensual passion, does precede, however, a period of renewal for Mellors and Connie during their separation from each other. Thus the novel closes with the promise of the new life which will emerge from the ashes of the phoenix and it is this promise that Mellors' letter expresses:

I love this chastity, which is the peace of our fucking, between us now like a snowdrop of forked

50. L C's L pp. 304-05
white fire. And when the real spring comes, ... then we can fuck the little flame brilliant and yellow. 51

It is only in the symbolism of the woods, especially in its connection with Connie, and in that of the love scenes that Lawrence captures fully the "ebb and flow" of life that is so much a feature of his other novels.

Connie is seen also in connection with the old life, especially in the transition period, and again Lawrence uses the imagery method. On one side, her connection is pictured in the terms of the twenties' society life. Thus she feels, in her disillusion, that joy "was a word you applied to a good Charleston" 52 and that "Sex and a cocktail: they both lasted about as long." 53 For the most part, however, the imagery forms a contrast with the landscape parallel, seen in her rebirth. Thus, while the living flowers regenerate her, she sees her marriage as a parasitic hot-house flower:

The fine flower of their intimacy was to her rather like an orchid, a bulb stuck parasitic on her tree of life, and producing, to her eyes, a rather shabby flower. 54

Again, she sees her argby life as a form of imprisonment in comparison with the wild freedom of the woods. At one stage she realises that "She had been fastened by a rope, and jagging and snarling like a boat at its moorings: now

51. LG's L p. 365
52. LG's L p. 107
53. LG's L p. 109
54. LG's L p. 129
She was loose and adrift".\textsuperscript{55} She also recognises Clifford's influence over her in other terms:

He seemed to sit there like a skeleton, sending out a skeleton's cold grizzly will against her. Almost she could feel the skeleton clutching her arm and pressing her to its cage of ribs. \textsuperscript{56}

In both the characterisation and in the symbolic settings, despite the successful rendering of many emotions, notably those of Connie, there is a static quality. What is more, this is produced, especially in the case of Clifford, by the oversimplifying effect of the imagery used.

Yet another problem arises in the conception of this novel, however, connected in a different manner with the symbolism. Lawrence too frequently will not allow the novel framework to carry his message. His very opening is a categoric statement of the situation, which allows for no gradual proof within the action: "Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins ..." \textsuperscript{57} Also quite categoric is his original analysis of the sexual position of the young. This is partly justified in that it seems to express Connie's inner feelings, but this cover is not always maintained. It resembles often an essay on the age. The same has already been noticed in his description of Tevershall and the other mining towns.

Lawrence seems also not to trust the efficacy of

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{L.C.'s L} p. 132
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{L.C.'s L} p. 248
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{L.C.'s L} p. 47
Mellors in interpreting the symbolism. The book contains yet another enlightened young man, Tommy Dukes, who is yet supposed to represent one of the victims of cerebral consciousness. Even the other modern degenerates occasionally lapse out of character to enforce the Lawrentian message. Thus Clifford can write of the modern age to Constance:

"It seems to me absolutely true that our world, which appears to us the surface of all things is really the bottom of a deep ocean: all our trees are submarine growths, and we are weird, scaly-clad submarine fauna, feeding ourselves on offal like shrimps." 56

even though one of his most salient features is a perpetual blindness and even his writings reflect only the brilliant surface of the age.

Perhaps more serious than the other faults of the novel, however, is the breakdown of the symbolic framework. Most of the book is carefully constructed within the settings of Wragby Hall, Tavershall and Wragby Woods and the symbolic connotation of these surroundings enforces and deepens the thematic meaning and the characterisation, even that of Clifford. With Connie's departure to Venice, the framework, and thus the frame of reference, is destroyed. The shallowness of Lawrence's depiction of the Lido has already been discussed and so has the failure of Mellors in the London surroundings. These failures characterise the final portion of the book. It ends on a bathetic note because the

56. L.C.'s L. p. 325
framework, within which the novel was set, is removed. A further result is that the unity of the symbolic connotation is destroyed and is not recovered, even in Mellors' last letter.

