



**"ANOTHER KIND OF LOVE": THE DYNAMICS
OF LOVE AND POWER BETWEEN
MEN IN THE FICTION OF
D. H. LAWRENCE.**

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Errata. "'Another Kind of Love': The Dynamics of Love and Power Between Men in the Fiction of D.H. Lawrence" by Kym McCauley.

- p. 3 for *compliment* read *complement*
- p.10 for Lawrence's' read Lawrence's
- p.19 for order read establishment
- p. 20 for advise read advice
- pp. 22, 23n., 48, 50, 51, 54, 55, 64, 93 and 122
 in each instance for Critch read Crich
- p. 35 for Morels' read Morel's
- p. 36 for [He drags...fire. read [He drags...fire.]
 for weeks read week's
- p. 38 for Morels' read Morel's
 for fathers' read father's
- p. 45 for relaces read replaces
- p. 51 for Brennen read Brennan
- p. 52 for womens' read women's
- p. 53 for womens' read women's
 for her children read their children
- p. 59 for contribution read contributions
- p. 68 for discerned read distinguished
- p. 100 for principal read principle
- p. 107 for Gran Ellis' (second occurrence) read Gran Ellis
- p. 109 for Somers (first occurrence) read Somers'

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material written or published by another person except where reference is made in the text.

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Abstract

My thesis examines the dynamics of love and power in relationships between men in the fiction of D.H. Lawrence. I argue that the Lawrentian hero, while recognizable as an autobiographical figure, does not operate solely as the mouthpiece of the author representing a dominant point of view or stance. I am also concerned with the way in which the Lawrentian male seeks power through means other than those prescribed by the dominant models of male leadership in his society and how he sabotages his conflicting theories about male relationships and love by his overriding need for power.

For the purposes of this study I focus upon Lawrence's novels up to and including *The Plumed Serpent* and examine the episodes between men which recur across those texts. Initially, my reading emphasizes the dynamics of male power which operate within the opposing or contradictory themes of violence and nurturing. This occurs in Paul Morel's relationships with his father and Baxter Dawes in *Sons and Lovers*, the wrestling match between Gerald and Birkin in *Women in Love* and the sadism which dominates "The Prussian Officer." I then examine how nurturing becomes a representation of power in the sick-bed scenes which occur in *Sons and Lovers*, *Women in Love* and *Aaron's Rod*.

Following this I demonstrate how Lawrence's bathing scenes between men, usually read by critics as overtly homoerotic, resist being narrowly categorized. By comparing the bathing scenes between George and Cyril in *The White Peacock* and Ramón and Cipriano in *The Plumed Serpent* with those in the wider narrative and visual representations of the period, I show how Lawrence's bathing scenes operate beyond an established homoerotic genre or tradition.

Finally, I examine how these paradigms of male interaction and power act in the Australian context as they occur in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*, the latter co-written with Mollie Skinner.

Unlike many of the critical responses regarding the male relationships in Lawrence's fiction, the purpose of this thesis is not to seek a definitive Lawrentian stance or philosophy. Hence, my thesis does not produce any one critical theory as a dominant reading. Instead, I use a discursive approach to examine how Lawrence has been read in the past and how some of these readings have generated an expectation of homosexuality or homoeroticism which limit the diverse symbolic and metaphoric elements present in the male relationships.

Instead of seeking or drawing conclusions, I examine the competing voices across the texts which relate the dilemmas characteristic of *fin de siècle* and apocalyptic fiction.

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I also acknowledge GMP Publishers for permission to use images from Emmanuel Cooper's monograph *The Life and Work of Henry Scott Tuke. 1858-1929*.

I would also like to thank Ms Liz Lee and Mr Chris Smith for assisting me to make the best use of the resources of the Barr-Smith Library.

I was also greatly assisted by the resources of the Darling House Community Library.

Abbreviations

- WP* *The White Peacock*. 1911; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983
- SL* *Sons and Lovers*. 1913; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992
- R* *The Rainbow*. 1915; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989
- WL* *Women in Love*. 1920; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987
- AR* *Aaron's Rod*. 1922; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988
- K* *Kangaroo*. London: Secker, 1923.*
- BB* *The Boy in the Bush* (with M.L. Skinner). 1924; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990
- PS* *The Plumed Serpent*. 1926; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987
- LCL* *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. 1928; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993
- Letters I* *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*. Vol. I. Ed. James T. Boulton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- Letters II* *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*. Vol. II. Ed. George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Letters III* *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*. Vol. III. Ed. James T. Boulton and Andrew Robertson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Letters IV* *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*. Vol. IV. Ed. Warren Roberts, James T. Boulton and Elizabeth Mansfield. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

* Wherever possible I use the recent Cambridge Editions of *The Letters and Works of D.H. Lawrence*. As the publication of Bruce Steele's edition of *Kangaroo* for Cambridge University Press is forthcoming, references to *Kangaroo* in this text are from the Secker first edition published in London, 1923. This edition has a longer conclusion than the Seltzer edition published in New York the same year and details Somers' final observations of Sydney. Where significant differences occur between the Seltzer edition and the Secker edition in references I make to *Kangaroo* in this text, a note will be made.

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Introduction

Rupert Birkin, at the conclusion of *Women in Love*, says to Ursula:

Having you, I can live my life without anybody else, any other sheer intimacy. But to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too: another kind of love. (WL 481)

According to this model, a transcendental male relationship is a prerequisite for a sexual, bodily union with a woman. While D.H. Lawrence insists upon a theoretical model of gender binarisms, he is also concerned with the dynamics of power in relationships between men, the power hierarchies of masculinities within the superstructure of patriarchy.

The conclusion of *Women in Love* is an example of the contradictory nature of Lawrence's work. While it is necessary for man to approach the Other, woman, to transcend the self, there must also be a bonding with another man, the Other within the same, in order for this process to be complete or, in fact, possible. The Lawrentian man must have both, then, to have either. This is posited by Birkin in *Women in Love* during the following conversation with Gerald:

"You've got to take down the love-and-marriage ideal from its pedestal. We want something broader.—I believe in the *additional* perfect relationship between man and man—additional to marriage."

"I can never see how they can be the same," said Gerald.

"Not the same—but equally important, equally creative, equally sacred, if you like."

Gerald moved uneasily.—"You know, I can't feel that," said he. "Surely there can never be anything as strong between man and man as sex love is between man and woman. Nature doesn't provide the basis."

"Well, of course, I think she does. And I don't think we shall ever be happy till we establish ourselves on this basis. You've got to get rid of the *exclusiveness* of married love. And you've got to admit the unadmitted love of man for man. It makes for a greater freedom for everybody, a greater power of individuality both in men and women."

"I know," said Gerald, "you believe in something like that. Only I can't *feel* it, you see." He put his hand on Birkin's arm with a sort

of deprecating affection. And he smiled as if triumphantly.
(WL 352-3)¹

I will argue that the Lawrentian hero, while recognizable as an autobiographical figure, does not operate solely as the mouthpiece of the author representing a dominant point of view or stance. I am more concerned with the way in which the Lawrentian male seeks power through means other than those prescribed by the dominant models of male leadership in his society. He sabotages his conflicting theories about male relationships and love by his overriding need for power.

For the purposes of this study I have focussed upon Lawrence's novels and have concentrated on the dynamics of power between men in their personal relationships. Much has been written about the sexual politics in Lawrence's fiction. Yet if one accepts that a relationship between men is supplementary to man's relation to woman in his work or, as J.C.F. Littlewood suggests, is "clearly offered as a necessary *compliment* to marriage, not as an alternative,"² the power dynamics within those male relationships warrant further study. The Lawrentian male is not so much concerned with transcending power in his relationships as with redressing the balance of power in his favour. This contributes to the failure of his male 'heroes' to present any consistent, credible theory or philosophy in his work.

Criticism of D.H. Lawrence invariably attempts to define a Lawrentian ideology or philosophy. Yet Lawrence's work is essentially contradictory and resists being categorized. To illustrate this, I have

¹See David Farmer, Lindeth Vasey and John Worthen, *WL* Introduction, xlviii. The editors identify the two paragraphs "Gerald moved....and women" as those expurgated by Martin Secker from the page proofs of *Women in Love* prior to its publication in England on 10 June 1921. Its inclusion in the Cambridge edition is justified by the lack of evidence that Lawrence knew about or authorised this deletion. While a close textual examination of Lawrence's work is beyond the scope of this study, further information regarding the textual emendations and expurgations in the editing of *Women in Love* may be found in Annabel Cooper, "Essential Criticism': The Constructing of *Women in Love*," PhD diss., University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, 1989.

²J.C.F. Littlewood, "Lawrence," *Essays in Criticism* 25. 2 (1975): 246.

taken some of the better known and controversial contributors to the Lawrence debate to show how he has been read in the past. My review of Lawrentian criticism is by no means exhaustive but attempts to be representative of the shifting perspectives on Lawrence throughout this century.

One of the latest approaches to Lawrence is through the theories of Mikhail Bakhtin. Reading Lawrence as dialogic fiction in the tradition of Dostoevsky helps us make use of the contradictions with which we are confronted in his work. David Lodge, having introduced the fundamental concepts of Bakhtin's theories, applies them to *Women in Love*. He concludes that

the exiguous plot—essentially a double love story—exists merely to bring the protagonists into contact and conflict, and the issues thus raised are neither resolved nor contained within the history of their relationships....

Thus the novel literally ends, the dialogue between the hero and heroine still continuing. It began with a dialogue, between Ursula and Gudrun, about the pros and cons of marriage. In between there are scores of similar scenes, where couples, threes, quartets and larger groups of people conduct debates on issues that are general and abstract and yet of vital importance to the chief characters. Although Rupert Birkin is the principal spokesman for Lawrence's own ideas in the novel, and a kind of self-portrait, he is not allowed to win these arguments. There are no winners. *Women in Love* is not a *roman à thèse*. It has not got a single *thèse*, but several, of which Lawrence's treatment is remarkably even-handed.³

The danger in this approach is the temptation to remove authorial intention from the text completely in order to defend or absolve Lawrence from the controversial debates his work generates.⁴ This is

³David Lodge, *After Bakhtin. Essays on Fiction and Criticism* (London: Routledge, 1990) 63-64.

⁴See Avrom Fleishman's response to Lodge: "Lawrence and Bakhtin: Where Pluralism Ends and Dialogism Begins," *Rethinking Lawrence*, ed. Keith Brown (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1990) 109-19. See also Fleishman's Bakhtinian reading of Lawrence's later fiction: "He Do the Polis in Different Voices: Lawrence's Later Style," *D.H. Lawrence. A Centenary Consideration*, ed. Peter Balbert and Phillip L. Marcus (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1985) 162-79.

not my purpose nor does this study propose to be a Bakhtinian reading of Lawrence's work.⁵ The dialogic model allows investigations to be conducted across the texts into the various male relationships which evolve. Through examining fragments or moments of male interaction it can be shown that a polyvocal textual vehicle operates against what is often interpreted by critics as a totalizing ideological narrative.

This approach extends and develops what Lydia Blanchard recognizes: "that Lawrence raises special problems because he was not afraid to contradict himself."⁶ When criticism attempts to define Lawrence and his work in terms of offering an ideal or a definitive stance there is a failure to take this essential aspect of his work into account. Carol Siegel asserts:

Perhaps the greatest mistake that a reader of Lawrence can make is to treat the contradictoriness of his writings as an unconscious intrusion of personal conflicts. Such readings seem based on the assumption that Lawrence wished to produce texts that would communicate coherent, unified statements, that he tried to make his works speak with one voice.⁷

E.M. Forster was aware of the contradictory quality in Lawrence's works and defines it thus in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927):

He invites criticism because he is a preacher also — it is this minor aspect of him which makes him so difficult and misleading — an excessively clever preacher who knows how to play on the nerves of his congregation. Nothing is more disconcerting than to sit down, so to speak, before your prophet, and then suddenly to receive his boot in the pit of your stomach. 'I'm damned if I'll be humble after that,' you cry, and so lay yourself open to further nagging. Also the subject matter of the sermon is agitating — hot denunciations or advice....

⁵For a recent Bakhtinian study see Mei-Ying Chen, "A Bakhtinian Approach to Point of View in Three D.H. Lawrence Novels," PhD diss., The University of Iowa, 1989.

⁶Lydia Blanchard, "Love and Power: A Reconsideration of Sexual Politics in D.H. Lawrence," *Modern Fiction Studies* 21. 3 (1975): 432.

⁷Carol Siegel, *Lawrence Among the Women. Wavering Boundaries in Women's Literary Traditions* (Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1991) 7.

Humility is not easy with this irritable and irritating author, for the humbler we get, the crosser he gets. Yet I do not see how else to read him. If we start resenting or mocking, his treasure disappears as surely as if we started obeying him.⁸

The promotion of Lawrence as a preacher or prophet by F.R. Leavis and his contemporaries in the 1950s is paradoxical. Lawrence offers no solutions or resolutions to the problems he introduces in his work. Similarly, some feminist appraisals of Lawrence as a misogynist limit the perception of his work by presenting a dominant opinion or stance in his fiction which, upon close examination and comparison, is not consistent.⁹ Elements or examples of Lawrence as a preacher or as a misogynist exist, but I will argue that it is difficult if not impossible to attribute one definitive quality to his contradictory work.

In Lawrence criticism the author has moved from being perceived by Leavis and his contemporaries throughout the 1950s as a sexual liberator, to being seen as a sexual discriminator in the late 1960s and '70s. This was mainly due to Kate Millett's appraisal of Lawrence in her *Sexual Politics* (1969) and Simone de Beauvoir's earlier criticism in *The Second Sex* (1949).¹⁰ Janet Barron, writing in 1989-90, divides feminist responses to Lawrence into two categories. In what she defines as

⁸E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974) 146-47.

⁹See Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. H.M. Parshley (1949; London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), Mary Ellman, *Thinking about Women* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968); Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (1969; London: Granada, 1971); Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch* (London: Paladin, 1971); Caroline G. Heilbrun, *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (1973; New York: Harper and Row, 1974) and Robert Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). For an overview and criticism of the above feminist approaches see Peter Balbert, *D.H. Lawrence and the Phallic Imagination. Essays on Sexual Identity and Feminist Misreading* (London: Macmillan, 1989).

¹⁰See Deirdre Bair, *Simone de Beauvoir* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1990). According to Bair, de Beauvoir qualified her views regarding the relationship between Birkin and Gerald in *Women in Love* following an interview in 1985: "several days later she telephoned excitedly to say that she had reread the novel, 'which I am now sorry to say I did not fully appreciate when...I read it first.' Her general opinion of Lawrence ('terrible machiste') had not changed, but in this one instance she said, 'I now find much in the character of Rupert Birkin that suits entirely what I think about the enlightened roles men and women should play in each other's lives. It is only when Lawrence himself cannot resist intruding into his novel to preach that I am repelled'" (512).

"radical feminist polemic" Lawrence remains "the archetypal male chauvinist." The other school "accepts de Beauvoir's and Millett's basic analyses while nevertheless seeing a need to counteract any excessively reductive readings of the works." Barron concludes: "Feminist criticism, and criticism generally, has not quite got Lawrence right yet; our analyses still distort as often as they identify."¹¹

Criticism becomes similarly confused when conclusions are drawn regarding Lawrence's sexuality, usually through a series of inconclusive biographical details and the reminiscences of those who knew him. A.L. Rowse includes Lawrence in his overview *Homosexuals in History* and claims that Lawrence's nature

was *dominantly* homosexual; it was precisely because he wouldn't accept the fact that he so over-emphasized sex with women in all his work, was so harshly and unnecessarily clamorous about it.¹²

Scott Sanders makes the following evaluation:

Lacking an acceptable father-figure, dominated by an aggressive mother, married to an aggressive wife, deeply inhibited in his earliest sexual relations, frail of body—it is not surprising that there should have been a strong homosexual element in Lawrence's make-up.¹³

A more balanced yet still problematic conclusion is drawn by Jeffrey Meyers in his study *Homosexuality and Literature 1890-1930*. Meyers asserts:

in four major novels D.H. Lawrence considers homosexuality as a more meaningful and transcendent alternative to heterosexual love, but also portrays the scenes of male friendship in a rhythmic, incantatory, ambiguous and poetic language that obscures yet intensifies his real theme.¹⁴

¹¹Janet Barron, "Equality Puzzle: Lawrence and Feminism," Brown 20-21. See also Mara Kalnins, "Lawrence's Men and Women: Complements and Opposites," *Problems for Feminist Criticism*, ed. Sally Minogue, (London: Routledge, 1990) 145-78.

¹²A.L. Rowse, *Homosexuals in History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977) 285.

¹³Scott Sanders, *D.H. Lawrence: The World of the Major Novels* (London: Vision Press, 1973) 131.

¹⁴Jeffrey Meyers, *Homosexuality and Literature 1890-1930* (London: Athlone Press, 1977) 2.

He continues his argument by assessing Lawrence's sexuality on the basis of his own perception of Lawrence's male characters:

Lawrence's inner struggle with repressed homosexual desires results in an ambiguity of presentation, for none of his heroes can commit himself completely to homosexuality although it is portrayed as a 'higher' form of sexual love. Though this ambiguity has artistic functions—it deflects attention from the physical to the symbolic aspects of the scene—it also exposes Lawrence's personal doubts about the validity of homosexual experience. Homosexual lovers like the Prussian Officer, Banford in 'The Fox', Winifred Inger in *The Rainbow* and Loerke in *Women in Love* are portrayed as perverse and corrupt. Yet the homosexuality in the four scenes [which Meyers has defined previously as the "four overt homosexual scenes: the swimming idyll in *The White Peacock* (1911), the wrestling match in *Women in Love* (1920), the nursing episode in *Aaron's Rod* (1922) and the initiation ceremony in *The Plumed Serpent* (1926)"] is described as nourishing and life-enhancing, and represents a meaningful and valuable relationship.¹⁵

Meyers fails to recognize the difference between the characters that Lawrence acknowledges and condemns as homosexual and the male friendships which are distinctive through their potential to transcend sexuality and its associated conflicts. Charles L. Ross discerns this potential in the relationship between Birkin and Gerald and argues:

Lawrence grasped the ideal of male comradeship as a possible though difficult alternative to the deathliness of modern sex relations, an "additional" and complementary (not higher) relationship to the new type of "mystic" marriage that Birkin and Ursula strive to realize.¹⁶

Meyers, however, maintains a rather limited perception of same-sex interaction in Lawrence's work as falling into two ambiguous categories of homosexuality, one acceptable to the author and one not.

Furthermore, his reading is supposed to reveal proof of Lawrence's own

¹⁵Meyers 131-32.

¹⁶Charles L. Ross, "Homoerotic Feeling in *Women in Love*: Lawrence's 'Struggle for Verbal Consciousness' in the Manuscripts," *D.H. Lawrence: The Man Who Lived*, ed. Robert B. Partlow Jr and Harry T. Moore (Southern Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980) 169. Ross cites Meyers in his preliminary argument. See also Littlewood 250 for a critique of Meyers.

latent homosexuality. While Meyers recognizes and acknowledges the contradictory nature of Lawrence's work he consistently fails to take it into account in his appraisals both in his critical work and in his biography of Lawrence.¹⁷

These contradictions may be shown in Lawrence's own views about homosexuality as revealed in his letters and essays, some examples of which I offer.¹⁸ In an early letter to Henry Savage, 2 December 1913, he writes:

I should like to know why nearly every man that approaches greatness tends to homosexuality, whether he admits it or not: so that he loves the *body* of a man better than the body of a woman — as I believe the Greeks did, sculptors and all, by far. I believe a man projects his own image on another man, like on a mirror. But from a woman he wants himself re-born, re-constructed. So he can always get satisfaction from a man, but it is the hardest thing in life to get one's soul and body satisfied from a woman, so that one is free from oneself. And one is kept by all tradition from loving men, or a man — for it means just extinction of all the purposive influences. (*Letters* II 115)

On 5 December 1918 he writes to Katherine Mansfield:

¹⁷Jeffrey Meyers, *D.H. Lawrence. A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1990). For a contrasting point of view see John Worthen, *D.H. Lawrence. The Early Years. 1885-1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Worthen states: "We should see him...not as a 'repressed homosexual', nor as a 'latent homosexual', or indeed as a homosexual at all...He certainly experienced homoerotic feelings, and he expressed them in his writing. But this is not the same as being a homosexual" (158). See also Carmel Macdonald-Grahame, "Narrative Strategies and Sexual Ideology in the Novels of D.H. Lawrence," *Masters diss.*, University of Western Australia, 1990, 204-46. In her chapter "Homosocial Relations: What Men Want Instead," Macdonald-Grahame applies the term "homosocial" to Lawrence's male relationships as an alternative to "homosexual" making reference to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1985).

¹⁸See H.M. Daleski, *The Forked Flame: A Study of D.H. Lawrence* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), in which he states:

there is not much evidence of what he thought about homosexual practices. Cecil Grey, who is for the most part hostile to Lawrence, reports that in 1916 he read the typescript of an unpublished work called *Goats and Compasses*, which he describes as 'a bombastic, pseudo-mystical, psycho-philosophical treatise dealing largely with homosexuality'; but since the only two copies of the 'treatise' were destroyed, one by Lawrence himself and the other by Philip Heseltine, Gray's description of it testifies to nothing more than that Lawrence was interested in the subject (185).

For further information see George J. Zytaruk, "What Happened to D.H. Lawrence's *Goats and Compasses*?" *The D.H. Lawrence Review* 4 (1971): 280-86, Charles L. Ross and George J. Zytaruk "Goats and Compasses and/or Women in Love: An Exchange," *DHLR* 6 (1973): 33-46 and Keith Sagar "Goats and Compasses and Women in Love Again," *DHLR* 6 (1973): 303-08.

I do believe in friendship. I believe tremendously in friendship between man and man, a pledging of men to each other inviolably.—But I have not ever met or formed such friendship. Also I believe the same way in friendship between men and women, and between women and women, sworn, pledged, eternal, as eternal as the marriage bond, and as deep.—But I have not met or formed such friendship. (*Letters* III 302)

Lawrence's position is clearer in his essay "Morality and the Novel" published in 1925. Here, he asserts:

The great relationship, for humanity, will always be the relation between man and woman. The relation between man and man, woman and woman, parent and child, will always be subsidiary.¹⁹

The construction of Lawrence's' power dynamics rests upon binary roles. Not only are opposing gender roles upheld between men and women, there is a similar perception of opposites within the male gender and this fails to take into account the multiplicity of male roles which exist. This is evident in the following scene in *Women in Love* in which the intellectual and artistic Lawrentian male, Birkin, is confronted by his opposite, the physical, sensual Gerald:

Gerald really loved Birkin, though he never quite believed in him. Birkin was too unreal;—clever, whimsical, wonderful, but not practical enough. Gerald felt that his own understanding was much sounder and safer. Birkin was delightful, a wonderful spirit, but after all, not to be taken seriously, not quite to be counted on as a man among men...It was always Gerald who was protective, offering the warm shelter of his physical strength. (*WL* 201-2)

The physically superior male conforms to the social stereotype of masculinity and uses his social advantage, over women and weaker men, to protect or exploit them. The physically weaker Lawrentian male asserts that power is something greater than social advantage. In other words, it is something greater than that which is conferred collectively by patriarchal society through its hierarchical systems.

¹⁹D.H. Lawrence, "Morality and the Novel," *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 175.

At this point it is useful to make some distinctions between masculinity, masculinism and patriarchy. To do this I have drawn upon Arthur Brittan's definitions in *Masculinity and Power* (1989).

Masculinity may be seen as subjective and tenuous. Perceptions of masculinity change over time and may be seen as having reached a crisis in contemporary times due to shifting gender roles and the growing influence of feminism. Masculinism, according to Brittan, may be defined as

the ideology that justifies and naturalizes male domination... masculinism gives primacy to the belief that gender is not negotiable—it does not accept evidence from feminist and other sources that the relationships between men and women are political and constructed nor, for that matter, does it allow for the possibility that lesbianism and homosexuality are not forms of deviance or abnormality, but are alternative forms of gender commitment.²⁰

Patriarchy may be seen as putting that ideology in place within the state. It is a condition in which women, and I will argue, certain types of men, hold little power and must submit to the dominant masculinist ideology.

The Lawrentian male believes that the motivation in his interaction with other men is to lead them beyond their destructiveness to consummation with a woman and with himself. I will argue, though, that there is a hidden agenda: the desire to gain the power which his antagonist enjoys collectively or socially, through an act of that individual's submission. As this is not possible physically, the Lawrentian male develops alternative skills in his struggle for supremacy.

These skills become evident during moments of physical violence and nurturing between men. This reading will emphasize the dynamics

²⁰Arthur Brittan, *Masculinity and Power* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989) 4.

of male power which operate within the opposing or contradictory themes of violence and nurturing. Initially I will direct my attention to the underlying violence in Paul Morel's relationships with his father and Baxter Dawes in *Sons and Lovers*. I will also examine the wrestling match between Gerald and Birkin in *Women in Love* and the sadism which dominates "The Prussian Officer." I will then show how nurturing becomes a representation of power in the sick-bed scenes which occur in *Sons and Lovers*, *Women in Love* and *Aaron's Rod*.

Following this I will demonstrate how Lawrence's bathing scenes between men, usually read by critics as overtly homoerotic, resist being narrowly categorized. By comparing the bathing scenes between George and Cyril in *The White Peacock* and Ramón and Cipriano in *The Plumed Serpent* with those in the wider narrative and visual representations of the period, I will show how Lawrence's bathing scenes operate beyond an established homoerotic genre or tradition.

To conclude, I will examine how these paradigms of male interaction and power act in the Australian context as they occur in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*, the latter co-written with Mollie Skinner. While the effects of World War One and the Australian environment generate new voices and different arguments within the texts, any conclusive, definitive philosophy or ideology is absent.

Although the Lawrentian 'hero' undergoes a series of shifting perspectives in his search for love in male relationships, he never achieves his ideal. This reading attributes that failure in part to an important element that the Lawrentian male fails to confront within himself even when it is apprehended and expressed by other characters, the competing voices within the text. His search for "another kind of love" between men is ultimately a quest for another kind of

power than that which he perceives, yet cannot assume, within the dominant, patriarchal social system which attempts to bind him.

1. Violence

My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true. The intellect is only a bit and a bridle. What do I care about knowledge. All I want is to answer to my blood, direct, without fribbling intervention of mind, or moral, or what not. I conceive a man's body as a kind of flame, like a candle flame, forever upright and yet flowing: and the intellect is just the light that is shed on to the things around.

Letter to Ernest Collings, from 'Villa Igéa', *Villa di Gargnano*, Lago di Garda (Brescia), Italy, 17 January 1913 (*Letters I* 503).

The main episode of the novel deals with the relations of two men, Gerald and Birkin, and is nothing more or less than a shameful glorification of that state of mind which in practice, as every student of crime is aware, leads to conduct which is condemned by the criminal law. The chapter headed 'Gladiatorial' is sheer filth from beginning to end, and I pay Mr Lawrence the compliment of saying that no other novelist than he could have written it. This is the sort of book which in the hands of a boy in his teens might pave the way to unspeakable moral disaster.

W. Charles Pilley, review of *Women in Love* in *John Bull*, 17 September 1921, rpt. H. Coombes, ed., *D.H. Lawrence. A Critical Anthology* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973) 145.

Paul's relationship with his father in *Sons and Lovers* is dominated by rivalry as they struggle for power within the home. This is obvious in the following scene when they are threatening each other violently:

He would at that moment dearly have loved to have a smack at something. Morel was half crouching, fists up, ready to spring.

The young man stood, smiling with his lips.

"—Ussha!" hissed the father, swiping round with a great stroke, just past his son's face. He dared not, even though so close, really touch the young man, but swerved an inch away.

"Right!" said Paul, his eyes upon the side of his father's mouth where in another instant his fist would have hit. He ached for that stroke. But he heard a faint moan from behind. His mother was deadly pale, and dark at the mouth. Morel was dancing up to deliver another blow.

"Father!" said Paul, so that the word rang.

Morel started, and stood to attention.

"Mother!" moaned the boy, 'Mother!'....

"What's a-matter with 'er?" he asked.

"Faint!" replied Paul.

"H'm!"

The elderly man began to unlace his boots. He stumbled off to bed. His last fight was fought in that home. (SL 253)¹

Morel possesses a sensuality and physical strength to which his son is drawn yet he is powerless at work and in his home. In the pit, "[a]uthority was hateful to him, therefore he could only abuse the pit-

¹This violence is also evident in this earlier confrontation between Morel and William:

Paul never forgot coming home from the Band of Hope, one Monday evening, and finding his mother with her eye swollen and discoloured, his father standing on the hearthrug, feet astride, his head down, and William, just home from work, glaring at his father....

William was white to the lips, and his fists were clenched. He waited until the children were silent, watching with children's rage and hate, then he said:

"You coward, you daren't do it when I was in."

But Morel's blood was up. He swung round on his son. William was bigger, but Morel was hard-muscled, and mad with fury.

"Dossn't I?" he shouted. "Dossn't I? Ha'e much more o' thy chelp, my young jockey, an' I'll rattle my fist about thee. Ay, an' I shall that, dost see."

Morel crouched at the knees and showed his fist in an ugly, almost beast-like fashion. William was white with rage.

"Will yer!" he said, quiet and intense. "It'ud be the last time, though."

Morel danced a little nearer, crouching, drawing back his fist to strike. William put his fists ready. A light came into his blue eyes, almost like a laugh. He watched his father. Another word, and the men would have begun to fight. Paul hoped they would. The three children sat pale on the sofa.

"Stop it both of you," cried Mrs Morel, in a hard voice.

