BEYOND NIHILISM: A STUDY OF D.H. LAWRENCE AND FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

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Beyond Nihilism: A Study of D.H. Lawrence and Friedrich Nietzsche

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Abstract

This study investigates Friedrich Nietzsche's influence on D.H. Lawrence's view of human psychology. Primarily from this influence, Lawrence postulates a radically new perception of human psychology, whereby the modes of consciousness are viewed in terms of a dynamic equilibrium. Nietzsche's influence is evident not only in Lawrence's letters and critical writings but also in his art, especially in Women in Love.

After documenting that Lawrence in his youth had read and been greatly impressed by Nietzsche, the thesis argues that later Lawrence comes to reject Nietzsche's influence, which he sees as a restraint on his own creativity. This acceptance/ rejection pattern characterizes Lawrence's response to Nietzsche up to and beyond the writing of Women in Love.

The method employed to establish the impact of Nietzsche's influence is to describe the parallelism between Nietzsche's 'philosophy' and Lawrence's 'pollyanalytics'. Both men think in dualistic terms, which is attributable in part to their shared admiration for Heraclitus. The polarities in Lawrence's critical writings, for example, 'Foreword to Sons and Lovers', Study of Thomas Hardy, and The Crown, parallel the polarities in Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy. Having established the similarities between Nietzsche and Lawrence in relation to this particular theme, the thesis examines the 'fundamental error', which both men describe as the mistaken belief that mind is the measure of all existence.

Beginning with the premise of the 'fundamental error', both writers question the relation between the different modes of consciousness: the conscious and the unconscious. It is at this point that Lawrence begins to establish his radical view of human psychology. Both men believe that as a consequence of the 'fundamental error' the condition of existence for modern man is a nihilistic one. Although Nietzsche and Lawrence posit such a dismal view, they do chart a way out. The way out entails the dissolution of the 'fundamental error', so that out of that dissolution the dualism of the conscious and the unconscious can establish a new balance.

Lawrence's most developed articulation of these notions is in his art, primarily Women in Love, where his view of human psychology, as shaped by Nietzsche's influence, is rendered by the actual internal conflicts of vital characters. Gerald Crich, who fails to overcome the collapse of the vital dualism, comes to represent the predictable end of modern man. In Lawrence's analysis of Gerald's psyche, the tyrannical mind has an immensely powerful accomplice -- the mechanistic human will that destroys all vital connections. Although Lawrence wrongly terms this human will Nietzsche's Wille zur Macht, his own view of the different orders of will parallels Nietzsche's. Indeed, what Lawrence means by volonté de pouvoir is what Nietzsche means by Wille zur Macht. Though both men clearly establish these orders of will, the new dynamic balance between the conscious and the unconscious selves will be accomplished differently.

For Nietzsche, the solitary superman figure, similar to Zarathustra, will bring this about on his own; while for Lawrence, it will be accomplished by the man/woman relationship, with sexuality playing a central role.

In all his reading he seemed to be groping for something that he could lay hold of as the guiding principle in his own life. There was never the least touch of the academic or the scholastic in his approach. What he read was to be applied to the here and now; he seemed to consider all his philosophical reading from the angle of his own personal need.

- from Jessie Chambers'
D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record

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Part One

An Argument for Influence

An Argument for Influence

I

Most studies of Nietzsche's influence on D.H. Lawrence begin with a passage from Jessie Chambers' D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record:

> On an evening of a holiday in the spring of 1909 he read his essay 'Art and the Individual' to a little gathering of Eastwood intelligentsia at a house of a friend, where he sprawled at full length on a hearth-rug, shy at reading his own work. It was a member of this little circle, a socialist and Suffragette, who first showed us A.R. Orage's New Age which Lawrence took regularly for a time. He liked it far more for its literature than for its politics. He was never really interested in politics, and was quickly irritated and bored by the subject. We used to enjoy particularly the Literary Causerie of Jacob Tonson.
>
> It was in the library of Croydon that Lawrence found Nietzsche. He never mentioned him to me directly, nor suggested that I should read him but I began to hear about the 'Will to Power', and perceived that he had come upon something new and engrossing.[1]

This marks the beginning of Lawrence's recorded interest in Nietzsche, which may well have stemmed from his contact with New Age. The significance of this magazine, as David S. Thatcher points out in Nietzsche in England 1890-1914, includes its "outstanding contribution to the formation of literary taste and encouragement of original talent" as well as importance in Fabian socialism.[2] But it also

achieved for Nietzsche's work "an intellectual respect and recognition which it had been denied in England up to this time."[3] Before becoming editor in 1907, Orage had published Friedrich Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit (1906), which opened with the sweeping claim that "(Nietzsche) stood near the pinnacle of European culture, a scholar among scholars and a thinker among thinkers. His range of subjects is as wide as modern thought. Nobody is more representative of the spirit of the age. In sum, he was his age; he comprehended the mind of Europe."[4] Orage made New Age a vehicle for pressing this claim:

> From May, 1907, until the end of 1913--a period of five and a half years--Nietzsche's name is hardly absent from the pages of the New Age: apart from casual mentions of his name there are some eighty items relating to Nietzsche during this period, ranging in importance from extensive articles and book reviews to readers' comments in the correspondence columns. It is no exaggeration to say that with the advent of Orage's New Age a new phase in the English reputation of Nietzsche begins.[5]

The people most receptive to Orage's crusade were not academics but artists and freelance intellectuals, such as George Bernard Shaw, Arnold Bennett, John Middleton Murry, Edward Garnett, Richard Aldington, and W.B. Yeats.

John B. Humma writes that Lawrence who "was revolting at this time against the chapel system of morality which is based upon 'Thou Shalt Not'" found Nietzsche attractive because of his "notorious antagonism toward established truths."[6] But Lawrence's interest was, in fact, part of a wider fashion. Lawrence, like others, found in Nietzsche a kindred spirit

who understood the torments of the creative soul and who, as John Middleton Murry wrote in 1916, "has given us a touchstone to try his own achievements."[7] Because of Nietzsche's influence, Thatcher argues, "the artist took it upon himself to act as legislator of values for society, for the total cultural pattern...the whole tone of aesthetic discussion changes radically between 1890-1914. A new sense of social responsibility emerges which entails a more committed attitude to art and the role of the artist in society".[8] It is in response to this shift in attitude that Lawrence would have wanted to read Nietzsche.

When Lawrence turned to the Croydon library, he would have found a range of works by Nietzsche:

> Which of Nietzsche's works Lawrence read at this time (c.1908/9) is not recorded, but it will very likely have been <u>Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future</u>, which was added to the stock of Croydon Central Library in 1908; not only would a recent accession be likely to catch the eye, but Jessie Chambers' reference to the Will-to-Power points in the same direction. However, in 1906 Croydon Central Library also possessed <u>The Case of Wagner</u>, <u>The Dawn of Day</u>, <u>A Genealogy of Morals</u>, <u>Poems</u>, and <u>Thus Spake Zarathustra</u>, all of which were added to stock in 1903, at the beginning of the real Nietzsche vogue in England.[9]

In 1909 <u>The Birth of Tragedy</u> was published in English, and Patrick Bridgwater believes that Lawrence's "emphasis on and praise of the knowledge of the blood or 'blood consciousness' parallels and echoes Nietzsche's distinction between tragic and theoretical man in <u>The Birth of Tragedy</u>. Indeed, so many of the parallels point back to <u>The Birth of Tragedy</u> that it is reasonable to conclude that Lawrence was much impressed

by it."[10]

There should be little surprise, then, at Ford Madox Ford's reminiscence that on visiting Lawrence in Nottingham (circa 1910-1911)[+] he was astonished at the cultural atmosphere in which Lawrence lived and that, in fact, Lawrence "was a well-read German scholar who had absorbed Nietzsche, Marx, and Wagner as his daily breakfast...."[11] Here is Ford's impression of Lawrence and his environment at this time:

> Those young people knew the things that my generation in the great English schools hardly even chattered about. Lawrence, the Father, came in from down the mine on a Saturday evening. He threw a great number of coins on the kitchen table and counted them out to his visiting mates. All the while the young people were talking about Nietzsche and Wagner and Leopardi and Flaubert and Karl Marx and Darwin and occasionally the Father would interrupt his counting to contradict them. And they would discuss the French Impressionists and the primitive Italians and play Chopin or Debussy on the piano.
>
> I went with them one Sunday to a Nonconformist place of worship. It was the only time I was ever in one except that I once heard the Rev. Stopford Brooke who was a Unitarian preach a sermon on Tennyson. The Nottingham Chapel - I think it was in Wesleyan - made me of course feel uncomfortable at first. But the sermon renewed my astonishment. It was almost entirely about - Nietzsche,

[+]Ford writes that he visited Lawrence at the time when Lawrence was forced to give up his career at Croydon, which suggests late 1911. But in a Lawrence letter (to Edward Garnett, 11 November, 1911) we know that Ford is in Germany. However, in <u>Return to Yesterday</u>, Ford writes that he recalls that "Lawrence had been very distressed at the thought of having to return home and be a burden to his parents." But Lawrence's mother died on 9 December, 1910; hence my inability to discover the actual time of the visit. Nevertheless, the accuracy of the date is not greatly significant. Of course, attention should be called to Ford Madox Ford's proclivity to exaggerate or romanticize his claims. But even taking this into consideration, Ford's evidence has considerable credibility.

> Wagner, Leopardi, Karl Marx, Darwin, the French Impressionists and the primitive Italians. I asked one of Lawrence's friends if that was not an unusual sort of sermon. He looked at me with a sort of grim incredulity.
> "What do you suppose?" he asked. "Do you think we would sit under that fellow if he could not preach like that for fifty-two Sundays a year? He would lose his job."
> I asked him if the elder generation liked it. He said that of course they liked it. They wanted their sons to be educated people. And they liked it for itself. They could do their religious thinking without the help of a preacher.[12]

It is evident, then, that Lawrence not only read Nietzsche's books, and the articles and reviews on his works, but also lived and breathed in an atmosphere replete with interest in German thinkers, composers, and writers. Also, at this time, Lawrence's German was quite good (Arnold, p. 33) and in January, 1912, he had published in the English Review two reviews: one on The Oxford Book of German Verse - from the 12th to the 20th Century, in German, ed. by H.G. Fiedler, with a Preface by Gerhart Hauptmann; and another on Jethro Bithell's The Minnesingers, in translation.[13]

In Lawrence's review of Georgian Poetry: 1911-1912 (published in Rhythm, edited by Katherine Mansfield and J.M. Murry, in March, 1913) he referred specifically to Nietzsche:

> The last years have been years of demolition. Because faith and belief were getting pot-bound, and the Temple was made a place to barter sacrifices, therefore faith and belief and the Temple must be broken. This time art fought the battle, rather than science or any new religious faction. And art has been demolishing for us: Nietzsche, the Christian religion as it stood; Hardy, our faith in our own endeavour; Flaubert, our belief in love.[14]

In Paul Morel, Bridgwater has noted, Lawrence wrote "that

Paul (= himself) and Miriam (= Jessie Chambers), at 17 and 16 respectively, read Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, 'authors who hurt her inexpressibly, and delighted him'; he subsequently omitted this reference."[15] Also, in The Trespasser, Lawrence's Wagnerian novel, "Helena carries around a volume of Nietzsche which may be alluding to Nietzsche's contrast between Dionysian and domestic tragedy, while Siegmund's and Helena's response to the Christian symbols strongly suggest Nietzsche's vitalistic concept of Christianity as slave religion."[16] Nietzsche's influence appears in Lawrence's fiction at this early date not only because Nietzsche is in vogue but also because Nietzsche evokes the passionate struggle of an individual with the moral constraints of his time and place.[+]

In early April, 1912, a new development further intensified Nietzsche's influence: Lawrence's meeting with Frieda Weekley.

[+]For the following information I am indebted to Thatcher's Nietzsche in England 1890-1914. It should also be mentioned that Edward Garnett, who was Lawrence's mentor during the time of writing The Trespasser and Sons and Lovers, had some interest in Nietzsche. In 1903, Edward Garnett published a review of The Dawn of Day in Academy, and was considered by the translator Thomas Common to be one of the Englishmen who could vouch for Nietzsche's importance. In fact, at the turn of the century, Garnett represented Fisher Unwin and Duckworth in order to obtain the rights to have English translations of Nietzsche published. (He failed, unfortunately.) With this in mind, it is possible that Lawrence and Garnett may have discussed Nietzsche during any one of Lawrence's weekend visits with the Garnetts. Again, this illustrates that for Lawrence Nietzsche was more than just in the air.

Lawrence went to see Professor Weekley, his former professor of French at Nottingham University College, in hope of securing a teaching position at a German University. Richard Aldington notes that Lawrence's desire was not as singular as we may imagine, since in "those early days Germany was fashionable with the British intelligentsia, for whom Italy was overdone and France decadent..."[17] In any event, Frieda obviously stands as the major source of German influence in Lawrence's life. In The von Richthofen Sisters, Martin Green claims that:

> She (Frieda) gave him (Lawrence) sensual happiness, but she also gave him - by the same gift - a mission as a writer. She gave him her identity, her idea - which became his idea. She even helped him significantly with the work of translating that idea into literary terms.[18]

Her idea, as Green sees it, was largely based on her relationship with Otto Gross, who was a brilliant student of Freud's and who wrote her a letter of which we have Frieda's fictionalized account in The Memoirs and Correspondence:

> ...Only now that you have gone I slowly begin to understand what a renewal of all my forces you have given me: you who have shown me living and coloured what has so far been only a bodiless dream to me, a vague longing for fulfilment. I have actually seen and loved what previously seemed only a possibility, a vision I hardly hoped to see in the flesh.
>
> In the past all the paralysing doubts had attacked my vision of a future, of all mankind's future. But now those doubts have no longer any point of attack. Now I know. The woman I have dreamed of for coming generations I have known and loved. Is it really possible, can it exist? Am I dreaming or is it really true? It is like a miracle, like a greeting from the future that you have come to me. Now I know what men will be like who will no longer be tainted by all the things I hate and combat. I know it through you, the only living human being today that has remained free from all the false shame and sham Christianity and false democracy, free from all the accumulated bunk, remained free through your own strength.[19]

Because Gross saw in Frieda the woman of the future, Green points out, she "came to Lawrence with a burningly vivid sense of her own value".[20]

One can easily see the Nietzschean elements functioning in this letter. Though Gross was one of Freud's most devoted students, he "more than once described Freud's work as being as a whole an extension of, and an application of, Nietzsche's insights".[21] Frieda, too, had read some Nietzsche before meeting Gross. In her fictionalized account of her marriage to Earnest Weekley, the husband, Charles Widmer (= Earnest), comments that Paula (= Frieda) "liked her Nietzsches and Platos".[22] Being a German and French scholar, Earnest Weekley easily could have encouraged Frieda's interest in Nietzsche. Also, in an undated letter written between 25 November, 1901, and 3 March, 1902, to her sister, Else, Frieda writes: "Bertha Niebeleisen will soon visit you, I hope she doesn't bore you too much. She wrote me a Nietzsche Calendar, if you own a Nietzsche (I believe you have Zarathustra) I would be glad if you would send it."[23] Gross, in 1907, would have found in Frieda a most willing supporter and enthusiast in his assimilation of Nietzsche's 'philosophy'. In fact, it can be said that Gross had much to do in making Frieda, as Martin Green argues, the Nietzschean woman incarnate. She did not want to enter the world of men - politics, or the exercise of the intellect - but preferred to concern herself with her own womanhood, the world of herself, and with her role as muse.

Frieda later wrote about Gross: "I had a great friend, a young Austrian doctor who had been a pupil of Freud's and had worked with him. Consequently he had been fundamentally influenced by Freud, and through him I was much impressed too. So Lawrence through this friend and me had an almost direct contact with these new ideas."[24] The full extent of Frieda's influence, since Lawrence "got most of his ideas in this living way", can only be guessed at; however, she most surely reinforced Lawrence's interest in Nietzsche, along with presenting in the flesh a model for the man/woman relationship in Women in Love.

By mid-April, 1913, Frieda and Lawrence had returned to Germany from Italy and were staying in Irschenhausen. In the letters of this month two references to Nietzsche survive. In a letter to Edward Garnett[+], Frieda writes that "I feel so apologetic that we came and came, the 'ewige Wieder Kehr' of Nietzsche, and then never turned up."[25] In a letter to A.W. McLeod, postmarked 26 April, 1913, Lawrence also writes about Nietzsche:

> I could send such heaps of German books if you could read the floundering language, which is alien to my psychology and my very tissue. I should never be able to use German, if I lived for ever..... Nietzsche said the Germans are the great receptive, female nation.[26]

This letter to McLeod suggests that while in Germany Lawrence

[+]Although this letter is undated, internal evidence indicates that it was written in April after the Lawrence's had moved to Irschenhausen.

was reading Nietzsche in the original, and that Nietzsche was very much a part of Frieda and Lawrence's conversations. From the preceding biographical and textual evidence, it is evident that Lawrence's interest in and enthusiasm for Nietzsche does exist; yet his response to this influence is a complex one, since in this case the dynamic of influence is at first accepted then denied.

II

In a letter written in early 1913 to Edward Garnett, Lawrence declares: "...I don't want to write like Galsworthy nor Ibsen, nor Strindberg, not any of them, not even if I could. We have to hate our immediate predecessors, to get free from their authority."[27] Nietzsche's influence on Lawrence, I would argue, operates in a similarly reactive fashion: it is simultaneously present and denied, accepted and rejected. This denial of Nietzsche is central to understanding how Nietzsche's influence affects Lawrence. Indeed, the issue is how the rejection of an influence becomes, paradoxically, a significant development in the effective nature of that particular influence. The substantive issue here, of course, is not so much that Lawrence in his rejection may not have understood Nietzsche conceptually, but instead how Nietzsche's influence is given expression in Lawrence's art.

In his explicit treatment of Nietzsche, Lawrence's

attitude is decidedly negative. The Study of Thomas Hardy (1914) marks this adverse treatment of Nietzsche by Lawrence: one has only to recall that in the Study Nietzsche is continually found at fault. First, Lawrence writes that Nietzsche's Eternal Recurrence - one of the major tenets of his 'philosophy' - does not really exist: "Nietzsche talks about the Ewige Wiederkehr. It is like Botticelli singing cycles. But each cycle is different. There is no real recurrence."[28] Lawrence's contention is that in each of Botticelli's cycles, truth - "that momentary state when in living the union between male and female is consummated" - is not absolute but relative, in that it is expressed anew by each cycle; but to express truth - as Lawrence claims Nietzsche does - by singing out one cycle, one moment, as absolute, is false. Second, Lawrence declares that the "Wille zur Macht is a spurious feeling",[29] when discussing its properties in a particular context:

> The other attitude of a man in love, besides this of "she administered onto my maleness", is, "she is the unknown, the undiscovered, in which I plunge to discovery losing myself."
>
> And what we call real love has always been this latter attitude.
>
> The first attitude, which belongs to passion, makes a man feel proud, splendid. It is a powerful stimulant to him, the female administered to him. He feels full of blood, he walks the earth like a Lord. And it is to this state Nietzsche aspires in his Wille zur Macht.[30]

Of course, in this context, Lawrence would decry the Wille zur Macht, since he clearly desires the man "to venture within the unknown of the female", or conversely, a woman to venture "towards the sunrise and the brilliant, bewildering, active embrace of a husband."

Nonetheless, his enumeration of the different relationships between a man and a woman may originate in part in Beyond Good and Evil:

> The difference among men becomes manifest not only in the difference between their tablets of goods.. ...it becomes manifest even more in what they take for really having and possessing something good.
>
> Regarding a woman, for example, those men who are more modest consider the mere use of the body and sexual gratification a sufficient and satisfying sign of "having", of possession. Another type, with a more suspicious and demanding thirst for possession, sees the "question mark," the illusory quality of such "having" and wants subtler tests, above all in order to know whether the woman does not only give herself to him but also gives up for his sake what she has or would like to have: only then does she seem to him "possessed." A third type, however, does not reach the end of his mistrust and for having even so: he asks himself whether the woman, when she gives up everything for him, does not possibly do this for a phantom of him. He wants to be known deep down, abysmally deep down, before he is capable of being loved at all; he dares to let himself be fathomed. He feels that his beloved is fully in his possession only when she no longer deceives herself about him when she loves him just as much for his devilry and hidden insatiability as for his graciousness, patience and spirituality.[31]

In 'Manifesto' Lawrence clearly describes the man/woman relationship in terms that are analogous to Nietzsche's third type:

> I want her though, to take the same from me.
> She touches me as if I were herself, her own
> She has not realized yet, the fearful thing, that I am
> the other,
> She thinks we are all of one piece.
> It is painfully untrue.
>
> I want her to touch me at last, ah, on the root and quick
> of my darkness
> and perish on me, as I have perished on her.
>
> Then, we shall be two and distinct, we shall have each
> our separate being.

And that will be pure existence, real liberty.
Till then, we are confused, a mixture, unresolved,
    unextricated one from the other.
It is in pure, unutterable resolvedness, distinction of
    being, that one is free,
not in mixing, merging, not in similarity.
When she has put her hand on my secret, darkest
    sources, the darkest outgoings,
when it has struck home to her, like a death, 'this is
him!'
she has no part in it, no part whatever,
it is the terrible other,
when she knows the fearful other flesh, ah, darkness
    unfathomable and fearful, contiguous and con-
    crete,
when she is slain against me, and lies in a heap like one
    outside the house,
when she passes away as I have passed away,
being pressed up against the other,
then I shall be glad, I shall not be confused with her,
I shall be cleared, distinct, single as if burnished in
    silver,
having no adherence, no adhesion anywhere,
one clear, burnished, isolated being, unique,
and she also, pure, isolated, complete,
two of us, unutterably distinguished, and in unutter-
    able conjunction.