*Lady Chatterley's Lover* fails as a work of art because Lawrence, at times, allows the symbolic and imagistic method to prevail, even when the images are derivative from earlier novels or are not suitable in the particular context. Even more seriously, however, in other portions of the book, he does not allow the symbolic framework, which he has constructed, to carry the theme by its own implications. These faults may have become insignificant, however, if Lawrence had not destroyed the unity of the work by shifting the action to London, outside the symbolic frame of reference. Largely because of this last failure, the total work is non-unified. It is also often static, through the use of arbitrary symbolism, despite its large proportion of beautiful and sensitive passages, in the depiction of Connie's rebirth.
In each of the novels that have been discussed, Lawrence treats of the search for the true creative being, which, as defined in Fantasia, is found in the balance of the lower sensual powers and the upper spiritual ones but which, in the novels, is usually found in the discovery of the lower sensual being. This search for the true creative life, achieved in the "pure balance of two single beings"¹ is juxtaposed by Lawrence's fierce attack against the modern world which, shaped by industrialism and dependent upon the reason and the will, discards the old emotional and passion soul. Thus, each stage in The Rainbow culminates in the finding of an equilibrium between man and woman. Tom and Lydia establish the rainbow above Anna, Anna and Will finally find a kind of stability while Ursula reaches forward to the rainbow which will become personified in Birkin. Parallel to this development is the revolt against the artifact as represented by the Church and by the modern industrial world. In Women in Love, the two streams of thought, become expressed in the love affairs of Birkin and Ursula and Gerald.

¹. Win L p. 164
and Guðrun, the one reaching towards new life, the other probing deeper into the source of utter dissolution. Lawrence's reaction against the machine and the modern reasoning will is also revealed in his portrayal of Hermione, of Gerald, the coal-magnate and master and of the other people of their worlds. The pattern becomes simpler in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* where the woods, symbolic of creation and the setting for Connie's regeneration, are directly opposed to Wragby Hall and Tevershall, the settings for Clifford's degeneration into industrial imbecility. Although the outward form may be different, *The Plumed Serpent* likewise treats of these themes. On the one hand, Kate and Cipriano, Ramón and Teréza search for new life and being, while on the other, they revolt against the machine and the mechanical will of modern America, personified by Owen and Villiers, and of modern Christianity, personified by Carlota.

Lawrence's problem lies in depicting vividly both the old and the new and in comparing and contrasting the two modes of living. As has been seen, he uses the symbolic and imagistic method to capture the ebb and flow of life while he conveys the two streams of living by the dichotomy of his symbolism. Basic to this dichotomy, found in all the symbols and images used, is the light-dark opposition. At first, he encountered difficulties with this opposition, for on one side, it represents a division between the sensual and
spiritual life, a division further clarified by his concept of the Northern and Southern characters. Generally, in this dichotomy, the light is creative while the darkness may represent either creativity in sensuality or sensual dissolution. On the other side, the light, as representing life, is opposed to the grey-ash of the mechanical world.

In The Rainbow, this opposition is presented with varying shades of meaning. Thus Lydia passes through a period of dark and vacuous death to a new world of light and life. The darkness here represents the deadness of Lydia's soul but cannot be really equated with either of the strands of the dichotomy central in Lawrence's writings. With Will and Anna's love, the death-blackness is opposed to the creative light, on the one hand, while, on the other, the sensual passional darkness is opposed to the spiritual daytime love. The same oppositions occur in the love affair of Skrebensky and Ursula. Thus Skrebensky represents the grey-ash mechanical world which cannot share in the mystical rapprochement of Ursula with the moon and stars. Yet he too can lose himself in the sensual passion of the jungle darkness while the rest of the world, caught within the light produced by industrial forces, is left bereft of this knowledge. Lawrence separates his differing concepts of light and dark, in The Rainbow, by means of the associative images. Lydia, emerging into the light, becomes aware of the sea, the flowers and the dawn, all of which denote the
creative mystery. Will, lost in the deadness of the artifact, is compared with the mole, while, as a power of darkness and sensuality, is compared with the cat. Likewise, the light which Ursula and Skrebensky oppose, is produced by the trains and factories whereas the creative light is of the moon, sun and stars. The sensual darkness is described through jungle imagery while the word "ash" is descriptive of the mechanical deadness.