"We've had enough for *one* night" (SL 83).

managers" (SL 25). Consequently "he came gradually to have worse and worse stalls, where the coal was thin, and hard to get, and unprofitable" (SL 26). His attempts to find love and to establish some position of authority in his home are thwarted by his wife and later his children. Morel's frustration leads him to perform clumsy acts of brutality for which he is despised by his family and of which he immediately feels shame. Unable to assert power or leadership at home and feeling intellectually inferior and unwanted, Morel retreats to a homosocial environment where he finds equality among his male workmates. Sharing his shame and humiliation, they unite in an effort to escape their dilemma.²

Paul recreates the situation with his father in his relationship with Baxter Dawes. Dawes shares many of Morel's characteristics. His violent nature causes him to be outcast by his wife and society. Paul is drawn to, yet disturbed by Baxter's

brown eyes, full of the consciousness of failure, almost pleading for re-assurance, for someone to re-establish the man in himself, to warm him, to set him up firm again. (SL 446)

This too is Morel's vain plea, first of his wife then of his children. Paul discovers with Baxter a consummation through violence in which he was frustrated with his father.

The juxtaposition of violence and sexual imagery combines the two instinctual elements in which Paul believes it is possible to prove his

²See Richard Wasson, "Class and the Vicissitudes of the Male Body in Works by D.H. Lawrence," *DHLR* 14. 3 (1981). Wasson examines the miner's strike as a collective reaction by these men to reassert their masculinity which they perceive as downgraded or thwarted by their wives and the colliery authorities. He refers to Sylvia Sklar's following observation in her study *The Plays of D.H. Lawrence* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1975): "Masculinity (in the women's eyes) becomes equated with a capacity to work and do jobs well. Wages are seen by wives as the share of the owner's profits the men are fit to earn" (93). Wasson continues: "The men, on the other hand, subject to difficult and dangerous conditions of labor, working worn-out seams in the mines, and subject to company policies that create unsafe environments and lower wages, feel themselves ill-treated in general and by their wives in particular. Often enough strikes...become the only avenue by which these workers can manifest their masculinity" (298).

manhood. Hence, the violence between Paul and Baxter is described using sexual imagery and becomes a contest and consummation of masculine power.³ In the following scene Paul's superior instinctual ability is emphasised when he fights Dawes:

Paul went down with him. Pure instinct brought his hands to the man's neck, and before Dawes, in frenzy and agony, could wrench him free, he had got his fists twisted in the scarf and his knuckles dug in the throat of the other man. He was a pure instinct, without reason or feeling. His body, hard and wonderful in itself, cleaved against the struggling body of the other man. Not a muscle in him relaxed. He was quite unconscious, only his body had taken upon itself to kill this other man. For himself, he had neither feeling nor reason. He lay pressed hard against his adversary, his body adjusting itself to its one pure purpose in choking the other man,....

Then suddenly he relaxed, full of wonder and misgiving. Dawes had been yielding. Morel felt his body flame with pain, as he realized what he was doing. He was all bewildered. Dawes' struggles suddenly renewed themselves in a furious spasm. Paul's hands were wrenched, torn out of the scarf in which they were knotted, and he was flung away, helpless. He heard the horrid sound of the other's gasping, but he lay stunned. Then still dazed, he felt the blows of the other's feet, and lost consciousness.

Dawes, grunting with pain like a beast, was kicking the prostrate body of his rival. (*SL* 410)

Lawrence explains that "the elemental man in each had met" (*SL* 424).

Paul is "pure instinct" and nearly succeeds in killing Baxter. To clarify this point, it is necessary to differentiate between Lawrence's use of the terms intellect and instinct in his fiction. In Lawrence's work a superior, instinctual knowledge is in binary opposition with the idea of intellect or "will."

³For a further analysis of the relationship between Paul Morel and Baxter Dawes and the function of the wrestling match see David Ashe Hogge, "Male-Male Bonding: A Study of *Adam Bede*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, and *Sons and Lovers*," PhD. diss., University of Kentucky, 1983.

Lawrence later refined this model through the influence of Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and *Totemism and Exogamy*.⁴ In the idea of the totem he found a correlative for what he saw as instinct or "blood consciousness." This influence is evident in a letter written to Bertrand Russell, 8 December 1915 in which Lawrence states:

there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and the nerve-system: there is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness, which depends on the eye as its source or connector. There is the blood-consciousness, with the sexual connection, holding the same relation as the eye, in seeing, holds to the mental consciousness. One lives, knows, and has one's being in the blood, without any reference to nerves and brain. This is one half of life, belonging to the darkness. And the tragedy of this our life, and of your life, is that the mental and nerve consciousness exerts a tyranny over the blood-consciousness, and that your will has gone completely over to the mental consciousness, and is engaged in the destruction of your blood-being or blood-consciousness, the final liberating of the one, which is only death in result.

Lawrence attributes sexuality and motherhood to this "blood-consciousness" in the same letter:

when I take a woman, then the blood-percept is supreme, my blood-knowing is overwhelming. There is a transmission, I don't know of what, between her blood and mine, in the act of connection. So that afterwards, even if she goes away, the blood-consciousness persists between us, when the mental consciousness is suspended; and I am formed then by my blood-consciousness, not by my mind or nerves at all.

Similarly in the transmission from the blood of the mother to the embryo in the womb, there goes the whole *blood* consciousness. And when they say a mental image is sometimes transmitted from the mother to the embryo, this is not the *mental* image, but the *blood-image*...And this is the origin of the totem...blood knowledge comes either through the mother or through the sex—so that dreams at puberty are as good an origin

⁴Sir James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd ed. 12 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1911-15) and *Totemism and Exogamy: A Treatise on Certain Early Forms of Superstition and Society*, 4 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1910).

of the totem as the percept of the pregnant woman. (*Letters II* 470-1)⁵

This ideology is developed through Lawrence's use of "the carved figure of the negro woman in labour" (*WL* 78) in *Women in Love*.⁶ In *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* these ideas encompass the cosmos and the collective duality of the universe and its relation to Earth and humanity.

For the purposes of this discussion, however, it can be shown that intellect or what Lawrence often refers to as "will" are attained through an individual's submission to that culture's dominant ideology. This may occur with that individual's entry into the symbolic order, for example, through the education system, the military, industry or the clergy. It is a wholly conscious and rational knowledge which is gained through interaction and competition in male-dominated society. In his essay "Blessed Are the Powerful" (1925), Lawrence defines intellect as "one of the most curious instruments of the psyche. But like the will, it is only an instrument." Intellect or "will" in itself does not yield power. As an example Lawrence argues:

A man may have a strong will, an iron will, as we say, and yet be a stupid mechanical instrument, useful simply as an instrument, without any *power* at all.

An instrument, even an iron one, has no power. The power has to be put into it.

He continues: "Power comes to us, we know not how, from beyond. Whereas our will is our own."⁷

⁵There is also a discussion of this letter in Paul Delany, *D.H. Lawrence's Nightmare. The Writer and His Circle in the Years of the Great War* (New York: Basic Books, 1978) 178-80.

⁶The Cambridge edition of *Women in Love* uses Lawrence's original title for Chapter Seven "Fetish." This title appeared in proofs dating from October 1920 to November 1921 when the title "Totem" was substituted. See also *WL* Explanatory notes 539 and *WL* Introduction xl. In the Penguin edition of *Women in Love* the figure is referred to as a "savage woman in labour"-see D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (London: Penguin, 1985) 87.

⁷D.H. Lawrence, "Blessed Are the Powerful," *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, ed. Michael Herbert (1925; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 321.

For Lawrence, power is generated by primitive, yet superior instinctual knowledge. While possessed by men, it is usually associated in his work with women. Problems occur when women like Mrs Morel in *Sons and Lovers* and Mrs Brangwen in *The Rainbow* appear to value the intellectual, masculine aspects over the instinctual, feminine which they neglect in themselves and perceive as weakness in their husbands.

Lawrence attributes the instinctual qualities which his heroes employ to a feminine dimension. This becomes a major source of male power absorbed through man's knowledge of woman and woman's submission to man. Kate Leslie acknowledges this in *The Plumed Serpent* when she questions and resists

[t]he Will of God! She began to understand that once fearsome phrase. At the centre of all things, a dark, momentous Will sending out its terrific rays and vibrations, like some vast octopus. And at the other end of the vibration, men, created men, erect in the dark potency, answering Will with will, like gods or demons.

It was wonderful too. But where was woman, in this terrible interchange of will? Truly only a subservient, instrumental thing: the soft stone on which the man sharpened the knife of his relentless volition: the soft lode-stone to magnetize his blade of steel and keep all its molecules alive in the electric flow.

Ah yes, it was wonderful. It was, as Ramón said, a manifestation, a manifestation of the Godhead. But to the Godhead as a sheer and awful Will she could not respond. (PS 387-8)

In "Fantasia of the Unconscious" (1922) Lawrence offers the following advise to men:

fight for your life, men. Fight your wife out of her own self-conscious preoccupation with herself. Batter her out of it till she's stunned. Drive her back into her own true mode. Rip all her nice superimposed modern-woman and wonderful-creature garb off her. Reduce her once more to a naked Eve, and send the apple flying.

Make her yield to her own real unconscious self, and absolutely stamp on the self that she's got in her head. Drive her forcibly back, back into her own true unconscious.⁸

⁸D.H. Lawrence, *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (New York: Seltzer, 1922) 284.

Lawrence's stance is ambiguous, given that he relates instinct to the unconscious and non-rational yet suggests that this unconscious knowledge, associated with women, may be harnessed and used in a conscious and manipulative way by men. Ironically, according to Lawrence's argument, consummation of male power through violence or sexuality is derived consciously by men from the unconscious in women. The Lawrentian male then bands together with other, physically stronger men in order to win back the possession of power in relationships and gain valid leadership in society beyond mere bullying and destructiveness.

Lawrence's women, understandably, resent their role in this scheme. Ursula, in *Women in Love*, asks Birkin "Why aren't I enough?" She continues: "You are enough for me. I don't want anybody else but you. Why isn't it the same with you?" (*WL* 481). Tanny Lilly in *Aaron's Rod* and Harriet Somers in *Kangaroo* also voice their objections. Tanny suggests to Lilly after he is punched by Jim Bricknell that "[y]ou shouldn't play at little Jesus, coming so near to people, wanting to help them" (*AR* 85). Similarly, Harriet considers her husband's interaction with men as

only something you delude yourself about. And then you'll come a cropper, and fall back on me. Just as it always is. You fall back on me, and I'm expected to like it. I'm good enough to fall back on, when you've made a fool of yourself with a lot of tuppenny little people, imagining you're doing something in the world of *men*.
(*K* 71)

Once women have been used as a source of instinctual knowledge, the hierarchical systems of power within patriarchal society are addressed by the Lawrentian hero. Importantly, Lawrence does not so much want to prevent male dominated systems such as the legal, religious, industrial and military spheres entering into private behaviour and morality, but to alter their structures into models in

which his heroes could dominate. While his premise is one of changing the structure of dominance in society from a so-called masculine derived, intellectual and physical basis to what he conceives as a feminine-derived instinctual knowledge, the balance of power remains firmly in the hands of men, shifting notably to the Lawrentian male.

Hence, there is a dual purpose at work in Lawrence's' perception of instinct. There is the drawing of instinctual knowledge, which becomes power, from women, and the employment of this female-generated power upon rival men. Given the ambiguous nature of this plan, the advances of the Lawrentian hero are frustrated by the resistance of the men he encounters, thus furthering what Lawrence saw as the collective destruction of modern civilization.

Gerald Critch, the industrial magnate in *Women in Love*, represents this civilization. David Cavitch recognizes this in his appraisal of Birkin's grief over Gerald's death at the conclusion of the novel:

His bitter lament indirectly eulogizes Gerald as the representative modern man, as he appears to most readers and critics—the ablest, fairest member of a society in which all men are doomed by their common limitation.⁹

F. R Leavis addresses the issue thus:

The question-mark on which with characteristic Laurentian integrity the book ends, regards the implications of Birkin's failure with Gerald. For the relation with Gerald was to have been an essential condition of a successful 'polarity'. Contemplating the frozen corpse of his friend, Birkin is left with nothing to disguise from him the question that faces him and Ursula: the question of the kind of success possible in marriage, and in life, for a pair that have cut themselves finally adrift. The society in which, if they had a place, their place would be, represents the civilization that has been diagnosed in Gerald.¹⁰

⁹David Cavitch, *D.H. Lawrence and the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969) 64.

¹⁰F.R. Leavis, *D.H. Lawrence. Novelist* (1955; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968) 188-89. See also Anne Wright, *Literature of Crisis, 1910-22*. Howards End, Heartbreak House, Women in

It is useful at this point to address the debate between John Worthen and George Donaldson regarding Gerald's death at the conclusion of *Women in Love*. Worthen asserts that

we need to realise that Gerald is a focus for Birkin of his need for more than a single intimacy, his need for 'other people', his desire for 'another kind of love'; it is something the novel has dramatised, not something it has reached a conclusion about or is offering as a truth.

The novel as a whole, in fact, is asking what kind of freedom—or individuality—is possible for a man like Birkin; his attachment to Gerald has the force of a necessary, if unwanted, bond.¹¹

Donaldson dissents:

Birkin's need for more than a single intimacy — for more than Ursula — is a need, not for other people, but for another single intimacy — for Gerald. For Gerald to be all men to Birkin is not the same thing as his being for Birkin a focus for his need for other people.¹²

If we read Gerald's role as representative of the collective destructiveness of modern civilisation the debate may be simplified. Birkin's need for Gerald correlates with his desire to lead modern civilisation away from what he perceives as inevitable destruction. Gerald's denials and his death represent the impossibility of that mission. It also exposes a further dilemma: the necessary exclusivity in Birkin's relationship with Ursula. It is this "*exclusiveness* of married love" (WL 352) to which he objects.

To read Ursula's objection to Birkin's involvement with Gerald as sexual jealousy or resentment further confuses the issue. Instead, her objection may be read as an acknowledgment of Birkin's futile attempt to save a civilisation intent upon self-destruction. It is this futility rather than any sexual connotation to which Ursula refers as "an

Love and The Waste Land (London: Macmillan, 1984) in which she states: "the death of Gerald—symbolically encapsulates the fate of a civilization" (148).

¹¹John Worthen, *D.H. Lawrence and the Idea of the Novel* (London: Macmillan, 1979) 96.

¹²George Donaldson, "'Men in Love'? D.H. Lawrence, Rupert Birkin and Gerald Critch," *D.H. Lawrence: Centenary Essays*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1986) 48-49.

obstinacy, a theory, a perversity" (WL 481) in Birkin. This interpretation is supported by Ursula's early realization that Gerald's primal instincts are inherently destructive. Having killed his brother in a childhood accident he is depicted as Cain and Ursula perceptively remarks to Gudrun:

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

"I couldn't pull the trigger of the emptiest gun in the world, not if someone were looking down the barrel. One instinctively doesn't do it—one can't." (WL 49)

Aligning Gerald with Cain also emphasizes the destructive role he plays in society as the inheritor of Victorian concepts of masculinity. This is gained through his active involvement in patriarchal symbolic structures, for example the military or industry. The Edwardian ethos of manliness is critiqued in novels like *Father and Son* by Edmund Gosse and Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*. Of substantial importance were the ideas of sociologist Edward Carpenter. While Emile Delavenay's study *D.H. Lawrence and Edward Carpenter. A Study in Edwardian Transition* fails to provide conclusive evidence of influence¹³ I do acknowledge the connection Anthea Trodd establishes that

Carpenter's importance as mentor to Forster and many others, including Lawrence, lay in his rejection of the Victorian concept of

¹³Emile Delavenay, *D.H. Lawrence and Edward Carpenter. A Study in Edwardian Transition* (London: Heinemann, 1971). See also Margaret Bolsterli, "Studies in Context: The Homosexual Ambience of Twentieth Century Literary Culture," *DHLR* 6 (1973): 71-85. Bolsterli's review of Delavenay's study asserts the following: "the fact remains that there is not one scrap of external evidence that Lawrence ever read a word of Carpenter's work; he does not mention him anywhere and none of his contemporaries mentions his discussing him at any time, a strange state of affairs if Carpenter was as influential on Lawrence's thinking as Delavenay thinks he was" (72). This view is qualified by Bolsterli's acknowledgment that "[e]ven without personal contact with Carpenter, it is inconceivable that Lawrence would not have been familiar with his ideas and life-style since they were so much a part of the intellectual climate of the time" (73). Paul Delany however, reveals that Lawrence intended to send Carpenter a pamphlet advertising *The Signature* magazine with which he was involved in 1915. Referring to G.M. Lacy, *An Analytical Calendar of the Letters of D.H. Lawrence* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1971) 865, Delany notes that Lawrence wrote about Carpenter: "he is not in my line. But he may give the paper to some young creature" (Delany 143).

manliness. His writings traced the connections between the way in which the manly ethos rejected feeling as appropriate to masculinity, and the oppression of women and the working class by the male ruling class who endorsed that ethos.¹⁴

Sheila Macleod's view that the Cain allusion in "Gerald is, like homosexuality itself, unnatural, dangerous and accursed" is too simplistic.¹⁵ It is more productive to compare Gerald's destructiveness with the ideas of Italian Futurists such as Marinetti. The Futurists combine Nietzschean ideals of masculinity with a belief in the fusion of instinct with newly emerging forces of industry and the machine.¹⁶ Birkin and Gerald's relationship is symbolised by a wrestling match which, like Paul's fight with Baxter, incorporates sexual imagery in the contest between Gerald's physical strength and Birkin's instinct. Gerald, an industrial magnate and master of machinery and men, literally fuses with Birkin who likewise

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 subjection, always seizing with some rapid necromantic foreknowledge every motion of the other flesh, converting and counteracting it, playing upon the limbs and trunk of Gerald like some hard wind. It was as if Birkin's whole physical intelligence interpenetrated into Gerald's body, as if his fine, sublimated energy entered into the flesh of the fuller man, like some potency, casting a fine net, a prison, through the muscles into the very depths of Gerald's physical being. (WL 270)

The Futurists would have considered that Birkin's instinctual qualities confer upon him an inwardness which they align with an outmoded femininity.¹⁷ Yet Lawrence breaks significantly from this

¹⁴Anthea Trodd, *A Reader's Guide to Edwardian Literature* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) 58.

¹⁵Sheila Macleod, *Lawrence's Men and Women* (London: Paladin Grafton, 1987) 47.

¹⁶See Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Marinetti: Selected Writings*, trans. and ed. R.W. Flint (London: Secker and Warburg, 1972), U. Appollonio, *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973) and Lawrence, *Letters II* 182-84 regarding the influence of Marinetti on *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*.

¹⁷See Peter Nicholls, "Futurism, Gender and Theories of Postmodernity," *Textual Practice* 3. 2 (1989): 202-22.

belief through the triumph of Birkin's feminine-perceived instinctual power over Gerald's overt and Nietzschean Will-to-Power masculinity. The ideal, for both participants, is a transcendence of the self through a symbolic fusion, instinctual man and man of the machine. Yet this remains unfulfilled. Jack Lindsay suggests that

Marinetti provided the clear point of contact with the contemporary human condition which helped Lawrence to bring his general repudiations of the system and his personal experience of the dehumanizing forces into a coherent and dynamic system, at once moral and artistic. Marinetti himself was balanced on the edge of the abyss, Lawrence felt, pointing to both the way out and the way of deeper involvement with evil; but his strong reaction to the essence of the actual state of things, as opposed to what the dead tradition pretended that state of things to be, was what Lawrence was able to take over and transmute to his own needs and purposes.¹⁸

Speculation among critics however, continues to generate interpretations of homosexuality as the dominant motivation in the wrestling match between Gerald and Birkin. These interpretations often rely upon the following scene:

There were long spaces of silence between their words. The wrestling had some deep meaning to them—an unfinished meaning.

"We are mentally, spiritually intimate, therefore we should be more or less physically intimate too—it is more whole."

"Certainly it is," said Gerald. Then he laughed pleasantly, adding: "It's rather wonderful to me." He stretched out his arms handsomely.

"Yes," said Birkin. "—I don't know why one should have to justify oneself."

"No."

The two men began to dress.

¹⁸Jack Lindsay, "The Impact of Modernism on Lawrence," *Paintings of D.H. Lawrence* ed. Mervyn Levy (London: Cory, Adams and Mackay, 1964) 44. While an examination of the influence of the Italian Futurists and Nietzsche on Lawrence is beyond the scope of this study some work has been conducted in this field including Emile Delavenay "Lawrence and the Futurists," *The Modernists. Studies in a Literary Phenomenon* ed. Lawrence B. Gamache and Ian S. MacNiven (New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 1987) 140-62 and Paul Eggert, "Lawrence and the Futurists: the Breakthrough in His Art," *Meridian* 1. 1 (1982) 21-32.

"I think also that you are beautiful," said Birkin to Gerald, "and that is enjoyable too. One should enjoy what is given."

"You think I am beautiful—how do you mean, physically?" asked Gerald, his eyes glistening.

"Yes. You have a northern kind of beauty, like light refracted from snow—and a beautiful, plastic form. Yes, that is there to enjoy as well. We should enjoy everything."

Gerald laughed in his throat, and said:

"That's certainly one way of looking at it.—I can say this much, I feel better. It has certainly helped me.—Is this the Brüderschaft you wanted?"

"Perhaps. Do you think this pledges anything?"

"I don't know," laughed Gerald.

"At any rate, one feels freer and more open now—and that is what we want."

"Certainly," said Gerald. (WL 272-3)

It is too limiting though to read ritual scenes between men in Lawrence's work as solely homoerotic. Similarly, reading them against the accompanying heterosexual relationships obscures their intended purpose: to transcend sexual involvement. Yet Anne Wright argues that in *Women in Love* the "heterosexual relationships are interwoven, at each stage of development, with the less overtly sexual progress of the 'Man to Man' love."¹⁹

Like Wright, many critics fail to recognize that the ritualistic content in Gerald and Birkin's relationship transcends sexuality. These ritual scenes exist and should be evaluated outside the perimeters of Birkin and Gerald's separate, sexual relationships with women. While John W. Haegert suggests that separating the male friendships in Lawrence's works "does them surprisingly little violence,"²⁰ his opinion that "the relationship of Birkin and Gerald closely parallels the deepening intimacy of Birkin and Ursula"²¹ confuses the issue. Similarly, John Edge

¹⁹Wright 130.

²⁰John W. Haegert, "Brothers and Lovers. D.H. Lawrence and the Theme of Friendship," *Southern Review* 8. 1 (1975) 39.

²¹Haegert 43.

posits in his reply to Haegert's argument that "the theme of male comradeship cannot be seen as distinct from Lawrence's treatment of heterosexual relationship, and of women."²² In the case of Paul and Baxter this is quite correct as there are no ritual scenes between them and their contact revolves very much around the possession of Clara. Gerald and Birkin's wrestling, however, transcends their involvement with women and encompasses other issues such as Birkin's concern about the fate of modern civilization.

Ritual scenes such as the wrestling scene and those I will address later which occur in *The White Peacock*, *Aaron's Rod* and *The Plumed Serpent* deliberately stress the exclusivity of male contact. To read them continually against the co-existent relationships with women obscures that purpose and creates unnecessary confusion. Yet it is also misleading to consider Birkin and Gerald's relationship as merely a haven from their interaction with women. It supplements their relationships with women without intentionally attempting to mirror or replace them, although this does occur in the nurturing scene between Lilly and Aaron in *Aaron's Rod* which I will discuss later.

Kate Millett's view that *Women in Love* "is actually the story of Birkin's unrequited love for Gerald, the real erotic centre in the novel"²³ does not allow for the possibility that the male relationships are transcendental. Simone de Beauvoir acknowledges the transcendental function of male relationships in Lawrence's works while highlighting the problems confronted by the women who are left behind. She argues that man

is intent upon aims and ends, he incarnates transcendence; woman is absorbed in her sentiment, she is all inwardness; she is dedicated to immanence. Not only does man play the active role in

²²John Edge, "D.H. Lawrence and the theme of Comradeship," *Southern Review* 9. 1 (1976) 34.

²³Millett 265.

the sexual life, but he is active also in going beyond it; he is rooted in the sexual world, but he makes his escape from it; woman remains shut up in it.²⁴

While the ritual scenes between men are always followed by a return to women in Lawrence's works, those women are not afforded a similar opportunity to establish same-sex intimacy and must rely solely upon a man for fulfillment. Nor should women develop the Lawrentian perceived masculine qualities of intellect. When they do Lawrence complains of their "will", such as Hermione's "persistent, almost insane will!" (WL 88) in *Women in Love*. Deborah Core acknowledges this injustice:

On the surface, Lawrence's treatment of his fictional women seems contradictory. He showed, especially in *The Rainbow*, that he understood women's grievances; but he saw those grievances as symptoms of a larger disorder in a distressed world. He offered women only one real solution: they must reject this world, find a worthy man, and make with him a new world, unsullied by the evils of industry, artificial class structure, and over-education. Men may live the new life alone or in partnership with other men, but women may not.²⁵

Critical responses to Birkin's sexuality are often influenced by Birkin's assertions throughout the "Prologue" to *Women in Love* such as his "passionate desire to have near him some man he saw, to exchange intimacy, to unburden himself of love to this new beloved" (WL Appendix II 503).²⁶ The language suggests, quite wrongly for Lawrence's purposes, that Birkin harbours known homosexual tendencies and is consciously seeking homosexual experience. This misapprehension often forms the foundation upon which critics support their interpretation of homosexuality in the ritual wrestling scene

²⁴de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* 229.

²⁵Deborah Core, "The Closed Door: Love Between Women in the Works of D.H. Lawrence," *DHLR* 11 (1978): 129.

²⁶See Berend van der Veen, "Male Leadership in D.H. Lawrence," *D.H. Lawrence 1885-1930 A Celebration*, ed. Andrew Cooper (Nottingham: D.H. Lawrence Society, 1985): 90-91.

between Birkin and Gerald in *Women in Love*. This argument is evident in Scott Sanders' appraisal of what he terms

the controversial naked wrestling scene of "Gladiatorial." Even without the information provided by the "Prologue," this scene appears explicitly sexual, with the two men "fusing," "penetrating," "joining."²⁷

Earl Ingersoll goes further:

Curiously it is Gerald who proposes that they wrestle in the nude. The description of the ensuing encounter could hardly be more homoerotic in its extensive description of activity similar to sexual intercourse.²⁸

Nigel Kelsey, however, interprets the wrestling scene as a "mythical readerly invitation" which

works to comfort and reassure the reader by attempting to structure the scene in terms of a 'natural' sexuality: if the signifier is two young white men in interlocking embrace, we are left in little doubt that the signs of language from which the signifiers emanate are largely operative in the heterosexual realm—traditionally wrestling serves to confirm overt masculinity rather than a dubious sexuality. When the signified of the scene posits a purposeful mixture of non-homosexual friendship and ambiguous erotica, therefore, it is the reassuring heterosexual realm of wrestling which ultimately supports the dominant signification; an expansion of sexual relations between and within the sexes giving a new dimension to transcendence of which bloodbrotherhood is a part, the emergence of sexual difference and diversity in a new enlightened age.

The mythical invitation asks us to read the composition of ambiguous erotica then through a heterosexual filter; a filter ever capable of expanding to meet a range of sexual needs.²⁹

Lawrence's insistence upon men developing their own symbolic rituals read through this "heterosexual filter" confuses his purpose. In this way he prefigures the problematics within the contemporary yet

²⁷Sanders 126.

²⁸Earl Ingersoll, "The Failure of Bloodbrotherhood in Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Lawrence's *Women in Love*," *The Midwest Quarterly. A Journal of Contemporary Thought* 30. 4 (1989): 473.

²⁹Nigel Kelsey, *D.H.Lawrence: Sexual Crisis* (London: MacMillan, 1991) 175.

still unfocused concerns of Men's Studies.³⁰ While he confronts the difficulties men find in developing intimacy, given the restrictions and conventions of society, he seems determined to endow them with symbolic rituals which invoke the conflicts between men and women. Hence, they appear to inherit similar conflicts instead of transcending them. While the intention exists for male relationships to be transcendental, they in effect become mere parodies of men's relationships with women when they are consistently evaluated against them.

This marks an essential problem with Lawrence criticism and indeed the whole field of Men's Studies and its evaluation of the multiplicities of male relationships and roles. It also reveals the dilemma faced by the author. His attempts to define an ideal relationship between men is undermined by the dominant, available discourse, the sexual imagery he borrows from heterosexual relationships. Through his use of ritualistic scenes related through heterosexual imagery, Lawrence inadvertently bestows upon his male relationships the problems and misapprehensions associated with the relationships between his men and women.

Lawrence's dilemma was compounded by the fact that most of the power struggles which take place between his male characters occur within the unconscious realm, not within the intellectual, rational, conscious world in which they work and act. Randall Stevenson, discussing Lawrence and modernism, defines the author's problem as being

able to go only so far in communicating experience beyond thought, and to do no more than gesture awkwardly at what lies

³⁰See for example: Jonathan Dollimore *Sexual Dissidence. Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) and Harry Brod, ed., *The Making of Masculinities. The New Men's Studies* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987).

beyond. Certain impulses — physical passions especially — lead not only beyond thought, but beyond what can be conventionally rendered in language: an inevitable problem for modernist writing, with its deepening fascination for the mind within.³¹

By drawing upon the conscious world to dramatise his characters' unconscious dilemmas, he attempts to add a further, symbolic significance to their everyday life and encounters. While Lawrence's use of symbolic sexual imagery in the male rituals is confusing it does enable him to suggest that an accompanying, unconscious significance exists which need not be necessarily considered sexual. This profoundly influences his characters' conscious experiences and our interpretation of them. Hence, the emphasis of these experiences is effectively removed from the conscious realm, of which his characters are aware and over which they have some control, to the unconscious of which they are not fully aware and by which they are consistently confused.