Then we shall be free, freer than angels, ah, perfect.

The similarity in their thinking on this matter is evident: both articulate a desire that the man/woman relationship go beyond superficial contact, the one ministering to the other, to let the unknown in each other be discovered. Now, in the excerpt from Beyond Good and Evil, Nietzsche was as much opposed to what Lawrence rejects - the shallow sense of power which results from the female ministering to the male - as Lawrence came to be; so Lawrence errs in calling this sham sense of power the state that "Nietzsche aspires in his Wille zur Macht". Lawrence appears to accept part of Nietzsche's teaching in order to reject unjustly other aspects of his

teaching - a denial predicated upon a wilful interpretation. I will take up this kind of misinterpretation later.

On 19 February, 1916, in a letter to S.S. Koteliansky, Lawrence also criticizes Nietzsche, specifically referring to Thus Spake Zarathustra: "I understand Nietzsche's child. But it isn't a child that will represent the third stage: not innocent unconsciousness: but the maximum of fearless adult consciousness, that has the courage even to submit to the unconsciousness of itself."[32] Lawrence is alluding to Nietzsche's "On the Three Metamorphoses", from Thus Spake Zarathustra: "Of the three metamorphoses of the spirit I tell you: how the spirit becomes a camel; and the camel, a lion; and the lion, finally, a child."[33] In this letter, Lawrence establishes how his Weltanschauung - fearless adult consciousness which can submit to its own unconsciousness - differs from Nietzsche's, or at least how his differs from what he takes to be Nietzsche's Weltanschauung - innocent unconsciousness. What becomes evident, then, is that Lawrence commonly disagrees with Nietzsche by this time, even though a tacit acknowledgement of his previous enthusiasm remains.

This rejection of Nietzsche on Lawrence's part is concisely expressed in an observation made by John Middleton Murry when he and Katherine Mansfield were living next door to the Lawrences in Higher Tregerthan, Cornwall (from 7 April, 1916, to mid-June, 1916): "Only one recurrent pattern do I remember which was when Frieda would take it on herself to defend one

of Lawrence's discarded prophets - Shelley, for example, or Nietzsche - against his sudden sentence."[34] In the Bertrand Russell Archives there is a letter to Russell from Lady Ottoline Morrell, dated 2 December, 1915, which supports John Middleton Murry's observation: "Frieda and Lawrence have gone--they had a quarrel over Nietzsche at dinner--she is a devil! I wish she wasn't allowed to be at large." Unfortunately, Lady Ottoline does not provide the substance of the argument; yet we can be reasonably assured that Frieda was defending Nietzsche against Lawrence's "sudden sentence", his denouncement of her 'vulgar Nietzscheanism'. This rejection of Nietzsche, however, is based for the most part on Lawrence's wilful distortion of Nietzsche's basic tenets, and this distortion cannot be simply attributed to a careless mis-reading on Lawrence's part. The mis-reading may be the result of what Harold Bloom calls the anxiety of influence.[35]

One symptom of the anxiety of influence is expressed by the following: when a writer of great imaginative powers confronts his "Great Original" he "must find fault that is not there..."[36] According to Bloom's first category in the dialectic of influence, clinamen, Lawrence was influenced by his precursor Nietzsche, but rejected that influence in order to avoid losing his priority, his creativity. Bloom explains that when a great writer reads his precursor he does not read as a critic does. He can only read himself in his precursor's work because "to be judicious is to be weak, and to compare, exactly and

fairly, is to be not elect".[37] Seen in this way Lawrence's rejection of Nietzsche may be directly connected with Nietzsche's influence on him. But Nietzsche is not the only example of this dialectic of influence operating on Lawrence, for Lawrence clearly suffers this anxiety with Hardy and Dostoevsky, for example. All evidence points to the fact that on many occasions Lawrence is susceptible to this anxiety of influence, and that by deliberately misinterpreting and distorting his precursor's system he believes that he can free himself from any claims that may be made on him. Whether this belief is founded in truth or not, it is through this psychological device that the artist can survive creatively. I believe, therefore, that Lawrence's rejection of Nietzsche is in part the result of this anxiety of influence, and that the rejection must be seen in this dialectical context.

With the anxiety of influence as a major premise of this study, the following chapters will examine the fundamental problems that both Lawrence and Nietzsche share. The chapters of 'A Description of the Major Themes' generally demonstrate Nietzsche's influence on Lawrence's 'pollyanalytics' - Lawrence's working out of his philosophical concerns separate from his art. The 'Polarities' examines the mutual concern both men have for the body/consciousness dualism; 'Reduction: Towards the Discovery of the "Fundamental Error"' establishes that both Lawrence and Nietzsche deem the tyranny of mental consciousness to be a major problem in modern life; and

'Revolt: Beyond Nihilism' presents a course of salvation that is based on a radically new conception of human psychology that both men share. Of course, this analysis of Nietzsche's influence on Lawrence's 'philosophical' tracts makes the necessary preparation for addressing the different matter of Nietzsche's influence on Lawrence's art, especially as it is expressed in Women in Love.[+] The chapters on Women in Love will show that the dialectic of influence is still at work and how, in part, a work of art can be created out of it.

[+]In tracing Lawrence's interest in Nietzsche from his youth in Croydon to the writing of Women in Love, I do not wish to suggest that after Women in Love Lawrence was free of Nietzsche's influence. This, of course, is not true. Lawrence's leadership phase, for example, owes much to Nietzsche too: one has only to think of Eric Bentley's A Century of Hero-Worship in which he sees in Lawrence's leadership phase Nietzschean strains (but on the whole this study, especially the section concerning Lawrence, has serious limitations[38]) or Eugene Goodheart's The Utopian Vision of D.H. Lawrence. Also much may be made of the fact that The Plumed Serpent has as its emblem Zarathustra's eagle and serpent, and of Lilly's view of 'Will-to-Power' in Aaron's Rod. However, the novel which is central to this study is Women in Love. There are two major reasons for this: Women in Love is not only the novel which contains Lawrence's most complete statement about his major concerns, but also the novel, I believe, which is of all his works the closest to Nietzsche's conceptual world.

Notes

1. E.T. (Jessie Chambers), D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record, (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1935), p. 120.
2. David S. Thatcher, Nietzsche in England 1890-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), p. 228.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 231.
5. Ibid., p. 235.
6. John B. Humma, "D.H. Lawrence as Friedrich Nietzsche", Philological Quarterly 53, (Jan., 1974), pp. 110-120.
7. John M. Murry, Between Two Worlds (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1935), p. 420.
8. Thatcher, op. cit., p. 268.
9. Patrick Bridgwater, Nietzsche in Anglosaxony (New York: Leicester University Press, 1972), pp. 104-5.
10. Ibid., p. 108.
11. Armin Arnold, D.H. Lawrence and German Literature (Montreal: H. Heinemann, 1963), p. 33.
12. Ford Madox Ford, Return to Yesterday (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1931), pp. 392-3.
13. Arnold, op. cit., pp. 15-17.
14. D.H. Lawrence, "Georgian Poetry: 1911-1912", Phoenix (London: Heinemann, 1968), ed. Edward D. McDonald, p. 304.
15. Bridgwater, op. cit., p. 105.
16. Ibid.
17. Richard Aldington, D.H. Lawrence: Portrait of a Genius (New York: Collier Books, 1967), p. 106.
18. Martin Green, The von Richthofen Sisters (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1974), p. 131.
19. Frieda Lawrence, The Memoirs and Correspondence (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 95.
20. Green, op. cit., p. 49.

21. Green, op. cit., p. 45.

22. Frieda Lawrence, op. cit., p. 87.

23. Ibid., p. 152.

24. Ibid., p. 193.

25. Ibid., p. 181.

26. D.H. Lawrence, The Collected Letters (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), ed. Harry T. Moore, p. 204.

27. Ibid., p. 182.

28. D.H. Lawrence, Study of Thomas Hardy, Phoenix (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), ed. Edward McDonald, p. 461.

29. Ibid., p. 491.

30. Ibid., pp. 490-491.

31. Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil (Toronto: Random House, Inc., 1966), pp. 106-7.

32. D.H. Lawrence, The Quest for Rananim (Montreal: McGill - Queen's University Press, 1970), ed. George J. Zytaruk, p. 70.

33. Walter Kaufmann, trans., The Portable Nietzsche (New York: The Vikong Press, 1968), p. 137.

34. Between Two Worlds, p. 411.

35. Harold Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1975), p. 31.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p. 19.

38. For example, Bentley does not concern himself with Lawrence's great novels, i.e. Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, and Women in Love. (Incidentally, Bentley considers Lady Chatterley's Lover "a shocking book, not for what it mentions but for what it preaches..." (p. 236).) Although Bentley concedes that Lawrence is a great writer, he states that "it is not the greatness of the writing that concerns me here. My theme compels me, on the contrary, to stress the less great and non-great works" (p. 217). His theme, bluntly put, is the analysis of Lawrence's concern with power

in order to show his inherent fascist strains; but it appears that Bentley is deliberately fixing his case. Instead of consulting all Lawrence's works, especially the great ones, he selects only what will suffice for his argument, and from this cursory application thinks he can claim to know what Lawrence is essentially about. I find Bentley highly suspect when he writes: "But, in truth, Lawrence's thought is sufficiently clear in 1944, and, if it is often illiberal, readers of today will not be so surprised at the fact as were the reviewers of the twenties" (p. 215). To argue on my part that Lawrence has no fascist tendencies would, of course, be erroneous; but to see everything with fascist blinkers is equally erroneous. Bentley, I suspect, is a victim of the *bête noir* of his epoch.

Part Two

A Description of the Major Themes

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1. The Polarities

Both Lawrence and Nietzsche believed the body/consciousness dualism to be central in describing the human condition, since the relationship between the two polarities is crucial in determining what they consider life-giving and life-denying. The central polarity of Lawrence's dualistic metaphysic is described in a famous letter to Bertrand Russell, using the notions of 'blood-consciousness' and 'mental consciousness':

> I have been reading Frazer's Golden Bough and Totemism and Exogamy. Now I am convinced of what I believed when I was about twenty - that there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and the nerve system: there is blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness, which depends on the eye as its source and 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 the 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.[1]

What Lawrence means by 'blood-consciousness' and 'mental consciousness' is analogous, I suspect, to what Nietzsche means by Dionysus and Apollo. Indeed, I submit that Nietzsche's dualistic metaphysic is one of the main sources of influence on Lawrence's own metaphysic and, moreover, that Heraclitus, the originator of a world-view based on the connection between opposites, is a common source for both. For not only is Lawrence

influenced by Nietzsche but both are influenced by Heraclitus.

Nietzsche claims, in The Birth of Tragedy, that Greek cheerfulness, what moderns see in the Greeks as health and joy, is a construct of Euripides, but yet there was "a sixth century with its birth of tragedy...its Heraclitus."[2] By distinguishing the Socratic and the pre-Socratic world-views, Nietzsche clearly establishes Heraclitus as a touchstone for The Birth of Tragedy, and indirectly for its dualistic metaphysic. Nietzsche's interest in the early Greeks, especially Heraclitus, is well documented. In Will to Power, Nietzsche claims that the connection between German philosophy and antiquity will be evident in time, since "today we are getting close to all those fundamental forms of world interpretation devised by the Greek spirit through Anaximander, Heraclitus, Parmenides..."[3] This process of becoming more Greek operates in two ways according to Nietzsche: "at first, as is only fair, in concepts and evaluations, as Hellenic ghosts, as it were: but one day, let us hope, also in our bodies. Herein lies (and has always lain) my hope for the German character."[4] The significant point to examine, here, is this issue of the body: this reaffirmation of being, of existence through the body, the senses (which obviously includes a change in the perception of being).

This change in the perception of being requires full investigation because it is the foundation upon which Nietzsche's dualistic metaphysic stands. In The Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche sets apart Heraclitus, a figure he holds reverently high. He does

so because Heraclitus, contrary "to the rest of the philosopher crowd", accepts the evidence of the senses, i.e. he accepts "plurality and change" and opposes "duration and unity".[5] From this observation, although believing in his way that Heraclitus too was unjust to the senses, Nietzsche posits that "Reason is the cause of our falsification of the evidence of the senses. Insofar as the senses show becoming, passing away, change, they do not lie."[6] Of course, the terminology of senses (body) and reason (mind), of the relation of Being and Knowing, is central to Nietzsche as well as to Lawrence, and for that matter to all romantics. Nietzsche is arguing for the organic duality, and traces this belief to his understanding of Heraclitus.

The Birth of Tragedy is the obvious point from which to establish the polarities in Nietzsche's thought. First of all, I concur with A.R. Orage's belief that The Birth of Tragedy, is "not only a basis for a philosophy of art, but also a key to Nietzsche's thought as a whole."[7] In his chapter on The Birth of Tragedy in Ecce Homo, Nietzsche claims as much when he assimilates the "Heraclitean philosophy" with his "Dionysian philosophy":

> I have the right to understand myself as the first tragic philosopher - that is, the most extreme opposite and antipode of a pessimistic philosopher. Before me this transposition of the Dionysian into a philosophical pathos did not exist: tragic wisdom was lacking; I have looked in vain for signs of it even among the Great Greeks in philosophy, those of the two centuries before Socrates. I retain some doubt in the case of Heraclitus, in whose proximity I feel warmer and better than anyone else. The affirmation of passing away and destroying, which is the decisive feature of the Dionysian philosophy; saying yes to opposition and war; becoming, along with a radical

> repudiation of the very concept of being - all this is clearly more closely related to me than anything else to date. The doctrine of the "eternal recurrence", that is, of the unconditional and infinitely repeated circular course of all things - this doctrine of Zarathustra might in the end have been taught already by Heraclitus. At least the Stoa has traces of it, and the Stoics inherited almost all of the principle notions from Heraclitus.[8]

The Birth of Tragedy, then, is both a book which owes a considerable amount to Heraclitus and which is the cornerstone of Nietzsche's thought.

In The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche delineates the central polarity in terms of Greek deities: the opposing forces are Apollo "(who as the etymology of the name indicates) is the shining one", who contains "the glorious divine image of the principium individuationis", the principle of individuation, and Dionysus who "is brought home to us most intimately by the analogy of intoxication" in which "the entire symbolism of the body is called in play."[9] Dionysus is "the mysterious primordial unity", eternally suffering and contradictory", out of which Apollo, "the cognitive modes of existence", arises as a necessity.[10] The process, Nietzsche writes, can be seen as the following: "out of the original Titanic divine order of terror, the Olympian divine order of joy gradually evolved through the Apollinian impulse toward beauty, just as roses burst from a thorny bust."[11] Albeit the Apollonian arises from the Dionysian, the Apollonian can reign triumphantly over the Dionysian, as Nietzsche believes that "the Homeric naivete can be understood only as the complete victory of the Apollonian

illusion" over the Dionysian primal impulse.[12] Evidently, this polarity is in conflict, with one tending to dominate the other; but the best example of this opposition, says Nietzsche, is not manifest in this tyranny but in Attic tragedy where they are "coupled with each other, and through this coupling ultimately generate an equally Dionysian and Apollonian form of art."[13] Art, then, is the outcome of a true equilibrium of these impulses.

Although Nietzsche stresses "that the continuous development of art is bound up with the Apollinian and Dionysian duality",[14] he also sees the duality functioning not just in art but in existence _per se_ as well. In other words, these two impulses are also the impulses of the existent world, or as Nietzsche writes:

> For the more clearly I perceive in nature those omnipotent art impulses, and in them an ardent longing for illusion, for redemption through illusion, the more I feel myself impelled to the metaphysical assumption that the truly existent primal unit, eternally suffering and contradictory, also needs the rapturous vision, the pleasurable illusion, for its continuous redemption.[15]

According to Nietzsche, these two impulses operate not just in art but also in life; in fact, art and life in Nietzsche's view cannot be easily separated. Indeed, one of Nietzsche's most famous dicta focuses on this very point: "for it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified."[16] What Nietzsche means is that "only insofar as the genius in the act of artistic creation coalesces with the primordial artist of the world, does he know anything of the eternal essence of art."[17] In Nietzsche's view, the eternal

essence of art is directly related to existence; and the creative genius in revealing the primordial artist - the duality of process - may be seen to effect the revelation of life through art. For Nietzsche, this revelation justifies existence and the world, since it is only through art that we truly come to know the world.

The polarity of Dionysus and Apollo is expressed in numerous metaphors in the early sections of The Birth of Tragedy: as darkness and light, chaos and order, illogic and logic, union and separation, reality (of the body, the senses) and illusion (of the mind), and many others - opposites, then, in conflict. Later in The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche proclaims the opposing forces to be Dionysus and Socrates; and later still, in his development beyond this study in tragedy, he comes to see the opposing forces as Dionysus and the Crucified. In all these transformations, Nietzsche's understanding of Dionysus gradually changes until he can speak of his "Dionysian philosophy". Although Nietzsche's thinking arises out of the matrix of a classical intellectual framework, the central polarity of his metaphysic is the body/consciousness dualism, which is also the foundation of Lawrence's dualistic metaphysic.

As Emile Delavenay argues, the place to enter Lawrence's 'philosophy' is with the "Foreword to Sons and Lovers,[18] sent to Edward Garnett in January, 1913. The 'Foreword', as Emile Delavenay writes, "heralds a series of 'philosophical essays' on similar themes and in a similar style" that "show a process

of self-understanding which starts with the writings of Sons and Lovers and leads to Women in Love and the character of Birkin."[19] Since Lawrence writes out of a Christian framework, his vocabulary differs greatly from Nietzsche's; yet his dualistic metaphysic bears a remarkable similarity to Nietzsche's.

In the 'Foreword', the central polarity is described as the Father, "the unutterable Flesh," and the Son, "the Flesh as it utters the Word."[20] Lawrence argues that the 'Flesh' does not arise from the 'Word', as he quotes the disciple John as saying, but that the 'Word' arises from the 'Flesh'. The 'God of the Flesh', Lawrence writes, is in woman; while the 'God of the Word', the Son, is in man. At this point Lawrence has clearly established the distinction of the illogical, the unutterable, the unknowable being, from the logical, the word as uttered, the knowable - analogous to the distinction between Dionysus and Apollo. Moreover, in a letter to Ernest Collings, dated 17 January, 1913, the same month he sent Garnett a copy of the 'Foreword', Lawrence makes his first real statement of his belief in 'blood-knowledge':

> 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.[21]

Lawrence's belief in the blood, the 'Flesh', is analogous to Nietzsche's belief in Dionysus, the primal source, the Dionysus where all the body is brought in play; and Lawrence's distrust and criticism of the intellect is similar to Nietzsche's criticism

of the Apollonian force in ascendance over the Dionysian.[22]

Like all the romantics, English and continental, both Nietzsche and Lawrence believe that the knowable, the logical, or the mental, arise out of the unknowable, the illogical, the body; but the crucial point is that they are not in absolute opposition to the Apollonian force, so long as it does not break its vital connection with the Dionysian, and tyrannize over it. In fact, both see the Apollonian as a requisite in the scheme of things - without it the primal force could not be revealed. Lawrence sees the 'Word' as this vision itself:

> Flutter of petals, the rose, the Father through the Son wasting himself in a moment of consciousness, a Rose, a Clapping of the Hands, a Spark of Joy thrown off from the Fire to die ruddy in mid darkness, a snip of Flame, the Holy Ghost, the Revelation.[23]

The Father and the Son are brought into an organic, dualistic union, as Dionysus and Apollo in Attic Tragedy are brought into a perfectly balanced coupling. As Lawrence progresses beyond the 'Foreword' to Study of Thomas Hardy, he tends to focus his attention on friction between and criticism of the duality as seen in Euripides' plays and Hardy's novels.

In Study of Thomas Hardy, the polarity remains in its Judaeo-Christian aspect: God the Father and Christ, or the principles of Law and Love respectively. These principles represent to Lawrence the two successive ideas of human consciousness: Law is of the Flesh, the blood, woman, the Will-to-inertia; and Love is of the spirit, the word, of man, the Will-to-Motion. When Lawrence discussed the principles of Law and Love with John Middleton Murry, Murry apparently thought

that the two things "were better called: the condition of Being and the condition of Knowing."[24] Murry continues by stating that Lawrence accepted this distinction, and evidence of this acceptance is to be found in the Study when Lawrence writes: "It is the novelists and dramatists who have the hardest task in reconciling their metaphysic, their theory of being and knowing, with their living sense of being."[25] Murry's terminology is appropriate, for Lawrence, as well as Nietzsche, attempted to conceive of Being and Knowing in a new way, in order to create a radically new perception of Reason.