In *Women in Love* Lawrence depicts this dichotomy in a different manner. Here he is very concerned to show how closely related the rivers of dissolution and creation are. As a result, each of the central symbols and images plays a dual role. Water may symbolise the Northern death. As was seen, Gerald dies symbolically when his sister drowns and is, himself, frozen into ice, having died in the snow-clad mountains. Ursula, as she accepts Birkin, however, feels the fountains and rivers of life gushing through him. This water duality is expressed in the central symbol of the two rivers of life. Likewise the flower may represent the "rose of happiness" or the "mud-flowers" while the moon, symbolic of so many of the forces of life in "Moon" can be used to describe Hermione who "like the moon, had only one side to her penny". ² This duality of symbol and image extends throughout the book finding its ultimate expression in the Hohenhausen episode. In these mountains, Ursula and Birkin can see the light of creation and life while

² *WinL* p. 328
Gudrun and Gerald are aware only of the dark river.

The dual function of the light–dark opposition becomes more clearly defined in *The Plumed Serpent* and the various facets of the imagery become distinct with the use of the light symbol to represent the spiritual northern forces, characteristic of the Europeans, Kate and Ramón, and of the dark to represent the southern sensual nature of Cipriano and Terésa. The associated images are slightly different from those of the former novels, but they, as those images in *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow*, describe the division of the loins and the breast. The snake and the images discussed previously in conjunction with it represent the lower forces, and the bird and similar images the upper. These same symbols and images may describe degradation or creation but the dichotomy between the sensual and spiritual and the degraded and the creative remains clear. The close link between all parts of man's nature is expressed in the symbol of the Morning Star and all elements of the light–dark opposition meet at this central point. Thus Lawrence's division in his philosophy between the loins and the breast, the rational and emotional self and the corrupt and creative life find coherent expression in the religious symbolism of this Mexican novel.

The opposition of the mechanical world and the creative mystery is central in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Here the imagery tends to divide into images of imprisonment and freedom but the ideas expressed are the same. The old
association of industrial life with grey ash also recurs, however, in the descriptions of the dowry town of Tavershall which contrast with the descriptions of the flowers blossoming in the woods, suggestive of the colour and light associated with creativity. The other opposition between sensual and spiritual passion is also suggested, if only in the scene of love-making the night before Connie leaves Tragby Hall. The nature of the darkness is conveyed by the jungle imagery, as noticed in The Rainbow.

One may see, therefore, in Lawrence's varying use of the light-dark opposition and in the duality of his symbols, the dual nature of his themes - his attempt to describe, on the one hand, the passionable creative mystery, and, on the other, to oppose the progression of the modern world towards complete acceptance of rationality and mechanisation. Thus the symbols and the ideas which they express become inextricably linked.