Another example of Lawrence's use of ritual can be seen when Birkin is confronted in *Women in Love* with "the problem of love and eternal conjunction between two men" (WL 206). To establish this bond Lawrence favours the drawing and exchange of blood. This may be read as an alternative to the symbolic sexual union between men and women. Birkin suggests this alternative in his following conversation with Gerald:

"You know how the old German knights used to swear a Blutbrüderschaft,"....

"Make a little wound in their arms, and rub each other's blood into the cut?" said Gerald.

"Yes—and swear to be true to each other, of one blood, all their lives.—That is what we ought to do. No wounds, that is obsolete.—But we ought to swear to love each other, you and I, implicitly, and perfectly, finally, without any possibility of going back on it." (WL 206-7)

³¹Randall Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction. An Introduction* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992) 30-31.

Scott Sanders suggests that "[b]ehind the notion of *Blutbrüderschaft* lurks the less mysterious reality of homosexual love which he was unwilling or unable to acknowledge."³² Sanders' evaluation of the scene however, fails to address an important point. The Lawrentian male hopes that through the melting together of two men, one complete man will emerge with the best combined qualities. It is this intermingling that Birkin wants symbolised through a blood-intimacy or *Blutbrüderschaft*.³³ Charles L Ross suggests that Lawrence "seems to have chosen the foreign term because he found the English connotations of 'homosexual' both too narrow and socially inadmissible. Casual homosexual relations were as repugnant to him as heterosexual promiscuity."³⁴

When Gerald resists Birkin's offer of a *Blutbrüderschaft*, Birkin considers him

doomed, limited. This strange sense of fatality in Gerald, as if he were limited to one form of existence, one knowledge, one activity, a sort of fatal halfness, which to himself seemed wholeness, always overcame Birkin after their moments of passionate approach, and filled him with a sort of contempt, of boredom. It was the insistence on the limitation which so bored Birkin in Gerald, Gerald could never fly away from himself, in real indifferent gaiety. He had a clog, a sort of monomania. (*WL* 207)

Gerald's resistance represents not so much an abhorrence toward Birkin's advance but rather an inability to express his feelings for Birkin in words. Like Lawrence, Gerald is inhibited by the language available

³²Sanders 126.

³³While Lawrence maintains the ritual scene as exclusively male in the novel he refers in a letter to John Middleton-Murry and Katherine Mansfield 8 March 1916: "No more quarrels and quibbles. Let it be agreed for ever. I am Blutbruder: a *Blutbrüderschaft* between us all" (*Letters* II 570).

³⁴Ross 177. He continues his argument thus: "As the long and fruitless controversy about exactly what kind of sex Lawrence is depicting in certain scenes in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* should have made clear, Lawrence is seldom explicit on this subject. He is always less concerned with which parts of the body are in contact than with the range of sensual and emotional response in any relationship...Similarly, when describing the friendship of Birkin and Gerald, Lawrence is more concerned with the psychological 'basis' for love between men than with physiological specification" (181).

to him. David J. Gordon notes this parallel between the author and his character in which "speech and, still more, writing imply a permanent gulf between persons, yet they are an inescapable and powerful means of attaining such a communication."³⁵

Gerald consistently fails to find words which communicate his meaning. He answers Birkin's request to participate in the ritualistic Blutbrüderschaft with the bland reply: "We'll leave it till I understand it better" (*WL* 207). This implies neither assent nor refusal but an inability to commit himself, in language, to a symbolic connection with Birkin which he cannot fully understand. Indeed, this confusion is shared by critics and readers alike, puzzled by Birkin's intent in the ritual. Birkin, though, is adept with language and tends to verbalise even his innermost feelings. Here, therefore, he is presented as Gerald's superior making language another advantage in the Lawrentian male's struggle for superiority.³⁶

The mingling of blood and the wrestling ritual in *Women in Love* serve as symbols of male unification beyond the sexual contact which Lawrence saw as inappropriate between men. Mark Spilka describes the situation thus:

the wrestling bout in *Women in Love*...functions as part of a general step beyond marriage to some further living relationship; second, it functions as the spontaneous pledge to keep that relationship alive; and third, it involves an actual physical communion, between self and self, or soul and soul, and therefore functions as a mutual realization of the beloved. One can legitimately protest, of course, that the scene at hand goes far

³⁵David J Gordon, "Sex and Language in D.H. Lawrence," *Twentieth Century Literature* 27. 4 (1981) 369.

³⁶See Laurence Lerner, "Lawrence and the Feminists," *D.H. Lawrence: Centenary Essays* ed. Mara Kalnins (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1986), Lerner notes that Birkin's linguistic skill helps him in his interaction with women and prevents his suffering the fate of the young man he and Ursula meet in Chapter 26 of *Women in Love*: "Birkin asserts his continuing need for freedom with articulateness and dignity, and can persuade Ursula to accept it, at least in part. The young man has no such ability, and is helpless before the firm possessiveness of the woman" (86).

beyond these functions, and that Lawrence has blown it up out of all proportion to man's actual experience—that he has overstressed, in other words, man's capacity for physical, non-sexual communion with his fellow man, and has therefore left himself exposed to honest (and dishonest) criticism. But he has only done so as part of a more general attempt to place *Blutbrüderschaft* itself upon an ideal pedestal—and even here he has incorporated his fault into the very body of his work, and has made it part of a *problem posed*, rather than a problem solved.³⁷

These scenes may also be seen as a cleansing effect in which the best qualities of male opposites are combined to create a male ideal for the good of humanity. This is rather like Lawrence's use of Apocalyptic fire imagery. The Phoenix arises single and complete from the ashes and, like the mingling of blood, can be seen as a kind of male birth. The male individual arises complete with all the elements of masculinity he previously lacked.

In *Sons and Lovers* fire remains a symbol of masculinity throughout and is often invoked in scenes depicting Morel. It is also a pivot around which male authority is measured in the home. When Barker and Wesson arrive for the weeks reckoning "[t]hey could not be induced to come on to the hearth. The hearth is sacred to the family" (SL 238). When Wesson is persuaded to approach the fire "[h]e rose and went awkwardly. He sat in Morel's arm-chair awkwardly. It was too great a familiarity. But the fire made him blissfully happy" (SL 238). The fire also symbolises Morel's position in the home so that "Morel, as master of the house, sat in his arm-chair with his back to the hot fire. The two butties had cooler seats" (SL 238).

Conversely in Lawrence's early play *A Collier's Friday Night* (circa 1909, first published 1934) the fire serves as a symbol of the father's diminishing authority in the house. Much emphasis is placed on the

³⁷Mark Spilka, *The Love Ethic of D.H. Lawrence* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1955) 161-62.

positioning of the table in front of the fire when the father arrives home. In the stage directions

The man gets hold of the table and pulls it nearer the fire, away from his daughter.

NELLIE : Why can't you leave the table where it was! We don't want it stuck on top of the fire.

FATHER : Ah dun, if you dunna.

[He drags up his arm-chair and sits down at the table full in front of the fire. 38

When the butties arrive for the weeks reckoning the father's position is not augmented and the three men together "*sit at the table, on the side of the fire.*"³⁹ The fire, therefore, becomes a focal point of male privilege and position in the home.

Similarly, the consumption of food also illustrates this point. Morel's "last fight" (SL 253) in the household, detailed at the beginning of this chapter, is provoked by his eating "a piece of pork-pie...It was what Mrs Morel had bought for her son" (SL 252). This issue is raised in *The Collier's Friday Night* when the father eats some grapes intended for the son and consequently complains to his wife "you begrudge me every bit I put in my mouth."⁴⁰ As in *Sons and Lovers* a violent argument is narrowly averted between the son and his father following this incident.

A detail raised in John Worthen's recent biography of Lawrence illustrates the importance of food, the position of the father at the table and his role as provider in these scenes. Lawrence was clearly influenced by the conviction of his uncle, Walter Lawrence, for the manslaughter of his coal-miner son Walter Junior on 18 March 1900 at Ilkeston. Their argument, which resulted in Walter Senior throwing a carving steel at his son causing his death some days later, was provoked

³⁸D.H. Lawrence, *A Collier's Friday Night* (London: Secker, 1934) 10.

³⁹Lawrence, *A Collier's Friday Night* 25.

⁴⁰Lawrence, *A Collier's Friday Night* 71.

by the son's displeasure upon finding that the father had left him no eggs to eat. This was exacerbated by the father's drinking habits which led to his irregular employment and diminishing earning capacity. Yet this incident, as Worthen points out, provides

a unique insight...into the kind of quarrels that happened in a miner's kitchen. The row between father and son was about position and priority, about earning and money; about who earned what, and what rights this entailed....

The quarrel naturally took place in the confined space of the miner's kitchen, where the whole large family lived; where those who sat and ate and read the newspaper were occupying the places wanted by others...The hierarchy of the room creates oppositions; quarrels about who sits where and also quarrels about role and earning power and status.⁴¹

Worthen concludes:

The quarrel at Ilkeston, then, dreadful as it must have been, was in a way a time-honoured one between the older male generations in a working-class environment of rigid priorities and status; one in which quarrels and violence were never very far away.⁴²

Authority is upheld through physical violence. In the wider, social sphere, Gerald uses force to maintain his authority. Even as a child during the miners' strike he "longed to go with the soldiers to shoot the men" (*WL* 226). A further differentiation must therefore be made between Lawrence's concepts of intellect and physical strength.

Morel possesses physical force without intellect and can be annihilated by his son and wife's ability to expose the essential nullity and futility of his purely physical and sensual existence. Mrs Morel initially mistakes Walter's physical strength for the power she believes, as a woman, she lacks. As a girl, her young suitor John Field laments his

⁴¹Worthen 45.

⁴²Worthen 48. Worthen continues, however, to illustrate that the incident between the Ilkeston Lawrences emphasizes their difference from the Eastwood Lawrences who "were verbal rather than physical. There is no record of them becoming violent; Arthur Lawrence never seems to have been violent to his children, either,...the quarrels of the Eastwood Lawrences generally demonstrated a significant reversal of female and male roles" (49).

inability to join the ministry. She tells Field, and "Her voice rang with defiance. 'If I were a man, nothing would stop me'" (SL 16). Morel, "not baffled and gripped into incandescence by thought and spirit as her life was, seemed to her something wonderful, beyond her" (SL 18). He represents "a new tract of life suddenly opened before her...He seemed to her noble. He risked his life daily, and with gaiety. She looked at him, with a touch of appeal in her pure humility" (SL 19). Through her disillusionment, Mrs Morel comes to believe that power is something beyond physical strength and may be found through knowledge, particularly in terms of education and the clergy. Morel represents instinctual life, "he often did the right thing, by instinct" (SL 18). His instinctual sensuality, however appealing, is perceived as destructive and downgraded in favour of the intellectual abilities prized by Mrs Morel. These are displayed by the rather ineffectual aspiring minister Field and the widower Mr Heaton, a Congregational clergyman.

Morel's physical and sensual appeal is counterposed against what Paul describes as his mother's "sane and wholesome" (SL 184) reserve. Morel's sexual energy is at odds with the intellectual qualities fostered by Mrs. Morel in the Morel household. Paul's dilemma, having been guided by his mother toward the social, intellectual sphere, is his exclusion from the instinctual sensuality which the father possesses and the mother rejects. Unable to derive fulfillment through the intellect, Paul eventually follows his father's course through sexuality with women and physical violence with men.

The Lawrentian male's subtle weapon is his ability to expose the futility of man's authoritative role in society and the home. It is used by Paul against his father in the Morel household and is extended by later Lawrentian heroes, such as Birkin, against their socially and physically superior counterparts. Birkin, for example, is able to reveal Gerald's

destructive role in perfecting an industrial system so efficient that he "was hardl[y] necessary any more" (WL 232).

The Lawrentian hero knows, however, that this ability can only be maintained outside the system of dominance and he takes care to remain outside his rival's domain. For example, in "The Prussian Officer" (1914), the orderly is as powerless as Gerald's miners against their master because he is trapped within the patriarchal system in which the hierarchy rule by force. In many ways, this homosocial discrimination finds its parallel with women's traditional subordination to men in society.

Physical violence is used in Lawrence's works to uphold male authority against men and women alike. The orderly's dilemma in "The Prussian Officer" is similar to that endured by Ursula in her relationship with Will Brangwen in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Ursula, like the orderly, is trapped within the patriarchal order. Initially, Will is overcome by his child's vulnerability and complete submissiveness:

The baby had a beautiful, rounded head that moved him passionately. He would have fought to the last drop to defend that exquisite, perfect round head....

One evening, suddenly, he saw the tiny living thing rolling naked in the mother's lap, and he was sick, it was so utterly helpless and vulnerable and extraneous; in a world of hard surfaces and varying altitudes, it lay vulnerable and naked at every point. Yet it was quite blithe. And yet, in its blind, awful crying, was there not the blind, far-off terror of its own vulnerable nakedness, the terror of being so utterly delivered over, helpless at every point. He could not bear to hear it crying. His heart strained and stood on guard against the whole universe. (R 196-7)

Will's protectiveness soon takes the form of possessiveness as the second child Gudrun is born and "the father had the elder baby, the weaned child" (R 198). Delivered into her father's care Ursula becomes

the centre of his existence. Her vulnerability is further emphasized in the following scene:

At evening, towards six o'clock, Anna very often went across the lane to the stile, lifted Ursula over into the field, with a: "Go and meet Daddy." Then Brangwen, coming up the steep round of the hill would see before him on the brow of the path a tiny, tottering, wind-blown little mite with a dark head, who, as soon as she saw him, would come running in tiny, wild, windmill fashion, lifting her arms up and down to him, down the steep hill. His heart leapt up, he ran his fastest to her, to catch her, because he knew she would fall. She came fluttering on, wildly, with her little limbs flying. And she was glad when he caught her up in his arms. Once she fell as she came flying to him, he saw her pitch forward suddenly as she was running with her hands lifted to him; and when he picked her up, her mouth was bleeding. He could never bear to think of it, he always wanted to cry, even when he was an old man and she had become a stranger to him. (R 198)

As Ursula matures and questions his authority, Will reacts by administering physical violence. Ursula learns to defend herself through passivity as shown in the following:

He had a duster in his hand. He turned and flapped the cloth hard across the girl's face. The cloth stung, for a moment the girl was as if stunned. Then she remained motionless, her face closed and stubborn. But her heart was blazing. In spite of herself the tears surged higher, in spite of her they surged higher.

In spite of her, her face broke, she made a curious gulping grimace, and the tears were falling. So she went away, desolate. But her blazing heart was fierce and unyielding. He watched her go, and a pleasurable pain filled him, a sense of triumph and easy power, followed immediately by acute pity. (R 248-9)

The "pleasurable pain" Will experiences is the power of subordinating Ursula to his domination which is continually yet vainly questioned and resisted.

Likewise, the orderly in "The Prussian Officer" is powerless against the Captain who derives "a thrill of deep pleasure, and of shame"⁴³ in

⁴³D.H. Lawrence, "The Prussian Officer," *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories*, ed. John Worthen (1914; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 6.

his brutal authority. In the following scene the orderly's passivity and vulnerability are emphasized.

Once he flung a heavy military glove into the young soldier's face. Then he had the satisfaction of seeing the black eyes flare up into his own, like a blaze when straw is thrown on a fire. And he had laughed with a little tremor and a sneer.

But there were only two months more. The youth instinctively tried to keep himself intact: he tried to serve the officer as if the latter were an abstract authority and not a man. All his instinct was to avoid physical contact, even definite hate. But in spite of himself the hate grew, responsive to the officer's passion. However, he put it in the background. When he had left the Army he could dare acknowledge it.⁴⁴

The orderly and Ursula are trapped in the patriarchal order and must submit or adopt the same principals of violence to survive. This becomes the orderly's final recourse when he kills the Captain. At Ursula's earliest opportunity she flees to yet another patriarchal system at the school where she teaches. Here, in a chapter entitled "The Man's World", she is once again exposed to the brutal discipline the headmaster Mr Harby displays toward the students and teachers alike:

The class was his class. She was a wavering substitute. He thrashed and bullied, he was hated. But he was master. Though she was gentle and always considerate of her class, yet they belonged to Mr Harby, and they did not belong to her. Like some invincible source of the mechanism he kept all power to himself. And the class owned his power. And in school, it was power and power alone that mattered. (R 350-1)

To her disgust, Ursula discovers that the only way she can succeed in "The Man's World" is to adopt its brutality. She does this when she thrashes Vernon Williams. Finding no escape from male domination outside the home, and having no desire to emulate it in her classroom, Ursula finally returns to the source of her oppression and confronts her

⁴⁴Lawrence, "Prussian Officer" 5.

father, informing him of her forthcoming marriage. This represents a final break from his authority.

Ursula swung round and the lights in her eyes flashed.

"No, I won't," she cried. "I won't hold my tongue and be bullied.—What does it matter which day I get married—what does it *matter!* It doesn't affect anybody but myself."

Her father was tense and gathered together like a cat about to spring.

"Doesn't it?" he cried, coming nearer to her. She shrank away.

"No, how can it?" she replied, shrinking but stubborn.

"It doesn't matter to *me* then, what you do —what becomes of you—?" he cried, in a strange voice like a cry.

The mother and Gudrun stood back as if hypnotized.

"No," stammered Ursula. Her father was very near to her. "You only want to——"

She knew it was dangerous, and she stopped. He was gathered together, every muscle ready.

"What—?" he challenged.

"Bully me," she muttered, and even as her lips were moving, his hand had caught her smack at the side of the face and she was sent up against the door....

Ursula recovered, her hand was on the door-handle. She slowly drew herself up. He seemed doubtful now.

"It's true," she declared, with brilliant tears in her eyes, her head lifted up in defiance. "What has your love meant—what did it ever mean?—bullying, and denial—it did—"

He was advancing again with strange, tense movements, and clenched fist, and the face of a murderer. But swift as lightning she had flashed out of the door, and they heard her running upstairs.

He stood for a moment looking at the door. Then, like a defeated animal, he turned and went back to his seat by the fire.

(WL 365-6)

Like Morel, Will uses physical violence to uphold his diminishing authority in the home after which he resumes his symbolic place of authority in front of the fire. This now becomes a pathetic gesture. Ursula's dilemma with her father and her headmaster, like that of the orderly with his Captain, outlines the interconnection in patriarchal structures between authority and physical violence in Lawrence's works. Having no recourse within that structure, women and

subordinate men must learn to submit to patriarchal hierarchies or adopt its brutal destructiveness to survive.

The Lawrentian hero develops alternative skills to overcome opposition and resistance and realizes that physical violence or "bullying" alone will not yield him power. He finds greater success when the object of his attention is already in a submissive position. This occurs when the Lawrentian male assumes a nurturing role in the sick-bed scenes throughout the novels.

2. Nurturing

Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* comments that Miriam "is glad when Paul is sick, because she can take care of him: she pretends to serve him, but it is really a method of imposing her will upon him."¹ The same may be said of the Lawrentian male's approach to the men he nurses in the sick-bed scenes throughout Lawrence's work. Violence and nurturing are two representations of power in male interaction. Caregiving in the sick-bed scenes takes three interrelated forms. It may be generated as a counter-response to violence which occurs when the rival male is nursed to health by his adversary, the Lawrentian male. The second form involves the reversal of roles and the transference of power which occurs in the relationship between parent and child in the sick-room. Finally, the Lawrentian male discovers in the sick-room that he is now physically stronger than the subject of his attention and that he may gain access to those who usually resist his advances. In each case nurturing, which should restore independence and strength, becomes instead an opportunity for the caregiver to manipulate the balance of power in relationships.

In the first case the woman over whom the two men have fought is excluded and a camaraderie develops in the sick-room between the men which relaces their original rivalry.² Paul discovers, when he visits Dawes convalescing in hospital after Typhoid, that he possesses a power far greater than that attained through violence. The physically superior Dawes "seemed to leave himself in the hands of Morel" (SL 431) and is reduced to a state of complete passivity. As a result,

¹de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* 232.

²As John W. Haegert notes: "From *Sons and Lovers* on, the sickroom becomes an indispensable milieu for the conduct of male friendships." Furthermore, he states: "The treatment of Paul and Dawes finds no parallel in the earlier novels, but it recalls the theme of the story, 'The Old Adam'...In both the novel and the story, there are violent physical confrontations between the men, followed by a period of self-reproach in which the younger man 'nurses' the older back to health" (Haegert 42-43).

[t]he two men, between whom was such a big reserve, seemed faithful to each other. Dawes depended on Morel now. He knew Paul and Clara had practically separated. (SL 445)

Similarly, in an earlier short story "The Old Adam", Edward Severn establishes an intimacy with Mr Thomas following their violent interaction over Thomas' wife Kate. Immediately after their fight "Severn was grief-stricken: He would willingly, at that moment, have given his right hand for the man he had hurt."³ Consequently, "[t]o the end of their acquaintance, Severn and Thomas were close friends, with a gentleness in their bearing one towards the other. On the other hand, Mrs Thomas was only polite and formal with Severn, treating him as if he were a stranger."⁴ Caregiving, in this first instance, becomes a transitional stage between violence and the establishment of male intimacy.

In the relationship between parent and child, the invalid parent confers power temporarily upon the nurturer during illness. If the invalid dies, the caregiver inherits this power absolutely. The care-giver represents a vital link to life in the invalid's struggle against death. He also assumes an almost God-like role in the sick-room as the dispenser of life and death. This is most striking in the mercy-killing of Mrs. Morel by Paul. Kate Millett harshly ascribes Paul's actions as part of his aim to rise beyond the class boundaries that have confined his mother. She argues:

When Paul's ambition inspires his escape from identical circumstances it will be upon the necks of the women he has used, who have constituted his steppingstones up into the middle class.

³D.H. Lawrence, *Love Among the Haystacks and Other Stories*, ed. John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 84. In his introduction, Worthen gives 1911 as the year in which Lawrence wrote "The Old Adam" (xxx).

⁴Lawrence, *Love Among the Haystacks* 86.

For Paul kills or discards the women who have been of use to him.⁵

Although his act finally releases him from his mother's control it more importantly yields an unexpected discovery of weakness in the father. Hitherto

Morel had been a man without fear—simply nothing frightened him. Paul realized with a start that he had been afraid to go to bed, alone in the house with his dead. He was sorry.

"I forgot you'd be alone, father," he said.

"Dost want owt to eat?" asked Morel.

"No"

"Sithee—I made thee a drop o' hot milk. Get it down thee: it's cold enough for owt."

Paul drank it. (SL 443-4)

We experience a curious reversal of roles and expectations following the death of Mrs. Morel. Paul, who has always longed to usurp his father is now his mother's murderer. The situation is compounded when he is offered milk by Morel as a comfort, the means by which he was initially sustained by his mother and through which he chooses to kill her.⁶

The killing of Mrs. Morel serves two purposes. It establishes Paul's position as man of the house and Paul attains a consummation with his mother through death in which he has been frustrated in life. His scenes with her corpse are rendered with descriptions of almost courtly love. This is evident in the following scene in which the dead Mrs. Morel

lay raised on the bed, the sweep of the sheet from the raised feet was like a clean curve of snow, so silent. She lay like a maiden asleep. With his candle in his hand, he bent over her. She lay like a girl asleep and dreaming of her love. (SL 443)

Having found consummation at last with his mother, Paul has no further use of the Dawes and aids Baxter's recovery so that he may

⁵Millett 248. See also Faith Pullin, "Lawrence's Treatment of Women in *Sons and Lovers*," *Lawrence and Women* ed. Anne Smith (London: Vision Press, 1978) 75-100.

⁶Millett puts it thus: "By a nice irony the son is murdering her who gave him life, so that he may have a bit more for himself: he who once was fed upon her milk now waters what he gives her to be rid of her" (Millett 249).

resume his place with Clara. After their discussion of Clara and to whom she "belonged,"

they did not talk any more. The instinct to murder each other had returned. They almost avoided each other.

They shared the same bedroom. When they retired Dawes seemed abstract, thinking of something. He sat on the side of the bed in his shirt, looking at his legs....

Paul reluctantly got out of bed and went to look at the rather handsome legs of the other man that were covered with glistening dark-gold hair. (SL 448)

While Dawes is a physically superior and attractive man, Paul finds through his manipulations in the sick-room that he can control his mother, Morel, Clara and Baxter. Yet the Lawrentian male is confounded by the temporary nature of his power over others in the sick-room and the ambiguity of his position there. His efforts, while gaining a transient authority over the patient, will ultimately lead to that patient's well-being and eventual independence. It is the same situation which should, ideally, exist in the parent-child relationship and this is absent in Paul's relationship with his mother of whom he is never quite free until their roles are reversed in the sick-room.

To understand this concept further and its relation to male interaction, it is useful to consider the very different relationship Gerald Critch experiences with his father in *Women in Love*. We learn of Thomas Critch's relationship with his son Gerald through his struggle against death in the sick-room. Gerald

somehow *wanted* this death, even forced it. It was as if he himself were dealing the death, even when he most recoiled in horror.

Still, he would deal it, he would triumph through death. (WL 322)

Lawrence's father figures are interesting to a student of masculinity in his works because they break significantly with the established, Victorian tradition of patriarchy which confers male power upon sons through inheritance. This inheritance is bolstered in the individual

through his exposure to the male hierarchical systems of schooling, military training and the eventual accession to a position of power in commerce or industry. Gerald undergoes all these stages and finds release through his imagination. We are told that

[d]uring his childhood and his boyhood he had wanted a sort of savage freedom. The days of Homer were his ideal, when a man was chief of an army of heroes, or spent his years in wonderful Odyssey. He hated remorselessly the circumstances of his own life, so much that he never really saw Beldover and the colliery valley...The world was really a wilderness where one hunted and swam and rode. He rebelled against all authority. Life was a condition of savage freedom. (*WL* 221)

Both Paul and Gerald create fantasies of masculinity from images of battling, heroic men quite unlike their fathers. In the following scene, Paul's vulnerability and submissiveness provoke a gentle response from Morel which belies Paul's concept of masculinity:

He loved the evenings, after eight o'clock, when the light was put out, and he could watch the fire flames spring over the darkness of the walls and ceiling; could watch huge shadows waving and tossing, till the room seemed full of men who battled silently.

On retiring to bed, the father would come into the sick-room. He was always very gentle if anyone were ill. But he disturbed the atmosphere for the boy.

"Are ter asleep, my darlin'?" Morel asked softly.

"No—is my mother comin'?"

"She's just finishin' foldin' the clothes. Do you want anything?" Morel rarely "thee'd" his son.

"I don't want nothing.—But how long will she be?"

"Not long, my duckie."

The father waited undecidedly on the hearthrug for a moment or two. He felt his son did not want him....

Then Morel came again, and crouched before the bedroom fire. He loved a fire dearly.

"She says she won't be long," he said.

He loitered about indefinitely. The boy began to get feverish with irritation. His father's presence seemed to aggravate all his sick impatience. At last Morel, after having stood looking at his son awhile, said softly:

"Good-night my darling."

"Good-night," Paul replied, turning round in relief to be alone.
(SL 91-2)

Unable to accept his father's male presence yet unable to escape, Paul retreats to an imaginative world beyond his parents' control. Here he conjures his own image of masculinity from the shadows of the fire-flames "of men who battled silently." The imagination remains the one unassailable realm of privacy in Lawrence's work for those consistently under the control and intrusion of others. Paul's imaginings prefigure his later violent, yet very sexually defined encounter with Baxter Dawes.

These fantasies arise when Lawrence's father identities fail to exercise the power with which they are endowed by society. Morel acknowledges his lack of power in society and in the home through frustrated fits of anger and brutality after which he immediately feels shame and further humiliation. Thomas Critch however, shows us that male power is not absolute or one-dimensional but problematic, reliant upon the relationships involved and the conflicts within the self. He also refuses to appropriate power in the way prescribed by patriarchal society choosing instead a model of Christian love in which all men are equal:

The father...was trapped between two half-truths, and broken. He wanted to be a pure Christian, one and equal with all men. He even wanted to give away all he had, to the poor.—Yet he was a great promoter of industry, and he knew perfectly well that he must keep his goods and keep his authority. This was as divine a necessity in him, as the need to give away all he possessed—more divine, even, since this was the necessity he acted upon. Yet because he did *not* act on the other ideal, it dominated him, he was dying of chagrin because he must forfeit it. He wanted to be a father of loving-kindness and sacrificial benevolence. The colliers shouted to him about his thousands a year. They would not be deceived. (WL 226-7)

Immediately we are confronted with the essential difference between Thomas and Gerald Critch. Thomas is torn between his need to exercise power and secure his position of patriarchal authority while seeing himself instead as his men's equal, at one with humanity. Perceiving humanity as death-bound and self-destructive, Lawrence relates how Thomas soon earns the contempt of the men and the family over which he is supposed to preside. Hence, there emerges in these relationships involving Thomas a disparity within power structures which encompasses beneficence and protection on the one hand and the pessimistic knowledge or experience of mankind as subordinated and humiliated on the other.

Thomas's vain struggles in the sick-room are to maintain life, denying "death its victory" (*WL* 215). Gerald inherits what Lawrence saw as the inevitable death of modern civilisation. This is personified in the brutal destructiveness and tyranny of the industrial magnate, the master, Gerald. He is born and arises from his father's optimistic Christianity and becomes instead "God of the Machine, Deus ex Machina" (*WL* 228). Yet, the male power that Gerald inherits upon his father's retirement and death hastens his inevitable downfall.