In the Study, Lawrence illustrates the difference between a polarity in conjunction and a polarity in disjunction. As does Nietzsche in The Birth of Tragedy, Lawrence uses the art of Aeschylus and that of Euripides to demonstrate this difference. Lawrence argues, as did Nietzsche before him, that in Aeschylus the two forces - Law and Love (Dionysus and Apollo in Nietzsche's terminology) - are eternally in conflict but unequally matched. Nietzsche and Lawrence disagree as to the meaning of this disequilibrium. Nietzsche's position is that in Euripides the element of Socratism (the Apollonian force) - Love is Lawrence's term - is falsely favoured over the Dionysian, and consequently it remains unjustly in the ascendant. Lawrence, on the contrary, believes that Love in Euripides is always being borne down, that Euripides "with his aspiration towards Love, Love the supreme, and his almost hatred of the Law, Law the Triumphant but Base Closer of Doom, is less satisfactory, because of the very fact that he holds Love always Supreme, and yet must endure the chagrin

of seeing Love perpetually transgressed and overthrown."[27] Although both Nietzsche and Lawrence are in basic agreement that in Euripides the balanced duality collapses, their difference of opinion concerning Euripides reflects the significance Lawrence places on The Bacchae, whereas Nietzsche argues that "this tragedy was a protest against the practicability of his own tendency; but alas, it had already been put into practice! The marvel had happened: when the poet recanted, his tendency had already triumphed."[28] In The Bacchae the Apollonian element can not willfully control the Dionysian, even though Euripides may desire this, which is Lawrence's argument, while Nietzsche simply sees the play as a recanting, a last effort by Euripides to correct his error. Again, what appears to be operating in this instance is that Lawrence concurs with Nietzsche and disagrees with him almost simultaneously. The closeness of Lawrence's thought here to The Birth of Tragedy suggests that it had an impact in his thinking - however, the fact that a disagreement between Nietzsche and Lawrence does exist on this matter implies that the anxiety of influence may be operating.

During this interim between Lawrence's writing of the Study and The Crown, a two-fold development occurs which will alter his direction - he develops a greater interest in the collapse of the duality, in dissolution or reduction as it is called, and he reads John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy. Lawrence's concern with reduction will be examined in the next chapter; while the importance of Burnet's book on Lawrence's dualistic

metaphysic will be examined in the present one. Lawrence's reading of John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy (July, 1915), especially the chapter on Heraclitus, clearly influences his thinking. In that often quoted letter to Russell, Lawrence writes: "I have been wrong, much too Christian in my philosophy. These early Greeks have clarified my soul. I must drop all about God."[29] Also in the same letter, dated ? 14 July, 1915, Lawrence stresses that "I shall write out Herekleitos, on tablets of bronze."[30] In a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, dated ? 19 July, 1915, Lawrence proclaims with assurance that "I shall write my philosophy again. Last time I came out of the Christian Camp. This time I must come out of these early Greek philosophers."[31] But what is important in this letter is what follows these declarations - that what Lawrence had gleaned from Heraclitus (via Burnet) augmented his knowledge in what he already believed was true. He writes: "I am so sure of what I know, and what is true, now, that I am sure I am stronger, in the truth, in the knowledge I have, than all the world outside that knowledge."[32] Stronger in the knowledge he had gained from Heraclitus, I argue; Lawrence's immediate reception of Heraclitus is due to the fact that their thinking is complementary. In The Crown the Heraclitean and Nietzschean influences are evident.

Months before he actually wrote The Crown, Lawrence informed a number of his correspondents that the writing of his 'philosophy' was very much an on-again-off-again project. He had written to Bertrand Russell, in a letter dated 26 February, 1915, that he

had at one time called his philosophy Le Gai Savaire, which echoes Nietzsche's Die Frohliche Wissenschaft, or The Gay Science. "I want," Lawrence writes, "to rewrite this stuff, and make it as good as I can, and publish it in pamphlets, weekly or fortnightly, and so start a campaign for this freer life."[33] Le Gai Savaire, or Le Gai Saver (which Lawrence calls it in another letter to Russell, dated 2 March, 1915), undergoes a significant name change a few months later. In an undated letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, Lawrence writes that he has "begun again my philosophy - Morgenrot[34] is my new name for it."[35] This new title evokes Nietzsche's Die Morgenrote, or The Dawn. These titles, with their obvious allusions to Nietzsche, present another side of the anxiety of influence. On these occasions Lawrence does not attempt to disguise a connection with Nietzsche; in fact, he does the opposite of what he has in the past. In these instances the power of identification with Nietzsche may be so great that it temporarily disrupts the anxiety pattern - that the actual identification is so powerful that it, temporarily at least, overcomes any anxiety that may accompany such identification. Of course, such identification may in fact lead to a severe reaction, since the more the influence is accepted the greater the rejection can become. Regardless, these titles illustrate at the very least Nietzsche's spell on Lawrence even in The Crown, which Lawrence believed to be "really something: the seed, I hope, of a great change in life: the beginning of a new religious

era, from my point."[36]

In "The Lion and the Unicorn were Fighting for the Crown", the first chapter of The Crown, Lawrence expresses his polarity in terms closely approximating Nietzsche and Heraclitus. Lawrence's metaphors differ, of course, from The Study of Thomas Hardy, but the vision in this first chapter parallels that of the previous treatise. The Lion as King of Beasts, to continue Lawrence's plethora of metaphors of polarity, represents darkness, the Beginning, the body and 'blood-consciousness'; the Unicorn, the Beast of Purity, represents light, the End, the spirit, and 'mental consciousness'.[37] The two forces, while in true dualistic opposition, create the Crown (which is the Holy Ghost in The Study) as the only genuine Absolute.

In a passage close to Nietzsche's contention that Apollo arises from Dionysus, Lawrence explains that the "infinite darkness conceives of its own opposite."[38] Out of infinite darkness arises infinite light, that infinite darkness (like Dionysus) is the source of light (or of Apollo). Nevertheless, Lawrence makes it clear that "there cannot exist a specific infinite save by virtue of the opposite and equivalent specific infinite; "that is, everything must be seen in terms of its opposite, for its only true meaning is in its organic connection with its opposite. Lawrence writes that "the flesh develops in splendour and glory out of the prolific darkness" and when "begotten by light it develops to a great triumph, till it dances naked in glory of itself..."[39] Here, the imagery is

that of procreation, the mingling of the female (darkness) and male (light); and this supports the issue of the relation of the two Infinites, but contradicts the logic of infinite darkness conceiving its own opposite. Notwithstanding this confusion, Lawrence supports his conviction when he writes that the flesh dances naked "before the Ark, naked in glory of itself in the procession of heroes travelling towards the wise goddess, the white light, the Mind, the light which the vessel of living darkness has caught and captured within itself, and holds in triumph."[40] Indeed, the darkness leads to the light it already contains. Lawrence closes this section with another, possibly unconscious, reference to Nietzsche. When the darkness "circles round the treasure of light which it has enveloped, which it calls Mind," the result is "the ecstasy, the dance before the Ark, the Bacchic delirium."[41] Unquestionably, this passage rephrases Nietzsche's basic tenet in The Birth of Tragedy, that the Apollonian arises out of the frenzied Dionysian to create Attic tragedy, as true fusion of Being and Knowing.

The nature of Lawrence's dualistic metaphysic is decidely influenced by Heraclitus. Heraclitus says that "war is common to all and strife is justice, and that all things come into being and pass away through strife" (Fr. 62). Lawrence endorsed this, not in the literal sense of approving of the slaughter that most of Europe was engaged in at that time, but in terms of his metaphysic since he believed that the dissolution of civilization

resulted from the wilful destruction of this dynamic, organic process. The first two chapters of The Crown contain numerous edicts similar in content to fragment 62: "And there is no rest, no cessation from conflict. For we are two opposites which exist by virtue of our opposition. Remove the opposition and there is a collapse, a sudden crumbling into universal nothingness."[42] Or: "Is not the Unicorn necessary to the very existence of the Lion, is not each opposite kept in stable equilibrium by the opposition of the other",[43] which recalls this statement by Heraclitus: "The sun will not overstep his measures; if he does, the Erinyes, the handmaids of Justice, will find him out" (Fr. 29). Lawrence's view of the dynamic process is succinctly summed up when he writes, "Anything that triumphs, perishes."[44] In other words, anything that imperils this dynamic process, this conflict of opposites, is dissolute - life-destroying.

Lawrence's concern with the body/consciousness dualism in The Crown is in all probability informed by both Nietzsche and Heraclitus. Nietzsche speaks at great length on this matter of dualism, and Heraclitus, who partially helped Lawrence to break away from the Judaeo-Christian tradition, clarifies for Lawrence the actual workings of this dynamic, dualistic metaphysic. Though it is evident that the body/consciousness dualism is a common concern for both Nietzsche and Lawrence, and furthermore that their metaphysics are mutually influenced by Heraclitus,

the problematic of the anxiety of influence must not be forgotten. Because he must, Lawrence will work free of their influence as much as possible, and in doing so he will confront the matter of body/consciousness dualism with his own particular genius and in his own language.

Notes

1. D.H. Lawrence, The Collected Letters, ed. Harry T. Moore (New York: The Viking Press, 1962), p. 393.

2. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1967), pp. 78-9.

3. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House Inc., 1968), pp. 225-26.

4. Ibid.

5. Friedrich Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penquin Books Inc., 1972), p. 36.

6. Ibid.

7. David S. Thatcher, Nietzsche in England 1890-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), p. 231.

8. Twilight of the Idols, pp. 273-74.

9. The Birth of Tragedy, pp. 35-6.

10. Ibid., p. 45.

11. Ibid., pp. 42-3.

12. Ibid., p. 44.

13. Ibid., p. 33.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., p. 45.

16. Ibid., p. 52.

17. Ibid.

18. D.H. Lawrence, The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Aldous Huxley (Heinemann, 1932), pp. 95-102.

19. Emile Delavenay, D.H. Lawrence: The Man and his World (Carbondale and Edwarsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), p. 167.

20. Foreword to "Sons and Lovers", p. 96.

21. Collected Letters, p. 180.

22. See H. Steinhauer's "Eros and Psyche: A Nietzshean Motif in Anglo-Saxon Literature," in Modern Language Notes, April 1949. In the short, but informative section on Lawrence, Steinhauer believes that this belief in the blood (as with Nietzsche's belief in Dionysus) is a neo-pagan belief as contradistinguished from the Christian conception of life. In fact, the polarities that both Lawrence and Nietzsche use, says Steinhauer, "are the polarities in the pagan-Christian conflict" (p. 219). Also, Steinhauer believes that Lawrence was significantly influenced by Nietzsche: "What had Nietzsche to offer Lawrence? the answer is: everything" (p. 221).

23. Foreword to "Sons and Lovers", p. 100.

24. John M. Murry, Between Two Worlds (London: Jonathan Cape, 1935), pp. 314-15.

25. D.H. Lawrence, Study of Thomas Hardy, in Phoenix; ed. Edward McDonald (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p. 479.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., pp. 476-77.

28. The Birth of Tragedy, p. 82.

29. After this remark Lawrence quotes fragments 110, 111, and 129, 130 from Burnet's chapter on Heraclitus.

30. Collected Letters, p. 352. This letter is misdated by Moore; the letter to Russell should be ?14 July.

31. Ibid., p. 351. This letter is also misdated by Moore; the letter to Ottoline should be ?19 July.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., p. 324.

34. Letters of D.H. Lawrence, p. 237.

35. By comparing the chronology and internal evidence of the Huxley letters and the Moore letters, this letter dates somewhere between 1 June, 1915, and 20 June, 1915.

36. Letters of D.H. Lawrence, p. 258.

37. For further information regarding polarities consult the diagram of the various polarities in Lawrence's thinking, as well as the ensuing discussion, in Graham Hough's The Dark Sun, pp. 224-30. It should be mentioned, however, that Hough is mistaken about the Crown when he writes: "The lion, the mind, the active, male principle must always be at strife with the unicorn, the senses, the passive, the female principle" (p. 226). Surely the lion, who is king of beasts, is the lion of darkness, while the unicorn, who is chaste, is the unicorn of light: "We are enveloped in the darkness like the lion: or like the unicorn, enveloped in the light" (The Crown, p. 367). The lion, rather than the "unicorn of chastity", is of the flesh, the senses, darkness. Also, see Lawrence's poem St Mark for his treatment of the transformation of the "lion of the senses" to the 'winged lion', namely the apocalyptic beast which stands for Mark.

38. D.H. Lawrence, The Crown, in Phoenix II, ed. Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1970), p. 368.

39. Ibid., p. 369.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., p. 368.

43. Ibid., p. 366.

44. Ibid., p. 381.

A Description of the Major Themes

2. Reduction: Towards the Discovery of the 'Fundamental Error'

Both Lawrence and Nietzsche advocate a dynamic, dualistic metaphysic - a vital connection between opposites which must be kept in a sensitive, shifting balance. However, when this Heraclitean dualism collapses Western civilization, so both men believe, is plunged into reduction. Reduction occurs when one element of the dualism overcomes its opposite. The nature of reduction can be described in terms of the 'fundamental error'. For Lawrence as well as for Nietzsche the 'fundamental error' is rooted in what they understand to be the tyranny of mental consciousness: that is, the unjustifiable belief in mental consciousness as the sole measure of existence. This analysis of reduction by both men is very important because they make it, in their metaphysics, both the measure of the ills of Western civilization, and the perspective from which they can declare what measures are necessary for health to prevail.

We have seen that Nietzsche makes Euripides responsible for the demise of Attic tragedy, by removing from tragedy the original and powerful Dionysian element. Although Nietzsche argues that Euripides reconstructed "tragedy purely on the basis of an un-Dionysian art, morality, and world view",[1] Euripides is only the agent through which the "new born demon, called Socrates,"[2] speaks. Socrates, according to Nietzsche, opposed Dionysus,

after replacing Apollo, and accomplished the "reversal of taste in favour of dialectics" with the result that the mob achieved victory. As a tool of the mob, dialectics lead the way for the supremacy of the ideal, or as Nietzsche writes, "the Apollonian tendency has withdrawn into the cocoon of logical schematism."[3] Socrates, to Nietzsche, is "the turning point or vortex of the so-called world history who maintained the unshakeable faith that thought, using the thread of causality, can penetrate the deepest abysses of being, and that thought is capable not only of knowing being but even of correcting it."[4] Nietzsche, then, historically locates the origin of the reductive process with Socrates, who epitomizes the ascendance of Logos. Obviously, Nietzsche categorically opposes such a belief: to dare to correct or alter being in this manner is fallacious.

What has occured, then, is that the true dynamic dualism of Dionysus and Apollo succumbs to the demon of the Socratic dialectic, a dialectic, Nietzsche contends, which is divorced from a genuine connection with being - but which still wants to manipulate being. Consequently, Nietzsche claims, this means for mankind the suppression of the individual, that Greek noble man who kept the dynamic dualism of Dionysus and Apollo intact, in favor of the ascendance of the herd, a central Nietzschean metaphor:

> My idea is, as you see, that consciousness does not really belong to the man's individual existence but rather to his social or herd nature; that, as follows from this, it has developed subtlety only insofar as this is required

> by social or herd utility. Consequently, given the best will in the world to understand ourselves as individually as possible, "To know ourselves," each of us will always succeed in becoming conscious only of what is not individual but "average." Our thoughts themselves are continually governed by the 'character of consciousness' - by the genius of the species that commands it - and translated back into the perspective of the herd. Fundamentally, all our actions are altogether incomparably personal, unique, and infinitely individual; there is no doubt of that. But as soon as we translate them into consciousness they no longer seem to be.[5]

Nietzsche stresses that the development of consciousness from man's herd nature is the result of a life-preserving power: that is, the birth of consciousness originates in the need for preservation. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, 'herd consciousness' is erroneous because it is not based upon truth but on survival: "thus the strength of knowledge does not depend on its degree of truth but on its age, on the degree to which it has been incorporated, on its character as a condition of life."[6] Truth qua truth does develop but only as the weakest form of knowledge; eventually, as Nietzsche personifies this struggle, there is a conflict within the individual between the "impulse for truth" and the "life-preserving errors". Nietzsche's 'herd consciousness', unmistakably, is the Socratic dialectic, which must be overcome. Ironically, Nietzsche contends that Socrates' faith in truth will eventually become a critique of the Socratic dialectic itself, of reduction.

Later, particularly in <u>The Anti-Christ</u> (which Lawrence's <u>Apocalypse</u> parallels), Nietzsche's antagonists are no longer Dionysus and Socrates but Dionysus and the Crucified. This later

Dionysus incorporates both of the earlier Apollonian and Dionysian elements: Dionysus now represents the dynamic dualism while Socrates and the Crucified represent the reductive force which destroyed it. Christianity, for Nietzsche, is the continuation of the herd revolt led by the Jews against the Greek noble man - the revolt of the Socratic dialectic against the Dionysian dualism. The major upshot of this, allegedly, is that morality became the property of the herd, not the individual. In <u>On the Genealogy of Morals</u>, through his understanding of morality, Nietzsche makes the important distinction between the morality of "Good and Bad" and "Good and Evil":

> This, then, is quite the contrary of what the noble man does, who conceives the basic concept "good" in advance and spontaneously out of himself and only then creates for himself an idea of "bad". This "bad" of noble origin and that "evil" out of the cauldron of unsatisfied hatred - the former an after-production, a side issue, a contrasting shade, the latter on the contrary the original thing, the beginning, the distinctive deed, in the conception of a slave morality - how different these words "bad" and "evil" are, although they are both apparently the opposite of the same concept "good". But is not the same concept "good": one should ask rather precisely who is "evil" in the sense of the morality of resentment. The answer, in all strictness, is: precisely the "good" man of the other morality, precisely the noble, powerful man, the ruler, but dyed in another colour, interpreted in another fashion, seen in another way by the venomous eye of resentment.[7]

The distinction between these moralities assumes that Christian morality - the morality of "Good and Evil" - is predicated upon the ascendance of the Socratic dialectic; Nietzsche believes that it is the greatest expression of reduction yet. In fact, even the democratic movement with the attending rationalism of

science is claimed to be an extension of this reduction, in Nietzsche's phrase the "democratic movement is the heir of the Christian movement".[8] Nietzsche again and again venomously rants against the Christian morality in favour of the Dionysian: "the god on the cross", he writes, "is a curse on life, a sign-post to seek redemption from life; Dionysus cut to pieces is a promise of life: it will be eternally reborn and return again from destruction".[9]

Though Nietzsche selects an historical figure, Socrates, as the individual who effected this reduction, Lawrence locates the cause of it in the human psyche, particularly in what he denotes as the ego. In "The Crown", Lawrence writes that "the false I, the ego, held down the real, unborn I":[10] that is, this false I, the uncreated, "will seek to make itself absolute and timeless by devouring its opposite". The false absolute, evidently, exerts a static, tyrannical control over the unborn I, that I of the dynamic, dualistic process. Lawrence is arguing here that the true self has been usurped by the ego, which is the false absolute. Since the ego develops because it devours its own opposite, the vital dualism is destroyed. In fact, there can be said to exist the ego of power, when darkness devours light, and the ego of love, when light devours darkness. Lawrence differs from Nietzsche in that he posits the reductive process as two-fold, and it would do well for the many commentators who are convinced that Lawrence is totally opposed to consciousness to contemplate this fact. Lawrence is as much opposed to the complete

mindless, reckless abandon of the pagan as he is to the tyrannical consciousness of contemporary man.[11]

As Nietzsche changes his concept of the agents of reduction from Socrates to the Crucified, a change necessitated by his deeply felt hatred of Christianity, Lawrence's ego of power and ego of love become, respectively, the pagan Infinite and the Christian Infinite. In "The Crown", he writes: "We have known both directions. The Pagan, aristocratic, lordly, sensuous, has declared the Eternity of Origin, the Christian, humble, spiritual, unselfish, democratic, has declared the Eternity of the Issue, the End."[12] Albeit Lawrence perceives the reductive process occuring in two separate ways, he believes that contemporary man exists within the Christian Infinite, "within the closed shell of the Christian conception."[13] However, in reaction to the Christian Infinite, he believes that it is to the pagan Eternity, the Eternity of Pan, that "some of us are veering round to, in private life, during the past few years."[14]

In the 1915 version of "Twilight in Italy", which to some extent parallels the major concerns in "The Crown", Lawrence restates the same claim, but with a noteworthy addition: "We are tempted, like Nietzsche, to return back (sic) to the old pagan Infinite, to say that is supreme."[15] Later in the travel book, Lawrence's distinction between Northern and Southern Europe demonstrates the reactionary process, the complete swing from the one Infinite to the other, from one direction to the

other: "When Northern Europe, whether it hates Nietzsche or not, is crying out for the Dionysiac ecstasy, practising on itself the Dionysiac ecstasy, Southern Europe is breaking free from Dionysis, from the triumphal affirmation of life over death, immortality through procreation."[16] Obviously, this reaction is merely a palliative: the reductive process remains while only the symptom has changed.[17] The identification of the pagan Infinite with Nietzsche is common enough, but it indicates that Lawrence has misconstrued Nietzsche's thought.

Lawrence criticizes Nietzsche for regarding the pagan Infinite as supreme, because such a view involves the dissolution of the dynamic dualism - the dualism of the pagan and the Christian, of the Origin and the End. But this criticism is essentially unfounded. In fact, this criticism may partly explain the reason behind Nietzsche becoming one of Lawrence's "discarded prophets". As has been documented, Nietzsche strenuously argues for a dualistic metaphysic, for the two-in-one, much in the same way Lawrence does. Dionysus is not simply equivalent to the pagan Infinite; Dionysus, as we know, comes to signify not just the pagan force but the Christian as well. Nietzsche's Dionysus represents his dualism, his fusion of the Dionysian and the Apollonian polarities. Although possibly unaware of it, Lawrence parallels this process: Lawrence's view of Pan changes from the Pan of the pagan Infinite to the Pan "of the living relatedness of all things", i.e. Lawrence's Pan is analogous to Nietzsche's Dionysus.