Closely connected with the light-dark opposition, where the darkness denotes sensual passion, is the Phoenix pattern. The cycle of death and new life, represented by the phoenix myth, underlies the development of Lawrence's characters from his earliest novels to Lady Chatterley's Lover. Thus, in The Rainbow, it was seen how Lydia, dying a spiritual death after she came to England with Lensky, is reborn through her increasing awareness of the natural life around her, finding fulfilment in the marriage with Brangwen. Traces of this cycle are also present in the marriage of Will
and Anna. After the wedding, they lose themselves in the central core of silence to be recreated while, later, having reached a stalemate in their relationship, they find new life in a sensual and shameless exploration of each other. Although the latter does not result in true new birth, it represents the intermediate stage of death experienced by Ursula, Gudrun and Connie. Thus, with Skrebensky, Ursula surrenders herself to the desires of the jungle beast and, through this experience, comes closer to the rainbow. She and Birkin, to find new life, also meet at the source of their corruption. Gudrun, with both Gerald and Loerke, explores the depths of obscenity and, from here, she could have turned to new life, as Ursula does. As was discussed earlier, Connie's night of passion with Mellors precedes a period of rest which is to be followed by her complete initiation into the new creative life. Kate, in *The Plumed Serpent*, follows this pattern more closely than any other of Lawrence's characters, however. As was seen, she gradually dies to the old world and it is only after this period of death that she can accept fully Cipriano and the religion of Quetzalcoatl.

From the pattern of opposition in the symbolism and from the depiction of the phoenix cycle, several symbols emerge into their full power as natural expressions of Lawrence's philosophy – it may be noted that Lawrence himself recognised their power and discusses their significance in
Fantasia and Apocalypse, as well as in The Symbolic Meaning.

The symbol of water is perhaps the most central. Signifying northern corruption in the images of ice, it most often portrays the sexual experience, however, and is linked closely with the concept of life. Thus it was noticed how the movement of the sea underlay the passages in The Rainbow in which Will and Anna come together in pure sympathy and in which Ursula rejects Skrebensky and turns to the universe. If water represents death for Gerald, and dissolution for Gudrun, in Women in Love, it also represents the mystery of life for Birkin and Ursula, being a central image in the chapters "Moony" and "Excuse" while in both The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley's Lover the description of the rolling waves is linked with the sexual union and religious regeneration.

As representing the female element, the water symbolism has links with the image of the flame, also recurrent in these novels. This image, which according to Lawrence, represents the male element, attains its full power in Ursula's vision of Birkin in the classroom episode and in Kate's vision of Cipriano as the living Huitzilopochtli. Throughout the four novels, it represents passion and love and, as such, conveys vividly the emotions of the male, even if it does not reach the symbolic proportions of the water imagery.

Found side by side with the above symbolism are the
symbols of the cosmos. The moon, sun and stars are central in the description of Ursula's quest in The Rainbow and they lose none of their power either in *Women in Love*, where the moon, in the chapter "Moony" represents the varying facets of life and forms an external correlative to Ursula's and Birkin's emotions, or in *The Plumed Serpent* where the dark sun forms the centre of the creative mystery. The horse and bullock have a similar power. The horse, representative of the loins, terrifies Ursula, as she grapples with life. In *Women in Love*, he is subjected to the mechanical will of man, while the bull is frightened away by Gudrun. In *The Plumed Serpent* they are utterly degraded only to find new being at the end of the novel. Lawrence never defines exhaustively the meaning of these symbols, even in the philosophical works, and the absence of any limit to the meaning gives an extra dimension to their emotive force, as descriptive of life and passion.

*Lady Chatterley's Lover* lacks this force, simplicity and freshness being the central features of the wood scenes. Although Lawrence uses the sea and flame imagery, he does not develop it to its full power. Instead he uses the flower symbolism extensively. Thus the woods blossom into life and, filled with the joy of love, Connie and Mellors thread each other's body with flowers. As she sinks into oblivion with Mellors, Connie equates herself with the sea anemone. Except where it represents corruption and decadence,
in *Women in Love*, this flower symbol denotes always, for Lawrence, freshness and youth. The young women of *The Rainbow* are constantly likened to the flower while it is her youthful flower which attracts Birkin to Ursula. Kate's flower represents, for Cipriano, the freshness of dawn and, as the lovers return to a state of virginity, the flower and flame-images are predominant.