Thomas's and Gerald's dilemmas may be seen as some of the problematics with which a study of masculinity is concerned. Joseph Brennan, addressing the issue of male power in Lawrence's work asserts: "Men cannot withdraw from the power they have...either they must use it properly or it will convert itself into destructiveness."⁷

Bruce Woodcock summarises the problems of male power thus:

If there are historically contradictory and changing elements in the notion of masculinity, there are accompanying contradictions within the notion of male power itself. Male power both allows and disallows, but unequally across the social classes. Like

⁷Joseph Brennan, "Male Power in the Work of D.H. Lawrence," *Paunch* 63-4 (1990): 201.

femininity, masculinity is restrictive in its effects; but crucially, unlike femininity, the very restrictions of masculinity adhere in the 'benefits' of its power to which the individual male accedes.⁸

Society scorns those men who fail to appropriate the power granted them through the privilege of their gender and class. The Lawrentian male, being physically frail and of the working class, must establish skills alternative to those promoted in patriarchal society in his appropriation of power. Through undermining the structure of patriarchy, Lawrence is not criticizing male dominance but attempting to redefine masculinity around those feminine perceived qualities his heroes adopt through their interaction with women. The sick-bed scenes illustrate the fragility of the masculine-prized qualities of physical strength and intellect and become a site where the Lawrentian male can display and employ his skills of leadership and control upon those who usually resist him.

He does this by assuming a traditionally perceived feminine role as nurturer. This is most obvious in the interaction between Aaron and Lilly in *Aaron's Rod*. Although Lilly criticizes motherhood and how "[t]he whole world wags for the sake of the children—and their sacred mother" (AR 99), Lilly's is essentially a motherly role. Even his name is feminine. Darning and washing Aaron's socks, Lawrence describes Lilly "as efficient and inobtrusive a housewife as any woman" (AR 98). Lilly's ministrations are ludicrous as he becomes a parody of the traditional concept of womens' nurturing role. Ignoring Aaron's protestations Lilly exclaims

"I'm going to rub you with oil,' he said. 'I'm going to rub you as mothers do their babies whose bowels don't work."

Aaron frowned slightly as he glanced at the dark, self-possessed face of the little man.

⁸Bruce Woodcock, *Male Mythologies. John Fowles and Masculinity* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1984) 10.

"What's the good of that?" he said irritably. "I'd rather be left alone."

"Then you won't be."

Quickly he uncovered the blond lower body of his patient, and began to rub the abdomen with oil, using a slow, rhythmic, circulating motion, a sort of massage. For a long time he rubbed finely and steadily, then went over the whole of the lower body, mindless, as if in a sort of incantation. He rubbed every speck of the man's lower body—the abdomen, the buttocks, the thighs and knees, down to the feet, rubbed it all warm and glowing with camphorated oil, every bit of it, chafing the toes swiftly, till he was almost exhausted. Then Aaron was covered up again, and Lilly sat down in fatigue to look at his patient.

He saw a change. The spark had come back into the sick eyes, and the faint trace of a smile, faintly luminous, into the face. Aaron was regaining himself. But Lilly said nothing. He watched his patient fall into a proper sleep. (AR 96)

There is a paradox in place. While Lilly's behaviour satirizes the traditional role of women as wives and mothers, it is nevertheless the role Lilly assumes in his interaction with Aaron. Yet this role is blatantly inappropriate and inherits all the elements that Lilly criticizes in women's relation to her children. Again, a role which Lawrence perceives as feminine is used and adapted in his quest for power over men. Aaron must submit like a child to the control and ministrations of the parent, in this case, the mother-image. The scene between Aaron and Lilly, like the wrestling scene and *Blutbrüderschaft* between Gerald and Birkin, is another example which highlights the futility of emulating existing roles and rituals between men and women in the construction of ideal, transcendental relationships between men. These scenes do not succeed in conveying an ideal model for male intimacy. Instead, they become mere parodies of the existing and often limiting roles between men and women. Consequently, Lilly foresees the transient nature of his influence upon Aaron and concedes:

As soon as this man's really better he'll punch me in the wind, metaphorically if not actually, for having interfered with him. And Tanny would say he was quite right to do it. She says I want

power over them. What if I do? They don't care how much power the mob has over them, the nation...Why can't they submit to a bit of healthy individual authority? (AR 96-7)

It is important to note, however, that the Lawrentian male also refuses to submit to another's authority when he is ill. This is evident in the following sick-bed scene which occurs in *Women in Love* between Birkin and Gerald. Birkin maintains his directional role in Gerald's life regardless of his illness:

Gerald came near the bed and stood looking down at Birkin whose throat was exposed, whose tossed hair fell attractively on the warm brow, above the eyes that were so unchallenged and still in the satirical face. Gerald, full-limbed and turgid with energy, stood unwilling to go, he was held by the presence of the other man. He had not the power to go away. (WL 210)

During this episode, Birkin is able to continue his influence upon the physically stronger Gerald in whom he generates moments of great self-realization which are characteristically resisted. This occurs ostensibly through Birkin's insistence that Winifred Critch not be sent to boarding-school. Gerald believes she should go regardless of it having "been a torture to him" (WL 205). Birkin argues that Winifred's imaginative, artistic talents confer upon her "a special nature, and for special natures you must give a special world" (WL 205). Having sublimated his own imagination through his exposure to the dominant social orders, Birkin's proposals are particularly significant to Gerald:

"...Instead of chopping yourself down to fit the world, chop the world down to fit yourself.—As a matter of fact, two exceptional people make another world. You and I, we make another, separate world...Do you *want* to be normal or ordinary?—It's a lie. You want to be free and extraordinary, in an extraordinary world of liberty."

Gerald looked at Birkin with subtle eyes of knowledge. But he would never openly admit what he felt. He knew more than Birkin, in one direction—much more. And this gave him his gentle love for the other man, as if Birkin were in some way young,

innocent, child-like: so amazingly clever, but incurably innocent.
(*WL* 205-6)

The sick-bed scene, in this case, advances the theme of innocence and experience of life and humanity which is developed further in Gerald's relationship with his father. Gerald's experience of life causes him to mistrust any concepts which fall outside the social, intellectual realm that he controls. Birkin's unconscious, instinctual knowledge, like his father's Christian charity, are beyond his comprehension and are apprehended as weakness and therefore unmanly. Birkin's instinctual qualities continue to perturb him as

Gerald, watching, saw the amazing attractive goodliness of his eyes, a young, spontaneous goodness that attracted the other man infinitely, yet filled him with bitter chagrin, because he mistrusted it so much. He knew Birkin could do without him—could forget, and not suffer. This was always present in Gerald's consciousness, filling him with bitter unbelief: this consciousness of the young, animal-like spontaneity of detachment. It seemed almost like hypocrisy and lying, sometimes, oh, so often, on Birkin's part, to talk so deeply and importantly. (*WL* 206)

Although Birkin is in a vulnerable position throughout this reversal of the sick-bed scene involving the Lawrentian male, his power and influence are maintained. Consequent to this discussion, Birkin suggests the Blutbrüderschaft ritual. He also manages to orchestrate the destiny of Winifred Critch managing to prevent her enduring a fate similar to her mother's whom Birkin considers "wanted something more, or other than the common run of life. And not getting it...has gone wrong perhaps" (*WL* 208). He also makes it possible for Gudrun to exert her influence upon Gerald through his endorsement of Hermione's suggestion that she should tutor Winifred.

Regardless of the physical advantages or disadvantages incurred by the Lawrentian male, scenes involving violence and nurturing act as representations of his self-defined instinctual power in male interaction.

They do not, however, lead the Lawrentian hero any closer toward "another kind of love" with a man. This love, as opposed to power, may be perceived in Lawrence's works in the idealistic bathing scenes which recur throughout his novels.

3. Bathing

It is to me the most exciting moment—when you have the blank canvas and a big brush full of wet colour, and you plunge. It is just like diving in a pond—there you start frantically to swim. So far as I am concerned, it is like swimming in a baffling current and being rather frightened and very thrilled, gasping and striking out for all you're worth. The knowing eye watches sharp as a needle; but the picture comes clean out of instinct, intuition and sheer physical action. Once the instinct and intuition gets into the brush-tip, the picture *happens*, if it is to be a picture at all.

D.H. Lawrence, "Making Pictures," front endpaper to *Paintings of D.H. Lawrence*, ed. Mervyn Levy (London: Cory, Adams and Mackay, 1964) rpt. *Phoenix II Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works by D.H. Lawrence*, ed., Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann, 1968) 603.

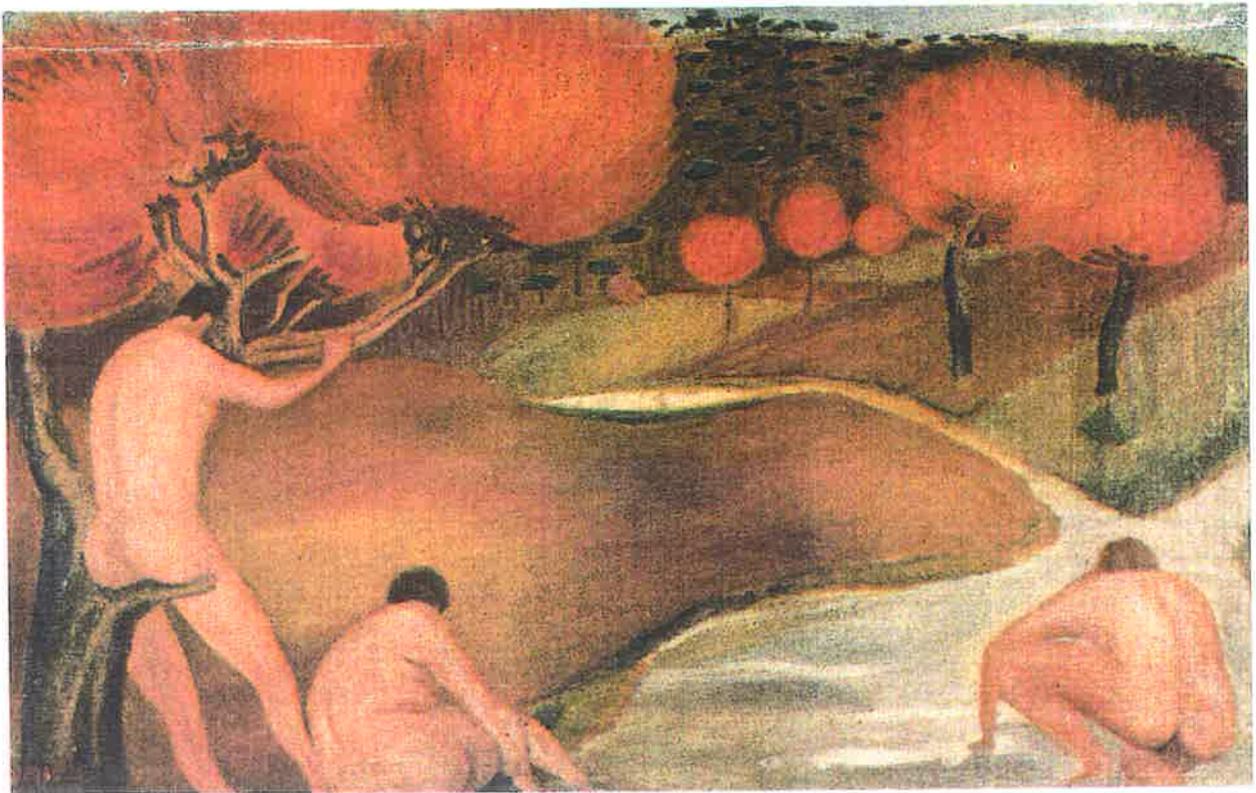


PLATE 1. D.H. Lawrence, *Red Willow Trees* (1927), oil (inscribed Lorenzo), (40 x 26 in.), Saki Karavas, Esq. Collection, rpt Levy 37.

The main bathing-scenes in Lawrence's fiction with which this study is concerned involve Cyril Beardsall and George Saxon in *The White Peacock*, Paul, Gertrude and Walter Morel in *Sons and Lovers*, Winifred Inger and Ursula Brangwen in *The Rainbow* and Ramón and Cipriano in *The Plumed Serpent*.¹

Through a comparative study of bathing imagery in other writings of the period it is possible to construct an appropriate historical basis against which the bathing-scene in Lawrence's work may be examined and contrasted. In this context, Lawrence's bathing-scenes may also be compared with the paintings of Henry Scott Tuke. While not attempting to establish a direct influence on Lawrence's work, I have chosen Tuke as a representative of the "plein air" school of artists based around Cornwall where Lawrence lived and wrote *Women in Love* from 1916 to 1918. Tuke emphasized his pantheistic beliefs by situating ideal male forms within a natural landscape.

I will also compare the male bathing-scenes which occur in a group of lesser known poets and writers about whom Timothy d'Arch Smith writes in his study *Love in Earnest. Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930*. In his description of these writers, Smith argues:

The word 'Uranian' was chosen because it was much used in the circles in which our poets moved and because it is free from the naunces of 'homosexual', 'paederast', and 'calamite'.²

¹The focus of this study does not permit me to address other bathing episodes which occur in Lawrence's fiction, for example those in *The Trespasser*.

²Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest. Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970) xx. Smith continues: "I am aware that its founder, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, author of numerous pamphlets for the recognition of the homosexual, intended a rather different interpretation of the word, but it, and its parallel, 'Urning', being much in use not only to denote adult homosexuality but also boy-love among the group of poets we shall study, it seemed best to fit the period this book covers."

Further, given the knowledge we have of Forster's homosexuality, his contribution to what should be regarded as the bathing-scene genre in the period warrant further study.³ This is best achieved through an examination of the homoerotic bathing-scene in *A Room with a View*. The bathing-scene in Forster's work is established by Mr Beebe as exclusively male when he introduces Freddy Honeychurch to George Emerson:

"That's the best conversational opening I've ever heard. But I'm afraid it will only act between men. Can you picture a lady who has been introduced to another lady by a third lady opening civilities with "How do you do? Come and have a bathe..."?⁴

Mr Beebe is persuaded to join his young companions for a regenerative bathe in which the child-like nature of the participants rather than any sexual elements are emphasized:

The three gentlemen rotated in the pool breast high, after the fashion of the nymphs in *Gotterdammerung*. But either because the rains had given a freshness, or because the sun was shedding a most glorious heat, or because two of the gentlemen were young in years and the third young in the spirit - for some reason or other a change came over them...They began to play. Mr Beebe and Freddy splashed each other. A little deferentially, they splashed George. He was quiet; they feared they had offended him. Then all the forces of youth burst out. He smiled, flung himself at them, splashed them, ducked them, kicked them, muddied them, and drove them out of the pool.⁵

³For examinations of the connection between Forster and Lawrence in their work see Paul Delany, "Lawrence and E.M. Forster: Two Rainbows," *DHLR* 8 (1975): 54-62; C.E. Baron, "Forster on Lawrence," *E.M. Forster: A Human Exploration. Centenary Essays*, ed. G.K. Das and John Beer (London: Macmillan, 1979) 186-95; John Beer, "'The Last Englishman': Lawrence's Appreciation of Forster," Das and Beer, 245-68; Rosemarie Bodenheimer, "*St. Mawr, A Passage to India* and the Question of Influence," *DHLR* 13 (1980): 134-49 and Frederick P. W. McDowell, "'Moments of Emergence and of a New Splendour': D.H. Lawrence and E.M. Forster in their Fiction," *D.H. Lawrence's "Lady." A New Look at Lady Chatterley's Lover*, ed. Michael Squires and Dennis Jackson (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1985) 58-90.

⁴E.M. Forster, *A Room With A View* (1908; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) 145.

⁵Forster *A Room With A View* 149-50.

This scene is characterized by a return to nature in which "[t]he world of motor-cars and Rural Deans receded illimitably."⁶ Yet Forster's bathing scene is soon transformed into a parody of the traditional pastoral idyll through the intrusion of Lucy, Mrs Honeychurch and the ineffectual Cecil Vyse. The world of freedom and purity among men is presented as an escape from the stunted, restricted life Vyse endures among women and society. In this sense, bathing in the natural environment has a cleansing effect in which the influences of the matriarchal home and modern society are washed away. Maintaining a humorous attitude though, Mrs Honeychurch is confused by her son's involvement in the pastoral scene when they have "a comfortable bath at home, with hot and cold laid on."⁷

Forster's bathing-scene affords his participants a brief return to a state of child-like innocence. This theme is expressed in an unintentionally humorous manner by the Reverend E.E. Bradford, a Uranian poet obviously impressed by Henry Scott Tuke's painting of Jack Rowling entitled *Our Jack*.⁸ In a poem of the same title Bradford celebrates Jack's innocent appeal:

Our Jack's a jolly fisherboy, a sturdy looking chap,
 With stubby shocks of curly locks beneath his
 battered cap.
 His face is tanned and ruddy, and his neck and
 throat are brown,
 But his skin is like a lady's just a little lower down.
 For he's always in the water, and is clean as clean
 can be,
 And not a baby in the land has fairer skin than he.

⁶Forster *A Room With A View* 149.

⁷Forster *A Room With A View* 151.

⁸Although not a member of Uranian circles and, given the calibre of their work, possibly grateful that he wasn't, Forster was aware of their existence through his Cambridge connections and knew some of the contributors including Charles Sayle a well-known contributor and reviewer of Uranian verse. See P.N. Furbank, *E.M. Forster. A Life*, vol. 1 (London: Secker and Warburg, 1977) 113-14.

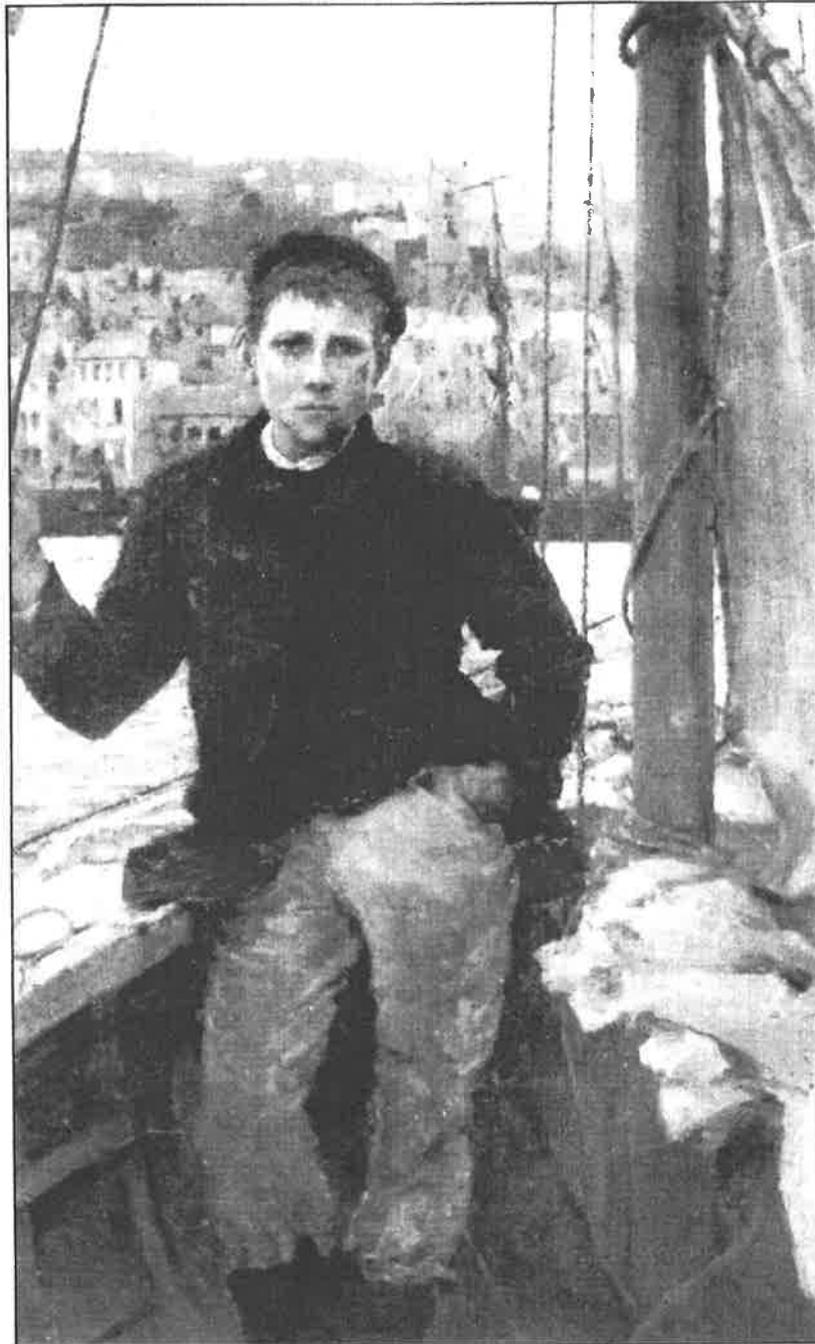


PLATE 2. Henry Scott Tuke, *Our Jack* (1886), oil on canvas (48 x 31 cms.), Tuke Collection, Royal Polytechnic Society, Falmouth, rpt Emmanuel Cooper, *The Life and Work of Henry Scott Tuke. 1858-1929* (London: GMP Publishers, 1988) 14.

Bradford continues his use of water imagery to separate Jack from his more worldly companions:

For Jack's always on the water, when the rest are
 "on the spree,"
 And the parson's little daughter's not more innocent
 than he."⁹

Characteristically, the Uranian narrator observes a potentially erotic scene from a safe distance, however much sexual participation may be desired and expressed. This is evident in the following lines from John Gambril Nicholson's poem "The Boy in the Boat" inspired by the work of W.H. Bartlett, a member of the "*plein air*" group of artists:

Vaguely I see his comrades round him swimming,—
 To him is given my gaze alone
 As he leans o'er them, innocently dimming
 Their beauty by his own.¹⁰

Nicholson, in another bathing poem in his third collection of verse *A Garland of Ladslove* (1911), laments the restrictions of society which prevent his joining the bathers:

There is a Pond of pure delight
 The paidophil adores,
 Where boys undress in open sight
 and bathers banish drawers.

There youth may flaunt its naked pride
 Unscathed by withering Powers,—
 Convention's narrow laws divide
 That swimming-bath from ours!¹¹

Charles Kains-Jackson's "Sonnet on a Picture by H.S. Tuke" glorifies

the beauty and the delicacy
 Of young slim frames not yet to labor put.
 The kisses that make red each honest face
 Are of the breeze and salt and tingling spray.
 So, may these boys know never of a place
 Wherein, to desk or factory a prey,

⁹Rev E.E. Bradford, *To Boys Unknown* (London: G.M.P. Publishers, 1988) 67.

¹⁰John Gambril Nicholson, *In the Dreamy Afternoon* (London: G.M.P. Publishers, 1989) 74.

¹¹d'Arcy Smith 171.

That color blanches slowly, nature's grace
 Made pale with life's incipient decay.¹²

Lawrence's bathing-scenes adopt a more serious tone and serve a different purpose: there is much less sense of the participants having fun. Lawrence's use of the bathing-scene shows the Lawrentian hero against a physically stronger counterpart in whose strength is sought transcendence from his own physical inadequacy. They experience with each other an intimacy which transcends eroticism or sexuality.

To understand this concept further it is useful to differentiate between homoeroticism and homosexuality in the period. The poetry of World War One may be examined in this context. Here, bathing imagery co-exists with the paradigms of male intimacy I have addressed so far—physical violence and nurturing. Paul Fussell in his study *The Great War and Modern Memory* addresses these themes and effectively assigns the bathing-scene to a literary genre which finds its roots in the pastoral tradition. More importantly though, Fussell clarifies the nature of male interaction in the period and emphasizes the difference between homoeroticism and homosexuality. War poetry promotes the Platonic, chaste nature of male friendship which may be categorized and differentiated, in this historical context, as homoerotic. In a chapter entitled "The British Homoerotic Tradition" Fussell argues that

some of the reasons for the homoerotic motif in Great War writing...is the war's almost immediate historical proximity to such phenomena as the Aesthetic Movement, one of whose most powerful impulses was the rediscovery of the erotic attractiveness of young men. Aestheticism was an offshoot of the kind of warm late-Romanticism that makes it seem appropriate that Tennyson should be fond of Arthur Hallam, Whitman of Peter Doyle, and Housman of Moses Jackson.

¹²Brian Reade, ed. *Sexual Heretics. Male Homosexuality in English Literature from 1850 to 1900* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970) 226. See also Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975) 303.

What can be called the main prewar tradition of homoerotic poetry runs from Whitman to Hopkins to Housman.¹³

In Great War Poetry the depiction of living, naked bodies immersed in the cleansing effects of water contrasts with the defilement and destruction of life in the mud of the trenches where young men, clothed in their uniforms, drown in their own blood. In his chapter entitled "Soldiers Bathing" Fussell examines the pastoral homoeroticism in War Poetry which prefaces the industrial-like efficiency with which these men are killed. He uses as an example of this tragic irony Rupert Brooke's allusion to swimmers. In his poem "Peace" young men "turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping" from peacetime to the challenge of war.¹⁴ In "*Dulce Et Decorum Est*" Wilfred Owen uses water imagery to detail a man dying from gas:

As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.¹⁵

He continues this imagery in "The Sentry" when a soldier, believed dead, is found in a dug-out "splashing in the mud, deluging muck."¹⁶

Owen also refers to

[t]hose other wretches, how they bled and spewed,
And one who would have drowned himself for good,-
I try not to remember these things now.¹⁷

More horrific is the conclusion of "Counter-Attack" by Siegfried Sassoon in which a soldier is

[l]ost in a blurred confusion of yells and groans...
Down, and down, and down, he sank and drowned,

¹³Fussell 280-81.

¹⁴Rupert Brooke, *Rupert Brooke: The Collected Poems* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1987) 312. See Wright 122 and Fussell 301.

¹⁵Wilfred Owen, *The Complete Poems and Fragments*, ed. Jon Stallworthy, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1983) 140, lines 14-16.

¹⁶Owen 188, line 14.

¹⁷Owen 188, lines 27-29.

Bleeding to death.¹⁸

In her study *Literature of Crisis, 1910-22* Anne Wright examines the effect of the Great War on *Women in Love* and other texts of the period. She addresses the bathing scenes in War Poetry and aligns them with the drowning of Diana Critch and the young doctor at Shortlands. Against this image of clean water in which the couple die is Gudrun's recollection of the boys who dive for coins in the filth and mud of the Thames in London:

dreadful boys ran with us on the shore, in that *awful* Thames mud, going in *up to the waist*...and paterfamilias on board, laughing when the boys went down in that awful mud, occasionally throwing them a ha'penny. And if you'd seen the intent look on the faces of these boys, and the way they darted in the filth when a coin was flung—really, no vulture or jackal could dream of approaching them, for foulness. I *never* would go on a pleasure boat again—never. (WL 161)

Wright argues that "[t]he Thames mud contradicts the Shortlands idyll, yet is inexorably part of the same process...But in the cold and the mud we may surely comprehend too that other-world of the hell of the trenches." She concludes furthermore that "death in *Women in Love* must be read, constantly, in the context of the war."¹⁹

Yet the intrusion of industrial destruction upon pastoral splendour and innocence is also a theme in Lawrence's earlier, pre-war novel *The White Peacock*. It is important primarily to recognize the significance of the mill-pond in which his earliest bathing scene takes place. It features prominently in the opening of the novel as a symbol of antiquity in which

the shadowy fish slide through the gloom of the mill-pond. They were grey descendants of the silvery things that had darted away

¹⁸Siegfried Sassoon, *Collected Poems 1908-1956* (London: Faber and Faber, 1984) 69, lines 37-39.

¹⁹Wright 120-21.

from the monks, in the young days when the valley was lusty. The whole place was gathered in the musing of old age. (WP 1)

The mill-pond holds a promise of ancient knowledge and experience in which may be discerned "the tumult of life which had once quickened the valley" (WP 1). This contrasts with the increasingly industrial, urban environment into which the characters must move and which encroaches upon the valley and the rural lifestyle. Forster's pond in *A Room With a View* is transient, created by nature for the purpose of bringing men in contact with its splendour and each other. It serves as a baptism by nature for George in place of the formal, religious baptism his father prevented. Having attained this purpose,

[t]hat evening and all that night the water ran away. On the morrow the pool had shrunk to its old size and lost its glory. It had been a call to the blood and to the relaxed will, a passing benediction whose influence did not pass, a holiness, a spell, a momentary chalice for youth.²⁰

Lawrence's mill-pond is linked geographically to Strelley Mill which serves as Cyril's retreat from his matriarchal home. At the mill, women are subservient to men. George exploits this situation cruelly being the embodiment of the brutal male both in the home and within nature. His first action in the novel is to callously disturb and torment a nest of field bees. The reader's first impression of the Beardsall home invokes this scene through "the whirr of a sewing-machine coming from the little study, a sound as of some great, vindictive insect buzzing about" (WP 6). The Beardsall women will not tolerate their nest being disturbed by a brutal male. This, presumably, accounts for the absence of Mr Beardsall who we later find out is a drunkard, outcast from his home and family.

²⁰Forster RV 152.

Cyril's relationship with George is characterized by a disturbing combination of violence and tenderness. Brutality in men throughout the novel is emphasized by the amount of gratuitous violence directed against animals, mostly mothers and their young.²¹ Yet we learn of Cyril's yearning for male contact through his discovery of a "larkie's nest" in the Mill-garden. Cyril considers

[i]n my heart of hearts, I longed for someone to nestle against, someone who would come between me and the coldness and the wetness. I envied the two little miracles exposed to any tread, yet so serene. It seemed as if I were always wandering, looking for something which they had found even before the light broke into their shell. (WP 220)

These incidents prepare us for the scene which takes place between George and Cyril in the mill-pond. This is related with characteristic sexual imagery misleading to the reader:

We stood and looked at each other as we rubbed ourselves dry. He was well proportioned, and naturally of handsome physique, heavily limbed. He laughed at me, telling me I was like one of Aubrey Beardsley's long, lean ugly fellows. I referred him to many classic examples of slenderness, declaring myself more exquisite than his grossness, which amused him.