In "Pan in America" Lawrence reasons that the advent of Christianity brought about the death of the "great Pan"; and, consequently, the dead Pan was transformed into the Christian devil" with the cloven hoofs and the horns, the tail, and the laugh of derision."[18] This transformation, it should be noted, parallels the transformation of the morality of "Good and Bad" to the Christian morality - the morality of "Good and Evil" - as Nietzsche describes that transformation in On the Genealogy of Morals. Pan, etymologically, means "all", as Lawrence has it, it means the "vivid relatedness" between man and the living universe that surrounds him; it is the figure which embodies the living dualism. Idealism killed Pan when "the idea and the engine came between man and all things, like a death. The old connexion, the old Allness, was severed, and can never be ideally restored."[19] For Lawrence, humanity must return to the living relatedness with the universe; but he cautions that this cannot be done by returning "to the primitive life, to live in tepees and hunt with bows and arrows."[20] This to Lawrence is simply reactionary: in reaction to "the mechanical conquered universe of modern humanity", as we also know it, the Christian Infinite.

Lawrence, like Nietzsche, proclaims that Christianity "must be surpassed" for there is something new to be had. Lawrence, then, argues that we must perform a jailbreak from "the film which encloses us one with the past, and come out into the new." And, if we don't do this, "we lapse utterly back, through reduction...It is the triumph of death and destruction."[21] For

Lawrence, as for Nietzsche, Christian civilization is the greatest expression of reduction in history.

These parallels between Nietzsche's and Lawrence's thought on reduction, on the dissolution of the dynamic dualism which they take to be the "thought that directs the course of all things,"[22] originate in complementary insights into the 'fundamental error'. In Will to Power, Nietzsche clearly expresses what he believes to be the cause of reduction:

> The fundamental mistake is simply that, instead of understanding consciousness as a tool and a particular aspect of total life, we posit it as the standard and the condition of life that is of supreme value: it is the erroneous perspective of a parte ad totum - which is why all philosophers are instinctively trying to imagine a total consciousness, a consciousness involved in all life and will, in all that occurs, a "spirit", "God". But one has to tell them that precisely this turns life into a monstrosity, that a "God" and total sensorium would altogether be something on account of which life would have to be condemned - [23]

The 'fundamental error' is the tyranny exerted by consciousness over life, that consciousness which is only a part of life is taken to be the standard or condition of life. In the terms of Being and Knowing, reduction occurs when Knowing negates total Being, and replaces it with itself. Being, as total life, is the marriage of the Dionysian and the Apollonian duality, with the Apollonian arising out of the Dionysian, not the other way round. And, evidently, the belief in God (which is a blasphemy against life because Being is forced to minister to this imagined total consciousness) is the ultimate consequence of the 'fundamental error'.

In "Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious", Lawrence arrives

at the same insight; and this postulate of the 'fundamental error', albeit in Lawrence's own style, does echo the very tone of Nietzsche's passage:

> The brain is, if we may use the word, the terminal instrument of the dynamic consciousness. It transmits what is a creative flux into a certain fixed cipher. It prints off, like a telegraph instrument, the glyphs and graphic representation which we call precepts, concepts, ideas. It produces a new reality - the ideal. The idea is another static identity, another unit of the mechanical-active and materio-static universe. It is thrown off from life, as leaves are shed from a tree, or as feathers fall from a bird. Ideas are the dry, unliving, insentient plumage which intervenes between us and the circumambient universe, forming at once an insulator and an instrument for the subduing of the universe. The mind is the instrument of instruments; it is not a creative reality.
>
> Once the mind is awake, being in itself a finality, it feels very assured. "The word became flesh, and began to put on airs," says Norman Douglas wittily. It is exactly what happens. Mentality being automatic in its principle like the machine, begins to assume life. It begins to affect life, to pretend to make and unmake life. "In the beginning was the Word." This is the presumptious masquerading of the mind. The Word cannot be the beginning of life. It is the end of life, that which falls shed. The mind is the dead end of life. But it has all the mechanical force of the non-vital universe. It is a great dynamo of super-mechanical force. Given the will as accomplice, it can even arrogate its machine-notions and automatizations over the whole of life, till every tree becomes a clipped teapot and every man a useful mechanism. So we see the brain like a great dynamo and accumulator, accumulating mechanical force and presuming to apply this mechanical force-control to the living unconscious, subjecting everything spontaneous to certain machine-principles called ideals or ideas.[24]

Whereas Nietzsche's opposing terms are "total life" and "consciousness" or "life" and "God", Lawrence outlines his opposing terms as "flesh" and "Word", "life" and "idea", "creative reality" and "mind", "life" and "mentality", and "living unconscious" and "brain". The opposition of "flesh" and "Word",

to be sure, dates as far back as Lawrence's "Foreword" to Sons and Lovers, January, 1913. (Although "Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious" dates a number of years after the composition of Women in Love, this opposition of "flesh" and "Word" is only a natural continuation of Lawrence's thought, and therefore this passage is singularly important to this argument.) Actually, the best Lawrentian formulation for the 'fundamental error' is, of course, 'blood-consciousness' and 'mental consciousness', from his letter to Bertrand Russell. All in all, Lawrence, like Nietzsche, clearly posits as the 'fundamental error' the unjustifiable belief in 'mental consciousness' as the measure of existence.

Lawrence, moreover, complements Nietzsche by claiming that "mental consciousness" arises out of "blood consciousness", not the other way round. This is made patently clear in the letter written on 28 August, 1916, to John Middleton Murry:

> It isn't the being that must follow the mind, but the mind must follow the being. And if only the cursed cowardly world had the courage to follow its own being with its mind, if it only had the courage to know what its unknown is, its own desires and its own activities, it might get beyond to the new secret...You've got to know and know everything, before you transcend into the 'unknown'.[25]

The natural order, says Lawrence, is for the mind to follow being, not for the mind to dominate or manipulate being - a consciousness divorced from being, so to speak. Neither Lawrence nor Nietzsche is completely opposed to consciousness, as some of their detractors have claimed. As can be witnessed from the

above quotation, Lawrence does not believe in less mind but in more.[26] Lawrence, like Nietzsche, is not opposed to consciousness which is in a balanced, dynamic relation with being, and this is what Lawrence means by 'blood-consciousness'. Both men, it appears, are attempting to effect a new Reason from the dualistic relation of Being and Knowing - not a Reason antagonistic to Being, but as Marx and Engels write in The German Ideology, a Reason in which "Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."

Though there exist remarkable parallels between Nietzsche and Lawrence on this matter of reduction, Lawrence still criticizes Nietzsche. His criticism is based perhaps on his belief that Nietzsche advocates one idealism over another, namely the pagan over the Christian. Of course, to advocate one opposite at the expense of the other is to argue for the reductive process. However, it has been shown that what Nietzsche means by his 'Dionysian philosophy' is not far removed from what Lawrence means by Pan, or what his phrase blood-consciousness finally comes to mean. In fact, Lawrence's point of contention is undermined by the bulk of his claims which continue along lines complementary to Nietzsche. One possible interpretation of this severe reaction to Nietzsche can be described by the acceptance/rejection pattern that has been used to describe Lawrence's relationship to Nietzsche. Earlier, we noted that versions of Lawrence's philosophy preceding The Crown had titles that implied they were written under a Nietzschean aegis. Indeed, the parallels

between Nietzsche and Lawrence on this theme of reduction bear out that Nietzsche's influence has a dimension far greater than a simple allusion of name implies. The pattern appears to function in the following way: wherever an acceptance of Nietzsche may exist there will exist an equally strong reaction. It appears that the acceptance/rejection pattern is still functioning in Lawrence's relationship to Nietzsche, and that it will continue to do so right up to, and including, *Women in Love*.

Notes

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1967), p. 81.

2. Ibid., p. 83.

3. Ibid., p. 91.

4. Ibid., p. 95.

5. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1974), p. 299. Also see Lawrence's parallel notion in "The Individual Consciousness V. The Social Consciousness", in Phoenix.

6. Ibid., p. 169.

7. Friedrich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1969), pp. 39-40.

8. Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1966), p. 116.

9. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.S. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, Inc., 1968), p. 543.

10. D.H. Lawrence, "The Crown", in Phoenix II, eds. Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), p. 388.

11. It is worth remarking that this is manifest in Women in Love when Birkin castigates Ursula about complete, mindless abandon: "I don't mean let yourself go in the Dionysic (sic) way," he said. "It's like going around in a squirrel cage...." (p. 243) Also compare what Lawrence writes in the essay "We need one another": "I am so tired of being told that I want mankind to go back to the condition of savages. As if modern city people weren't about the crudest, rawest, most crassly savage monkeys that ever existed, when it comes to the relation of man and woman. All I see in our vaunted civilization is men and women smashing each other emotionally and physically to bits; and all I ask is that they should pause and consider." (Phoenix, p. 194)

12. "The Crown", p. 410.

13. Ibid., p. 388.

14. Ibid., p. 409.

15. D.H. Lawrence, Twilight in Italy (New York: The Viking Press, 1916), p. 94.

16. Ibid., p. 175.

17. Compare what Lawrence writes in "Why the Novel matters" about this reactionary movement, from one direction to another: "I don't want to grow in any one direction any more. And, if I can help it, I don't want to stimulate anyone else into some particular direction. A particular direction ends in a cul-de-sac. We're in a cul-de-sac at present." (Phoenix, p. 536)

18. D.H. Lawrence, "Pan in America", Phoenix, ed. Edward McDonald (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p. 23.

19. Ibid., p. 29.

20. Ibid.

21. "The Crown", p. 388.

22. John Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1967), p. 167.

23. Will to Power, pp. 376-7.

24. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious/Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penquin Books, 1977), p. 247.

25. D.H. Lawrence, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Harry T. Moore (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), pp. 469-70.

26. Compare this with Birkin's reply to Hermione's contention that too much mind is death:

    "Not because they have too much mind, but too little," he said brutally.
    "Are you sure?" she cried. "It seems to me the reverse. They are over-conscious, burdened to death with consciousness."
    "Imprisoned within a limited, false set of concepts," he cried. (Women in Love, p. 45)

A Description of the Major Themes

3. Revolt: Beyond Nihilism

> Behold the good and the just! Whom do they hate most? The man who breaks their table of values, the breaker, the lawbreaker; yet he is the creator.
>
> -- from Thus Spoke Zarathustra

Lawrence locates the aetiology of man's diseased nature in the tyranny of mental consciousness, or as we have come to know it the 'fundamental error'. This holds that human existence is based on irreconcilable dualisms: of body/mind, self/other, instinct/morality, or Plato's body/soul. Both Nietzsche and Lawrence oppose this reductive dualism with a dynamic dualism, a shifting balance which repairs this condition of irreconcilability. In The Utopian Vision of D.H. Lawrence, Eugene Goodheart writes that "continuity with the past, the handing down of inherited cultural attitudes - tradition in this sense does not figure in Lawrence. He is rather, in the phrase of Nietzsche, one of the "tabletbreakers" who appear at significant crises in culture and whose characteristic impulse is to divert the current tradition into new and hitherto unknown channels."[1] Lawrence's new creation can only occur when this reductive dualism is destroyed and overcome. But to overcome it requires a change in the traditional view of nature as impulse to be controlled and manipulated, and consequently of man's instincts in relation to the moral exigencies of civilization.

To Lawrence of course, Freud is a proponent of this reductive

process: the psychoanalyst who failed to see in his theory of the unconscious the workings of the fundamental error:

> ...One thing, however, psychoanalysis all along the line fails to determine, and that is the nature of the pristine unconscious in man. The incest-craving is or is not inherent in the pristine psyche. When Adam and Eve became aware of sex in themselves, they became aware of that which was pristine in them, and which preceded all knowing. But when the analyst discovers the incest motive in the unconscious, surely he is only discovering a term of humanity's repressed ideas of sex. It is not even suppressed sex-consciousness, but repressed. That is, it is nothing pristine and anterior to mentality. It is in itself the mind's ulterior motive. That is, the incest-craving is propogated in the pristine unconscious by the mind itself, even though unconsciously. The mind acts as incubus and procreator of its own horrors, deliberately unconsciously. And the incest motive is in its origin not a pristine impulse, but a logical extension of the existent idea of sex and love. The mind, that is, transfers the idea of incest into the affective-passional psyche, and keeps it there as a repressed motive... The Freudian unconscious is the cellar in which the mind keeps its own bastard spawn.[2]

Lawrence insists that this stranglehold of the mind over the unconscious must be stopped - its destruction and the subsequent unshackling of the unconscious is the most important of all tasks. The task, nearly impossible to achieve, is to destroy and to create simultaneously: to revolt against the cultural restrictions imposed on man by man so that a creative relationship between man and woman, man and the universe, can come to be. Such a revolt, instead of appeasing mankind with idealistic notions of painless salvation, calls for the painful task of creation through destruction.[3]

Nietzsche locates the central metaphor of this revolt against the tyranny of mental consciousness in the pronouncement

that "God is Dead". Nietzsche deems the belief in the Christian God to be the extreme manifestation of the 'fundamental error'; however, the belief in truth, he also argues, ironically turns on itself, negating the foundation upon which it originates. Consequently, Nietzsche believes, the death of God is the logical continuation of the 'fundamental error'; and, as Erich Heller postulates in "The Importance of Nietzsche", Nietzsche's discovery and subsequent pronouncement that "God is Dead" is the lever by which Nietzsche manages to unhinge "the whole fabric of traditional values."[4]

This pronouncement, made in the passage entitled "The Madman" in <u>The Gay Science</u>, discloses Nietzsche's awareness of the untold significance of such a state of affairs:

> How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed; and whoever is born after us - for the sake of this deed he will belong to a higher history than all history hitherto.
>
> Here the madman fell silent and looked again at his listeners; and they too, were silent and stared at him in astonishment. At last he threw his lantern on the ground, and it broke into pieces and went out. "I have come too early," he said then; my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men. Lightning and thunder require time; the light of the stars requires time; deeds, though done, still require time to be seen or heard. This deed is still more distant from them than the most distant stars - and yet they have done it themselves.[5]

Nietzsche sees that man, though he has committed no greater deed,

is oblivious to the irrevocable effect that such a deed produces. The reduction eventually collapses, and we must admit that Nietzsche wills this collapse into existence, that is, his vision demands that this occurs so that man can confront the consequences of such a collapse. First of all, this God who has died, destroyed unwittingly by man, is "primarily the God of Christianity, particularly of Christian morality. Christianity, says Nietzsche, is Platonism for the people. Thus the death of God means the death of the realm of Platonic ideas as Nietzsche conceived them, the death of any realm transcending man."[6] After this deed, as Erich Heller points out, man was for Nietzsche "an eternally cheated misfit, the diseased animal as he called him, plagued by a metaphysical hunger which it was now impossible to feed even if all the Heavens were to be ransacked".[7] Nietzsche, it must be stressed, is not especially concerned whether his assumption is justified or not; he is more concerned with the consequences of such an assumption: the utter nihilism which can result as well as man taking on the colossal burden of being completely responsible for his own essence, of finding a meaning in existence without God.[8]

The 'fundamental error' has come to its terminus: dissolution qua dissolution, man as the eternally cheated misfit, or dissolution and creation, man who undertakes the task of establishing his own essence and overcomes his nihilistic despair. The brink of nihilism, to which Nietzsche believes the death of God takes us, presents these two possible outcomes. The frag-

mentary jottings on nihilism in Will to Power will shed some light on this issue. Nietzsche argues that the term nihilism is ambiguous, for there are, he points out, two types of nihilism: nihilism as a sign of increased power and spirit - as 'active nihilism'; and nihilism as a decline and recession of power - as 'passive nihilism'. Nietzsche goes on to explain the significance of the recession of power: "the strength of the spirit may be worn out, exhausted, so that previous goals and values have become incommensurate and no longer are believed; so that the synthesis of values and goals (on which every strong culture rests) dissolves and the individual values war against each other: disintegration -".[9] The death of God, Nietzsche is saying, necessarily precedes the condition of 'passive nihilism', or as we have elsewhere come to know it, the dissolution of the cultural dualism as the basis for interpreting reality, i.e. the loss of the authority of cultural ideals, will lead, for most, to an inexorable malignancy in life.

Lawrence, like Nietzsche, declares that Christianity "must be surpassed" since "there must be something new" to be had.[10] Although Nietzsche is stridently opposed to Christianity because he believed it to be created out of resentment, Lawrence's view is less dogmatic. In a letter to Catherine Carswell, dated 16 July 1916, Lawrence writes that Christianity is "the greatest thing the world has seen."[11] Lawrence to a point accepts Christianity as "one of the greatest historical factors, the has-been."[12] Lawrence's objection to Christianity - "I am not

a Christian", he says in the same letter - is that the "has-been" must be given up. Christianity, as a creative force, has had its time, but now it bears down on life, and this is evil, Lawrence says, "when that which is temporal and relative asserts itself eternal and absolute."[13] As a result there is no birth, no creation, only reduction: "The process of birth had been arrested, the inflexible withered loins of the mother-era were too old and set, the past was taut around us."[14] The only activity left is reduction, which is the triumph of "the crown of sterile egoism" - the ego is the false absolute - rather than the true Crown, the eternities in consummation. And out of this reductive process begins "chaos, the going asunder, the beginning of nothingness. Then we leaped back, by reflex from the bound and limit, back upon ourselves into madness."[15] Lawrence realizes, as Nietzsche before, that in Christianity there is no true transcendence, since Christianity both encloses and corrupts man's living unconscious.

At this crisis, i.e. reduction, man becomes aware of his existential dilemma, thus he "conceives himself as a complete unit surrounded by nullity."[16] In this reduction, he finally comes to realize that he has lost touch with the Cosmos, and as a consequence he says "there is no eternity, there is no infinite, there is no God, there is no immortality."[17] The death of God, evidently, results from the logical progression of the tyranny of mental consciousness - the cultural dualism inevitably leads to its own dissolution. The Christian God is

dead for Lawrence as well as for Nietzsche, and it is a necessary death, for as man goes his way so do his Gods: "From time to time Man wakes up and realizes that the Lord Almighty has made a great removal, and passed over the known horizon. Then starts the frenzy, the howling, the despair."[18] This is, I believe, Nietzsche's 'passive nihilism'. Man even by ransacking the heavens can not find transcendence; but "without God", Lawrence admonishes, "without some sort of immortality, not necessarily life ever-lasting, but without something absolute, we are nothing."[19] Still Lawrence, like Nietzsche, does not remain entrapped by this existential despair, for he charts, as Nietzsche does with 'active nihilism', a way out of pure dissolution. Lawrence believes that only the Holy Ghost, the dark hound of heaven, "can scent the new tracks of the Great God across the Cosmos of Creation,"[20] and by listening to this "hound", which is the starting "off into the dark of the unknown, in search", we can leave off the howling and the despair - we can transcend this condition of nothingness.

For both Nietzsche and Lawrence 'passive nihilism' is not necessarily the plight of all men. Even though the death of God takes us to the final stage of dissolution, Nietzsche, almost with the same breath in which he describes 'passive nihilism', declares: "I have hitherto been a thorough going nihilist..." Nietzsche, however, does not mean by this a nihilist of the passive type, he is speaking of Zarathustra, the prophet of his corrective; and it is 'active nihilism' which gives birth to Zarathustra. 'Active nihilism', Nietzsche writes,

"can be a sign of strength: the spirit may have grown so strong that the previous goals ("convictions", articles of faith) have become incommensurate (for faith generally expresses the constraint of conditions of existence, submission to the authority of circumstances under which one flourishes, grows, gains power).[21] Indeed the paradox, as it is manifest in <u>Thus Spake Zarathustra</u>, is that dissolution and creation develops from the devolving womb of dissolution qua dissolution. This is the point where Zarathustra begins.

Erich Heller echoes this view when he writes in "The Importance of Nietzsche" that "such a creature (the eternally cheated misfit) was doomed: he had to die out, giving way to the Superman who would miraculously feed on barren fields and finally conquer the metaphysical hunger itself without any detriment to the glory of life."[22] For the weak, evidently, which up to this time is all of mankind, nihilism remains 'passive nihilism', dissolution qua dissolution; while for the strong, yet to exist, 'passive nihilism' will be transcended by 'active nihilism'.[23] In order to understand how the transvaluation of all values is possible, the somewhat paradoxical terms Eternal Recurrence and <u>Ubermensch</u> must be explicated.

Nietzsche is best known by the layman for his doctrine of the <u>Ubermensch</u>, the Superman. Zarathustra proclaims: "I teach you the overman. Man is something to be overcome."[24] Man must

be overcome because he is diseased, he has succumbed to the 'fundamental error', which substantiates the cultural dualism, falsely praising it as the quintessential expression of life; and faced with the fact that it is no longer the basis for interpreting reality man is left in utter despair. Thus Zarathustra continues:

> All beings so far have created something beyond themselves; and do you want to be the ebb of this great flood and even go back to the beasts rather than overcome man? What is the ape to man? A laughing-stock or a painful embarassment. A man shall be just that for the overman: a laughing stock or a painful embarassment.[25]

Man, Nietzsche believes, is a defeated creature; the Superman, who Zarathustra states has not existed hitherto, is the overcoming of that defeat - the transcendence of diseased man. Nevertheless, Nietzsche posits another doctrine, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, which appears to controvert his Ubermensch. Eternal Recurrence is the doctrine in which "all things recur eternally and we ourselves too; and that we have already existed an eternal number of times, and all things with us." Eternal Recurrence, therefore, is the worst of all thoughts - the most horrendous of all things - since the diseased state of man (i.e. man in his nihilistic despair) will repeat itself eternally with only the Ubermensch capable of saying yes to it - to cheerfully say yes to it. However, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence explicitly states not only that all things recur eternally but also that all things (including ourselves) exist an eternal

number of times. As Erich Heller correctly points out, the Superman has not yet existed; therefore, according to the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, he can never exist. Most certainly, this presents a dismal state of affairs.