Although these symbols are the ones that predominate in the novels, the symbol of the church and of the bird and serpent and many associated images lend immediacy to the portrayal of the characters and their problems. They succeed because they seem to express in a natural and truthful manner the ideas that lie behind them and, indeed, it often seems impossible to separate the ideas from the expression of them in the symbol and image. Lawrence fails only when he makes use of the rigid symbol with a specific meaning. He tends to fall into this error in *The Plumed Serpent* where it was noticed how he used the tree, egg, and flower imagery in a traditional and banal manner with meanings that were completely circumscribed. He fails, even more so, in this respect, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

So far, only the underlying ideas and the symbols associated with them have been discussed. Although there is a certain development and change in their use from novel to novel, their significance remains fundamentally the same. There is a definite development in Lawrence's use of form
and structure, however, that led inevitably to the failure of Lady Chatterley.

As was seen in The Rainbow, the early form is loose and indefinite. Thus the idea of rebirth and the symbol of the rainbow give a general unity to the themes of the book. Within this framework, the images develop gradually, through the three stages of the novel, until they reach their full power as symbols with Ursula's experiences at the end of the story. This type of development gives Lawrence great freedom and the various inconsistencies of symbolism, noted in the light-dark opposition, do not matter.

The structure of Women in Love is also fairly loose, although, through Birkin, Lawrence defines the central ideas and symbols more distinctly. Thus the varying facets of the themes are presented in different scenes, each of which is highly symbolic, as was previously discussed. The Flumed Serpent marks a step forward in the movement towards a stricter unity of construction. This is achieved by the background of hymns and sermons in which the religious symbols and sexual ideas, which pervade the novel, are defined and their relationships clarified. The conceptions, there established, apply also to the novel as a whole, and the result is a more definite structure than was previously used by Lawrence.

The movement to a stricter and tighter framework continues in Lady Chatterley's Lover and the narrowing of range is too
much for Lawrence, who, as an artist, needs freedom. As is discussed in the last chapter, this novel depends for its frame of reference on the symbolic settings of Wragby Hall, Tevershall and the woods. The landscape setting and the symbolic background occur even in *The Rainbow* but, in the earlier works, their use, like the general structure of the novel, is loose. Thus the natural setting serves as an external correlative to the inner emotion mainly in the love of Tom and Lydia and, from the images established at this point, Lawrence can build up his whole system of images and symbols. The Wragby and Tevershall scenes echo many passages of the Bredalby and Shortlands scenes, in *Women in Love*, but, in the latter, these scenes, like the other scenes of the novel, add meaning to the depiction of modern England without constricting the general development at all. The landscape background in *The Plumed Serpent* fulfils a most important function, serving as an external correlative to the emotions of Kate and the Mexicans, the symbolic link being established by the descriptive terms used which derive from the sexual and religious imagery. Yet, again, the natural parallel does not bind the movement of the novel to itself.

The characters in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* are constricted by this background, however. Thus Clifford, symbolic of the outmoded aristocracy and of the new industrial magnate, fails almost completely as a character. The dangers
of associating the character and the symbol too closely were seen in the depiction of Carlota and Terésa but, in the earlier work, Carlota defies her symbolic role while Terésa is less central in the development than Clifford and so is unharmed. Hellers, the central protagonist, cannot even exist plausibly away from his symbolic setting and, as was seen, the novel collapses once the external framework is removed.

One may conclude, then, that Lawrence, by using the symbolic mode to express in a natural and truthful manner his ideas and philosophy, was able to give to his characters an immediacy and vividness and to capture the sense-awareness whose loss he deplores in Apocalypse. He only fails in his purpose to convey the ebb and flow of life when he allows the symbol to restrict his freedom and the meaning to become rigid and confined. This failure, in which the means supersedes the end, becomes more evident in the later works but Lawrence was never able to defeat completely his own "sense-knowledge" of the world and thus, even in Lady Chatterley's Lover, he often evokes the emotions of the human character in his struggle to live, with great delicacy and, at these points "the novel gets up and walks away with the nail". 3

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