But I had to give in, and bow to him, and he took on an indulgent, gentle manner. I laughed and submitted. For he knew how I admired the noble, white fruitfulness of his form. As I watched him, he stood in white relief against the mass of green. He polished his arm, holding it out straight and solid; he rubbed his hair into curls, while I watched the deep muscles of his shoulders, and the bands stand out in his neck as he held it firm....

He saw I had forgotten to continue my rubbing, and laughing he took hold of me and began to rub me briskly, as if I were a child, or rather, a woman he loved and did not fear. I left myself quite limply in his hands, and, to get a better grip of me, he put his arm round me and pressed me against him, and the sweetness of the touch of our naked bodies one against the other was superb. It satisfied in some measure the vague, indecipherable yearning of my soul; and it was the same with him. When he had rubbed me all warm, he let me go, and we looked at each other with eyes of

²¹See Margaret Storch, "The Lacerated Male: Ambivalent Images of Women in *The White Peacock*," *DHLR* 21. 2 (1989) 117-35.

still laughter, and our love was perfect for a moment, more perfect than any love I have known since, either for man or woman. (WP 222-3)²²

Lawrence constructs a dichotomy of male forms in which Cyril's physically weaker yet "exquisite" body is contrasted with George's "grossness." This is duplicated in the wrestling scene between Gerald and Birkin in *Women in Love*. Throughout the novel Cyril searches for his lost father in the figures of Mr Saxon and Annabel the gamekeeper. With George the emphasis is placed on brotherhood, as with Birkin's desire for a blood-brotherhood or Blutbrüderschaft with Gerald in *Women in Love*. Yet this signifies a meaning different from that implied by Forster in *The Longest Journey* (1909) in which the brotherhood theme thinly disguises Rickie's desire for a homosexual relationship. Through an interactive knowledge of each other which is not sexual, George and Cyril attempt to transcend their own inadequacies and discover a sense of completeness.

Hence, the narrative voice may be easily misconstrued as homosexual when the Lawrentian male, in this case Cyril, details and admires the aspects of George's body in which he considers himself undeveloped. Yet a similar descriptive narrative occurs in *Sons and Lovers* when Morel is bathing and Paul notes:

He had still a wonderfully young body, muscular, without any fat. His skin was smooth and clear. It might have been the body of a man of twenty-eight, except that there were perhaps, too many blue scars, like tattoo marks, where the coal-dust remained under the skin, and that his chest was too hairy. But he put his hands on his sides ruefully. It was his fixed belief that, because he did not get fat, he was as thin as a starved rat.

Paul looked at his father's thick, brownish hands, all scarred, with broken nails, rubbing the fine smoothness of his sides, and

²²While this is not the place for me to digress, Andrew Robertson provides passages from the original manuscript to show how Lawrence's deletions reveal his "self-censorship about male attraction" (WP Explanatory notes 386).

the incongruity struck him. It seemed strange they were the same flesh.

"I suppose," he said to his father, "you had a good figure once."
(*SL* 235)

The nature of Paul's observations, unlike Cyril's, remain unquestioned by critics because a sexual dimension is not considered in the father-son relationship. In both scenes, however, the narrative voice stresses the sexually attractive, sought-after qualities in the physically stronger man which the Lawrentian male lacks. This lack is compounded by the following observations of Mrs Morel:

"You've had a constitution like iron," she said. "And never a man had a better start, if it were a body that counted. You should have seen him as a young man—" she cried suddenly to Paul, drawing herself up to imitate her husband's once handsome bearing. Morel watched her shyly. He saw again the passion she had had for him. It blazed upon her for a moment. He was shy, rather scared, and humble. Yet again he felt his old glow. And then, immediately, he felt the ruin he had made during these years. He wanted to bustle about, to run away from it. (*SL* 236)

Mrs Morel acts as an intermediary between Paul, the holder of the look, or what Laura Mulvey defines as the gaze, and the object of the gaze, Morel.²³ Her presence and physical interaction with Morel highlights his sexual attractiveness and invokes the passion she has once felt for him. His sexual nature belongs, as such, in the caressing, cleansing hands of his wife. This role of the wife as possessor of the male body also occurs in "Odour of Chrysanthemums" (1911) when Elizabeth Bates bathes her dead husband, laying "her hand on him in claim."²⁴

In these scenes passion, such as Mrs Morel and Mrs Bates have felt for their husbands, can be clearly discerned from the non-sexual love George and Cyril feel for each other yet which Cyril affirms is "more

²³Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16. 3 (1975): 6-18.

²⁴D.H. Lawrence, "Odour of Chrysanthemums," *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories* 196. See also Wasson 299-301.

perfect than any love I have known since, either for man or woman" (*WP* 223). Love between men and women, such as that between the Morels and the Bates is imperfect and further complicated by sexual conflict. Yet Jeffrey Meyers insists that George's rubbing is "explicitly homosexual."²⁵ It is unlikely however, that Lawrence should want to suggest or imply a sexual dimension to this non-sexual yet "perfect" love between George and Cyril. George does not rub Cyril in the way Mrs Morel rubs her husband, invoking a sexual connotation. Similarly, he does not assume a motherly role as does Lilly when he anoints Aaron in *Aaron's Rod*. George's physical strength, like Gerald's in his wrestling match with Birkin in *Women in Love*, is stressed throughout the scene. Perfect love between men occurs symbolically and idealistically in the mingling of opposites through blood or physical contact. In this sense Cyril, the first-person narrator in *The White Peacock*, hopes that some of George's attributes may 'rub off' on himself, the Lawrentian male.

Once the intermediary or appropriate distance is removed and replaced with direct physical contact the reader expects a sexual dimension to evolve, given Lawrence's use of heterosexual imagery as a model or basis on which to depict these male relationships. Yet in *Sons and Lovers*, the reader is invited to adopt a voyeuristic position. Mrs Morel, as intermediary, establishes the appropriate distance between Paul, the holder of the gaze, and Morel, the object.

In this context it is useful to examine the role of the child narrator in L.P. Hartley's *The Go-Between* set in the early 1900s. Unlike Uranian poetry in which an older man observes young boys, the child narrator observes, unseen, the farmer Ted Burgess who has just emerged from bathing in the river and is lying in the sun. There are similarities in the male gaze held by Paul Morel and Leo Colston. Burgess' mature and well

²⁵Meyers *Homosexuality and Literature* 139.

developed body holds a fascination for Leo similar to that felt by Paul for his father:

I, whose only acquaintance was with bodies and minds developing, was suddenly confronted by maturity in its most undeniable form; and I wondered, what must it feel like to be him, master of those limbs which have passed beyond the need of gym and playing field, and exist for their own strength and beauty?²⁶

Leo and Paul's appraisals of physically mature men emphasize their own lack of development. Unlike Paul, whose observations include the intermediary presence of his mother, Leo plays the role of go-between and becomes an intermediary in the sexual activity between Burgess and Marian. Thus, he learns of passion like Paul, not through first-hand experience but as a voyeur whose innocence is exploited and corrupted by the manipulations of the adults around him. In his childish way, Leo makes it possible for Burgess to exercise his sexuality or manhood but like Paul becomes sexually and emotionally distorted through the process of his interaction in adult relationships.

When the gaze and the intermediary are abandoned to direct physical and sensual experience between men in Lawrence's works, as between Cyril and George, the holder of the gaze moves from his role as objectifying observer to a paradoxical state of submission through activity. Thus, while he forgoes his privileged if tenuous position of power—the power inherent within the male narrator who subjects another to his gaze, he gains another type of power through submission. Through submitting to non-sexual male interaction, whether in wrestling or bathing scenes, the Lawrentian male gains a physical knowledge or experience of the qualities he appreciates and covets in his male counterpart. He then attempts to fuse these with his own.

²⁶L.P. Hartley, *The Go-Between* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1953) 63.

This acts beyond a sexual dimension and can be demonstrated by considering Connie Chatterley's unobserved gaze upon Mellors as he bathes in his backyard in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Connie undergoes "a visionary experience" (LCL 66) which leaves her "rather annoyed. Why should she be made to stumble on these vulgar privacies!" (LCL 66). Clearly, physical interaction is preferable or superior to visual observation. Yet, unlike the Lawrentian male, Connie's passive interaction with the male object of her gaze is ultimately motivated and consummated by sexual desire, not her desire to possess, dominate and subordinate Mellors' masculinity.²⁷ This has led to the failure of his previous relationship with Bertha Coutts and is obviously, for Lawrence, the fault of Mrs Morel and Mrs Bates in their marriages.

Hence, seeking power through submission and passivity becomes a characteristic and a prerogative of the Lawrentian male. It is a non-sexual tactic in his quest not for "another kind of love," but another kind of male power in the novels. Yet the Lawrentian male's physical interaction with another man, as in the case of Cyril and George, generates expectation in the reader and critic alike. His observation of the male form through the narrative voice goes unnoticed however when an appropriate distance and reserve is maintained, as with Paul's observation of his father.

This distance is maintained in Uranian poetry even when the narrator is obviously enamoured of his subject. There is always a sense of looking, not touching. Yet, in the Uranians' case, the process of looking confers power upon the narrator who creates the activities he observes. An objective appraisal of the male form by a male narrator, however admiring or suggestive of sexual contact, is apparently preferable or

²⁷See Joseph Brennan's discussion of what he calls the "flow of vision" (Brennan 205) between Connie and Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

less objectionable to scenes in which male characters physically interact. Physical interaction is prohibited, especially in scenes of tenderness and intimacy between men. Lawrence's scenes of male interaction, such as his bathing scenes, are misconstrued when the necessary reserve is removed and the narrative perspective transcends acceptable social boundaries which define appropriate male contact.

In visual art a similar reserve must be observed in the reproduction of bathing scenes or male nudes. The action must be suspended. Subjects should be separate and unaware that their activities are being watched. This creates a sense of pleasure, power and security in the unobserved observer. Lawrence, defending Cézanne in his essay "Art and Morality" (1925) argues:

Perhaps from painting better than from any other art we can realise the subtlety of the distinction between what is dumbly *felt* to be moral, and what is felt to be immoral.²⁸

Lawrence asks his reader to abandon the security of seeing life as a camera might, through an objective distance and refers to civilized man's

slowly-formed habit of seeing just as the photographic camera sees...He sees what the kodak has taught him to see. And man, try as he may, is not a kodak.²⁹

Hence, a connection may be made between the privileged position of the holder of the gaze and Lawrence's condemnation of the "kodak vision" to which he attributed the contemporary response to art and life by mankind in general. Through the gaze we are able to suspend action and activity and may find some sense of identification in the image presented, such as we would find in a photograph of ourselves or somebody or something we recognize. When the objective gaze or

²⁸D.H. Lawrence, "Art and Morality," *Study of Thomas Hardy* 163.

²⁹Lawrence, "Art and Morality," *Study of Thomas Hardy* 164.

suspension is distorted our safety or power as an all-knowing observer is threatened. Lawrence does not use Cézanne's famous bathing scenes but, more effectively, his still-life paintings to illustrate this point. He argues that the Cézanne still-life "is *contrary* to the All-seeing Eye. Apples, to the eye of God, could not look like that, nor could a tablecloth, nor could a pitcher. So, it is *wrong*." He continues his argument thus:

What an apple looks like to an urchin, to a thrush, to a browsing cow, to Sir Isaac Newton, to a caterpillar, to a hornet, to a mackerel who finds one bobbing in the sea, I leave you to conjecture. But the All-seeing must have mackerel's eyes, as well as man's.

And this is the immorality in Cézanne: he begins to see more than the All-seeing Eye of humanity can possibly see, kodak-wise.³⁰

The intimacy portrayed between men in Lawrence's bathing scenes challenges the reader to see beyond his expectations and judgements in order to gain a different perspective or knowledge. Interaction between his male characters distorts the suspension of activity and our safe identification with the images portrayed. In this sense, Lawrence's transcending of the acceptable social limits of male intimacy acts in a similar way to Cézanne's distortion of still-life in visual art. To experience the transition necessitates what Lawrence saw as a new morality. The existing morality which condemns male interaction or intimacy or labels it negatively as homosexual limits the potential of the scene and the relationships depicted. An appreciation of Lawrence's new morality leads us beyond the suspension of interaction as safe, 'suspended' images with which we may comfortably identify. Instead, we find ourselves in a situation in which "[a]ll moves. And nothing is true, or good, or right, except in its own living relatedness to its own circumambient universe: to the things that are in the stream with it."³¹

³⁰Lawrence, "Art and Morality," *Study of Thomas Hardy* 166.

³¹Lawrence, "Art and Morality," *Study of Thomas Hardy* 167.

Furthermore, the novelist has a moral responsibility. According to Lawrence, in his essay "Morality and the Novel":

The novel is the highest complex of subtle inter-relatedness that man has discovered. Everything is true in its own time, place, circumstance, and untrue outside of its own place, time, circumstance. If you try to nail anything down, in the novel, either it kills the novel, or the novel gets up and walks away with the nail.

Morality in the novel is the trembling instability of the balance. When the novelist puts his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection, that is immorality.³²

Given this premise, had Lawrence's predilection been, as is so often argued by critics like Meyers and Sanders, either a conscious or unconscious homosexuality in his male characters' interaction, he would have been guilty of committing, by his own standards, an immoral act. Instead, his male characters, through their interaction, are distorted in terms of the way in which existing conventional morality guides the reader to view and judge the events which occur to them. The challenge, for the reader, is to reassess Lawrence's male characters or masculinity in general beyond the limits in which our eyes are trained to apprehend certain images of masculinity and modes of male behaviour.

Henry Scott Tuke was able to create a sense of intimacy between his male subjects which, like Lawrence's narratives, were enhanced by the power of natural surroundings. Tuke's bathing scenes emphasize the role of Nature as an appropriate site in which male intimacy may be developed and portrayed. His figures bathe in sunlight as well as water. In Tuke's paintings the sun plays an important role as a God-like, "All-seeing Eye," the masculine symbolic holder of the gaze.

In Lawrence's works, sun and water assume symbolic gender roles. The water in which his men bathe has redemptive and destructive qualities and becomes a symbol of Woman, especially the Mother. The

³²Lawrence, "Morality and the Novel," *Study of Thomas Hardy* 172.

sun with its association with fire is masculine and also possesses redemptive and destructive elements. The masculine role of the sun may be seen in Lawrence's story of that name. Lawrence connects the sun paradoxically with the dark influence of a sacred and regenerative masculinity to which Juliet symbolically offers herself:

The true Juliet lived in the dark flow of the sun within her deep body, like a river of dark rays circling, circling dark and violet round the sweet, shut bud of her womb.

She had always been mistress of herself, aware of what she was doing, and held tense to her own command. Now she felt inside her quite another sort of power, something greater than herself, darker and more savage, the element flowing upon her. Now she was vague, in the spell of a power beyond herself.³³

Juliet bathes herself in the sun whereas Lawrence's male characters immerse themselves in water, symbolically returning to the great image of motherhood and the womb. When Gerald has his first sexual encounter with Gudrun in *Women in Love* she is described as "the great bath of life...Mother and substance of all life...And he, child and man, received of her and was made whole. His pure body was almost killed" (WL 344).

The sun in both Lawrence and Tuke's work may be seen to transcend mortal man's limited vision and performs the function of being a God-like, masculine, "All-seeing Eye." The sun, in this sense, represents the power of the creative artist. This occurs visually in Tuke's work and is achieved by Lawrence through his narrative. As a natural element which pervades and dominates the natural environment, the sun may also suggest a homoerotic element which need not necessarily involve or convey sexual desire. Yet this expectation of homosexuality between the subjects depicted remains present as a threatening illusion to those trained in viewing art as 'suspended'. While the figures and activity are

³³D.H. Lawrence, *Sun* (Paris: Black Sun Press, 1928) 15.

'suspended', the contrasting and ever-present play of the sun upon the bodies and the surrounding landscape suggests an intimacy in which the male subjects and nature become immersed and indefinable. The sun, seeing all, connects the subjects to each other, the artist and their natural surroundings.

This intermingling in Lawrence and Tuke's bathing scenes prevents the male figures becoming images with which there may be a comfortable identification and suggests an intimacy which challenges socially acceptable limits of male intimacy. This immediately generates the expectation of a homosexual element which was remarked upon in criticism of Tuke's work. One reviewer in 1899 made the following observation of his bathing-scenes:

Mr Tuke seems to find nothing so congenial to his mind as to tackle a subject everybody else would shrink from...Masterly as is Mr Tuke's work, one cannot help feeling regret that he does not give his attention to a more acceptable subject.³⁴

The dominating influence of the sun in Tuke's work may be clearly seen in *Two Boys on a Beach (A Study in Bright Sunlight)* (1909). Tuke is not trying to portray homosexuality in the scene but to depict a form of male intimacy or homoeroticism in which the qualities of innocence and liberty are stressed. Nudity is therefore incidental in his depiction of *Lovers of the Sun* (1922) in which some of the figures are clothed and some are not. This is also illustrated by the intimacy depicted between the two men in *Noonday Heat* (1903) of which a later, untrousered version was reproduced in 1911. The presence of the second, unclothed figure in the later version does little to enhance the already highly suggestive homoeroticism between the two subjects lying in the sun. Yet there is no physical contact between them at all.

³⁴*Cornish Echo* 24 March, 1899 rpt Cooper 43.

Tuke's male figures become a part of the admired landscape into which they so easily blend. This is evident in the bathing scenes which emphasize, even in their titles, the colours and qualities of the natural environment. This may be seen in *Ruby, Gold and Malachite* (1901) and *Aquamarine* (1928-29).

Yet when Tuke approaches the classical figure in his art there is a strong sense of contrivance which contrasts plainly with the outdoor paintings. His abandoned *Endymion* (1893) and the completed *Cupid and Sea Nymphs* (1898-99) lack the lustre and vibrancy of, for example, his *Bathing Group* (c1913). In the latter, the standing subject appears almost god-like in stance and stature. The subject assumes a god-like role within nature which cannot be suggested by Tuke through tradition or classical allusion.

The Uranians, unlike Lawrence and Tuke, used Classical imagery in their writings to express forbidden yearnings. Smith's study reveals that their themes may be discerned from classical allusions within "Uranian deceptive topics: Ganymede, Adonis, Hyacinthus, Narcissus, Hylas, a veritable gallery of beautiful Greek youths, their classical status donating...an assurance of impunity."³⁵ The natural environment, such as the water in which the boys bathe or the sun in which they bask covertly conveys the Uranian narrator's desire for physical contact which is not an element in the depiction of Nature in the work of Lawrence or Tuke. This can be seen in Arthur Stanley's poem "August Blue" about a boy bathing and which was, coincidentally, inspired by Tuke's painting of the same name housed in the Tate Gallery:

And as you stand, so slim, upright
The glad waves grow and yearn
To clasp you circling in their might

³⁵ d'Arch Smith 31.

To kiss with lips that burn.³⁶

Nature, in Uranian poetry, experiences physical contact with the male subject of the poem denied to the narrator by convention or morality. Yet this role of Nature can be traced to Christopher Marlowe's "Hero and Leander." Marlowe follows the Ovidean tradition in which the poet assumes a non-moralizing stance regarding the male intimacy he relates. Neptune's desire is revealed through the play of the sea upon Leander's body:

The god put *Helles* bracelet on his arme,
 And swore the sea should never do him harme.
 He clapt his plumpe cheekes, with his tresses playd,
 And smiling wantonly, his love bewrayd,
 He watcht his armes, and as they opend wide
 At every stroke, betwixt them would he slide
 And steale a kisse, and then run out and daunce,
 And as he turnd, cast many a lustfull glaunce,
 And threw him gawdie toies to please his eie,
 And dive into the water, and there prie
 Upon his brest, his thighs, and everie lim,
 And up againe, and close beside him swim,
 And talke of love.³⁷

The sea, personified as Neptune, winds caressingly about Leander's idealized male form but it is not merely his physical beauty that is admired. Neptune is also, like the Uranian narrators, enamoured of the innocent, compassionate and noble personal qualities of the subject.

While the bathing scene in Lawrence's work glorifies the beauty of the naked male form it also serves the practical purpose of illustrating and recording the degeneration of male physical beauty to ruination. This is evident at the conclusion of *The White Peacock* when George washes before dinner and Cyril notes:

³⁶Arthur Stanley, *Love Lyrics* (London: Gay and Bird, 1894) 15, rpt d'Arch Smith 92-93, Reade 348 and Fussell 303.

³⁷Christopher Marlowe, "Hero and Leander," *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973) 449-50. lines 179-91.

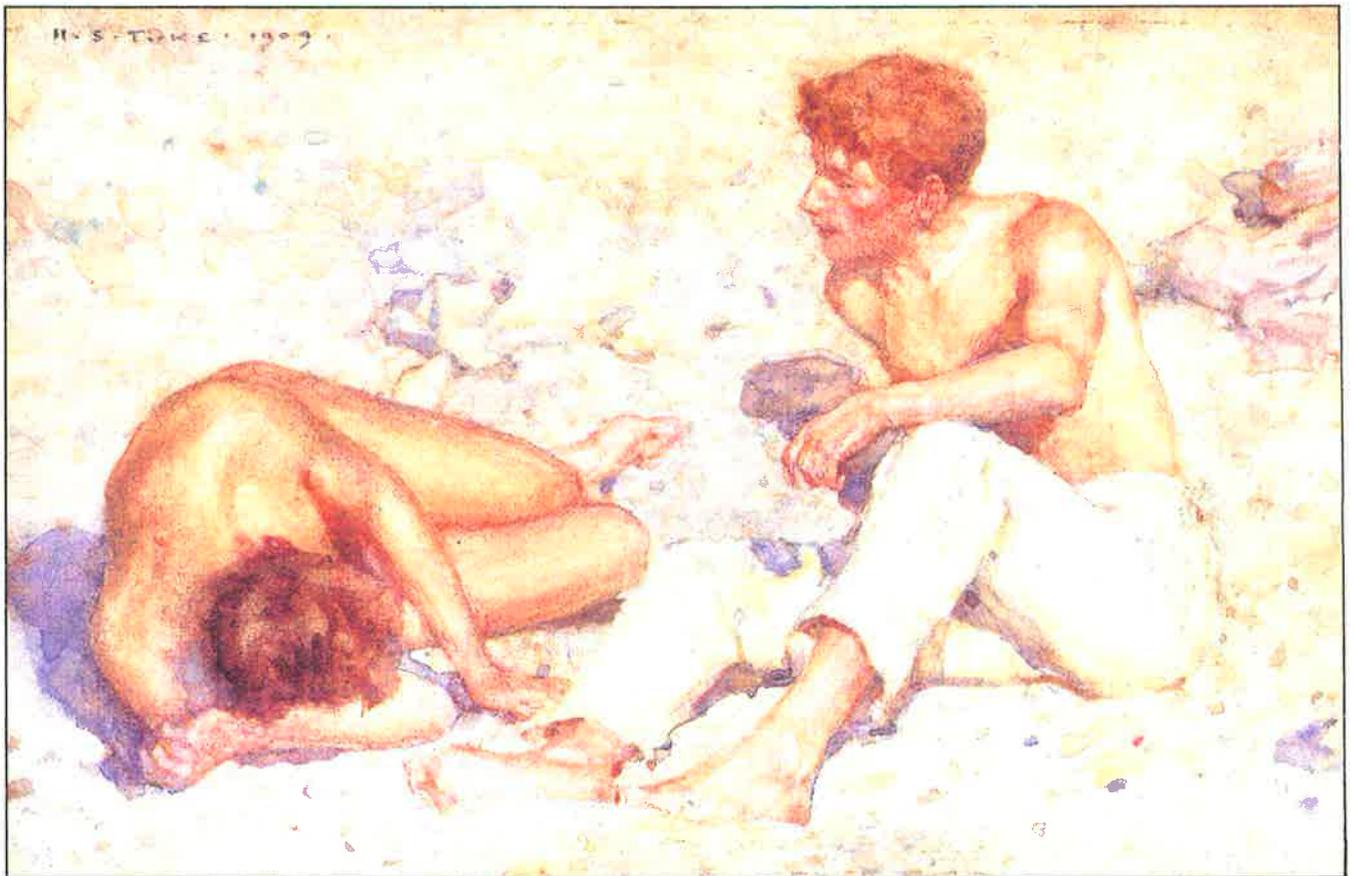


PLATE 3. Henry Scott Tuke, *Two Boys on a Beach (A Study in Bright Sunlight)* (1909), watercolour, (13 x 21 cms.), Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, rpt Cooper 35.



PLATE 4. Henry Scott Tuke, *Lovers of the Sun* (1922), oil on canvas, (112 x 92 cms.), Forbes Magazine Collection, New York, rpt Cooper 54.

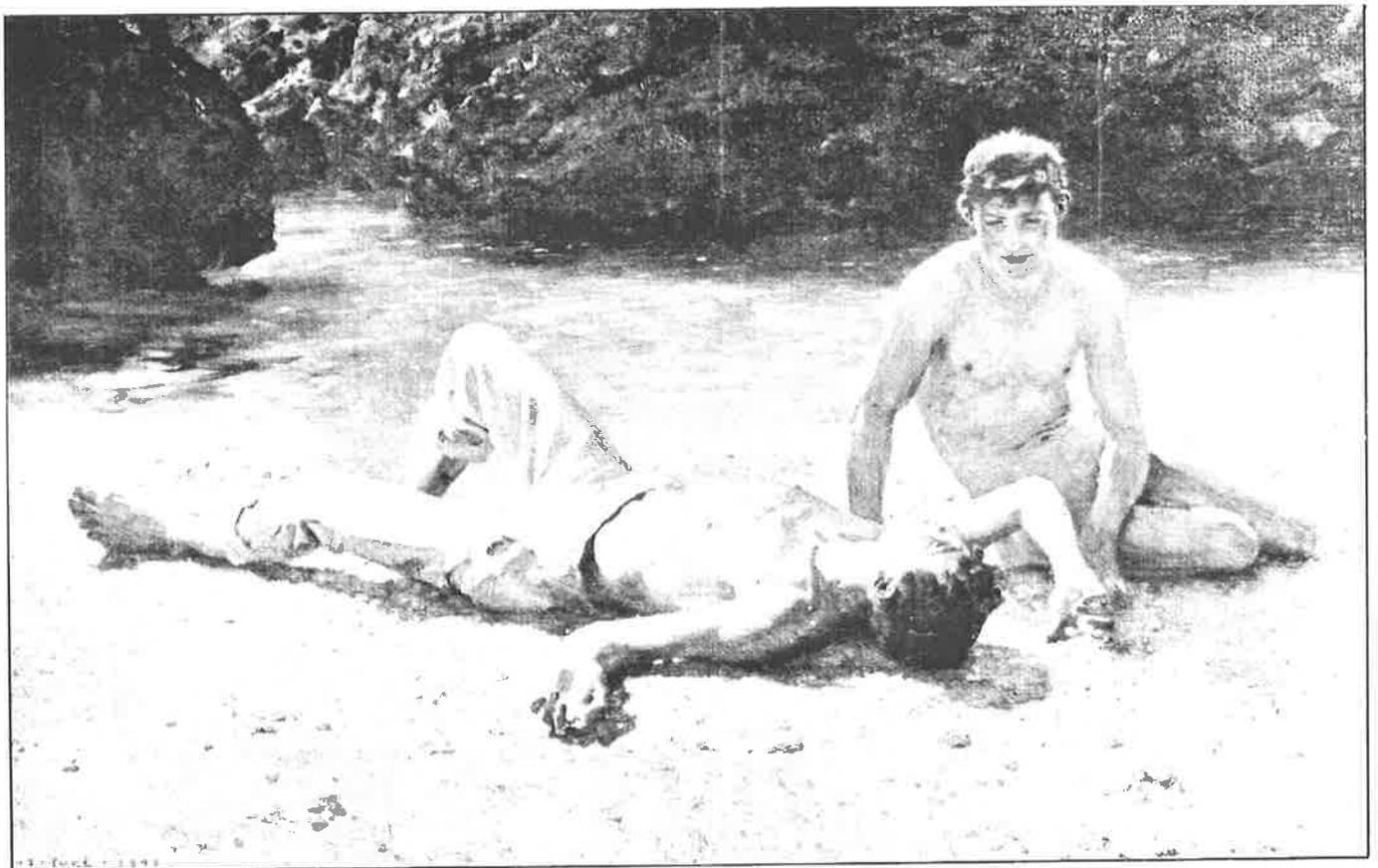


PLATE 5. Henry Scott Tuke, *Noonday Heat* (1903), oil on canvas, (81 x 132 cms.), Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, Falmouth, rpt Cooper 34.