Although Nietzsche posits two contradictory doctrines, the stress should not be placed on the contradiction. Again Erich Heller is accurate when he writes: "Yet the metaphysical nonsense of these contradictory doctrines is not entirely lacking in poetic and didactic method. The Eternal Recurrence of All Things is Nietzsche's mythic formula of a meaningless world, the universe of nihilism, and the Superman stands for its transcendence, for the miraculous resurrection of meaning from its total negation."[26] Thus Nietzsche paradoxically juxtaposes the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence and the Superman, dissolution and creation. Dissolution[27] - nihilism - is essential for the development of the Superman; for one of the Superman's characteristics (Nietzsche confides at least this much) is that he must say yes to the hardest of all thoughts, must affirm life even in its negation. The Superman in overcoming - in self-overcoming - does so not by negating life but by affirming it, affirming its essential meaninglessness if need be. Therefore, the transvaluation of all values, as the Superman is to effect this, is the outgrowth of values from a nihilistic, valueless background. This relation between dissolution and creation is common in Nietzsche's thought:

> Creation - that is the greatest redemption from suffering, and life's growing light. But that the creator may be, suffering is needed and much change. Indeed there must be much bitter dying in your life, you creators. Thus are you advocates and justifiers of all impermanence. To the child who is newly born, the creator must also want to be the mother who gives birth and the pangs of the birth-giver.[28]

The essence of Nietzsche's thought is the dualistic unity of opposing forces: dissolution and creation, Eternal Recurrence and _Ubermensch_ - in fact, what Nietzsche means by his controversial _Wille zur Macht_. Nietzsche seeks to posit values in a meaningless world, to discover a creator of "good and bad" in a morally bankrupt existence. His search for transcendence is found, paradoxically, in immanence. Though Nietzsche preached that God is dead, as Erich Heller writes, he "never said that there is no God, but that the Eternal had been vanquished by time and that the Immortal suffered death at the hands of the mortals."[29] Nietzsche no longer looks to the heavens for transcendence but to the earth, to existence itself. However, for mankind who cannot escape Eternal Recurrence (by escape I mean the transcendence of dissolution), the situation is a tragic one; for the Superman on the other hand, who by lapsing out (to use a Lawrentian phrase) of humanity into creation (i.e. active nihilism), the situation is heroic. And it is the _Wille zur Macht_ which the _Ubermensch_ possesses which allows him to overcome life, its nihil, man who wills nothingness, to effect a transvaluation of all values; and this is an ongoing process -

a continuous becoming.

The 'Will to Power' effects this transcendence not consciously, as simply an adjunct to the tyrannical mind, but, to return to the language of The Birth of Tragedy, through the true dualism of Dionysus, the instinctual life, and Apollo, the form-forming resistance. 'Will to Power' brings about the creation of Dionysian consciousness out of the collapse of the Apollonian ego; it is the process of values, morality, arising directly out of the instincts, rather than the dualism in which the instinctual life is consciously manipulated and controlled by the Apollonian ego - a life-affirming morality in contrast with a nihilistic morality. It finds its most eloquent expression in Nietzsche's final concept of Dionysus. The Dionysus that is

> an urge to unity, a reaching out beyond personality, the everyday, society, reality, across the abyss of transitoriness: a passionate-painful overflowing into darkness, fuller more floating states; an ecstatic affirmation of the total character of life as that which remains the same just as powerful, just as blissful, through all change; the great pantheistic sharing of joy and sorrow that sanctifies and calls good even the most terrible and questionable qualities of life; the eternal will to procreation, to fruitfulness, to recurrence, the feeling of the necessary unity of creation and destruction.[30]

As the unity of dissolution and creation, Dionysus is Nietzsche's Weltanschauung. Nietzsche's great task, then, is the construction of the Dionysian ego (which entails the dissolution of the Apollonian ego).

Lawrence clearly rejects Nietzsche's Wille zur Macht (as

far as he understands it): one has only to recall that in _Women in Love_ Birkin declares that "the _Wille zur Macht_ is a base and petty thing." It appears, _prima facie_, that Lawrence did not see in Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' any hope or salvation for mankind to overcome its nihilistic condition, but on further examination what Lawrence proposes as a solution is similar to what Nietzsche means by his philosophy of power. As John B. Humma correctly points out, Lawrence "who became the proponent for warm blood knowledge, for intuitive and instinctual life, reacted quite hostilely to what he felt was Nietzsche's intellectuality and his idea of will."[31] Again, as Humma argues, what Lawrence opposes - the will assisting destructive mental consciousness - is not at all what Nietzsche means by 'Will to Power'. As we have seen, Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' is not a conscious will, but the will which emanates from "our entire instinctive life" (Humma), the Dionysian union, rather than what Lawrence falsely believed. It must be stressed that Humma admirably discusses Lawrence's erroneous view of the 'Will to Power', and how in point of fact his 'blood consciousness' parallels that Nietzschean doctrine; nonetheless, Humma's thesis does not permit a full discussion of the relationship between the instincts and consciousness. Neither Lawrence nor Nietzsche are opposed to _all_ consciousness as Humma seems to imply at times, but only to Socratic mentalism - both in the final analysis are demanding a greater consciousness: a new way of seeing the world

and existence which is not a mindless exercise, but a perception based on a different relationship of the conscious with the unconscious. It remains to be shown how Lawrence's 'blood consciousness' complements what Nietzsche means by 'Will to Power'.

As stated earlier, the world of Women in Love is a world without the Christian God, but this in no way means that transcendence is impossible. Like Nietzsche, Lawrence realizes that the Christian God has died, and necessarily for that matter, nevertheless he does not mean that there is no God, no true absolute. In his essay "The Proper Study", Lawrence agrees with Alexander Pope that "the proper study of mankind is man", however, he goes on to state that in the long run "the proper study of mankind is man in relation to his deity." Or from "On Being Religious":

> Ask any philosopher and theologian, and he'll tell you that the real problem for humanity isn't whether God exists or not. God always is, and we all know it. But the problem is, how to get at him. That is the greatest problem ever set to our habit-making humanity. The theologians try to find out: How shall man put himself into relation to God, into a living relation? Which means: How shall man find God? That's the real problem.[32]

What has interfered with the search for transcendence, again the paradoxical transcendence in immanence, is the static form of the false ego, the false absolute. Our greatest evil, says Lawrence, is to "preserve an enveloping falsity around our destructive activity, some nullity of virtue and self-righteousness, some conceit of the 'general good' and the salvation of the world

by bringing it all within our own conceived whole form."[33] Lawrence believes that the only way to avoid this reductive activity, so that man can once again find God, is to give ourselves utterly to destruction, which means that dissolution qua dissolution must also be subject to the destructive process. In "The Crown" Lawrence writes:

> We may give ourselves utterly to destruction. Then our conscious forms are destroyed along with us, and something new must arise. But we may not have corruption within ourselves as sensationalism, our skin and our form in tact. To destroy life for the preserving of a static rigid form, a shell, a glassy envelop, this is the lugubrious activity of the men who fight to save democracy and to end all fighting.[34]

Lawrence desires to move from the consummation of reduction to the consummation of union.

The duality can be described as the polarity of life and death, or creation and destruction. Destruction for the preservation of a static rigid form - Christian morality, for example - is, as we have seen, the activity of the self-conscious ego (of the Apollonian ego),[35] and this process occurs as a result of the fear of death. As Eugene Goodheart writes: "the fear of death - Lawrence shares this view with Nietzsche and the existentialists - is ultimately a fear of life, that is, a fear of the risks of a Dionysian immersion in life. Death is the aim of the perfected life, and only those - and they are legion - who have what Rilke called unlived lives in their bodies have a horror of death."[36] Destruction within the existing integument is the result of a fear of death, but more accurately a fear of

life. For life, as Heraclitus knew and Nietzsche and Lawrence have come to perceive, is the duality of life and death, of creation and dissolution. To fear death, paradoxically, is to fear life. In "The Crown" Lawrence writes:

> Destruction and Creation are the true relative absolutes between the opposing infinities. Life is in both. Life may even, for a while be almost entirely in one, or almost entirely in the other. The end of either oneness is death. For life is really in the two, the absolute is the pure relation, which is both.
>
> If we have our fill of destruction, then we shall turn again to creation. We shall need to live again, and live hard, for once our great civilized form is broken, and we are at last born into the open sky, we shall have a whole new universe to grow up into, and to find relations with. The future will open its delicate, dawning aeons in front of us, unfathomable.[37]

In order to overcome man's nihilistic condition, then, the antagonistic duality of dissolution and creation must be transformed into a harmonious condition. This can only be accomplished, Lawrence believes, in the understanding, the whole understanding where "sense and spirit and mind are consummated in pure union."[38] In order to avoid the tyranny of the mind over existence - to prevent the mind from setting itself against the body - the mind must understand death in its organic relation to life:

> But we live in the mind. And the first great act of living is to encompass death in the understanding. Therefore the first great activity of the living mind is to understand death in the mind. Without this there is no freedom of the mind, there is no life of the mind, since creative life is the attaining a perfect consummation with death. When in my mind there arises the idea of life, then this idea must encompass the idea of death, and this encompassing is the germination of a new epoch of the mind.[39]

Lawrence believes that when this is done man will be free to be

in the world of the true absolute, to be in touch with his God. First of all, we must overcome our wish to conquer death which is in fact our fear of life: we must overcome our mistaken wish for life-everlasting. Lawrence argues that the only meaning immortality can be given is "this fulfilment of death with life and life with death in us when we are consummated and absolved into heaven, the heaven on earth."[40] The old Christian notion of immortality must be dispelled, for it is only a continuation of the fear of life; and this notion of transcendence must be replaced by this heaven on earth, transcendence in immanence, which is only possible through organic duality.

Both Lawrence and Nietzsche are committed to this dualistic vision of reality, and both see originating out of the bodily passions a resistance: for example, out of the Dionysian arises the Apollonian resistance and out of 'blood consciousness' arises the resistance of 'mental consciousness'. Whereas Freud saw in the Apollonian triumph the triumph of the ego over the Dionysian id, and consequently sides with the Apollonian, Lawrence and Nietzsche advocate the dynamic process of the Apollonian springing forth from the Dionysian. To successfully oppose the dualism that Freud propounds, Eugene Goodheart writes that Lawrence "resolves the dilemma (the irreconcilable duality) by conceiving the moral life as a direct expression of the passions. He imagines a world in which passion is not an explosive response to a repressive moral life but is permitted to issue freely from

the solar plexus and find from moment to moment its appropriate forms."[41] Nietzsche, too, conceives the relation between passion and reason (or morality) in the same manner. Again Goodheart:

> Nietzsche's conception of the relationship between reason and the passions is similar to Lawrence's view of moral being as the formal realizations of the passions. In Will to Power Nietzsche speaks of "the misunderstanding of passion and reason (read morality) as if the latter existed as an entity by itself, and not rather as a state of the relations between different passions and desires; as if every passion did not contain in itself its own quantum of reason." When reason (or morality) and the passions are in opposition to each other, there is finally neither genuine morality nor genuine passion.[42]

The anathema of Lawrence's and Nietzsche's revolt, which must be destroyed before the Dionysian immersion in life which they profess can come to be, is clearly echoed in the lecture made by Michel, the protagonist of Andre Gide's The Immoralist:

> ...Discussing the decline of Latin civilization, I described artistic culture as rising like a secretion to the surface of a people, at first a symptom of plethora, the superabundance of health, then immediately hardening, calcifying, opposing any true contact of the mind with nature, concealing beneath the persistent appearance of life the diminution of life, forming a rind in which the hindred spirit languishes, withers and dies. Finally, carrying my notion to its conclusion, I said that Culture, born of life, ultimately kills life.[43]

Both Lawrence and Nietzsche side with life, or at least with a flexible culture which is directly attuned to man's nature and which changes before imposing outmoded restrictions. Both see as their difficult, painful task the shattering of the false cultural edifice, the cultural restrictions, so that "the one glorious activity of man" can commence; that is, man "getting himself into a new relationship with a new heaven and a new earth."[44]

Notes

1. Eugene Goodheart, The Utopian Vision of D.H. Lawrence (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 5.

2. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious/Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penquin Books, 1977), p. 207.

3. In The Dark Sun, Graham Hough links Lawrence's fervour for destruction to Nietzsche's, and he also argues for the positive value of such an activity:

> Where Lawrence's powers are working most vigorously, it is the Dionysiac fervour of his destruction that is most striking; and it can be so intense that it becomes a positive value in itself. The triumphant welcome Lawrence can give to the forces which are to distinguish all ordinary personal and social values is akin, or at least analogous to, the mystic's joy in the extinction in the personality. The ecstasy with which Nietzsche in The Birth of Tragedy welcomes the merging of all separate entities in the Dionysian flood is the only literary parallel to Lawrence's vision, if we are really to see it as it is, not merely to extract from it those parts that are most agreeable to us. (p. 257)

4. Erich Heller, "The Importance of Nietzsche", in The Artist's Journey into the Interior (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 176.

5. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, trans. Walter Kaufmann (Random House, Inc., 1974), pp. 181-2.

6. Joan Stambough, "Thoughts on Pity and Revenge", in Nietzsche-Studien (Band I, 1972), p. 29.

7. Heller, op. cit., pp. 193-4.

8. For a further discussion of the relationship between the death of God and nihilism, with particular reference to the English, see Nietzsche's Twilight of the Idols, the section entitled "G. Eliot" in "Expeditions of an Untimely Man".

9. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, Inc., 1968), p. 18.

10. D.H. Lawrence, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, ed. Harry T. Moore (New York: The Viking Press, 1962), p. 467.

11. Ibid., p. 466.

12. Ibid.

13. D.H. Lawrence, "The Crown", in Phoenix II (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), p. 383.

14. Ibid., p. 372.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p. 391.

17. Ibid., p. 410.

18. D.H. Lawrence, "On Being Religious", in Phoenix (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p. 729.

19. "The Crown", p. 410.

20. "On Being Religious", p. 728.

21. Will to Power, p. 18.

22. Erich Heller, op. cit., pp. 193-4.

23. I believe a few more words are in order concerning the distinction Nietzsche makes between 'passive nihilism' and 'active nihilism'. The best commentary I have seen on this matter (and with which I am in fundamental agreement) is Richard Schacht's incisive essay "Nietzsche and Nihilism" in Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays, edited by Robert C. Solomon. Schacht points out that nihilism is inevitable "when it is recognized that the world cannot be understood in terms of the categories which traditionally have been applied to it, those who cannot conceive of it in any other terms will despair of being able to comprehend it at all. This is only natural; indeed, according to Nietzsche, it is psychologically unavoidable ...the world looks valueless, and is essentially incomprehensible. With the collapse of our traditional world-view, a period of nihilism must follow. But that is not, for Nietzsche, the end of the line. 'The universe seems to have lost its value, seems "meaningless" - but that is only a transitional stage.' (WP7) For it is not the intrinsic meaninglessness and incomprehensibility of the world itself that he holds to be the source of the coming nihilism. Rather, its source is held to be the collapse of an (erroneous) interpretation of the world: 'It is in one particular interpretation, the Christian-moral one, that nihilism

is rooted.' (WP1) Nietzsche goes on to observe that 'the untenability of one's interpretation...awakens the suspicion that all interpretations of the world are false.' (WP1) The nihilist, after all, does not stop with a repudiation of the previously accepted interpretation of the world; he generalizes, denying the possibility of any alternative. The generalization, however, is not only not logically warranted, but is also, according to Nietzsche, 'pathological'; nihilism, on his view, is not simply a transitional stage, but moreover 'a pathological transitional stage (what is pathological is the tremendous generalization, the inference that there is no meaning at all' (WP13)." (Schatcht, pp. 62-3) Nietzsche's description of this ineluctable nihilism following the collapse of the Christian-moral interpretation of the world is two-fold: 'active nihilism' and 'passive nihilism'. 'Passive nihilism', then, is the belief that there is no meaning at all - this, unfortunately, is the situation for most of mankind. 'Active nihilism', on the other hand, is not viewed in such a disastrous manner: Nietzsche "does not view 'the advent of nihilism' as an unmitigated disaster. It must come, as the traditional world-view must go, if a new world-view is to take its place; and the fact that it is coming may be due at least in part to the fact that some feel strong enough to try to do without the traditional world-view." (Schacht, p. 64) This is 'active nihilism', the power to withstand the collapse of the traditional world-view and, finally, to effect a transvaluation of all values: "He felt it to be imperative, if at all possible, not merely to avoid 'passive nihilism', but moreover to go beyond the stage of 'active nihilism' which must be expected to follow the demise of the traditional world-view; 'leaving it behind', in favor of 'a counter movement...which will take the place of this perfect nihilism'. (WP Preface 3-4) And in fact he holds not only that this is possible, but moreover that in his philosophy - and more specifically, in his conception of 'the will to power' - this 'countermovement finds expression' (Ibid.)". (Schacht, p. 64) This is where the <u>ubermensch</u> stands, at the point to move beyond nihilism - to the Dionysian, to Nietzsche's world-view.

24. Friedrich Nietzsche, <u>Thus Spake Zarathustra</u>, in <u>The Portable Nietzsche</u>, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Viking Press, 1968), p. 214.

25. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 124.

26. Erich Heller, op. cit., pp. 191-2.

27. What is meant by dissolution here is that it (dissolution) brings about nihilism. Since the collapse of the fundamental

error - i.e. the traditional view of the world - brings about nihilism, then it appears that nihilism can only occur after the destruction of the fundamental error.

28. Thus Spake Zarathustra, p. 199.

29. Erich Heller, op. cit., p. 176.

30. The Will to Power, p. 539.

31. John B. Humma, "D.H. Lawrence as Friedrich Nietzsche", in Philological Quarterly, 53, January 1, 1974, p. 110.

32. "On Being Religious", p. 726.

33. "The Crown", pp. 404-5.

34. Ibid., p. 404.

35. The Apollonian ego is the ego originating out of Socratic mentalism. Lawrence, in Apocalypse it should be remembered, saw with the coming of Socrates the death of the Cosmos - the death of man's living relation with God.

36. Goodheart, op. cit., pp. 73-4.

37. "The Crown", p. 404.

38. D.H. Lawrence, "The Reality of Piece", in Phoenix (New York: Viking Press, 1964), p. 682.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Goodheart, op. cit., p. 18.

42. Ibid., p. 19.

43. Andre Gide, The Immoralist (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1970), pp. 92-3.

44. "The Reality of Peace", p. 682.

Part Three

The Nietzschean Element In *Women In Love*

The Nietzschean Element in *Women in Love*

1. *Wille zur Macht*

In Lawrence's philosophical writings, as we have noted earlier, the issue of human psychology is constantly being examined and discussed. The argument of this study is that Nietzsche is an important influence on Lawrence's radical views of human psychology. Both men speak of the tensions and conflicts between the different aspects of consciousness: that is, between the demands of the unconscious and the conscious. Beyond this, both argue for a balance to be struck between the conscious and the unconscious; when the dynamic relation between the two forces of consciousness gets out of balance, destruction results. In *Women in Love*, by rendering this concern artistically, Lawrence goes beyond the didacticism of his doctrine to the actual internal conflicts of vital characters; beyond the narrow concerns of the creator to the creation. Art, or art-speech as Lawrence has it, differs from didacticism in that it is the revealed expression of irrepressible instinct and intuition. Nietzsche has a similar view of art.

Since both Nietzsche and Lawrence argue for a balance between the different modes of consciousness, they also advocate an art form which fuses instinct and the conscious. Nietzsche speaks of an "artistic-Socrates": the paradoxical relation of Socrates and art, the Socrates who possesses an "intellectual conscience" and who is an artist.[1] To be without an "intellectual conscience"

means, Nietzsche believes, to be able "to stand in the midst of this _rerum concordia discors_ and of this whole marvelous uncertainty and rich ambiguity of existence without questioning, without trembling with the craving and rapture of each questioning."[2] Indeed, Nietzsche contends that a man with an "intellectual conscience" needs "Dionysian art" in order that he can endure the adversity that such questioning entails. Art, says Nietzsche in _Will to Power_, is "the task of incorporating knowledge and making it instinctive."[3] "Art-speech," Lawrence writes, "is a use of symbols which are pulsations on the blood and seizures upon the nerves, and at the same time pure percepts of the mind and pure terms of spiritual aspirations."[4] Art-speech fuses the instincts and the conscious. Lawrence defines what he means by the conscious in the "Foreword" to _Women in Love_: "Any man of real individuality tries to know and to understand what is happening, even in himself, as he goes along. The struggle for verbal consciousness should not be left out in art. It is a very great part of life. It is not superimposition of theory. It is the passionate struggle into conscious being."[5] Lawrence's image of struggle for "verbal consciousness" is analogous to Nietzsche's "intellectual conscience". In fact, both men believe that the synthesis of instinct and the conscious will lead to complete, whole knowledge, to a radicalized perception. Art that fuses the different aspects of consciousness, rather than didacticism, will truly reveal the complex dynamic of human psychology.