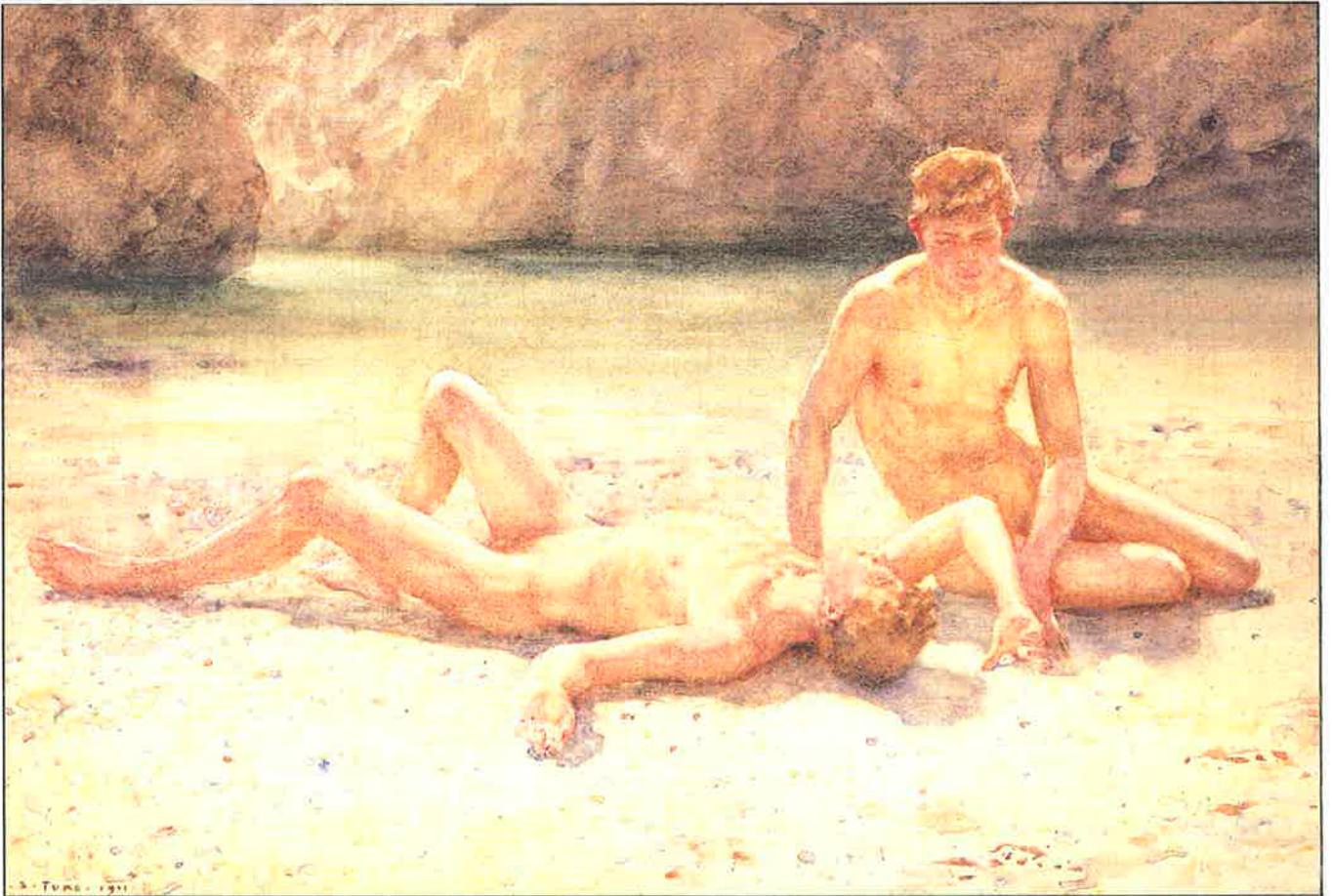


PLATE 6. Henry Scott Tuke, *Noonday Heat (Bathing Group)* (1911), watercolour, (40 x 59.5 cms.), Private collection, rpt Cooper 37.

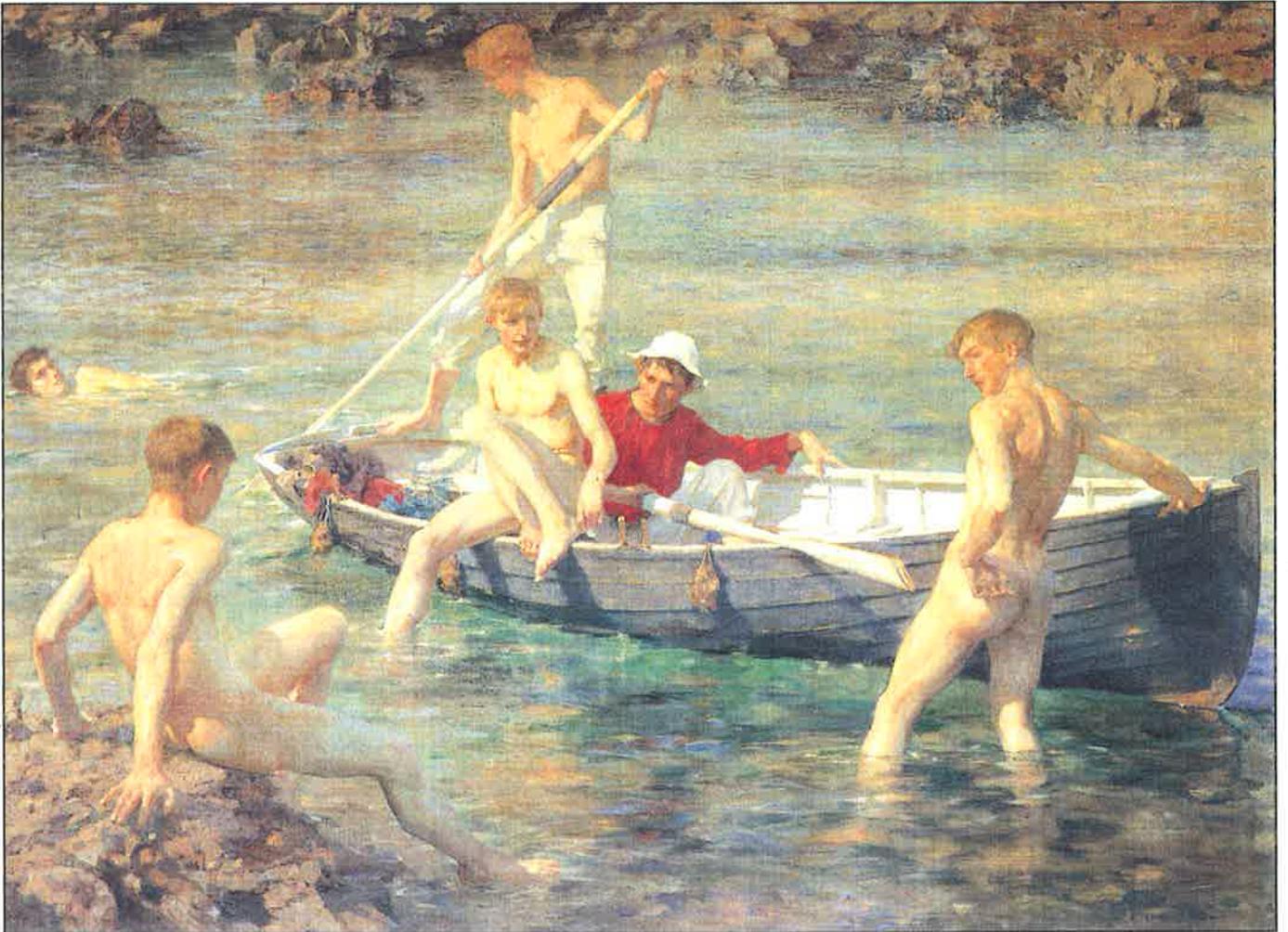


PLATE 7. Henry Scott Tuke, *Ruby, Gold and Malachite* (1901), oil on canvas, (117 x 159 cms.), Guildhall Art Gallery, Corporation of London, rpt Cooper 33.



PLATE 8. Henry Scott Tuke, *Aquamarine* (1928-9), oil on canvas, (66 x 97 cms.), Private Collection, rpt Cooper 65.

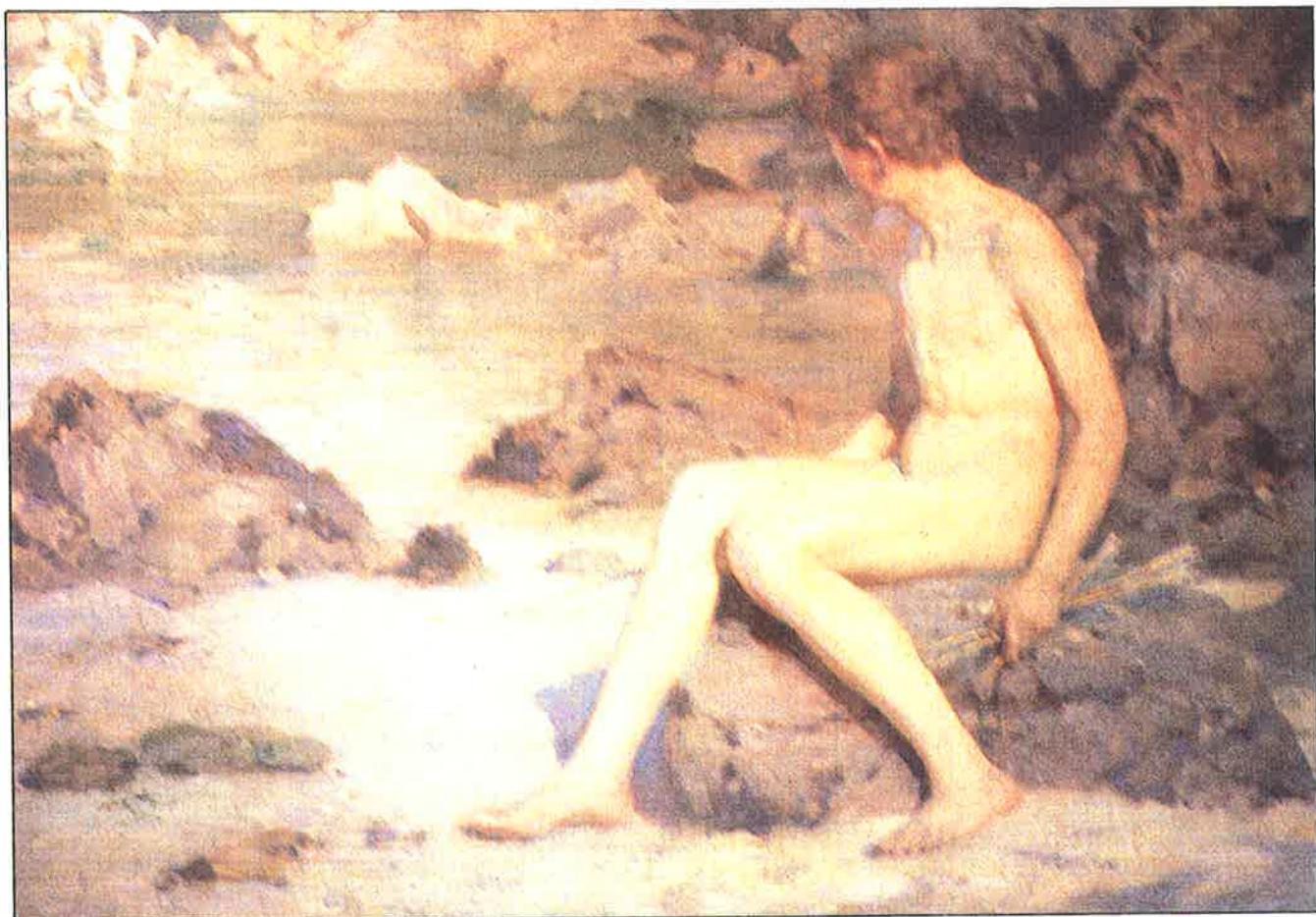


PLATE 9. Henry Scott Tuke, *Cupid and Sea Nymphs* (1898-9), oil on canvas, rejected by the Royal Academy, shown at the New Gallery 1899, rpt Cooper 21.

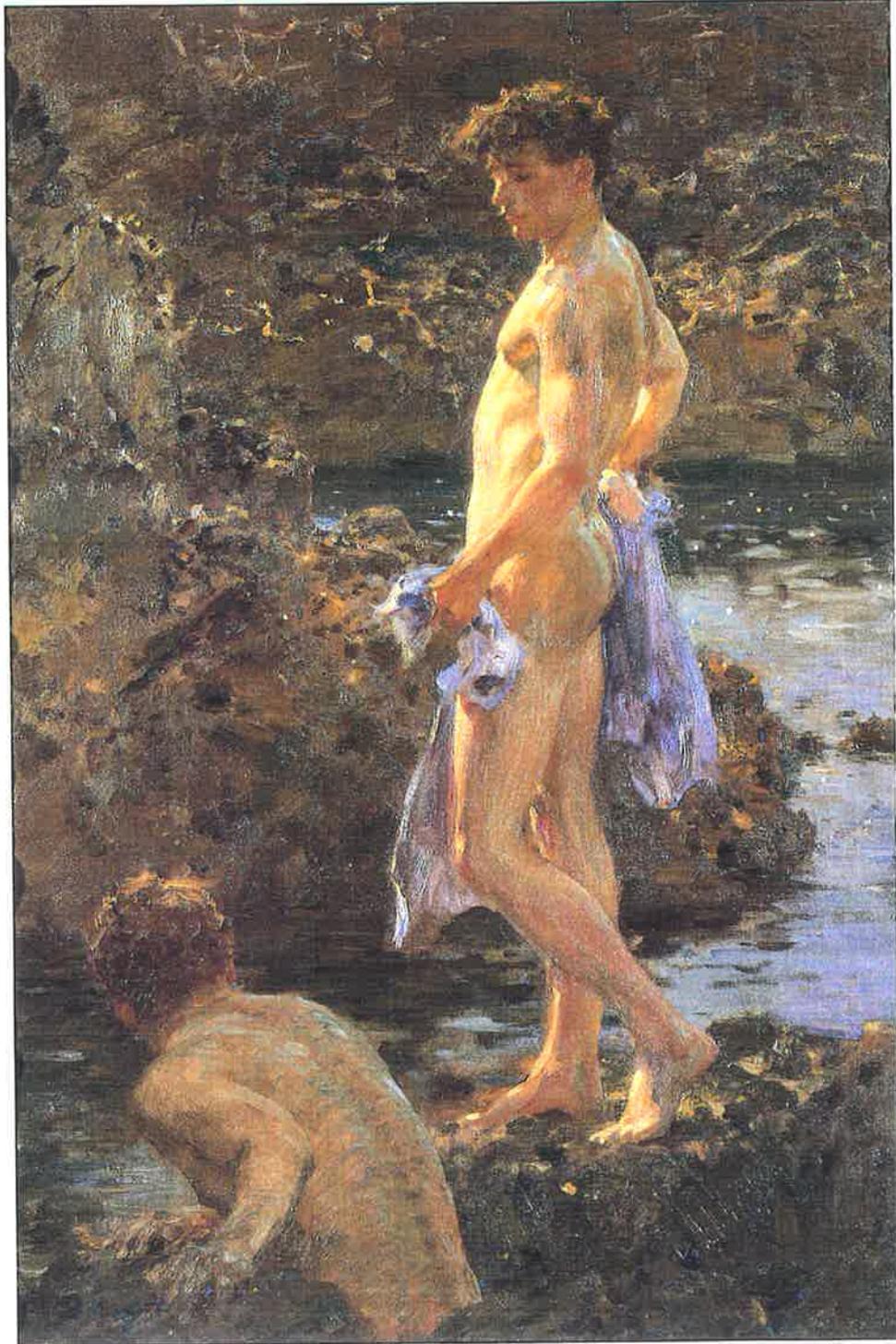


PLATE 10. Henry Scott Tuke, *Bathing Group* (c1913), oil on canvas, (85 x 60 cms.), Royal Academy of Arts, London, rpt Cooper 39.

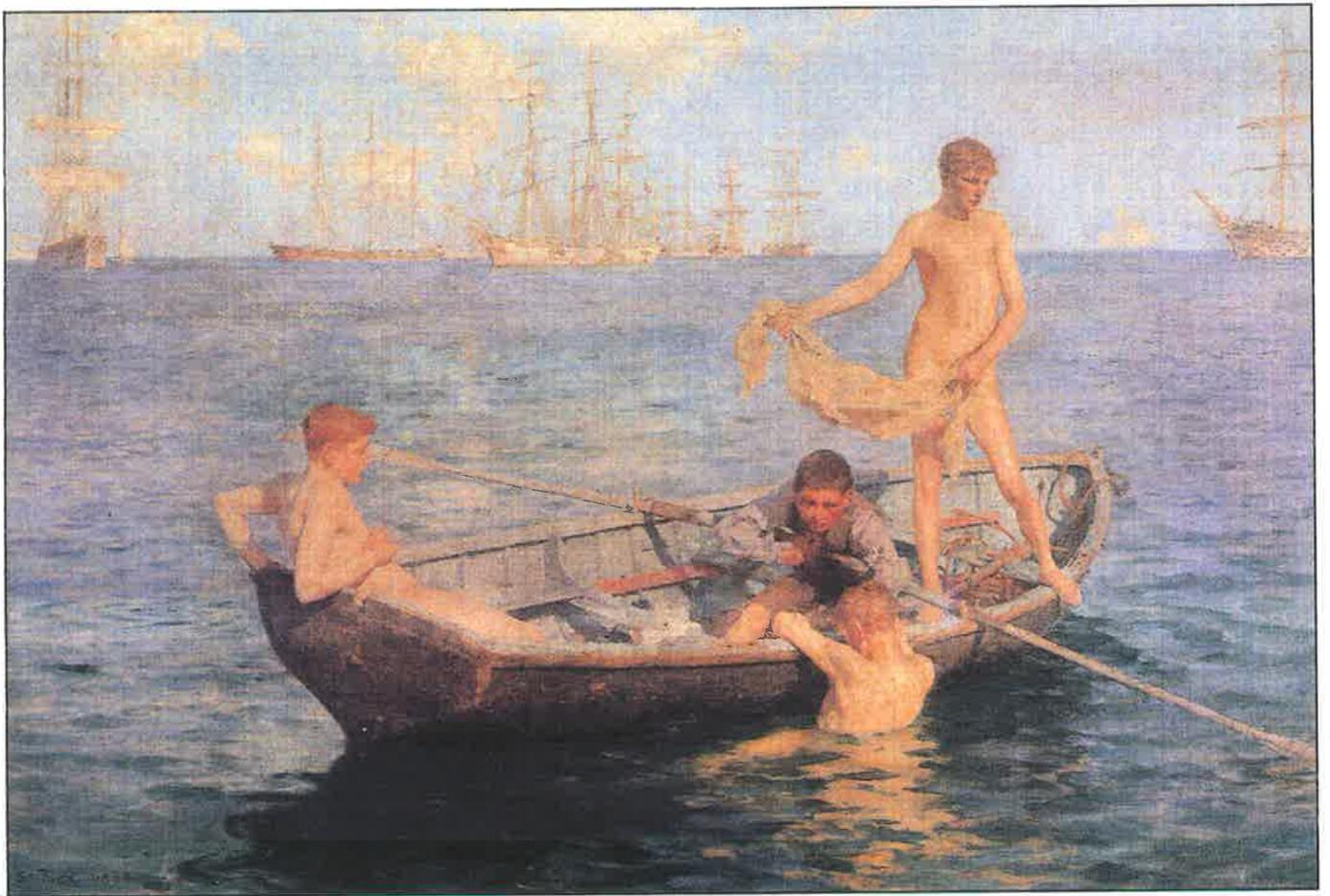


PLATE 11. Henry Scott Tuke, *August Blue* (1893-4), oil on canvas, (122 x 183 cms.), Tate Gallery, London, rpt Cooper 28.

When he took off the jacket of his pyjamas to wash himself I felt shocked. His arms seemed thin, and he had bellied, and was bowed and unsightly. I remembered the morning we swam in the mill-pond. I remembered that he was now in the prime of his life. I looked at his bluish feeble hands as he laboriously washed himself. The soap once slipped from his fingers as he was picking it up, and fell, rattling the pot loudly. It startled us, and he seemed to grip the sides of the washstand to steady himself. Then he went on with his slow, painful toilet. As he combed his hair he looked at himself with dull eyes of shame. (WP 321)

The bathing scenes between Cyril and George invite comparison with Ursula Brangwen and Winifred Inger's openly lesbian relationship in *The Rainbow*. Lawrence details this in his chapter entitled "Shame." As Lawrence uses this word to depict George's self-degeneration so he invokes a similar connotation in its use to define Winifred and Ursula's relationship. His approach to homosexuality, in this case between women, is clearly negative.³⁸

The Uranians, however, use "Shame" in a positive sense, as a synonym for homosexual love.³⁹ This can be seen in the following poem by Lord Alfred Douglas, the "Bosie" of Oscar Wilde's trial. In "Two Loves" Douglas describes a dream in which two youths represent hetero and homosexual love. The first

did joyous seem

And fair and blooming, and a sweet refrain
 Came from his lips; he sang of pretty maids
 And joyous love of comely girl and boy...
 But he that was his comrade walked aside;
 He was full sad and sweet, and his large eyes
 Were strange with wondrous brightness, staring wide
 With gazing; and he sighed with many sighs
 That moved me,

The sad youth is approached by the sympathetic dreamer:

³⁸See Jeffrey Weeks, *Coming Out. Homosexual Politics in Britain, from the Nineteenth Century to the Present* (London: Quartet Books, 1979) 105 regarding Lawrence's "life-denying" portrayal of lesbianism. Banford's relationship with March in "The Fox" also invites comparison.

³⁹See d'Arch Smith 31.

I fell a-weeping and I cried, 'Sweet youth,
 Tell me why, sad and sighing, thou dost rove
 These pleasant realms? I pray thee speak me sooth
 What is thy name?' He said, 'My name is Love.'
 Then straight the first did turn himself to me
 And cried, 'He lieth, for his name is Shame,
 But I am Love, and I was wont to be
 Alone in this fair garden, till he came
 Unasked by night; I am true Love, I fill
 The hearts of boy and girl with mutual flame.'
 Then sighing, said the other, 'Have thy will,
 I am the Love that dare not speak its name.'⁴⁰

The theme is evoked again throughout his "In Praise of Shame" in which he concludes "'Of all sweet passions Shame is loveliest.'"⁴¹

It is important to separate certain elements in Winifred and Ursula's lesbian association from those experienced between men in their attempts toward a non-sexual intimacy. Firstly, Ursula's attraction for Winifred does not transcend or supplement an existing heterosexual attraction or relationship. Instead,

[i]t was after Skrebensky had gone that there sprang up between the mistress and the girl that strange awareness, then the unspoken intimacy that sometimes connects two people who may never even make each other's acquaintance. (R 313)

Ursula's attraction toward her schoolmistress is emphasized during her swimming class. The rural splendour of the pastoral environment in which Lawrence sets his male interaction is replaced with the rather clinical image of an indoor swimming-pool in which "the water was glimmering pale emerald-green, a lovely, glimmering mass of colour within the whitish marble-like confines. Overhead the light fell softly" (R 313). Winifred's appearance and Lawrence's allusions to Diana and Grecian perfection recall the Uranians' use of classical imagery in their

⁴⁰Lord Alfred Douglas, "Two Loves," *The Chameleon* (December, 1894) rpt. Reade 360-62.

⁴¹Lord Alfred Douglas, "In Praise of Shame," *The Chameleon* (December, 1894) rpt. Reade 362.

descriptions of an admired subject. Yet these seem out of place in the modern, unnatural environment of the indoor pool:

Miss Inger came out, dressed in a rust-red tunic like a Greek girl's, tied round the waist, and a red silk handkerchief round her head. How lovely she looked. Her knees were so white and strong and proud, and she was firm-bodied as Diana. (R 313)

Eventually they bathe in the natural environment but it is at night without the presence of a symbolic masculine sun. This is replaced with "ice-cold" rain. Winifred has to carry Ursula into the water where "the elder held the younger close against her, close, as they went down, and by the side of the water, she put her arms round her and kissed her" (R 315). Ursula's reaction, although pleasurable, also

made her cold, and a deep bottomless silence welled up in her, as if bottomless darkness were returning upon her.

So the heat vanished away, she was chilled, as if from waking up. She ran indoors, a chill, non-existent thing, wanting to get away. She wanted the light, the presence of other people, the external connexion with the many. Above all she wanted to lose herself among natural surroundings. (R 316)

It seems, in this instance, that Lawrence's indictment of homosexuality as unnatural in his letters is borne out by his treatment of the theme in his fiction. This is substantiated by Ursula's rejection of Winifred: "The fine, unquenchable flame of the younger girl would consent no more to mingle with the perverted life of the elder woman" (R 319). Lydia Blanchard makes the following points about Ursula's failed relationship with Winifred:

The reasons for this rejection of Winifred are more complex than shame about single-sex relationships, however. Although the episode does show Lawrence's hostility toward lesbians, that hostility is not, in fact, significantly different from Lawrence's attitude toward homosexuals. The relationship fails because Winifred is corrupt; she wishes both to serve Ursula and also to impose her will on the younger girl. Such a power relationship, in which one or the other is stronger, is always destructive in

Lawrence, whether it involves a man and a woman, or two men, or two women.⁴²

Where there exists an allusion to homosexuality between men, Lawrence appears similarly disapproving. This may be seen in his depiction of the younger Tom Brangwen to whom Winifred is delivered as an apparently suitable mate. His relationship with a London engineer of whom he had been a pupil suggests that a homosexual element was in place. This is further signified by

the breach between him and his chief which was never explained...In his dark eyes was a deep misery which he wore with the same ease and pleasantness as he wore his close-sitting clothes. (R 225)

A similar allusion occurs in *Women in Love* through the introduction of Loerke and Leitner:

It was evident that the two men, who had travelled and lived together in the last degree of intimacy, had now reached the stage of loathing. Leitner hated Loerke with an injured, writhing impotent hatred, and Loerke treated Leitner with a fine-quivering contempt and sarcasm. Soon the two would have to go apart. (WL 422)⁴³

These male relationships are presented as self-destructive and limited, existing only as minor asides to the overall plot of the novels. They are firmly distinguished from the main relationships between men in which an eternal, transcendental union is sought and emphasized yet sabotaged by the Lawrentian male's need for power.

This theme is addressed in the symbolic, ritualistic bathing scene which occurs between Ramón and Cipriano in *The Plumed Serpent*. At this later stage, Lawrence's writing on male power tends toward

⁴²Lydia Blanchard, "The 'Real Quartet' of *Women in Love*: Lawrence on Brothers and Sisters," Partlow Jnr. and Moore 203.

⁴³The words "together in the last degree of intimacy" were emended by Lawrence to "together, sharing the same bedroom" on 4 February 1921 in answer to Martin Secker's request of 28 January 1921 prior to the publication of *Women in Love* in England on 10 June 1921. See *WL* Explanatory notes 577 and Farmer, Vasey and Worthen, introduction, *WL* xlviii.

unintentional humour or even self-parody but for the purposes of this discussion it is necessary to address the scene in context with his preceding male bathing episodes.

In order to gain power, Cipriano must submit passively to Ramón's ministrations as he is initiated into a divine form of manhood. This confers upon him a God-like status as he becomes "the Living Huitzilopochtli" (*PS* 371). This episode encapsulates many of Lawrence's previous ritualistic episodes. Bound and blindfolded, Ramón's hands wander over Cipriano's body, including "the secret places" (*PS* 368) that Lilly also handles during his attentions toward Aaron in *Aaron's Rod*. Maintaining this link, they return after their swim "to the house to rub oil in their limbs" (*PS* 369). Their communion, of course, generates the obligatory lapse into unconsciousness common to the experiences of Paul and Baxter in *Sons and Lovers* and Birkin and Gerald in *Women in Love*. Their swim is not detailed but concludes the initiation, confirming within Cipriano that he has transcended mortal experience:

"I went far," he said
 "To where there is no beyond?" said Ramón.
 "Yes, there." (*PS* 369)

This rather bland acknowledgment is reiterated when Cipriano returns to Kate and informs her:

"I am going to be the living Huitzilopochtli," he said.
 "Are you? When? Does it feel queer?"—Kate was afraid of his eyes, they seemed inhuman.
 "On Thursday. The day of Huitzilopochtli is to be Thursday. Won't you sit beside me, and be the wife of me when I am a god?"
 "But do you feel you *are* a god?" she asked, querulous.
 He turned his eyes on her strangely.
 "I have been," he said. "And I have come back. But I belong there, where I went."
 "Where?"
 "Where there is no beyond, and the darkness sinks into the water, and waking and sleeping are one thing." (*PS* 370)

Carol Siegel argues that "some of Lawrence's nonfictional writings reveal his dedication to allowing what he perceived as an external, female voice intrude into his work to challenge the voice he identified with himself."⁴⁴ This is also evident in his fiction. In *The Plumed Serpent*, the attainment of masculinity and the experience of male intimacy with Ramón transcends Cipriano's relationship with Kate which, however, is still necessary. Understandably confused by this situation and her role therein, Kate acknowledges this in discussion with Cipriano:

"I never understood mystical things. They make me uneasy."
 "Is it mystical when I come in to you?"
 "No," said Kate. "Surely that is physical."
 "So is the other, only further..." (PS 370)

Kate is further puzzled when Cipriano must return to Ramón.

"Yes. Go back to him. You only care about him, and your Living Quetzalcoatl and your Living Huitzilopochtli.—I am only a woman."

"No, Malintzi, you are more. You are more than Kate, you are Malintzi."

"I am not! I am only Kate, and I am only a woman. I mistrust all that other stuff."

"I am more than just a man, Malintzi.—Don't you see that?"

"No!" said Kate. "I don't see it. Why *should* you be more than just a man?"

"Because I am the Living Huitzilopochtli..." (PS 371)

This rather circular argument is reminiscent of Birkin's discussion with Ursula at the conclusion of *Women in Love* during which she insists:

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

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

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

"I don't believe that," he answered. (WL 481)

In *The Plumed Serpent* male interaction confers an accompanying deification, through association, upon the woman involved. This presumably counteracts any objections she may have regarding the

⁴⁴Siegel 7.

supplementary male relationship. Lawrence's insistence upon gender binarisms and the dichotomy between female instinct and male intellect or "will" remain in place throughout his work and undermine his attempts to find love with another man. Love is defined and sought in terms of power. Women like Kate recognize this yet become instruments in the attainment of that power.

Lawrence's bathing-scenes transcend the wider narrative genre established within the period. Instead of glorifying homosexuality they are used, especially in Ursula and Winifred's case, as a condemnation. His bathing-scenes between men stress the importance of transcending the self and the heterosexual relationship in order to establish a non-sexual communion with another man in a symbolic, natural environment. In this sense, they can be seen to have more in common with the visual representations of male intimacy produced by Henry Scott Tuke. Through interaction with another man within the natural environment, the Lawrentian male attempts to transcend the patriarchal social boundaries which limit and prescribe appropriate male conduct.