Although both Nietzsche and Lawrence similarly argue for a synthesis of instinct and the conscious in art, there is a wide gap of disagreement between the two on the function of art in life. Although Lawrence attaches what can be termed religious import to art, art is really only secondary to fulfilled man/woman relationship, as expressed, for example, in Women in Love. At this point Philip Rieff's caveat must be heard: "Even an art that preaches life, as Lawrence did, may perversely sacrifice life to art. For when art becomes invested with religious meaning, it may become the vehicle of nothing more than its own convenience."[6] Lawrence realizes the danger of such a view of art and challenges it in Women in Love. In that emotionally charged discussion on the photographic reproduction of Loerke's statuette of a naked girl on horseback in green bronze, Ursula expresses a platitude about art which, I believe, Lawrence fundamentally agrees with; and which, moreover, recognizes the problem of art that claims to be separate and distinct from life:

> 'Why,' said Ursula, 'did you make the horse so stiff? It is as stiff as a block.'
>
> 'Stiff?' he repeated, in arms at once.
>
> 'Yes. Look how stock and stupid and brutal it is. Horses are sensitive, quite delicate, and sensitive, really.'
>
> He raised his shoulders, spread his hands in a shrug of slow indifference, as much as to inform she was an amateur and an impertinent nobody.
>
> 'Wissen Sie,' he said, with an insulting patience and condescension in his voice, 'that horse is a certain form, part of a whole form. It is part of a work of art, a piece of form. It is not a picture of a friendly horse to which you gave a lump of sugar, do you see - it is part of a work of art, it has no relation to anything outside the work of art.'
>
> Ursula, angry at being treated quite so insultingly

de haut en bas, from the height of esoteric art to the depth of general exoteric amateurism, replied, hotly, flushing and lifting her face.

'But it is a picture of a horse, nevertheless.'

He lifted his shoulders in another shrug.

'As you like - it is not a picture of a cow, certainly.'

Here Gudrun broke in, flushed and brilliant, anxious to avoid any more of this, any more of Ursula's foolish persistence in giving herself away.

'What do you mean by "it is a picture of a horse"?' she cried to her sister. 'What do you mean by a horse? You mean an idea you have in your head, and which you want to see represented. There is another idea altogether, quite another idea. Call it a horse if you like, or say it is not a horse, that it is a falsity of your own make-up.'

Ursula wavered, baffled. Then her words came.

'But why does he have this idea of a horse?' she said. 'I know it is his idea. I know it is a picture of himself, really--'

Loerke snorted with rage.

'A picture of myself!' he repeated in derision. '_Wissen Sie, gnadige Frau_, that is a _Kunstwerke_, a work of art. It is a work of art, it is a picture of nothing, of absolutely nothing. It has nothing to do with anything but itself, it has no relation with the everyday world of this and other, there is no connexion between them, absolutely none, they are two different and distinct planes of existence, and to translate one into the other is worse than foolish, it is a darkening of all counsel, a making confusion everywhere. Do you see, you _must not_ confuse the relative work of action with the absolute world of art. That you _must not do_.'

'That is quite true,' cried Gudrun, let loose in a sort of rhapsody. 'The two things are quite and permanently apart, they have nothing to do with one another. I and my art, they have _nothing_ to do with each other. My art stands in another world, I am of this world.'

Her face was flushed and transfigured. Loerke, who was sitting with his head ducked, like some creature at bay, looked up at her swiftly, almost furtively, and murmured:

'_Ja - so ist es, so ist es_.'

Ursula was silent after this outburst. She was furious. She wanted to poke a hole into them both.

'It isn't a word of it true, of all this harangue you have made me,' she replied flatly. 'The horse is a picture of your own stock, stupid brutality, and the girl you loved and tortured and then ignored.'

He looked up at her with a small smile of contempt in his eyes. He would not trouble to answer this last charge.

Gudrun too was silent in exasperated contempt. Ursula was such an insufferable outsider, rushing in where angels would fear to tread. But then - fools must be suffered, if not gladly.

> But Ursula was persistent too.
> 'As for your world of art and your world of reality,' she replied, 'you have to separate the two, because you can't bear to know who you are. You can't bear to realize what a stock, stiff, hide-bound brutality you are really, so you say "it's the world of art". The world of art is only the truth about the real world, that's all - but you are too far gone to see it.' (pp. 483-5)

Ursula's refusal to believe in art that is distinct from life is countered by Loerke's and Gudrun's religious, rapt devotion to this belief. Pointedly, Ursula's criticism of Loerke is that his art does reveal his true nature, only that he refuses to believe this. Art will tell him something horrible, but truthful, about his existence, if only he would listen; but instead, ironically, he holds art high and separate from life, since he can not come to terms with his own reality. To mistake art for life, or to sacrifice life to art, is to muddle the relationship between life and art. As Ursula views Loerke's position on this matter, Lawrence would hold the same skepticism for Nietzsche who wrote "- for it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified."[7] Both Nietzsche and Lawrence agree that art's task is to give us a new kind of knowledge, an instinctive knowledge: the synthesis of the conscious and the unconscious. The widening difference between them rests, it appears, on the different therapeutic functions art performs. For Nietzsche art makes life bearable; for Lawrence art puts us in a new relationship with the universe - the direction our actual lives must go. Art can help us to "shed one's sickness in books," so that we can live whole and complete; it helps us to realize the fulfilled man/woman

relationship. Nietzsche, on the other hand, sees in art that which allows us to endure our sickness, not to overcome it, but to embrace that very sickness without being destroyed by it. Although Nietzsche and Lawrence differ on such a crucial matter as art's relationship to life, Lawrence's art is still profoundly influenced by Nietzsche.

The world of Women in Love is, I believe, a fictional complement to Nietzsche's world in dissolution. We noted earlier that this dissolution is a consequence of the 'fundamental error', namely separation of the mind from the body with mind exercising tyrannical control over existence. As a result of this development, man's ultimate condition is nihilistic. In a moment of clarification in 'Moony', Birkin realizes, too, that dissolution results when "the relation between the senses and outspoken mind had broken."[8] This death-break from pure integral being, Birkin believes, develops along two distinct lines. There is the "awful" African process which is symbolized by the African statue Birkin had studied in Halliday's apartment:

> She had thousands of years of purely sensual, purely unspiritual knowledge behind her. It must have been thousands of years since her race had died......... thousands of years ago, that which was imminent in himself must have taken place in those Africans: the goodness, the holiness, the desire for creation and productive happiness must have lapsed, leaving the single impulse for knowledge in one sort, mindless progressive knowledge through the senses, mystic knowledge in disintegration and dissolution, knowledge such as the beetles have, which live purely within the world of corruption and cold dissolution.[9]

This process of dissolution, however, is experienced differently by the white races: "The white races, having the Arctic north

behind them, the vast abstraction of ice and snow, would fulfil a mystery of ice-destructive knowledge, snow-abstract annihilation."[10] Birkin thinks of Gerald Grich as the "omen of universal dissolution into whiteness and snow,"[11] but Gerald is complex in that while he dramatizes dissolution he nearly transcends it. To understand Lawrence's view of dissolution is, in fact, to examine the role the human will plays in the inner conflict between the demands of the unconscious and the conscious as it is enacted by Gerald. In the midst of this psychic portrayal, Lawrence finds Nietzsche at fault; he most clearly condemns Nietzsche's Wille zur Macht. Nevertheless, Lawrence has learned something from Nietzsche concerning the matter of the human will, but again this influence is framed within the 'doubleness' that has characterized Lawrence's response to Nietzsche to this point.

Early in 'Water-Party' Birkin and Ursula discuss "the river of dissolution" and "the river of life." This discussion is important because it adumbrates the meaning of the dramatic action in the chapter:

> "It seethes and seethes, a river of darkness," he said, "putting forth lilies and snakes, and the ignis fatuus, and rolling all the time onward. That's what we never take into account - that it rolls onwards."
> "What does?"
> "The other river, the black river. We always consider the silver river of life, rolling on and quickening all the world to a brightness, on and on to heaven, flowing into a bright eternal sea, a heaven of angels thronging. But the other is our real reality - ."
> "But what other? I don't see any other," said Ursula.
> "It's your reality, nevertheless," he said; "that dark river of dissolution. You see it rolls in us just as the other rolls - the black river of corruption. And our flowers are of this - our sea-born Aphrodite, all our white phosphorescent flowers of sensuous perfection, all

> our reality nowadays."
>
> "You mean that Aphrodite is really deathly?" asked Ursula.
>
> "I mean she is the flowering mystery of the death process, yes," he replied. "When the stream of synthetic creation lapses, we find ourselves part of the inverse process, the blood of destructive creation. Aphrodite is born in the first spasm of universal dissolution - then the snakes and swans and lotus - marsh-flowers - and Gudrun and Gerald - born in the process of destructive creation." (pp. 192-3)

While Birkin rather didactically asserts that Gerald and Gudrun are creatures of dissolution, the novel itself clearly confirms that this is their condition. Metaphorically, Gerald carries the mark of Cain for "accidentally" shooting his brother.[12] Gerald did this because of the tumultous inner conflict of the demands of his unconscious life. Later in "Water-Party", after Diana's drowning, Gerald hauntingly remarks: "There's one thing about our family, you know...Once anything goes wrong, it can never be put right again - not with us. I've noticed it all my life - you can't put a thing right, once it has gone wrong."[13] Gerald is clearly a creature of Birkin's "river of dissolution," and, as he states here, his family is too. Gudrun, also, is linked early in the novel with dissolution. In "Coal-Dust" she is attracted to the colliers - to their "inexpressible destructiveness" - and also to Gerald, partly because he is the master of this manifestation of dissolution. In "Sketch-Book" Gerald and Hermione discover Gudrun sketching along the shore of Willey Water:

> Gudrun had waded out to a gravelly shoal, and was seated like a buddhist, staring fixedly at the water-plants that rose succulent from the mud of the low shores. What she could see was mud, soft, oozy, watery mud, and from

> its festering chill, water-plants rose up, thick and cool and fleshy, very straight and turgid, thrusting out their leaves at right angles, and having dark lurid colours, dark green and blotches of black-purple and bronze. But she could feel their turgid fleshy structure as in a sensuous vision, she knew how they rose out of the mud, she knew how they thrust out from themselves, how they stood stiff and succulent against the air. (p. 132)

Gudrun, appropriately enough, is sketching the very flowers of Birkin's "river of dissolution" - what he once alludes to as fleurs du mal. Gudrun and Gerald's true reality is magnificently etched in the reader's mind before that powerful scene in "Water-Party"; thus the reader is suitably prepared to comprehend symbolically as well as literally that chilling netherworld.

The imagery of "Water-Party" closely parallels that of the beginning of Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy. While adrift in their canoe, Gerald and Gudrun are happy in each other's company: Gudrun is in a "thrill of pure intoxication" and Gerald "is melting into oneness with the whole. It was like a pure perfect sleep, his first great sleep of life."[14] Nietzsche describes this inner tranquility as the Apollonian illusion. In his frail craft, man believes everything to be safe and stable, that the reality of the watery depths - the Dionysian - is ignored, even though the Dionysian is as much man's reality as the Apollonian. Gudrun and Gerald's tranquility, of course, is finally shattered by the reality of Diana's drowning, ironically in the very element they found so peaceful.

This watery reality is both Gerald and Gudrun's reality - when Gerald dives he is actually immersing himself in the "river

of dissolution", symbolically into the welter of his unconscious life. While Gerald is diving Gudrun thinks about what he means to her: "He was not like a man to her, he was an incarnation, a great phase of life."[15] Gerald is the great phase of dissolution, as Birkin thinks in "Moony", and Gudrun knows "that she would never go beyond him, he was the final approximation of life to her."[16] Nevertheless, in the snows of the Tyrol, Gudrun breaks off her connection with Gerald and joins with Loerke so that she can explore even to a greater degree this phase of dissolution. Gudrun claims connection with Gerald, since "she was suspended upon the surface of the insidious reality until such time as she also should disappear beneath it."[17] Gudrun realizes that her reality is this element of dissolution, which she so eagerly wants to embrace. After returning to the surface, Gerald marvels over this underworld reality because "it is so cold, actually, and so endless, so different really from what is on top, so endless - you wonder how it is so many are alive, why we're up here."[18] Gerald creates for the others the actuality of this reality, a world numbing and vast. Lawrence's art compels the reader to experience the literal coldness and horror of the depths, as both a symbol and a tangible reality.

But the question we should ask ourselves now is, what then is the essence of this reality? Death, of course, is the reality, for Diana and her would-be rescuer do drown. However, literal death is not the essence of this reality - the real terror is, as Birkin remarks to Ursula, the dead "...cling onto the living,

and won't let go!"[19] This is the true horror, the living are destroyed by those living the death process: "The bodies of the dead were not recovered till towards dawn. Diana had her arms tight round the neck of the young man, choking him. 'She killed him,' said Gerald."[20] Through her deathly will - an inheritance from her family, especially from her father - Diana[21] kills her would-be rescuer, her lover. In these individuals of dissolution, once their creative or spontaneous selves have lapsed, only their will remains, namely the will fixed on destruction. This is central to Women in Love: the novel is clearly concerned with this deathly, perverse direction of the will. As "Moony" stands as the first chapter in realizing the possibility of a return to the creative self, "Water-Party" stands as the chapter which first asserts the reality of the horror of the will to dissolution.

Both Gerald and Gudrun are implicated in this use of the will in their reaction to Winnifred's rabbit, Bismarck. The rabbit is a spontaneous animal, one which angers Gudrun because of its violent nature. Bismarck's strength is described by Winifred only as "magically strong". Since Gudrun cannot subdue the animal, Gerald intervenes after recognizing Gudrun's "sullen passion for cruelty". Gerald overcomes Bismarck by violently exerting his own will, administering a brutal blow to the rabbit's neck. Through this incident both Gerald and Gudrun realize that they are implicated with each other in "abhorrent mysteries". Both possess "underworld knowledge" (which recalls "Water-Party"),

knowledge which is a "mutual hellish recognition". This episode with Bismarck helps to clarify the perverse nature of Gerald and Gudrun's relationship. From this point the reader knows that they are committed to each other until death, or in Spilka's phrase: "to that future violent ripping at each other's souls which ends in Gerald's death."[22] However, the function of the will in its relation to the process of dissolution cannot be fully understood until the different notions of will in the novel are examined.

Hermione Roddice* leaps from the pages of Women in Love as the figure castigated for her destructive, parasitic will.

*Although it is commonplace to state that Hermione Roddice is based on the intellectual socialite Lady Ottoline Morrell, it is worth noting that Birkin's criticism of Hermione on her use of the will parallels Lawrence's criticism of Lady Ottoline, in a letter to her dated 23 April, 1915:

> We English, with our old-developed public selves, and the consequent powerful will, and the accompanying rudimentary private or instinctive selves, I think we are very baffling to any other nation. We are apt to assume domination, when we are not really personally implicated....
>
> Why must you always use your will so much, why can't you let things be, without always grasping and trying to know and to dominate. I'm too much like this myself. (C.L., pp. 334-5)

We shall soon see that this close association in Lawrence's mind between Lady Ottoline and Hermione will have a decided significance in understanding the source of Hermione's belief that the will, when "properly" used, can cure anything. Also, this element of self-criticism on Lawrence's part suggests that Lawrence in his portrayal of Birkin is not white-washing Birkin's character; rather, Lawrence incorporates this very flaw into Birkin's character. This, surely, is the mark of a great writer, one who questions everything, even himself, in his art.

Birkin constantly tries to get her to relinquish it; he also criticizes Hermione's passion as being only an offshoot of her will:[23] "But now you have come to all your conclusions, you want to go back and be like a savage, without knowledge. You want a life of pure sensation and 'passion'."[24] This return to sensation is perverse, a shift in Birkin's terms from the Northern process of dissolution to the "awful" African process; thus Hermione's will stands condemned:

> It isn't passion at all, it is your will. It's your bullying will. You want to clutch things and have them in your power. You want to have things in your power. And why? Because you haven't got any real body, any dark sensual body of life. You have no sensuality. You have only your will and your conceit of consciousness, and your lust for power, to know. (p. 46)

Hermione's will is connected with the conceit of consciousness, with "the vicious mental-deliberate profligacy our lot goes in for."[25] Birkin alludes to a polarity: there is a great difference between the will of the dark sensual body and the will of 'mental consciousness'. Hermione perversely directs this will of 'mental consciousness' because it is the only thing which prevents the chaos that is within her from destroying her. Her will must maintain her own false ego - her conceit of consciousness - which is the sham that covers her neurotic condition.

What is meant, however, by the 'spontaneous will'? In Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, Lawrence explains what he means by 'spontaneous will':

> The will is indeed the faculty which every individual possesses from the very moment of conception, for exerting

> a certain control over the vital and automatic processes of his own evolution. It does not depend originally on the mind. Originally it is a purely spontaneous control factor of the living unconscious. It seems as if, primarily, the will and the conscience were identical, in the premental state. It seems as if the will were given as a great balancing faculty whereby automatization is prevented in the evolving psyche. The spontaneous will reacts at once against the exaggeration of any one particular circuit of polarity...the will is the power which the unique self possesses to right itself from automatism.[26]

Hermione, as evidenced by Birkin's criticism, is an individual who lacks the will - the 'spontaneous will' that Lawrence speaks about - which prevents the human organism from being automatized. Hermione is automatized, since as Birkin claims she lacks all spontaneity:

> '...You and spontaneity! You, the most deliberate thing that ever walked or crawled! You'd be verily deliberately spontaneous - that's you. Because you want to have everything in your own volition, your deliberate voluntary consciousness. You want it all in that loathsome little skull of yours, that ought to be cracked like a nut. For you'll be the same till it is cracked, like an insect in its skin. If one cracked your skull perhaps one might get a spontaneous, passionate woman out of you, with real sensuality. As it is, what you want is pornography - looking at yourself in mirrors, watching your naked animal actions in mirrors, so that you can have it all in your consciousness, make it all mental.' (p. 21)

The novel's intent at this point is not only to clarify Hermione's sexually perverse nature (i.e. her pornography) and Birkin's involvement with her,[27] but also to suggest that one of the major causes for her perverse nature is precisely this lack of spontaneity. This lack of spontaneity, then, gives way to a perversity in which the will, as in Hermione's case, identifies with the mind. Clearly, what the novel suggests is that the

different orders of will that Lawrence discusses in Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious are important to understanding the novel's characters.

In Women in Love Lawrence is greatly concerned about this perverse direction of the will. In "Carpeting" Hermione discussed how the will can cure anything,* if directed "properly"; whereupon

*Apropos of this "use" of the will, Hermione tells Birkin that a "Very great doctor" had taught her to use her will in this manner, and that "by learning to use my will, simply by using my will, I made myself well." The teachings of this doctor are significant in the matter of the will, since in Lawrence's mind - especially over this matter of the perverse direction of the will - Hermione and Lady Ottoline are indissolubly connected. With this reference Lawrence is surely alluding to Dr. Roger Vittoz, author of Treatment of Neurasthenia By Teaching Brain Control (1911), of whom Lady Ottoline had stated in May, 1913: "I was then having treatment from Dr. Vittoz, who was a very remarkable man. He taught his patients a system of mental control and concentration, and a kind of organization of the mind, which had a great effect on steadying and developing me. I found it an enormous help then and always." In his book Vittoz writes that there are two brains: the conscious and the unconscious, or the objective and the subjective respectively. Evidently, in sufferers of neurasthenia (a nervous debility), this dualism of the brain is highly marked; while in the healthy individual "his ideas and sensations are the result of the working of two brains and he does not distinguish the working of one brain from that of the other." Vittoz believes that in the healthy individual the two halves of the brain, so to speak, are in a state of equilibrium, whereas in the neurasthenic this balance does not exist. This is somewhat similar to our formulations of reductive dualism (neurasthenia) and dynamic dualism. So far, I believe, Lawrence would be in accord with Vittoz. Nevertheless, Lawrence violently disagrees with Vittoz's prognosis: namely, Vittoz believes that it is through the exertion of the will, which as with reason and judgement is controlled by the objective brain, that this dualism can return to the necessary equilibrium. That is to say, that the patient by being taught to utilize his will, that will which is connected to the objective brain (mental consciousness), can be cured. To Lawrence, this tyranny of the will is the hideous use of the will, for it is the very mechanism which perpetuates this unbalanced dualism and, consequently, the repression of the 'spontaneous will'. Instead, Lawrence argues for the 'spontaneous will',

Birkin thoroughly denounces this mechanized will. It is in this chapter, however, that other characters, primarily Gudrun and Gerald, are connected with this perverse direction of the will. This discussion on will begins, in fact, when Ursula upbraids Gerald for his treatment of the Arab mare at the railway crossing. That scene, as in "Rabbit" (also recall this subtle connection: Gerald is preparing to go for a ride on his Arab mare before intervening on Gudrun's behalf), powerfully demonstrates a clash of wills. While Ursula is repelled by Gerald's treatment of the mare, Gudrun is fascinated by Gerald's control of the animal; actually she is at the point of an orgasm while Gerald in "mechanical relentlessness" continuously digs his spurs into the horse's bleeding flanks. Ursula is appalled by this destructive, perverse direction of Gerald's will while Gudrun, on the contrary, recognizes her own desire to be connected with this perversity. After this incident Gudrun begins to associate with the colliers, "automatons of the sooty netherworld." Lawrence's vocabulary at this point is highly instructive: everything to do with the colliers is described in mechanical terms, in terms of their mechanized will. "All," the narrator stresses, "had a secret sense of power, and of inexpressible destructiveness, and of fatal half-heartedness, a sort of rottenness in the will."[28]

(footnote continued from previous page) the will (in Vittoz's terminology) of the subjective brain. Clearly, Lawrence and Vittoz are diametrically opposed on this matter; hence, Lawrence's criticism of Lady Ottoline and Birkin's criticism of Hermione.

This "rottenness in the will" is precisely what Gudrun is attracted to, hence her desire for connection with Gerald who is master of these automatons and who is, she knows at this time, the greatest manifestation of this "rottenness in the will." Therefore, it is in Gerald, not Hermione, that Lawrence's notion of the mechanized will is crystallized.