4. The Australian Novels

There is a great fascination in Australia. But for the remains of a fighting conscience, I would stay. One can be absolutely indifferent to the world one has been previously condemned to. It is rather like falling out of a picture and finding oneself on the floor, with all the gods and men left behind in the picture. If I stayed here six months I should have to stay for ever—there is something so remote and far off and utterly indifferent to our European world, in the very air. I should go a bit further away from Sydney, and go 'bush.'

Letter to S.S. Koteliansky from Wyewurk, Thirroul, New South Wales, 9 July, 1922 (*Letters IV 275*).

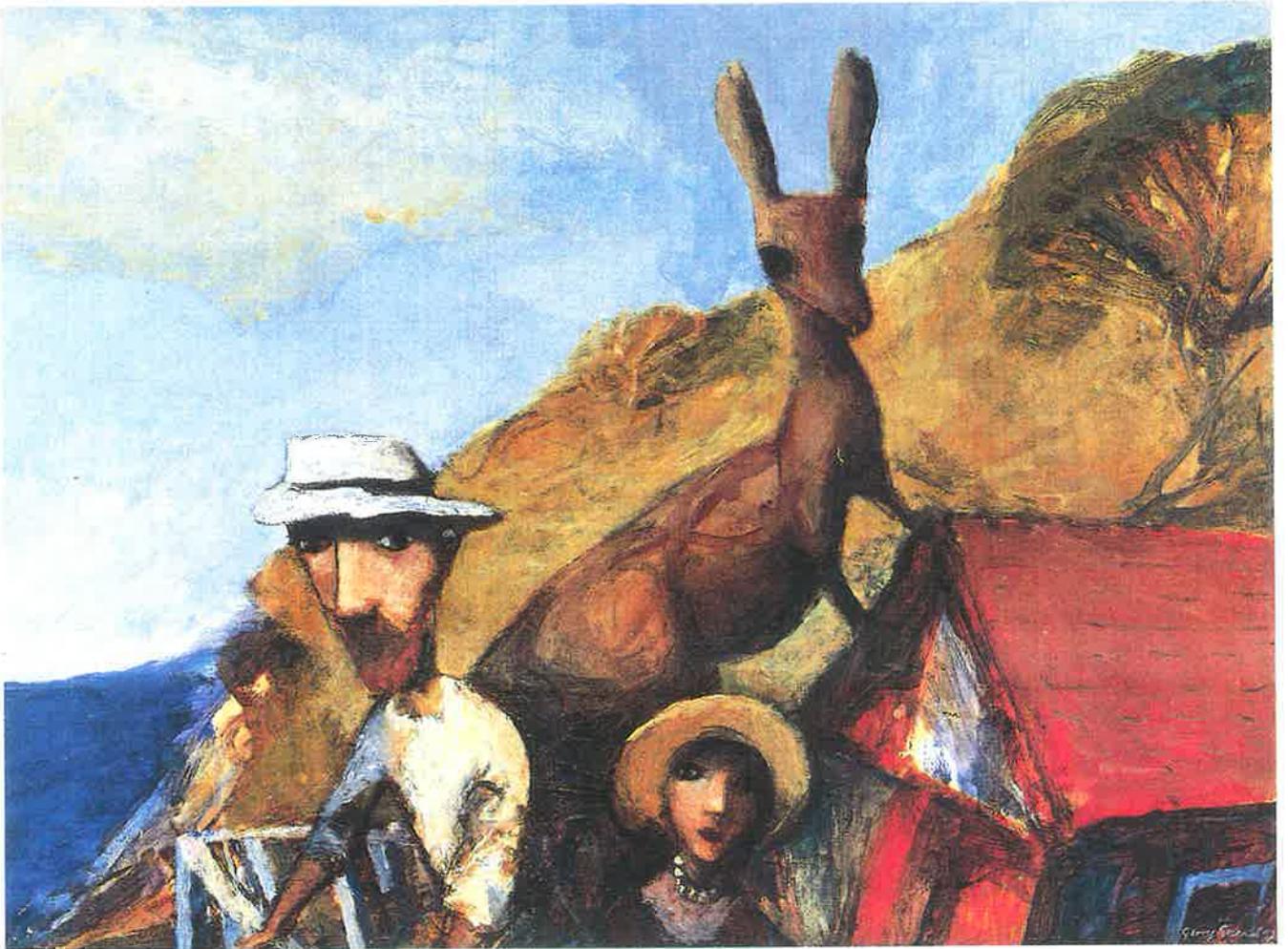


PLATE 12. Garry Shead, *Kangaroo* (1992), oil on board, (91 x 121 cm.), rpt Garry Shead, *The D.H. Lawrence Paintings* (Sydney: Craftsman, forthcoming).



PLATE 13. Garry Shead, *The Arrival* (1992), oil on board, (91.5 x 122 cm.)



PLATE 14. Garry Shead, *Thirroul* (1992), oil on board, (91 x 121 cm.)

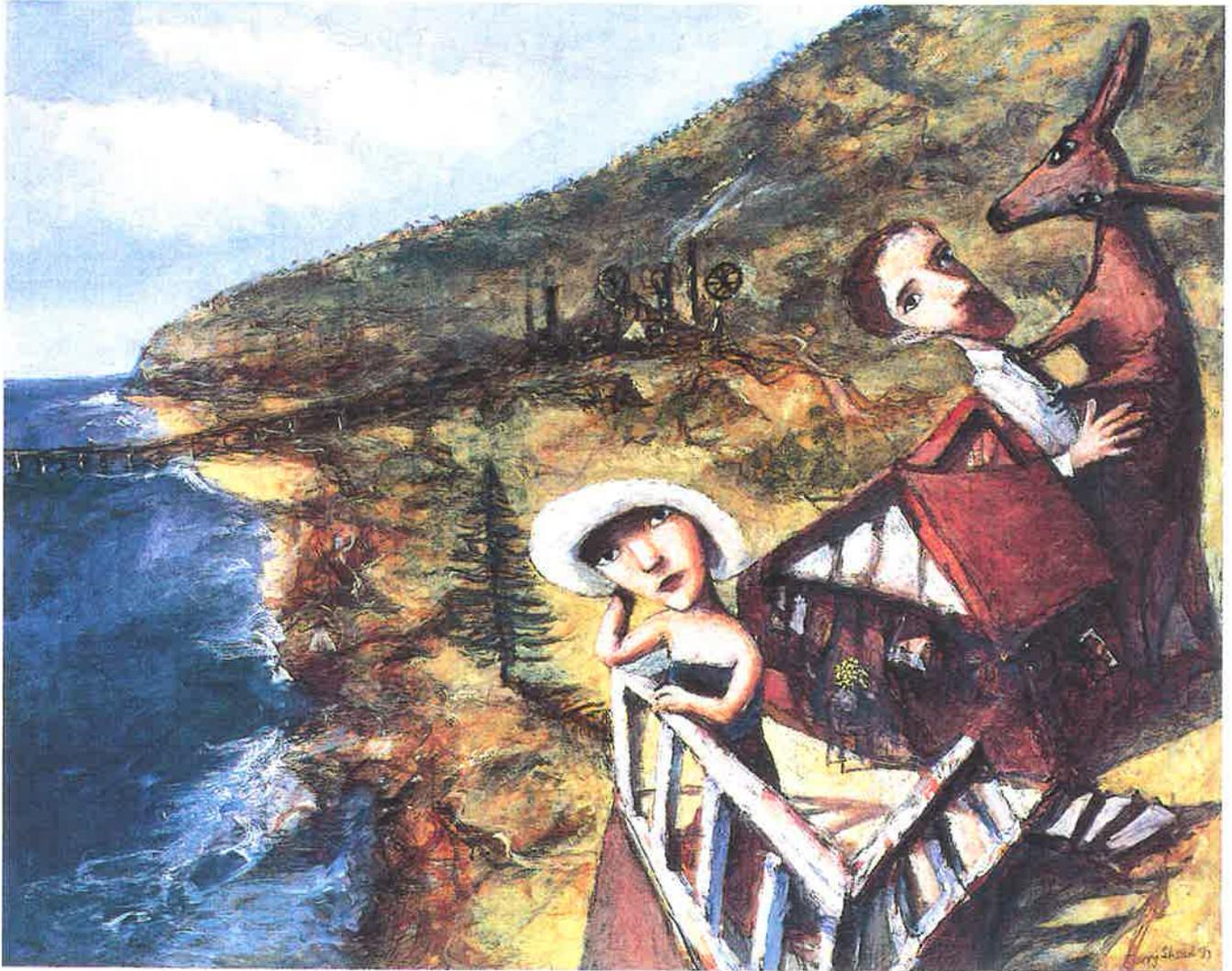


PLATE 15. Garry Shedd, *The Struggle* (1992), oil on board, (122 x 152.5 cm.)

As these images from Garry Shead's forthcoming publication *The D.H. Lawrence Paintings* demonstrate, Lawrence's Australian writings continue to generate artistic and critical responses to his perception of Australia's landscape and cultural identity. Shead's work, like Margaret Barbalet's novel *Steel Beach* (1988) and Joseph Davis' biography *D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul* (1989), provides another notable, imaginative contribution to what Andrew Moore terms the "booming" D.H. Lawrence industry in Australia.¹

The paradigmatic episodes between men involving violence, nurturing and the bathing-scene incorporate new perspectives in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush*, the latter co-authored with Mollie Skinner.² The men in these Australian novels define themselves and establish their power structures against a nation they perceive as a female Other. This perception evolves through representations of a feminized landscape. This is expressed in the various male responses to the land, especially the bush.³ The Australian environment and the effects of World War One generate new voices and different arguments within Lawrence's Australian texts. Yet these texts do not provide a definitive ideology or philosophy to reconcile the problems and dilemmas they raise.

¹Andrew Moore, "Thirroul and the Literary Establishment Strike Back," *Overland* 120 (1990): 41. See also Margaret Barbalet, *Steel Beach* (Melbourne: Penguin, 1988) and Joseph Davis *D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul* (Sydney: Collins Imprint, 1989).

²While a detailed examination of the collaboration between Lawrence and Skinner is not within the scope of this study, detailed accounts may be found in Paul Eggert's 'Introduction' to the Cambridge edition of *The Boy in the Bush* and Charles Rossman, "The Boy in the Bush in the Lawrence Canon," Partlow Jr. and Moore, 185-94. Using Eggert and Rossman's studies as a guide, I have dealt mainly with the sections and aspects of the novel for which Lawrence is responsible, in particular the creation of Hilda Blessington, the killing of Easu by Grant and the conclusion. For further information see M. L. Skinner, "D.H. Lawrence and *The Boy in the Bush*," *Meanjin* 9. 4 (1950): 260-63 and "D.H. Lawrence," *Southerly* 13. 4 (1952): 233-35. See also Katherine Susannah Prichard, "Lawrence in Australia," *Meanjin* 9. 4 (1950): 252-59; Marjorie Rees, "Mollie Skinner and D.H. Lawrence," *Westerly* 1 (1964): 41-49 and Harriet Gay, "Mollie Skinner: D.H. Lawrence's Australian Catalyst," *Biography* 3. 4 (1980): 331-47.

³See also John B. Humma, "Of Bits, Beasts, and Bush: The Interior Wilderness in D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo*," *South Atlantic Review* 51. 1 (1986): 83-100.

In *Kangaroo* the Lawrentian male, Richard Lovat Somers, is pursued by three representatives of the dominant masculinist social orders which might entice and bind him. Jack Callcott, Willie Struthers and Ben Cooley or Kangaroo attempt to establish an allegiance with Somers which necessitates his submission to their personal and political ideals.⁴ The power dynamics which operate in these relationships prevent the establishment of an ideal and transcendental male love.

This confirms the essential loneliness and isolation which can be seen in Somers' response to the new antipodean environment. He feels

scared and anxious. Things seemed so different. Perhaps everything *was* different from all he had known. Perhaps if St. Paul and Hildebrand and Darwin had lived south of the equator, we might have known the world all different, quite different.
(K 10-11)

⁴As I am concerned with the relationships between individual men in this study this is not the place to expand on Lawrence's perception of the political nature of Australian society beyond its symbolic role as representative of the dominant masculine structure which intrudes upon those personal relationships. For further information see John C. Alexander, "D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo*: Fantasy, Fact or Fiction?" *Meanjin* 24. 2 (1965): 179-97; Michael Wilding, "'A New Show': The Politics of *Kangaroo*," *Southerly* 30 (1970): 20-40 and Robert Lee, "D.H. Lawrence and the Australian Ethos," *Southerly* 2 (1973): 144-51. While there are some remarkable similarities between the structure of the Digger's Clubs outlined in *Kangaroo* and the New Guard Movement which became prominent in New South Wales during the early 1930s, ten years after this novel had been completed, there is not the scope within this study to enter the continuing debate generated by Robert Darroch's *D.H. Lawrence in Australia* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1981). Darroch argues that *Kangaroo* is based upon Lawrence's knowledge of a secret army within the King and Empire Alliance, and that the characters of Callcott and Kangaroo draw upon his alleged meetings with Major-General Sir Charles Rosenthal and Major William John Rendal Scott. He continues this argument in "D.H. Lawrence's Australia," *Overland* 113 (1988): 34-8; "*Kangaroo*: The Darroch Thesis," *Meridian* 11. 1 (1992): 23-30 and "More on Lawrence in Australia," *DHLR* 20. 1 (1988): 39-59. Darroch's views appear to be supported by C.M.H. Clark's account of Lawrence's visit to Australia in his *A History of Australia*, vol. 6 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1987) 183-85 and Andrew Moore's, "The Historian as Detective," *Overland* 113 (1988): 39-44 and "Anticipating the Cambridge *Kangaroo*: A Reply to Bruce Steele," *Meridian* 11. 1 (1992): 31-37. For contrasting points of view see Edward St John, "D.H. Lawrence and Australia's Secret Army," *Quadrant* 26. 6 (1992): 53-57; Paul Eggert, "Lawrence, The Secret Army, and the West Australian Connexion: Molly Skinner," *Westerly* 27. 4 (1982): 122-26 and Bruce Steele, "*Kangaroo*: Fiction and Fact," *Meridian* 10. 1 (1991): 19-34. For an overview see David Ellis, "Lawrence in Australia: The Darroch Controversy," *DHLR* 21. 2 (1989): 167-74. Perhaps the most original comment regarding the Darroch controversy has been offered by Raymond Southall, "Darroch and *Kangaroo*: A Response," *Meridian* 11. 2 (1992): "To seek to understand *Kangaroo* as Darroch does is like trying to understand Galileo's experiment by asking where he obtained the wooden balls" (75).

This fear develops and encompasses "the vast, uninhabited land [which] frightened him. It seemed so hoary and lost, so unapproachable" (K 8).

While this study attempts to distance or objectify the experiences of Lawrence's fictional characters from his own, Somers' response to Australia clearly draws on Lawrence's early impressions. These are expressed in his letters of that period in which he repeatedly uses the adjectives "hoary" and "empty" to describe the landscape. Eleven days after his arrival in Australia on 4 May 1922, he writes to E.H. Brewster from Darlington, Western Australia, 15 May 1922:

We are here about 16 miles out of Perth — bush all around — marvellous air, marvellous sun and sky — strange, vast empty country - hoary unending 'bush' with a pre-primeval ghost in it. (*Letters IV 239*)

In a letter to Jan Juta from the R.M.S. *Malawa*, 20 May 1922, he uses a feminine metaphor to describe the country:

Australia has a marvellous sky and air and blue clarity, and a hoary sort of land beneath it, like a Sleeping Princess on whom the dust of ages has settled. Wonder if she'll ever get up. (*Letters IV 244*)

On the same day he writes the following to S.S. Koteliansky about Australia:

weird land, marvellous blue sky, clear air, pure and untouched. Then the endless hoary grey 'bush' — which is gum trees, rather thinly scattered, like a thin wood, with a healthy sort of undergrowth — like a moor with trees. People very friendly, but slow and as if unwilling to take the next step: as if everything was a bit much for them. (*Letters IV 241*)

This impression is still with Lawrence on 28 May 1922 when he writes from Wyewurk, Thirroul, New South Wales to his mother-in-law the Baroness von Richthofen:

it is a queer, grey, sad country — empty, and as if it would never be filled. Miles and miles of bush — forlorn and lost. It all feels like that. (*Letters IV 249*)

Somers, like Lawrence, has a German wife and they endure the intrusion of the military upon their lives during World War One. The residual fear of this intrusion leaves Somers and Harriet during their subsequent self-imposed exile in Italy and India.⁵ In Australia, however, they rediscover "the dread, almost the horror, of democratic society, the mob" (K 290).

To clarify Somers' disturbing response to Australia it is important to consider how the nation serves symbolically as a focal point in the expression of the Lawrentian hero's conflicts. An example may be found in the following discussion between Jack Callcott and Harriet Somers:

"If you call the land a bride, she's the sort of bride not many of us are willing to tackle. She drinks your sweat and your blood, and then as often as not lets you down, does you in."

"Of course," said Harriet, "it will take time. And of course a *lot* of love. A lot of fierce love too."

"Let's hope she gets it," said Jack. "They treat the country more like a woman they pick up on the streets than a bride, to my thinking."

"I feel I could *love* Australia," declared Harriet. (K 82)

Jack continues his analogy with Harriet thus:

"...it's no good loving Australia if you can't love the Australian."

"Yes, it is. If as you say Australia is like the poor prostitute, and the Australian just bullies her to get what he can out of her and then treats her like dirt."

"It's a good deal like that," said Jack. (K 82)

In this case the Australian landscape may be read metaphorically as a virgin bride, resistant and hostile to the attempts of the dominant masculinist system, Imperial England, to penetrate and subordinate her.⁶ This perception is compounded by Somer's exposure to the

⁵While not within the scope of this study, further biographical details of the Lawences during this period may be found in Delany, *D.H. Lawrence's Nightmare*.

⁶Lawrence's perception of the Nation as female correlates with the ideas Elaine Showalter presents in her study *Sexual Anarchy. Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle*. (U.S.A: Viking, 1990) Using the male romance novels of the late Nineteenth Century Showalter states: "Quest narratives all involve a penetration into the imagined centre of an exotic civilization" (81).

patriarchal legal, military and political structures which protect, serve and maintain both countries.

This perception and portrayal of Australia as a feminized landscape by the main male characters in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* is particularly evident in their reactions to the Australian bush. The bush may be seen as representing Australia's feminized centre and thus conforming to a tradition examined by Kay Schaffer in her study *Women and the Bush*. Schaffer argues that "[t]he bush is typically imagined as a *feminine* landscape—one that is imagined as particularly harsh and unforgiving."⁷

In *Kangaroo* Somers is terrified by the bush:

He felt it was watching, and waiting. Following with certainty, just behind his back. It might have reached a long black arm and gripped him. But no, it wanted to wait. It was not tired of watching its victim. An alien people—a victim. It was biding its time with a terrible ageless watchfulness, waiting for a far-off end, watching the myriad intruding white men. (K 9-10)

Significantly, he also feels that the bush is "[w]aiting, waiting—the bush seemed to be hoarily waiting. And he could not penetrate into its secret. He couldn't get at it" (K 9).

Yet Jack Grant in *The Boy in the Bush* identifies himself with the wild and lawless qualities of the bush establishing a contrast against civilized society which labels him, like Gerald in *Women in Love*, "a sinner, a Cain" (BB 10). This sense of "sin" however, is not exclusively masculine. It is also identified with his mother who possesses

a pleasant, semi-luxurious sense...almost of sin...As if sin were, so to speak, the unreclaimed bush, and goodness were only the claims that the settlers had managed to fence in. And there was so much more bush than settlement. And the one was as good as the other, save that they served different ends. And that you always had the wild and endless bush all round your little claim, and

⁷Kay Schaffer, *Women and the Bush. Forces of Desire in the Australian Cultural Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 4.

coming and going was always through the wild and innocent, but non-moral bush. Which non-moral bush had a devil in it. Oh, yes! But a wild and comprehensible devil, like bush-rangers who did brutal and lawless things. Whereas the tame devil of the settlements, drunkenness and greediness and foolish pride, he was more scaring. (*BB* 11-2)⁸

It appears that Lawrence's male characters in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* seek identity and power within the patriarchal social order through a knowledge and subordination of the natural and "savage" elements of their feminine-perceived Australian landscape. Within this model a parallel may be found in the binary opposition of masculine-perceived intellect and feminine-perceived instinct.⁹ The Lawrentian male employs what he perceives as feminine qualities of instinct or what Lawrence terms "blood-consciousness" in his power relationships with other men. This knowledge is gained through his relationships with women who submit or yield to him.

Australia, as a female-perceived nation with its bush or outback as a feminized centre serves a potentially similar symbolic purpose. Yet, like many of the women with whom the Lawrentian male is involved, the Australian landscape remains impenetrable and hostile to those who try to dominate her. Instead of yielding "blood-consciousness" or "blood-knowledge" to men, Australia is seen to diminish the blood of her intruders. Somers is disturbed when informed that in Australia "it takes about four or five years for your blood properly to thin down" (*K* 159). Consequently he asks himself

"Do I want my blood to thin down like theirs?—that peculiar emptiness that is in them, because of the thinning that's gone out of them? Do I want this curious transparent blood of the

⁸For a discussion about the role of Grant's mother and her relation to Lawrence's depiction of the Australian bush see Helen Watson-Williams, "Land into Literature: Western Australia Through British Eyes," *European Relations. Essays For Helen Watson-Williams*, ed. Bruce Bennett and John Hay (Perth: The Centre for Studies in Australian Literature, University of Western Australia, 1985) 19-23.

⁹See pp 17-22 above.

antipodes, with its momentaneous [sic] feelings, and its sort of *absentness*? But of course till my blood has thinned down I shan't see with their eyes. And how in the name of heaven is this world-brotherhood mankind going to see with one eye, eye to eye, when the very blood is of different thickness on different continents, and with the difference in blood, the inevitable psychic difference? Different vision!" (K 162-3)

Instead of deriving "blood-consciousness" or "blood-knowledge" from Australia Somers believes "that somebody will have to water Australia with their blood before it's a real man's country" (K 82). The contrast between the Lawrentian hero and the men with whom he comes in contact in Australia is most striking in scenes of violence. While these men are physically stronger than the Lawrentian male, they are perceived by him as enacting a servile or self-sacrificial role when they involve themselves violently in war and politics.

In *Kangaroo*, consummative violence is juxtaposed with images of heterosexuality and male power. Jack Callcott, a former Captain in the Army, represents the masculine symbolic order previously represented by military figures such as Anton Skrebensky in *The Rainbow* and Gerald Critch in *Women in Love*. Following the murder of Kangaroo's assassin Callcott exclaims:

"Cripes, there's *nothing* bucks you up sometimes like killing a man—*nothing*. You feel a perfect *angel* after it."....

"When it comes over you, you know, there's nothing else like it. I never knew, till the war. And I wouldn't believe it then, not for many a while. But it's *there*. Cripes, it's there right enough. Having a woman's something, isn't it? But it's a flea-bite, nothing, compared to killing your man when your blood comes up."

And his eyes glowed with exultant satisfaction.

"And the best of it is," he said, "you feel a perfect *angel* after it. You don't feel you've done any harm. Feel as gentle as a lamb all round. I can go to Victoria, now, and be as gentle—" He jerked his head in the direction of Victoria's room.— "And you bet she'll like me."

His eyes glowed with a sort of exaltation.

"Killing's natural to a man, you know," he said. "It is just as natural as lying with a woman..." (K 358-9)¹⁰

Yet Somers' reaction to this violence is related with maternal imagery. He feels "as if he imagined a woman might feel after her first child, as if something had been ripped out of him" (K 355). Somers equates motherhood and childbirth with violence, as something life-threatening instead of life-perpetuating. This image of motherhood is distorted to establish the Lawrentian male's difference from his male counterpart but also suggests that he lacks identifiable masculine power through his inability to participate in or perpetrate the violence he observes. This is quite different from the way in which the motherhood theme is adapted and parodied in the nurturing scene between Lilly and Aaron in *Aaron's Rod*. In *Kangaroo* the Lawrentian male continues to be set apart from other men through his identification with women and maternal imagery.

Hilary Simpson suggests that "Kangaroo himself is an androgynous, at times almost maternal figure."¹¹ Marguerite Beede Howe sees Kangaroo as "the oedipal mother, who combines the worst traits of both parents and ultimately tries to destroy her son."¹² Kangaroo's characterization is complicated by gender issues. Harriet sees him as a patriarch considering him "too much like Abraham's bosom" (K 129). Yet Kangaroo's rejoinder infers a maternal role: "I have to be a fat old Kangaroo with—not an Abraham's bosom, but a pouch to carry young

¹⁰The following appears in D.H. Lawrence, *Kangaroo* (New York: Seltzer, 1923):

"...Having a woman's something, isn't it? But it's a flea bite, nothing, compared to killing your man when your blood comes up. Bah—having a dozen women all at once wouldn't compare with it. Funny thing, what?"

And his eyes glowed with exultant satisfaction.

"And the best of it is," he said, "you feel a perfect *angel* after it. You don't feel you've done any harm. No, not even to the dead buggers. Feel as gentle as a lamb all round..." (375)

¹¹Hilary Simpson, *D.H. Lawrence and Feminism* (London: Croom Helm, 1982) 112.

¹²Marguerite Beede Howe, *The Art of the Self in D.H. Lawrence* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1977) 93.

Australia in" (K 130). The issue is further confused by Somers' following remarks to Kangaroo in which he combines Biblical, patriarchal allusions with the maternal function of the "belly-pouch":

you're such a Kangaroo, wanting to carry mankind in your belly-pouch, cosy, with its head and long ears peeping out. You sort of figure yourself a Kangaroo of Judah, instead of a Lion of Judah: Jehovah with a great heavy tail and a belly-pouch. (K 235)¹³

Lawrence portrays Kangaroo in his political role as a mock-patriarch, a New Testament Christ-figure which often makes him appear ridiculous. Jaz, a frequent illuminator of personalities illustrates this when he asks Somers "he's a funny sort of Saviour, isn't he? Not much crown of thorns about him. Why, he'd look funny on a cross, what?" (K 140). In this sense, Kangaroo evolves into a parody of Christ. He becomes a misleading father-figure who seeks power through the love and submission of his disciples while offering them a promised land in his vision of a reshaped and politicized Australia.

This contrasts with the violent, Old Testament model of Abraham's patriarchy used in the depiction of Grant in *The Boy in the Bush*. Grant learns that to be an Abraham-like leader of men in Australia he must be prepared to fight or kill them. When he kills Easu "[h]e felt he had done a good thing. Somewhere inside himself he felt he had done a supremely good thing. Life could flow on to something beyond" (BB 282). Grant considers that the blood of his victim is his "testament" uniting him in an Abraham-like covenant with "his mysterious Lord, for ever. Like a sort of pledge, or baptism, or a sacrifice: a bond between them....I a lord of death" (BB 284). This violence foreshadows the executions detailed and justified in *The Plumed Serpent* where "[t]he Lords of Life are Masters of Death" (PS 378).

¹³There is a possibility that Lawrence may have thought that all kangaroos have pouches. As Bruce Steele points out "he sometimes writes about things he doesn't fully understand (calling a jelly-fish an octopus, for instance)" (Steele, 23).

Beyond the confusing gender issues however, Kangaroo's characterisation emphasizes his nationality. Leo Gurko argues that

[t]he centre of this novel about Australia is not any given group of Australians but the country itself. The same non-human principal will be true of *The Plumed Serpent*, *St. Mawr*, and *The Escaped Cock*, celebrated pieces that followed. Animals tend to replace human beings in these later titles and are emblematic of countries, clusters of belief, or ritualistic patterns with which they become synonymous. The Australian national animal introduces us at once to Australia as a continent, just as the central figure, nick-named Kangaroo, introduces us to Australia as a society.¹⁴

Lawrence's use of the kangaroo as emblematic of Australia simultaneously reinforces his opposing concepts of feminine instinct and masculine intellect or "will." This is evident in his poem "Kangaroo" (1923). Lawrence portrays a "[d]elicate mother Kangaroo" with "full antipodal eyes, so dark, /So big and quiet and remote."¹⁵ With these

she watches with eternal, cocked wistfulness!
How full her eyes are, like the full, fathomless, shining
eyes of an Australian black-boy
Who has been lost so many centuries on the margins of
existence!

She watches with insatiable wistfulness.
Untold centuries of watching for something to come,
For a new signal from life, in that silent lost land of
the South.¹⁶

This image of the female kangaroo in the "silent...haunted blue bush,"¹⁷ correlates with Somers' initial impression of the "terrible ageless watchfulness" (K 10) of the Australian bush. The Aboriginal male, "lost" for centuries within this environment, gains an instinctual knowledge or awareness inherent in the bush and also possessed by the

¹⁴Leo Gurko, "Kangaroo: D.H. Lawrence in Transit," *Modern Fiction Studies* 10. 4. (1964-5) 349-50.

¹⁵D.H. Lawrence, "Kangaroo," *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (New York: Seltzer, 1923) 146.

¹⁶Lawrence, *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* 147.

¹⁷Lawrence, *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* 148.

maternal, female kangaroo.¹⁸ This cannot be fathomed or penetrated by "intruding white men" (*K* 10) and the Aboriginal remains "on the margins of existence," beyond modern consciousness. Fay Zwicky puts it thus:

The alert European consciousness and its fate within Australia [is] acutely analysed by D.H. Lawrence in his novel, *Kangaroo*, where themes of failure of the present white inhabitants to relate to one another and to their land, the primacy of that land, and its total independence of human beings are explored in depth.¹⁹

While the loss of consciousness plays an important role in sexual relations between men and women, it serves a different purpose in ritual scenes between men. By losing their consciousness, men gain an instinctual knowledge or "blood consciousness" which Lawrence relates to the maternal female. This occurs in Paul's fight with Baxter Dawes in *Sons and Lovers*, Birkin and Gerald's wrestling match in *Women in Love* and before Ramón and Cipriano's bathing scene in *The Plumed Serpent*. It also befalls Grant when he is lost in the bush following the death of Easu. According to this model, this non-sexual consummation between men is possible only through transcending the conscious, intellectual realm in which they live and act.