In "Mino", the chapter immediately following "Carpeting", this "rottenness in the will" is finally clarified. Ursula and Birkin discuss the use of will after they watch Mino, Birkin's cat, strike and dominate a stray female cat. Ursula remembers that "It is just like Gerald Crich with his horses - a lust for bullying - a real _Wille zur Macht_ - so base, so petty."[29] In associating Gerald's will with Nietzsche's _Wille zur Macht_, Lawrence does not recognize Nietzsche's _Wille zur Macht_ as the legitimate impulse which will effect a transvaluation of values - that characteristic of the Superman which will overcome the chaos and meaninglessness of human existence. In fact, Ursula's comment tends to relate Nietzsche's Superman to the Northern process of dissolution. Not inconsequently, Birkin opposes the _Wille zur Macht_ with his _volonté de pouvoir_:

> 'I agree that the _Wille zur Macht_ is a base and petty thing. But with the Mino, it is the desire to bring this female cat into a pure stable equilibrium, a transcendent and abiding _rapport_ with the single male. Whereas without him, as you see, she is a mere stray, a fluffy sporadic bit of chaos. It is a _volonté de pouvoir_, if you like, a will to ability, taking _pouvoir_ as a verb.' (p. 167)

I contend that these two wills - _Wille zur Macht_ and _volonté_

de pouvoir - translate respectively into 'mechanical will' and 'spontaneous will'. As Birkin sees it, the will to ability is the will necessary to establish star-equilibrium and so overcome chaos. The Wille zur Macht, on the other hand, is clearly not the legitimate way to overcome chaos or dissolution, since it is really the mechanism which corrupts life.* Although brilliantly enacted, possibly unequalled in modern English fiction, this critique of Nietzsche's Wille zur Macht is essentially mistaken; for Nietzsche posits two orders of will, too. Not only does he posit the Wille zur Macht but he also posits a "will to nothingness" - a will which unmistakably contains all the flaws that Lawrence (via Birkin) criticizes in the Wille zur Macht. In his essay "What is the meaning of Ascetic Ideals?", from On the Genealogy of Morals, which it now appears Lawrence must have read, Nietzsche succinctly outlines the "will to nothingness":

> Apart from the ascetic idea, man, the animal man, had no meaning. His existence on earth contained no goal.... This is precisely what the ascetic ideal means: that something was lacking, that man was surrounded by a fearful void - he did not know how to justify, to account for, to affirm himself, he suffered from the problem of his

* In Blessed are the Powerful, published in Phoenix II, Lawrence makes a similar distinction between Wille zur Macht and volonté de pouvoir by using the terms "will-to-power" and pouvoir. He writes that a "will-to-power seems to work out as bullying. And bullying is something despicable and detestable...The Germans again made the mistake of deifying the egotistic Will of Man: the will-to-power" (p. 436). Lawrence opposes "will-to-power" with a real power that "comes into us from beyond." Real power, Lawrence stresses, "is pouvoir: to be able to" (p. 439). Clearly, Birkin's notion of volonté de pouvoir is one that Lawrence himself endorses.

> meaning...his problem was not suffering itself, but that there was no answer to the crying question 'Why is there suffering?'...the meaninglessness of suffering itself, was the curse which lay over mankind itself - and the ascetic ideal gave it meaning: man was saved thereby... he could now will something - immaterial to what end, why, with what he willed: the will itself was saved. It is quite impossible to disguise from oneself what is expressed by every complete will which has taken its direction from the ascetic ideal: this hatred of the human, and even more of the animal, and more still of the material, the horror of the senses, of reason itself, this fear of happiness and beauty, this longing to get away from all appearance, change, becoming, death, wishing for longing itself - all this indicates - let us dare to grasp it - a will to nothingness, a will opposed to life, a repudiation of the most fundamental preconditions of life, but it is and remains a will...And...man would rather will nothing than not will....[30]

R.J. Hollingdale writes that with this concept of the 'will to nothingness' Nietzsche "recognized the origin of nihilism: an individual, a nation, a civilization deprived of positive goals destroys itself by willing the last thing left in its power to will - its own destruction; and it will will this rather than not will."[31] (This could be used as an apt description of what Gerald undergoes.) "Nietzsche now gained the authority," Hollingdale continues, "to distinguish between different victorious moralities: that a certain morality had established itself did not imply it was a movement for the enhancement of power - it might be a nihilistic morality, and its triumph the triumph of the will to nothingness."[32] 'Will to nothingness,' evidently, is the will which, in Lawrence's terminology, assists the mind in effecting and maintaining control over the spontaneous self - life cutting into life, which will finally lead to utter disintegration.

All this, undoubtedly, is what Lawrence means by his Wille zur Macht; and, consequently, the reason why he criticizes Gerald who acts on this 'will to nothingness.' Gerald suffers from the conflicts of his "psychic existence";[33] in order to overcome this suffering, he directs his will not to understand his conflicts, whereupon he could save himself, but to alleviate his suffering by concentrating all his being towards establishing a powerful social mechanism. For a time he does successfully manage to ignore his psychic conflicts. The world, however, that is made from this concentration of effort is made in the image of his ego and it is directed against the senses - against becoming, against "reason itself".

When Birkin meets Gerald at the train station Gerald is reading The Daily Telegraph, from which he reads a short excerpt to Birkin:

> 'Here are two leaders' - he held out his Daily Telegraph, 'full of newspaper cant -' he scanned the columns down - 'and then there's this little - I dunno what you call it, essay almost - appearing with the leaders, and saying there must arise a man who will give new values to things, give us new truths, a new attitude to life, or else we shall be crumbling nothingness in a few years, a country in ruin -' (p. 59)

Gerald asks Birkin whether he thinks such a new gospel is really desired. (Ironically, as we shall see later, Gerald does create a new gospel - he becomes the High Priest of the machine.) Birkin, of course, is skeptical that such people really, instinctively that is, want to change:

'They want novelty right enough. But to stare straight

> at this life that we've brought upon ourselves, and reject it, absolutely smash up the old idols of themselves, that they'll never do. You've got very badly to want to get rid of the old, before anything new will appear - even in the self.' (p. 59)

Gerald is implicated in this criticism: Birkin accuses Gerald of confusing the self with the rest of humanity: "If you are of high importance to humanity you are of high importance to your self."[34] In other words, Birkin exposes the vacuum of Gerald's self, in that his private self is defined by his public activity. In fact, Gerald responds by saying that life "doesn't centre at all. It is artificially held together by the social mechanism."[35] (Since both Gerald and Birkin agree that there is no God - no Christian God at least - God can no longer be the centering factor.) This is Gerald's dilemma: his genuine self is fraught with conflict and turmoil - it is not surprising, then, that he believes that in such a condition life cannot centre - and because of this he believes that he will overcome these psychic conflicts by directing all his energies towards the social mechanism. In Gerald, Lawrence exposes what he believes to be fatally wrong with Nietzsche's _Wille zur Macht_.

It is in the context of Gerald's family that Gerald's dilemma and his failed attempt to overcome it are realized. Gerald's parents, Christiana and Thomas Crich, were an ill-matched pair: Thomas gave himself entirely to his work as a mine-owner, to his workers as a great Christian patriarch, while Christiana recoiled from Thomas's charity, from this outside

world. "The relation between her and her husband," the narrator comments, "was wordless and unknown, but it was deep, awful, a relation of utter interdestruction. And he, who triumphed in the world, he became more and more hollow in his vitality, the vitality was bled from him, as by some haemorrage. She was hulked like a hawk in a cage, but her heart was fierce and undiminished within her, though her mind was destroyed."[36] Their relationship is estranged not so much by Christiana's oddity as by Thomas's inflexible will. Gerald's father had bent the mother to his will, that will which imprisoned her and which, of course, was alien to her very being:

> Perhaps he had loved his neighbour even better than himself - which was going one further than the commandment. Always, this flame had burned in his heart, sustaining him through everything, the welfare of the people. He was a large employer of labour, he was a great mine-owner. And he had never lost this from his heart, that in Christ he was one with the workmen. Nay, he had felt inferior to them, as if they, through poverty and labour, were nearer to God than he. He had always the unacknowledged belief, that it was his workmen, the miners, who held in their hands the means of salvation. To move nearer to God, he most move towards his miners, his life must gravitate towards theirs. They were, unconsciously, his idol, his God made manifest. In them he worshipped the highest, the great, sympathetic, mindless Godhead of humanity.
>
> And all the while, his wife had opposed him like one of the great demons of hell. Strange, like a kind of prey, with the fascinating beauty and abstraction of a hawk, she had beat against the bars of his philanthropy, and like a hawk in a cage, she had sunk into silence. By force of circumstance, because all the world combined to make the cage unbreakable, he had been too strong for her, he had kept her prisoner. (pp. 241-2)

It is clear that Thomas Crich has no vital self, and that he attempts to overcome his lack of vitality through charity, by caring for his fellow man more than for himself. Nietzsche, too,

recognizes this particular manifestation of the "will to nothingness". In "What is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals?", Nietzsche writes that the most common attempt to cure the psychic problem is through the prescription of "love thy neighbour": "the pleasure of giving pleasure (doing good, giving, relieving, helping, encouraging, consoling, praising, rewarding)..."[37] Lawrence, however, goes beyond this by having Thomas love his fellow man <u>more</u> than himself, a self-negation paradoxically defining the self.

Mrs. Crich, on the other hand, does not lack vitality; but she is prevented by her husband from fully exploring it - in fact, prevented by this whole passion by the collective will of man for philanthropy, and in this case the passion which falsely blankets over the universal nihilistic condition. The real tragedy of the Crich's relationship, however, is that Christiana contains what Thomas needs, but Thomas, who cannot see through to this, perverts Christiana's vital self - he destroys precisely what he needs the most.

Out of this chaotic and perverted relationship Gerald is born. Gerald, however, will not perversely define his vital self with charitable activities; he will not find his <u>raison d'etre</u> in "sordid tales being poured out to him." Gerald finds himself in reaction against his father's obsolete idea, for Gerald will struggle against his own doubts through mechanical activity rather than philanthropy. To overcome his horror Gerald

simply chooses to ignore it, to believe it simply does not matter:

> His vision had suddenly crystallised. Suddenly he had conceived the pure instrumentality of mankind. There had been so much humanitarianism, so much talk of sufferings and feelings. It was ridiculous, the sufferings and feelings of individuals did not matter in the least. They were mere condition, like the weather. What mattered was the pure instrumentality of the individual. As a man as of a knife: does it cut well? Nothing else mattered.
> Everything in the world has its function, and is good or not good in so far as it fulfils this function more or less perfectly. Was a miner a good miner? Then he was complete. Was a manager a good manager? That was enough. Gerald himself, who was responsible for all this industry, was he a good director? If he were, he had fulfilled his life. The rest was by-play. (pp. 250-1)

Such is Gerald's doctrine: a world-view predicated upon mankind's instrumentality and the ignoring of the private self. Gerald gives all his effort to realizing his vision, because through it he gains respite from the terror of his own inner self. But how is he to bring this vision to fruition? By the will of man: "The will of man was the determining factor. Man was the archgod of earth. His mind was obedient to serve his will. Man's will was the absolute, the only absolute."[38] And the will, or at least the expression of the will in the world, would be "a great and perfect machine, a system, an activity of pure order, pure mechanical repetition, repetition as _ad infinitum_, hence eternal and infinite."[39] No longer is the ruling idea Thomas's philanthropy. The new idea - Gerald's religion - is this pure mechanical repetition, with Gerald as "the God of the machine, _Deus ex Machina_."[40]

Again, in "What is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals?", Nietzsche discusses another order of activity which parallels that which Lawrence has Gerald undertaking in his futile attempt to combat his physic problem:

> Much more common than this hypnotic muting of all sensitivity (Buddhism is what Nietzsche is alluding to), of the capacity to feel pain - which presupposes rare energy and above all courage, contempt for opinion, "intellectual stoicism" - is a different training against states of depression which is at any rate easier: mechanical activity. It is beyond doubt that this regimen alleviates an existence of suffering to a not inconsiderable degree: this fact is today called, somewhat dishonestly, "the blessing of work." The alleviation consists in this, that the interest of the sufferer is directed entirely away from his suffering - the activity, and nothing but activity, enters consciousness, and there is consequently little room left in it for suffering: for the chamber of human consciousness is small. (emphasis added)[41]

Both Lawrence and Nietzsche believe that "mechanical activity" is a form the "will to nothingness" - Wille zur Macht in Lawrence's mind - will take in order to avoid the suffering that it entails. However, Lawrence's critique of the industrialist, mechanical ambitions of Gerald, although possibly based on the psychological motivation Nietzsche suggests, goes far beyond anything Nietzsche has to say on the matter.

Of course, the central issue here is the nature of this absolute will. What Gerald brings about is not what he alone desires - it is also what all the miners desire. Gerald's Wille zur Macht, then, is the Wille zur Macht of the miners. Yet there is a paradoxical malignancy to all of this. Not only does such a will remove the significance of the self from the scheme of things, it is in fact the greatest expression of the nihilism of

the miners' existence: "It was the first great step in undoing, the first great phase of chaos, the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic, the destruction of the organic purpose, the organic unity, and the subordination of every organic unit to the great mechanical purpose. It was pure organic disintegration and pure mechanical organization. This is the first and finest state of chaos."[42] This will is the will to chaos, the will to universal nothingness. Ironically, Gerald, the High Priest of this religion, through contact with Birkin and Gudrun, but particularly because of the moribund condition of his father, begins to suspect "the mechanical certainty that had been his triumph."[43] What develops is that this particular manifestation of his will begins to tremble; after creating a world in the image of his will, he still feels that he may succumb to the nihilism of his inner self. Whereas his father, even at the point of death, refuses to allow his terror (which he connects with his wife) to take hold, Gerald is at the point of becoming the very crumbling nothingness he and Birkin had talked about earlier:

> But now he had succeeded - he had finally succeeded. And once or twice lately, he had suddenly stood up in terror, not knowing what he was. And he went to the mirror and looked long and closely at his own face, at his own eyes, seeking for something. He was afraid, in mortal dry fear, but he knew not what of. He looked at his own face. There it was, shapely and healthy, and the same as ever, yet somehow, it was not real, it was a mask. He dared not touch it, for fear it should prove to be only a composition mask. His eyes were blue and keen as ever, and as firm in their look. Yet he was not sure that they were not blue false bubbles that would burst in a moment and leave clear annihilation. He could see the darkness in them, as if they were only bubbles of darkness. He was afraid that one day he would break down and be a purely meaningless bubble lapping round a darkness. (p. 261)

But in spite of Gerald's fear, his will remains intact for the time being. Since the "mechanical activity" will no longer suffice, however, Gerald must "go in some direction, shortly, to find relief"[44] from this insidious dissolution.

It is to Gudrun, of course, that Gerald finally turns to find his relief. After his father's death, and on the brink of utter collapse, Gerald seeks out Gudrun after making a nocturnal visit to his father's grave. Earlier, we were told that in order to fill his void Gerald poured Gudrun into himself, "like wine into a cup"; now, during this scene, Gerald again needs to be replenished:

> And she, she was the great bath of life, he worshipped her. Mother and substance of all life she was. And he, child and man, received of her and was made whole. His pure body was almost killed. But the miraculous, soft effluence of her breast suffused over him, over his seared, damaged brain, like a healing lymph, like a soft, soothing flow of life itself, perfect as if he were bathed in the womb again. (p. 389)

Gudrun, naturally, will not tolerate this kind of parasitism for ever, since Gudrun sees men as rivals whereas Gerald wants the *Magna Mater* figure. As we have seen, Gudrun is attracted to Gerald because of his *Wille zur Macht*; but, in "Rabbit" and "Water-Party" (in both Gerald is challenged by Gudrun by either an actual or imagined slap across the face), Gudrun possesses her own *Wille zur Macht*. Gerald needs Gudrun, since "without Gudrun he would die," but Gudrun, it becomes clear, does not need Gerald.

This drama centres, as does the final vision of the novel,

in the snows of the Tyrol. The whole process of Gerald's disintegration leads inexorably to this final confrontation and death; and thus Birkin's vision of Gerald as an omen of "snow-abstract annihilation" comes to be. In fact, both Ursula and Gudrun see the whole Tyrol as _übermenschlich_ - superhuman; Birkin, too, comes to think of them all as an unknown race of snow creatures. What in fact happens during this holiday in the snow is a colossal clash of wills. We know that Gerald, even though on the brink of utter collapse, still has his will, described as "a superhuman instrument" which has the faculty for making order out of chaos. But as Gudrun becomes more acquainted with Loerke, "a little obscene monster of darkness" as Birkin calls him, she realizes that she must go beyond Gerald, that there are further stages of dissolution to know: "She had further to go, a further, slow exquisite experience to reap, unthinkable subtleties of sensation to know, before she was finished."[45] In order for her to make this further exploration with Loerke, however, the outcome of this battle of wills with Gerald must be settled first. The stakes are obvious: "one destroyed that the other might exist, one ratified because the other was nulled."[46] Eventually, as foreseen by Birkin, Gerald, with his _Wille zur Macht_, finally gives way to the crumbling nothingness he so greatly, but correctly, feared.

Gerald's death represents not only a personal tragedy, but also the "universal dissolution of snow-abstract annihilation."

As things stand for Lawrence, this is the predictable end of modern man. Moreover, Gerald's existential condition and his suicide are a powerful critique of Nietzsche's Wille zur Macht. Lawrence criticizes this perverse direction of the will, as clearly as Birkin criticizes Hermione's perverse direction of will: "It is fatal to use the will like that...disgusting. Such a will is an obscenity."[47] Fatal - Gerald's will is certainly depicted as such; therefore, such a will is not a viable way to overcome this conflict between the unconscious self with the conscious self. In Lawrence's view, the Wille zur Macht is patently a will to chaos, a will to nothingness. It is not the vital impulse which will overcome nihilism because it is that very complex mechanism which perpetuates the nihilistic condition.

Notes

1. See section 14 and 15 of The Birth of Tragedy, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1967).

2. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1974), p. 76.

3. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, Inc., 1968), p. 541.

4. D.H. Lawrence, The Symbolic Meaning (The Uncollected Versions of Studies in Classic American Literature), ed. Armin Arnold (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p. 19.

5. D.H. Lawrence, 'Foreword' to Women in Love, in Phoenix II, eds Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 276.

6. Philip Rieff, The Triumph of the Therapeutic (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 226.

7. The Birth of Tragedy, p. 52.

8. D.H. Lawrence, Women in Love (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penquin, 1976), p. 285.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 286.

11. Ibid., p. 287.

12. Apropos of this "accidental killing", Birkin in his own mind does not believe such things are accidents - they are, in fact, the subterranean force of unconscious motivation. Ursula, too, confirms this point: her instincts, she tells Gudrun, would not have allowed her to pull the trigger (i.e, it is impossible for her to perform the act). See also Mark Schorer's discussion of character as fate in "Women in Love and Death" for an excellent introduction to the matter.

13. Women in Love, p. 206.

14. Ibid., p. 199.

15. Ibid., p. 203.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., p. 206.

19. Ibid., p. 207.

20. Ibid., p. 212.

21. It should be noted that Diana is the name of the Roman goddess of chastity and hunting. But significantly in Lawrence's use of the name Diana, she is also known as the moon-goddess. And as I will show later, the moon is directly connected with the destructive will - the will that must be smashed before true creative being can arise.

22. Mark Spilka. The Love Ethic of D.H. Lawrence (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 136.

23. Birkin's accusations, of course, are ironic insofar as his behaviour, too, manifests destructive will. In "Class-Room", while accusing Hermione of her "own fixed will, your immortal understanding, your own tight conscious world...," Birkin himself is not completely free from these faults. In fact, Lawrence indicts nearly everyone, at one time or another, in the destructive use of the will. Nevertheless, Hermione's will is obviously the place to begin, although keeping in mind the complexity of her problems in relation to other characters.

24. Women in Love, p. 46.

25. Women in Love, p. 48.

26. D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious/Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penquin, 1977), p. 248.

27. It is Hermione, ironically, who cracks Birkin's skull so that he can be spontaneous, not deliberate as had been before the incident with the lapis lazuli at Breadalby.

28. Women in Love, p. 131.

29. Ibid., p. 167.

30. Friedrich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1969), pp. 162-3.

31. R.J. Hollingdale, *Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), p. 222.

32. *Ibid.*

33. See Mark Schorer's comments in "*Women in Love* and Death" on the social existence and psychic existence of the characters.

34. *Women in Love*, p. 61.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 244-5.

37. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, pp. 134-5.

38. *Women in Love*, p. 251.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 256.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 256-7.

41. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, pp. 134-5.

42. *Women in Love*, p. 260.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 248-9.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 267.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 509.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 500.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

The Nietzschean Element in Women in Love

2. The Other Way: Dionysian Consciousness

"Was it really only an idea, or was it the interpretation of a profound yearning."

- from Women in Love

Lawrence posits as an alternative to the "will to nothingness", as we have now come to understand Lawrence's Wille zur Macht, Birkin's volonté de pouvoir - "will to ability". This "will to ability", I have argued, is what Nietzsche really means by his Wille zur Macht: the 'spontaneous will' necessary for the development of the Dionysian consciousness, the transcendence of the nihilism resulting from the break between the senses and the outspoken mind. Birkin, in that moment of clarification in "Moony", realizes the way out of dissolution:

> There was another way, the way of freedom. There was the paradisal entry into pure, single being, the individual soul taking precedence over love and desire for union, stronger than any pangs of emotion, a lovely state of free proud singleness, which accepted the obligation of the permanent connection with others, and with others, submit to the yoke and leash of love, but never forfeits its own proud individual singleness, even while it loves and yields. (p. 287)

It is the "will to ability" that will bring this condition into existence: a dynamic dualistic condition of self and other, freedom and imprisonment, self-centeredness and love. This way of freedom develops out of the destruction of the "will to nothingness", since the other way is only possible when the

"will to nothingness" is no longer the impulse directing life. The situation is clear: only out of this dissolution can the creative individual arise. But, both Nietzsche and Lawrence argue that only an elite will break free into creation, because only a minority possess this "will to ability" which will replace the destroyed "will to nothingness". This is a serious limitation (one which for most people appears to verge on fascism, or at least on the Greek belief of a small aristocracy ruling over the plebian hordes) which deserves some attention.