Kangaroo exists within this limited social boundary. His role is emphasized when Somers feeds a tame male kangaroo at the Zoo who looks

up with the big, dark prominent Australian eyes, so aged in consciousness, with a fathomless, dark, fern-age gentleness and gloom. The female wouldn't come near to eat. She only sat up and watched, and her little one hung its tiny fawn's head and one long

¹⁸This corresponds with and extends Lawrence's earlier reaction to Sir James Frazer's *Totemism and Exogamy*. In his letter to Bertrand Russell, 8 December 1915, Lawrence writes of the origin of the totem: "some tribes no doubt really *were* kangaroos: they contained the blood-knowledge of the kangaroo.—And blood knowledge comes either through the mother or through the sex" (*Letters* II 470-71). See pp 18-19 above.

¹⁹Fay Zwicky, 'Speeches and Silences,' *Quadrant* 27. 5 (1983): 40.

ear and one fore-leg out of her pouch, in the middle of her soft, big, grey belly. (K 381)

This portrayal of the male kangaroo against the maternal female establishes him as a gloomy, masculine representative of consciousness, intellect or what Lawrence refers to as "will."

It is upon these qualities that Kangaroo relies in his pursuit of leadership and power in the city. This is evident in his following speech:

Man again needs a father—not a friend or a brother sufferer, a suffering Saviour. Man needs a quiet, gentle father who uses his authority in the name of living life, and who is absolutely stern against anti-life. I offer no creed. I offer myself, my heart of wisdom, strange warm cavern where the voice of the oracle steams in from the unknown; I offer my consciousness, which hears the voice; and I offer my mind and my will. (K 121)

Somers recognizes in Kangaroo's fatherly love a conscious "will" which, characteristic of the Lawrentian male, he discerns through his superior, feminine-attributed instinct. When Kangaroo asks Somers for his "case" against him, Somers replies

"Its not a case, Kangaroo,"..."it's a sort of instinct."

"Against what?"

"Why, against your ponderousness. And against your insistence. And against the whole sticky stream of love, and the hateful will-to-love. It's the will-to-love that I hate, Kangaroo." (K 235)

Kangaroo's father-like leadership which Somers refers to as "a kind of benevolent tyranny" (K 120) can be likened to Nietzsche's "Will to Power."²⁰ Lawrence examines this theme extensively throughout his later fiction and before addressing its significance in *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* it is useful to consider briefly its development in "The Ladybird," his novella published in England in March 1923.

In their discussion, Count Psanek, the Lawrentian male, challenges Basil's use of the word "love" and argues

²⁰See Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 1901-11, trans. W Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1968).

"...I thought that love assumed an equality in difference. I thought that love gave to every man the right to judge the acts of other men—"This was not an act of love, therefore it was wrong." Does not democracy, and love, give to every man this right?"²¹

Pursuing this argument with its Nietzschean overtones the Count defends his right to exercise "the sacredness of power", "[n]ot as a hereditary aristocrat but as a *man* who is by nature an aristocrat."²² As such, he believes that

"...it is my sacred duty to hold the lives of other men in my hands, and to shape the issue.—But I can never fulfil that duty till men willingly put their lives in my hands."

"You don't expect them to, do you?" smiled Basil.

"At this moment, no."

"Or at any moment!" The Major was sarcastic.

"At a certain moment the men who are really living will come beseeching to put their lives into the hands of the greater men among them, beseeching the greater men to take the sacred responsibility of power."²³

The Lawrentian male, Count Psanek, assumes the role of a sacred leader requiring his followers to perform "the sacred act of choice,"²⁴ the choice to place their lives in the hands of a greater man.

This has often been the catch-cry of the Lawrentian male. It forms an aspect of Paul's relationship with Baxter who "seemed to leave himself in the hands of Morel" (*SL* 431). It is also Birkin's lament upon Gerald's death: "He should have loved me" (*WL* 480). Likewise Lilly realises when he helps Aaron that

[a]s soon as this man's really better he'll punch me in the wind, metaphorically if not actually, for having interfered with him. And Tanny would say, he was quite right to do it. She says I want power over them. What if I do? They don't care how much power the mob has over them, the nation, Lloyd George and Northcliffe and the police and money. They'll yield themselves up to that sort

²¹D.H. Lawrence, "The Ladybird," *The Fox. The Captain's Doll. The Ladybird*, ed. Dieter Mehl (1923; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 203.

²²Lawrence, "The Ladybird," *The Fox. The Captain's Doll. The Ladybird* 202.

²³Lawrence, "The Ladybird," *The Fox. The Captain's Doll. The Ladybird* 202.

²⁴Lawrence, "The Ladybird," *The Fox. The Captain's Doll. The Ladybird* 203.

of power quickly enough...Why can't they submit to a bit of healthy individual authority? The fool would die, without me....Damn them all, why don't I leave them alone. They only grin and feel triumphant when they've insulted one and punched one in the wind. (AR 96-7)

The Lawrentian hero cannot find the transcendental love he seeks with other men in a democracy. In a letter to his sister-in-law Else Jaffe, written from Wyewurk, Thirroul, New South Wales, 13 June 1922, Lawrence states: "This is the most democratic place I have *ever* been in. And the more I see of democracy the more I dislike it" (*Letters* IV 263). His heroes also reject collective or democratic models of authority and leadership. They seek instead a Nietzschean model which is evident in Somers' desire for

the thing that the dark races know: that one can still feel in India: the mystery of lordship. That which white men have struggled so much against, and which is the clue to the life of the Hindu. The mystery of lordship. The mystery of innate, natural, sacred priority. The other mystic relationship between men, which democracy and equality try to deny and obliterate. Not any arbitrary caste or birth aristocracy. But the mystic recognition of difference and innate priority, the joy of obedience and the sacred responsibility of authority. (K 115)

This Nietzschean tone, also present in his later writings, may be attributed to the Lawrentian male's perception of serving the nation as submissive to a female principal. Collective, masculinist structures enforce that submission. Using the instinctual knowledge perceived within Woman and within the feminized landscape, the Lawrentian hero adopts a Nietzschean model of leadership in his frustrated attempts to gain power over other men.

This may be seen in *The Boy in the Bush*. When Grant is lost in the bush following the killing of Easu, he confronts and accepts his inevitable, terrifying isolation in the feminine-perceived bush. Yet he credits the self-knowledge he gains there to a masculine God and is



later symbolically rewarded with his discovery of gold. This enables him to assume a position of power and dominance, if he chooses, within the civilized and male dominated Perth society he eventually rejects. He does not, however, reject this society to create another democratic environment. Instead, he seeks to create a different power structure within the feminized bush or outback he has confronted and from which he has prospered. Once Woman or the feminized landscape have been used as a source of instinctual knowledge, the Lawrentian hero attempts to adjust the hierarchical systems of power within patriarchal society to enable him to rule absolutely over men and women.

He still finds, however, that his leadership is resisted. When Tom and Lennie fail to display "a certain reverence" (BB 337) toward him he despises them as he does Mary who refuses his bigamous marriage proposal. Consequently, he considers himself a fool to have wanted to "live as Abraham lived"(BB 337). This leads him to reject civilized society completely taking with him Hilda Blessington, "one who knew the world, and society, better than he did, and [whose] hatred of it was purer, more twinkling, more relentless in a quiet way" (BB 347). She agrees to join Grant and Monica in the union Mary has rejected: "to be virgin in the virgin bush." (BB 346) Hilda's misanthropy enables her to submit to Grant and his combination of Old Testament biblical and Nietzschean models of authority. Yet this secures him a small triumph at the conclusion of the novel as he rides his stallion, who has just impregnated Hilda's mare, "over the crest and down the silent grey bush, in which he had once been lost" (BB 347).²⁵

Love and power also become confusingly interconnected in *Kangaroo*. They form the main part of the masculinist agenda in the recruitment of

²⁵Mollie Skinner admits "I wept" upon reading this development of Jack's characterization by Lawrence at the conclusion of *The Boy in the Bush*. See Skinner, "D.H. Lawrence and *The Boy in the Bush*," 260.

Somers to Kangaroo's Digger's Clubs and Willie Struthers' socialism. Rather than submit to Kangaroo's social and political "will", misleadingly presented to him as "love", Somers offers the following advice to Kangaroo:

Don't love me. Don't want to save mankind. You're so awfully *general*, and your love is so awfully general: as if one were only a cherry in the syrup. Don't love me. Don't want me to love you. Let's be hard, separate men. Let's understand one another deeper than love. (K 235)

This argument also forms the basis for Somers' rejection of Struthers' socialism. Somers relates Struthers' working-class allegiance to Whitman's "Love of Comrades" (K 221).²⁶ Struthers' "last leaf of communism" (K 297) offers a "new sacred social bond, beyond the family...a new unifying passion. And this will be the new passion of a man's absolute trust in his mate, his love for his mate" (K 221). Yet Somers foresees disaster in this collective love between men in Socialism because

every individuality is bound to react at some time against every other individuality, without exception—or else lose its integrity;...human love is truly a relative thing, not an absolute. It *cannot* be absolute. (K 222)

Characteristically, the Lawrentian male cannot approach his interaction with other men as a suppliant or victim, only as a ruler or leader. When he is told of the Digger's Clubs in Australia he considers "of course that it was his own high destiny to be a leader" (K 98). This opportunity is not presented. Rather he is offered a measure of power should he consent to love, or in other words, submit to the male relationships which are presented to him within a social framework.

²⁶See also D.H. Lawrence, "Whitman," *Studies in Classic American Literature* (New York: Seltzer, 1921). Robert Hogan discusses the importance of Whitman in the composition of *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo* in "The Amorous Whale: A Study in the Symbolism of D.H. Lawrence," *Modern Fiction Studies* 5. 1 (1959) 39-46.

Unable to submit, the Lawrentian male resists the advances of the men who pursue him.

Kangaroo interprets this resistance thus:

"There is a principal of evil. The principal of resistance. Malignant resistance to the life principal. And it uses the very life-force itself against life, and sometimes seems as if it were absolutely winning. Not only Jesus rose from the dead. Judas rose as well, and propagated himself on the face of the earth. He has many children now. The life opposers. The life resisters. The life enemies..." (K 122)

Somers' resistance to Kangaroo is an important theme in the concluding sick-bed scenes in the novel, developing and extending those issues which necessitated Somers' resistance to the military during World War One. Somers recoils from Kangaroo and senses danger in him akin to the militarist "*canaille*" (K 291) to whom he was subjected throughout the war. "The Nightmare" chapter commences after Somers' realization that Kangaroo is "a thing, not a whole man. A great Thing, a horror" (K 236).

Kangaroo perceives Somers' opposition in the sick-room as feminine remarking in desperation: "'Was ever woman so coy and hard to please!'" (K 365). While the sick-bed scene in Lawrence's earlier works offered the Lawrentian hero an opportunity to gain power over those men who have resisted him, the Australian experience reverses this role. In the Australian novels nurturing is increasingly replaced by violence as an expression of masculinity and male leadership. In *The Boy in The Bush*, Grant nurses Easu's brother Herbert "a boy of nineteen, uncouth, and savagely shy. Jack had to do the menial offices for him" (BB 88). Yet Grant's transformation to manhood occurs when he transcends this compassionate, womanly-perceived role with Herbert in the sick-room and kills Easu.

In *Kangaroo*, Somers' resistance in the sick-room leads him to an understanding of love as something external, leaving the internal,

individual self apart and protected. This is evident in his final objection to Kangaroo's "love":

Love is perhaps an eternal part of life. But it is only a part. And when it is treated as if it were a whole, it becomes a disease, a vast white strangling octopus. All things are relative, and have their sacredness in their true relation to all other things. And he felt the light of love dying out in his eyes, in his heart, in his soul, and a great, healing darkness taking its place, with a sweetness of everlasting aloneness, and a stirring of dark blood-tenderness, and a strange, soft iron of ruthlessness. (*K* 368)²⁷

While he recognizes that Kangaroo's "love" involves the need for power and the submission of others, Somers fails to see this as an element in his own pursuit of love. Instead, he resigns himself to a life of isolation and loneliness. By asserting his independence, as he has done through his resistance to the war, the Lawrentian male discovers a means to protect his threatened individuality and masculinity.

The themes of isolation and resistance are also evident in the bathing-scenes in *Kangaroo* which differ markedly from those which occur in Lawrence's other fiction. Unlike other Lawrentian heroes, Somers maintains a distance and reserve between himself and the men he meets in Australia. Like Gerald who rejects Birkin's advances in *Women in Love*, Somers cannot accept Callcott's offer of mateship. In words similar to Gerald's he rejects Callcott's advances thus: "'Let's leave it Jack...Don't let us make any pledges yet. We're friends, whatever else we are. As for being mates—wait till I feel sure" (*K* 113).²⁸ Hence, he is wary of Callcott's easy intimacy. Instead of swimming with him in the sea, Somers observes him from a safe distance:

suddenly he saw Jack running across the sand in a bathing suit, and entering the shallow rim of a long, swift upwash. He went in gingerly—then threw himself into a little swell, and rolled in the

²⁷In the Seltzer edition "perhaps" is deleted from the sentence "Love is perhaps an eternal part of life" and appears: "Love is an eternal part of life" (385).

²⁸Seltzer: "...As for being mates—wait till I see my way" (119).

water for a minute. Then he was rushing back, before the next big wave broke. He had gone again by the time Somers came to climb the cliff-bank to the house. (K 93)

The bathing scenes in *Kangaroo* also emphasize the reserved interaction between men and women. Harriet maintains her distance from Somers when he bathes on the deserted beach. When she takes a towel to him he rubs himself dry, unlike Cyril who submits to George's rubbing in *The White Peacock*. When they make love afterwards it appears mannered and inconsequential and contrasts with the "perfect love" Cyril feels through his non-sexual experience with George. Somers and Harriet are left unfulfilled, embodying the conflicts of heterosexual love in his work:

Harriet came along with the towel, and he put his hand to her face and nodded to her. She knew what he meant, and went wondering, and when he had rubbed the wet off himself he came to her.

To the end she was more wondering than anything. But when it was the end, and the night was falling outside, she laughed and said to him:

"That was done in style. That was *chic*. Straight from the sea, like another creature."

Style and *chic* seemed to him somewhat ill suited to the occasion. (K 161)

Somers' relationship with Harriet is fraught with conflict yet provides the reader with a new female response to the male relationships. Harriet's exclusion from the political movements to which her husband is introduced in Australia is similar to Kate's isolation in *The Plumed Serpent*. Harriet

emphatically opposed this principle of her externality. She agreed with the necessity for impersonal activity, but oh, she insisted on being identified with the activity, impersonal or not. And he insisted that it could not and should not be: that the pure male activity should be womanless, beyond woman. No man was beyond woman. But in his one quality of ultimate maker and breaker, he was womanless. Harriet denied this, bitterly. She wanted to share, to join in, not to be left out lonely. (K 103)

While Ursula in *Women in Love* considers Birkin's yearning for male intimacy with Gerald "false, impossible" (WL 481), Harriet recognizes that Somers' desire for male interaction disguises his need for power. Most of their discussions revolve around the issues of love and power such as the following regarding Jack Callcott's involvement in politics. She feels that Callcott wants

"...[t]o be a Captain once more, feeling his feet and being a boss over something."

"Why shouldn't he be?"

"Why not? I don't care if he bosses all Australia and New Zealand and all the lot. But I don't see why you should call it disinterested. Because it isn't."

He paused, struck.

"Am I disinterested?" he asked.

"Not"—she hesitated—"not when you want just *power*." (K 107)

Harriet's opinion contradicts what the Lawrentian male considers as his "disinterested" motivation in his relationships with men. Her objection to Somers' pursuit of male intimacy generates additional conflict in their relationship and causes him to adopt a more reticent approach in his interaction with other men.

This leads Somers to construct an external masculine deity with which to assuage his sense of isolation. Confronting his difficulties with Harriet and failing to establish a transcendental male relationship in Australia, Somers asserts that

[t]he only thing one can stick to is one's own isolate being, and the God to whom it is rooted. And the only thing to look to is the God who fulfils one from the dark. And the only thing to wait for is for men to find their aloneness and their God in the darkness. Then one can meet as worshippers, in a sacred contact in the dark.
(K 368)

This also occurs in *The Boy in the Bush*. Tracing Lawrence's contribution to what Mollie Skinner originally titled "The House of Ellis," Paul Eggert finds that "Jack, particularly in his relations with Monica but also with other men, is portrayed as more self-controlled, self-sufficient

and remote, and more deeply sustained by his relationship with his personal God."²⁹ This may be seen in Grant's reaction to Gran Ellis' statement early in the novel that "God is y'rself. Or put it the other way if you like: y'rself is God" (BB 77). Later, Grant qualifies this belief and affirms:

"I am faithful to my own inside, when something stirs in me. Gran Ellis said that was God in me. I know there's a God outside of me. But he tells me to go my own way, and never be frightened of people and the world, only be frightened of *him*." (BB 318)

An important issue evolves here. Grant uses physical violence to assert his masculinity. Yet, as he relates his understanding of "sin" to his mother in the beginning of the novel, he apprehends his personal God and gains self-knowledge through the instinctual legacy he has inherited from Gran Ellis' and her belief in "the spirit of God in you" (BB 77). While violence expresses his masculinity, his masculinity is discerned through an instinctual awareness which is related to the maternal female. Instead of accepting this as a manifestation of the divine within, as suggested by Gran Ellis, Grant establishes his own external, masculine deity upon which he models himself. He then uses this model in his pursuit of dominance and leadership over those around him.

In *Kangaroo* Somers consistently betrays his fear of isolation through his uneasy responses to the feminized bush and by his appraisals of Australian people. He is generally unimpressed by Australians and reveals this in the following dialogue with Kangaroo:

"Look at these Australians—they're awfully nice, but they've got no inside to them. They're hollow. How are you going to build on such hollow stalks? They may well call them corn-stalks. They're marvellous and manly and independent and all that, outside. But inside, they are not. When they're *quite* alone, they don't exist."

²⁹Paul Eggert, "Opening up the text: the case of *Sons and Lovers*," Brown 41.

"Yet many of them have been alone a long time, in the bush," said Kangaroo, watching his visitor with slow, dumb, unchanging eyes.

"Alone, what sort of alone? Physically alone. And they've just gone hollow. They're never alone in spirit: quite, quite alone in spirit. And the people who have are the only people you can depend on."

"Where shall I find them?"

"Not here. It seems to me, least of all here. The Colonies make for *outwardness*. Everything is outward—like hollow stalks of corn. The life makes this inevitable: all that struggle with bush and water and what-not, all the mad struggle with the material necessities and conveniences—the inside soul just withers and goes into the outside, and they're all just lusty robust stalks of people." (K 142-3)³⁰

The "hollowness" which Somers perceives in the Australian people is consistent with the views Lawrence expresses in his letters during his stay in Australia. An example of these views may be found in his letter to Else Jaffe, 13 June 1922. He describes Australians as

always vaguely and meaninglessly on the go. And it all seems so empty, so *nothing*, it almost makes you sick. They are healthy, and to my thinking almost imbecile. That's what the life in a new country does to you : it makes you so material, so *outward*, that your real inner life and your inner self dies out, and you clatter round like so many mechanical animals. (*Letters* IV 263-4)

This emptiness, however, is not confined to Australians. Lawrence also perceives it in the Americans with whom he comes in contact after leaving Australia. In a letter to John Middleton-Murry, 30 December 1922, he writes:

there's no inside to the life: all outside. I don't believe there ever will be any inside to American life — they seem so dead — till they are all destroyed. (*Letters* IV 365)³¹

³⁰In the Seltzer edition Somer's speech "...They're never alone in spirit: quite, quite alone in spirit. And the people who have are the only people you can depend on" appears: "...They're never alone in spirit: detached and alone in spirit. And the people who are, are the only people you can depend on" (150).

³¹See also Eggert, 'Opening up the text: the case of *Sons and Lovers*.' Brown 42.

Lawrence's appraisals of both Australians and Americans as empty reveals his own preoccupation and disillusionment with the civilized societies he encounters outside England. In his Australian writings this is expressed through the opposing images of the feminized bush or outback, and the male-dominated, civilized life of the towns. Jaz, quietly perceptive of the people and events around him in *Kangaroo*, expounds this dichotomy of feminized outback and masculinist civilization and relates it to Somers own dilemma thus:

I expect you've got yourself to reckon with, no matter where you are. That's why most Australians have to fuss about something—politics, or horse-racing, or football. Though a man can go empty in Australia, if he likes: as you've said yourself. (K 228)

He continues:

Go into the middle of Australia and see how empty it is. You can't face emptiness long. You have to come back and do something to keep from being frightened at your own emptiness, and everything else's emptiness. It may be empty. But it's wicked, and it'll kill you if it can. Something comes out of the emptiness, to kill you. You have to come back and do things with mankind, to forget. (K 228-9)

Unlike Grant, Somers cannot reconcile himself to Australia or his wife, both representatives for him of the hostile feminine. Consequently, he withdraws from both. Failing to establish a relationship with the Other, woman, Somers also fails in his relationships with men over whom he seeks power and dominance in a supplementary or transcendental union. It appears that he must have both to have either.

Consequently, when Somers leaves Australia, he relates it in terms of leaving a woman by whom "I never was so tempted in my life. Talk about Eve tempting man to a fall: Australia tempts me" (K 389).

Continuing his conversation with Jaz, Somers asserts: "...I'll probably repent bitterly going to America, going back to the world: when I want Australia. I want Australia like a man wants a woman. I fairly tremble

with wanting it" (K 389). Furthermore, when urged by Jaz to live in Sydney, Somers replies:

"No, I wouldn't want to live in Sydney. I'd want to go back in the bush near one of the little townships. It's like wanting a woman, Jaz. I want it."

"Then why not do it?"

"I won't give in, not yet. It's like giving in to a woman; I won't give in yet. I'll come back later."

Jaz suddenly looked at Richard and smiled maliciously.

"You won't give in, Mr Somers, will you? You won't give in to the women, and Australia's like a woman to you. You wouldn't give in to Kangaroo, and he's dead now. You won't give in to Labour, or Socialism. Well, now, what will you do? Will you give in to America, do you think?" (K 389-90)

Like Birkin in *Women in Love*, Somers' search for a transcendental male relationship remains unfulfilled despite having

all his life had this craving for an absolute friend, a David to his Jonathan, Pylades to his Orestes: a blood-brother. All his life he had secretly grieved over his friendlessness. And now at last, when it really offered—and it had offered twice before, since he had left Europe—he didn't want it, and he realised that in his innermost soul he had never wanted it.

Yet he wanted *some* living fellowship with other men; as it was he was just isolated. Maybe a living fellowship!—but not affection, not love, not comradeship. Not mates and equality and mingling. Not blood-brotherhood. None of that. (K 114-5)

While Lawrence specifies in *Kangaroo* what the Lawrentian male doesn't want from his male relationships, he leaves his reader with an image of "*some* living fellowship" which remains as elusive as Birkin's desire for "another kind of love" at the conclusion of *Women in Love*. This inconclusiveness may be attributed in part to the Lawrentian heroes' inability to see that their search for "love" with another man is sabotaged by their overriding need for power in those relationships.

Thus, while *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* present male relationships from a different perspective, influenced by the War and the Australian environment, they end as they begin. Murray S. Martin,

writing about *Kangaroo*, considers it a novel "which has to be read, not as a complete statement, but rather as an interlude in a journey."³² The Lawrentian hero remains in transit and self-imposed exile and the Australian novels offer no conclusions or solutions to the problems they raise.

³²Murray S. Martin, "Kangaroo Revisited," *DHLR* 18. 2-3 (1985-86): 213.

Conclusion

The male relationships in Lawrence's fiction emphasize an essential dilemma for the Lawrentian male: whether it is possible to sustain one relationship to the exclusion of all others in modern civilization. While he does not want to forfeit his heterosexual relationships, he hopes in his male relationships to transcend the attendant, associated problems and conflicts. As a result, it seems he must have both to sustain either. Using a binary, opposing model of feminine perceived instinct or "blood consciousness" and masculine attributed intellect or "will," the Lawrentian male uses his knowledge of women in his pursuit of male power. Alternatively, the Lawrentian male constructs a personal, masculine God with which to assuage his sense of isolation.

The contradictions with which the reader is confronted in Lawrence's fiction, especially in his depiction of male relationships, frustrate attempts to define a dominant Lawrentian stance or philosophy. These attempts incur the danger David Lodge ascribes to the search for meaning in *Women in Love*: "in the process of trying to extract a coherent body of thought from the novel, one will 'monologize' it."¹ Reading Lawrence's fiction as dialogic challenges assertions that he promotes a dominant philosophy or stance in his work. Nigel Kelsey puts it thus: "Dialogic moments are by definition unfinalised, thereby acting as a permanent challenge to the integrity of all proposed philosophical closures."²

Examining recurring episodes across the texts reveals the contrary, competing voices within them in which no voice emerges as constant or definitive, not even those designated to Lawrentian men. While the polyphonic model helps us make use of the contradictions in Lawrence's

¹Lodge, *After Bakhtin* 63 reprinted in Brown 98.

²Kelsey 30.

fiction, it also leaves us without a solution or fixed conclusion to the problems raised. Avrom Fleishman states:

Lawrence's sense of the future extends beyond his leaving his principal characters in mid-passage, without guarantees of their after-careers; it is not a matter of mere open endings. Nor is his dialogical deployment of antithetical doctrines merely a relativistic bow to their equal truth or value; it is not that they are undecidable, or that he is indecisive about them, but that they have not yet been decided. For Lawrence, the openness of the future is to be taken literally.³

Anne Wright attributes the influence of the Great War to what she perceives as the apocalyptic endings of the representative modernist texts she selects in her study *Literature in Crisis, 1910-22*. Using *Women in Love* among these she argues that

[e]nd-anxiety is the way in which the text yearns for, and at the same time dreads, the end...And the real horror, equivalent to the terrors of apocalypse, is that there may be no end. The texts are waiting for the end; but when they achieve closure, it has a particular quality of endlessness.⁴

Within her focus, Wright applies the influences of Decadence and the apocalyptic paradigm of the *fin de siècle* which Frank Kermode examines in a broader context in his famous study *The Sense of an Ending*.⁵

This interpretation of World War One as a modern Apocalypse may also be useful in approaching the failure of Birkin's "another kind of love" and Somers' "living fellowship" with a man. The Lawrentian hero considers the resistance of the men he encounters as a condition of modern civilization's collective destruction. Yet he consistently fails to perceive, even when it is asserted by those around him, that his search for love is sabotaged by his overriding pursuit of power.

³Fleishman, Brown 118.

⁴Wright 16.

⁵Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending. Studies in the Theory of Fiction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.

As a result of World War One and his consequent self-imposed exile, the Lawrentian male seems more acutely aware of the power dynamics which operate between men. He does not however, attempt to redress these power imbalances and resents those who recognize and acknowledge his own ambition for power in male interaction.

This is often expressed by the women with whom he shares his exile and this further complicates their already troubled relationships. The Lawrentian male's resentment toward these women is often displaced onto representations of landscape. This is most obvious in the Australian novels in which the Australian bush is perceived as the feminized centre of a hostile and threatening land. These appraisals of the landscape are a correlative of Lawrence's disturbing, Nietzschean concepts about male power and the nation. They also contribute to his often negative opinions about the Australian people, especially the men, who serve, maintain and protect the feminine-perceived nation through masculinist social structures.

Unable to influence or change the men with whom he seeks transcendence from the conflicts associated with his heterosexual relationships, the Lawrentian male arrives at the pessimistic conclusion that their resistance is symptomatic of the inevitable self-destruction of modern civilization. Consequently, his search for male intimacy combines a desire to transcend his sexual conflicts with women with his need to escape from civilization's collective self-destruction as reflected in the representative men with whom he comes in contact. Gradually, he constructs a personal, masculine god around whom, especially in *The Plumed Serpent*, a cult of masculinity is formed. This permits the Lawrentian male to exercise his Nietzschean concepts of male power and deifies, through association and by their submission, the women with whom he is involved.

While beyond the limits of this thesis, an extended and comparative study of the manuscripts within this period could emphasize these developments. This would be substantiated by the examination of his plays and works of non-fiction such as the essays and in particular, Lawrence's travel literature.⁶ Through comparing the reactions of the Lawrentian male to the Australian landscape with his response to New Mexico in *The Plumed Serpent*, further evidence may be found to support my argument that Lawrence's landscape representation genders his portrayal of the nation and its political structures. This close, inter-textual study would reinforce that the complex nature of his fictional, male relationships extend beyond the much debated issues of homosexuality and homoeroticism.

The polyphonic model and the apocalyptic paradigms which operate in Lawrence's fiction preclude the arrival at fixed meanings. Yet their presence continues to stimulate debates which, like the novels themselves, seems endless and open. A last word, perhaps, may be found in Lawrence's own writing about the Apocalypse and applied to his work and the controversy it continues to generate: "Once a book is fathomed, once it is *known*, and its meaning is fixed or established, it is dead."⁷ The idea that a text can be fully known was a possibility for Lawrence: dialogical thought refuses this assumption.

⁶See for example Laura Fasick, "Female Power, Male Comradeship, and the Rejection of the Female in Lawrence's *Twilight in Italy, Sea and Sardinia*, and *Etruscan Places*," *DHLR* 21. 1 (1989): 25-36.

⁷D.H. Lawrence, *Apocalypse and Writings on Revelation*, ed. Mara Kalnins (1931; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 60.

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