In the fiction and other writings of his middle period, about 1915-1925, Lawrence establishes the polarity of the damned (the herd) and the elect (the elite) in very much the same manner that Nietzsche does - to wit, the herd versus the individual. In the world of Women in Love, it is clear that this social demarcation exists: "Humanity is a huge aggregate lie," says Birkin. It cannot travel beyond the "will to nothingness", and therefore tries to coerce all life into dissolution. "Humanity never gets beyond the caterpillar state," Birkin continues, "it rots in the chrysalis, it never will have wings. It is anti-creation, like monkeys and baboons."[1] The misanthropy in Women in Love complements Nietzsche's view of mankind; one only needs to recall Nietzsche's remark concerning the Ubermensch in Zarathustra to see a similar comparison and to hear a similar misanthropic tone:

> "I teach you the overman. Man is something that shall be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?

> "All beings so far have created something beyond themselves; and do you want to be the ebb of this great flood and even go back to the beasts rather than overcome man? What is the ape to man? A laughing stock or a painful embarassment. And man shall be just that for the overman: a laughing stock or a painful embarassment. You have made your way from worm to man, and much in you is still worm. Once you were apes, and even now, too, man is more ape than any ape.[2]

Lawrence's misanthropy is marked in part by what he culled from Nietzsche; however, another important factor for this attitude is Lawrence's bitterness about the war. Lawrence saw in the war humanity fighting to retain what is past, and in doing so opposing life. "I would say," Lawrence writes to Catherine Carswell, "to my Cornishmen, ...'Don't let your nation be a symbol of your manhood' - because a symbol is something static, petrified, turning towards what has been, and crystallised against that which shall be."[3] To Lady Cynthia Asquith, Lawrence indubitably condemns the humanity engaged in this anti-creation activity: "We want a clean sweep, and a new start, and we will have it. Wait only a little longer. Fusty, fuzzy peace-cranks and lovers of humanity are the devil. We must get on a new track altogether. Damn Humanity, let me have a bit of inhuman, or non-human truth, that our fuzzy human emotions can't alter."[4] Lawrence's bitterness about the war, as well as his awareness of Nietzsche's claim of the anti-creativeness of the masses, further substantiates his belief and hope in the individual. Therefore, Nietzsche's and Lawrence's belief in the special individual who can overcome dissolution is not a programme for the salvation of

mankind, but only for the fortunate few. With this in mind, the destruction of the "will to nothingness" so that the true creative self can emerge can be entertained.

"Moony" stands as the central chapter in realizing the possibility of a return to the creative self. As Colin Clarke writes in River of Dissolution: "To be separate and yet not coldly isolated, to be connected with another or others and yet retain one's singleness, to know specious individuality from true; these are the problems with which the chapter is centrally concerned."[5] In order to arrive at this way of freedom the ignominious will must be destroyed; it must succumb to the universal death force so that creation can occur. I believe that Lawrence is here giving to Nietzsche's most profound thoughts an artistic rendition, not only of the "will to nothingness" but also of the genuine operation of the Wille zur Macht. To demonstrate this, this complex chapter must be unravelled.

Ursula, who "felt as if everything were lapsing out" after Birkin had left for his convalescence in southern France, is at the brink of nihilism; for her the entire world is "lapsing into a grey wish-wash of nothingness" in which "she had no contact and no connection anywhere."[6] With these thoughts Ursula goes on a nocturnal walk to Willey Pond where she is plagued by a dogging presence - it is the moon which seems "so mysterious with its white and deathly smile."[7] Even in the darkness, wherein Ursula desires to hide herself, the "moon-brilliant hardness" pursues her, with the moonlight invasion repellent to

her. Therefore, she hides deeper in the darkness of the trees, at which point she sees Birkin and thinks: "Supposing he did something he would not wish to be seen doing, thinking he was quite private? But there, what did it matter? What did the small privacies matter? How could it matter, what he did? How can there be any secrets, we are all the same organisms? How can there be any secrecy, when everything is known to all of us?"[8] This is the shame felt in the Garden of Eden. Eve, as Lawrence has it (see, for example, Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p. 8), after sharing the apple of knowledge with Adam, becomes, as does Adam, ashamed - this, of course, is Lawrence's parable of the origin of self-consciousness. The mind, in effect, takes upon itself only what the body should know; thus the opposition of mind and body has its origin. Here, in "Moony", there is nothing to be ashamed of, which indicates two things: that Ursula is close to connecting with Birkin and that opposition is close to being replaced by conjunction - that a balance is imminent. Earlier, in fact, Ursula felt that she, herself, although at the brink of nihilism, was capable of seeking "a new union elsewhere." With this element of foreshadowing, Lawrence masterfully prepares the reader for the crux of the action. Nonetheless, this matter of the moonlight must be explained. It is quite obvious that Ursula for some apparently unknown reason does not like the moonlight; nonetheless, she does not want Birkin to continue stoning the moon's image, to destroy the moon's image. That Ursula is to be connected

with the moon's image seems clear, but the problem is with the significance of the moonlight itself.

This passage has been interpreted in many different ways; however, as Colin Clarke accurately points out, the usual interpretation is that Birkin is reacting against the tyranny of Cybele, the Magna Mater, which is in part quite true. But the significance of this scene, Clarke continues, truly "has much more to do with integration and disintegration, the need to smash the false integrity of the ego in order to make possible the true integrity of the blood."[9] This is manifest, after the stoning, when the pair of them discuss their relationship. In their ardent discussion, Ursula accuses Birkin of not loving her, not wanting to serve her, to which Birkin replies:

> No,.....I don't want to serve you, because there is nothing to serve. What you want me to serve, is nothing, mere nothing. It isn't even you, it is your mere female quality. And I wouldn't give a straw for your female ego - it's a rag doll. (p. 282)

It is this female ego, this rag doll, which the moon symbolizes; this rag doll is Ursula's spurious self, the self that must be destroyed. Consequently, the stoning of the moon's image is Birkin's attempt, metaphorically, to destroy the spurious self so that the true creative self can emerge.[10] However, since the moon's image returns to its original state, the true creative self is not symbolically portrayed; and this is seen by most commentators as Birkin's ultimate defeat. This criticism is simply inaccurate, for Lawrence's descriptive art at this moment clearly establishes that, although the fragmented moon's image

returns to its whole state, it is still different from its original state:

> Gradually the fragments caught together re-united, heaving, rocking, dancing, falling back as in panic, but working their way home again persistently, making a semblance of fleeing away when they had advanced, but always flickering nearer, a little closer to the mark, the cluster growing mysteriously larger and brighter, as gleam after gleam fell in with the whole, until a ragged rose, a distorted, frayed moon was shaking upon the waters again, re-asserted, renewed, trying to recover from its convulsions, to get over the dis-figurement and the agitation, to be whole and composed, at peace. (pp. 279-80)

Out of the destruction of Birkin's stoning arises not the moon's image in its original state but a "ragged rose" trying to re-integrate itself. This description of the moon's image is extremely significant. If we recall "Water-Party", Birkin informs Ursula that opposed to lilies, the fleurs du mal - the flowers of the river of dissolution - are "roses, warm and flamy"; to which Ursula emphatically replies that "I think I am a rose of happiness." As we have seen from Lawrence's "Prologue to Sons and Lovers" and Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy, the rose is the image of dynamic unity. Thus, in "Moony", Lawrence's art does emphasize the development of creation out of dissolution and, therefore, what is at work is the creative self emerging from the dissolution of the old condition.

The dissolution of the old condition signifies the death of the ego; but, for this to happen, the will must be smashed if the creative self is to break free:

> "No," he (Birkin) said, outspoken with anger. "I want you to drop your assertive will, your frightened self-

> insistence, that is what I want. I want you to trust yourself so implicitly, that you can let yourself go." (p. 283)

Once the will is broken the false ego also crumbles, since it is the will which keeps the false ego intact; and the upshot is, as Birkin tells Hermione in "Class-Room", 'blood-consciousness':

> "It is fulfilment - the great dark knowledge you can't have in your head - the dark involuntary being. It is death to oneself - but it is the coming into being of another."
> "But how? How can you have knowledge not in your head?" she asked, quite unable to interpret his phrases.
> "In the blood," he answered; "when the mind and the known world is drowned in darkness - everything must go - there must be the deluge. Then you find yourself a palpable body of darkness, a demon - " (pp. 46-7)

But to reiterate what has been stated in an earlier chapter, 'blood-consciousness' is not just reckless abandon - a debauch of the mind; for Birkin tells Ursula quite emphatically that it is different from that:

> "I don't mean let yourself go in the Dionysic ecstatic way," he said. "I know you can do that. But I hate ecstasy, Dionysic ecstasy or any other. It's like going round in a squirrel cage. I want you not to care about yourself, just to be there and not to care about yourself, not to insist - be glad and sure and indifferent." (p. 283)

Lawrence is opposed to the Dionysian state, let us say, that exists in Euripides' The Bacchae - thé Dionysus of an antagonistic dualism rather than of a creative dualism, of destruction rather than creation. In fact, it should be recalled that Gerald, who is one of the major figures in Women in Love representing this antagonistic dualism, reminds Ursula of Dionysus, "because his hair was really yellow, his figure so full and laughing."[11]

This Dionysus is the Dionysus of Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy, the figure of reckless, chaotic abandon, which strikes back because it has been repressed by the Apollonian impulse. 'Blood-consciousness', on the other hand, is the condition in which the dualism is dynamically balanced; this condition is finally what the term Dionysian comes to mean to Nietzsche. However, neither Birkin nor Ursula are ready for immersion into 'blood-consciousness' because they are trying, especially Birkin, to will this consciousness into existence. Ursula clearly castigates Birkin for this insisting - for his Salvator Mundi touch - to which Birkin rejoins, critically self-conscious: "While ever either of us insists to the other, we are all wrong."[12] Insofar as 'blood-consciousness' is possible, the central issue at this juncture is 'How can it come to be?'

Birkin postulates that there are two ways to attain 'blood-consciousness', and they are in fact interdependent: there is the perfect relation between a man and a woman, and the perfect relation between two men. It is through such relationships that the "will to ability" comes to be; the relationship itself breaks down the "will to nothingness" and replaces it with the "will to ability" - with the true will of the spontaneous self. First, let us consider this perfect relation between two men. In "Man to Man", Birkin realizes that there is another problem just as significant as the problem of "ultimate marriage" between a man and a woman: "Suddenly he saw himself confronted with another problem - the problem of love and eternal conjunction between

two men. Of course this was necessary - it had been a necessity inside himself all his life - to love a man purely and fully. Of course he had been loving Gerald all along, and all along denying it." (One need only recall the "Prologue to Women in Love"[13] to know that this is true; indeed this self-suppressed work is probably what Lawrence is alluding to. From the "Prologue", although at times Birkin desires to suppress his desire for men, "this secret of his passionate and sudden, spasmodic affinity for men" obviously verges on the homoerotic; and Lawrence's suppression of the "Prologue" clearly indicates the irresolute nature of his own feelings on homosexuality. It is fair to argue that because Lawrence could not come to terms with his own homosexual tendencies, Birkin's relationship with Gerald is from the beginning doomed.).* In "Man to Man" Birkin evades a real consummation for a symbolic one: he wants a Blutbruderschaft with Gerald: "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."[14] But Gerald (as J.M. Murry had replied to Lawrence himself when Lawrence had asked him to perform a Blutbruderschaft) does not understand what Birkin is driving at, does not understand this "impersonal union that leaves one free."

*It should also be noted that in the Prologue (Phoenix II, p. 94) Lawrence has Birkin, as a youth of twenty-one, "holding forth against Nietzsche." Almost from the time of the conception of Women in Love, Lawrence finds himself in opposition to Nietzsche's ideas.

Even though Birkin realizes that Gerald is "limited to one form of existence, one knowledge, one activity, a sort of fatal halfness," both come very close to 'blood-consciousness' in "Gladiatorial". They wrestle, and from the intertwining movements of their bodies "the earth seemed to tilt and sway, and complete darkness was coming over his (Birkin's) mind." His mind is inundated by the "plunging, unconscious stroke(s) of blood." Both are very close to 'blood-consciousness', but this Blutbruderschaft ultimately falls short. The reason for this is that the men fail to consummate their relationship physically (as Birkin and Ursula do after they too are on the brink of 'blood-consciousness'). The failure, then, is as much Birkin's fault, his repression of his homoerotic tendencies prevents the perfection of their relationship, as it is Gerald's. Though Lawrence tries to place the failure for this relationship squarely on Gerald's shoulders (because of his "fatal halfness"), the complex nature of Lawrence's own attitude towards homosexuality bears heavily, and somewhat negatively, on this depiction. It may be a clear case of the artist putting "his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection",[15] which is, as Lawrence himself believed, a serious error.

Lawrence's thoughts on male friendship in Women in Love may be connected with Nietzsche. Lawrence's hankering after "an eternal union with a man" has Nietzschean strains which Knud Merrild discusses in his With D.H. Lawrence in New Mexico. Lawrence is recorded as saying the following about male friendship:

> All my life I have wanted friendship with a man - real friendship, in my sense of what I mean by the word. What is this sense? Do I want friendliness? I should like to see anybody being 'friendly' with me. Intellectual equals? I see your joke. Not something homosexual, surely? Indeed you have misunderstood me - besides this term is so embedded in its own period. I do not belong to a world where that word has meaning. Comradeship perhaps? No, not that - too much love about it, no not even in the Calamus sense, not comradeship - not manly love. Then what Nietzsche describes - the friend in whom the world standeth complete, a capsule of the good - the creating friend, who hath always a complete world to bestow? Well, in a way. That means in my words, choose as your friend that man who has centre.[16]

Lawrence is here referring to "On love of thy Neighbour" in <u>Thus Spake Zarathustra</u>, a work that is replete with such remarks about true friendship; however, there is also a section from <u>The Gay Science</u> entitled "star-friendship" which, although it is often cited as an illustration of Nietzsche's feeling for Wagner, I believe has a significant bearing on the perfect relations that Birkin desires. Nietzsche writes:

> There is probably a tremendous but invisible orbit in which our very different ways and goals may be included as small parts of this path; let us rise up to this thought. But our life is too short and our power of vision too small for us to be more than friends in the sense of this sublime possibility. - Let us then believe in our star friendship even if we should be compelled to be enemies.[17]

To be sure, Birkin desires this "star-friendship" with Gerald, but it is more clearly examined and expressed in Birkin's relationship with Ursula. In "Mino" Birkin tells Ursula that he does not have love to offer her but something beyond love, "something much more impersonal and harder - and rarer." On being further pressed by Ursula to make sense out of what he is saying, Birkin declares: "It is true what I say; there is a beyond, in you, in me, which is further than love, beyond the scope, as stars are beyond the

scope of vision, some of them." And finally: "What I want is a strange conjunction with you," he said quietly; "-not meeting and mingling; - you are quite right; but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings; - as the stars balance each other."[18] (This, of course, is followed by the incident concerning Mino and the _volonté de pouvoir_; thus this "will to ability" is to be indissolubly connected with star-friendship.) It is apparent, however, that Birkin is describing the perfect relationship in terms complementary to Nietzsche's discussion of star-friendship; true individuality is sustained through this dynamic conjunction with another - through star equilibrium. And it is through this bond between people, with the immediate bond being between a man and a woman, that Dionysian consciousness can be attained.

From this perspective of ultimate marriage between a man and a woman, Birkin criticizes domestic marriage which he labels worse than _égoïsme à deux_: "....marriage in the old sense seems to me repulsive. _Égoïsme à deux_ is nothing to it. It is a sort of a tacit hunting in couples: the world all in couples, each couple in its own little house, watching its own little interests, and stewing in its own little privacy - it is the most repulsive thing on earth."[19] In a manner of speaking, this concern with ultimate marriage and domestic marriage is a central theme of the novel; the novel opens with Ursula and Gudrun discussing domestic marriage, and it closes with Ursula and Birkin discussing the dynamics of marriage and its various forms. Nevertheless, as we have observed on numerous occasions, Nietzsche not only has something to say on such matters, but what he says and how it is

said parallels Birkin's view. In "On Child and Marriage" from Zarathustra Nietzsche comments:

> Marriage: thus I name the will of the two to create the one that is more than those who created it. Reverence for each other, as for those willing with such a will, is what I name marriage. But that which the all-too-many, the superfluous, call marriage - alas, what shall I name that? Alas, this poverty of the soul in pair! Marriage they call this; and they say that their marriages are made in heaven. Well, I do not like it, this heaven of the superfluous.[20]

Lawrence's "tacit hunting in couples" complements Nietzsche's "wretched contentment in pairs"; such is their vitriolic rancour for domestic marriage. For Nietzsche the significance of marriage as opposed to domestic marriage is that it produces the one that is more than the pair - the Superman. Lawrence too argues that ultimate marriage, marriage as a dynamic conjunction, will give rise to the Superman; however, not in the case of Ubermenschlich progeny, but that the dynamic relation itself will give rise to the Dionysian consciousness for the two individuals in conjunction.

This is an important difference in the thought of these two men, since both men see sexuality playing a different role in its relation to Dionysian consciousness. For Nietzsche the Superman is a solitary figure, not Zarathustra but like him, who through his own isolation and despair brings about his Dionysian condition. Sexuality, therefore, has a limited role: it is only viewed in its procreative aspect. Lawrence, on the other hand, believes that the Dionysian condition will develop through a relationship with others, primarily that between a man and a woman, which is established and reinforced by their sexuality. To Lawrence sexuality is crucially important, and its scope is

far greater than mere procreation.

The perfect relation, then, can exist (at least in Birkin's view) between two men as well as between a man and a woman. Birkin tells Gerald that you have "got to get rid of the exclusiveness of married love" so that you can "admit the unadmitted love of man for man." Although Birkin believes that the immediate bond between people is the bond between a man and a woman, he also believes that this bond between men is just as important. In fact, this issue is extremely complex; it is the interconnection of these two bonds that "makes for greater freedom for everybody, a greater power of individuality both in man and woman." Consequently, Birkin's and Gerald's failure to establish this bond has significant ramifications on Birkin's and Ursula's relationship.

Although we have surmised that the failure of this bond between the two men is necessitated by Lawrence's refusal to subject himself and his art to the homosexuality he feels, Gerald is accused of the failure because of his refusal to accept Birkin's offer; Gerald flatly refuses to accept ultimate marriage (recall Gerald's and Gudrun's mocking of Birkin's notion of ultimate marriage in "Threshold"), instead he is willing to condemn himself to domestic marriage:

> Marriage was not the committing of himself into a relationship with Gudrun. It was a committing of himself in acceptance of the established world, he would accept the established order, in which he did not livingly believe, and then he would retreat to the underworld for his life.
> The other way was to accept Rupert's offer of love, to enter into the bond of pure trust and love with the other man, and then subsequently with the woman. If he pledged himself with the man he would later be able to pledge himself with the woman; not merely in legal marriage, but in

absolute mystic marriage. (p. 398)

Thus Gerald fails because he refuses to acknowledge the dynamic realm - this star-friendship; and as a result, he is left to explore his underworld - his "will to nothingness". But the effects of Gerald's failure are not limited just to himself: because of it Gudrun will fail, since only Gerald can bring her into the true connection; and also, the bond between Birkin and Ursula is not completely successful due to Birkin's desire for more than just the relation with a woman: "Having you, I can live all my life without anybody else, any other sheer intimacy. But to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too: another kind of love...." Birkin, here as elsewhere (one should think of Lawrence himself), rejects the cloistering effect of _égoïsme à deux_, and to make sure that their (his and Ursula's) relationship does not succumb to this he desires this conjunction with a man. (Whether Ursula should want an ultimate conjunction with a woman is never discussed, although there are her lesbian activities with Miss Inger in _The Rainbow_; what can be made of this omission I leave for further speculation.) Above all, what Birkin finally wants (and of course Lawrence), and what he is unable to find, is a colony of people who have gone through what they have - a colony where people exist without the "fribbling intervention of mind", in the realm of Dionysian consciousness:

> "Still," he said, "I should like to go with you - nowhere. It would be rather wandering just to nowhere. That's the place to get to - nowhere. One wants to wander away from the world's somewheres, into our own nowhere."
>
> Still she meditated.
>
> "You see, my love," she said, "I'm so afraid that while we are only people, we've got to take the world that's

> given - because there isn't any other."
> "Yes there is," he said. "There's somewhere where we can be free - somewhere where one needn't wear much clothes - none even - where one meets a few people who have gone through enough, and can take things for granted - where you be yourself, without bothering. There is somewhere - there are one or two people - "
> "But where?" she sighed.
> "Somewhere - anywhere. Let's wander off. That's the thing to do - let's wander off."
> "Yes," she said, thrilled at the thought of travel. But to her it was only travel.
> "To be free," he said. "To be free, in a free place, with a few other people!"
> "Yes," she said wistfully. Those "few other people" depressed her.
> "It isn't really a locality, though," he said. "It's a perfected relation between you and me, and others - the perfect relation - so that we are free together." (pp. 355-6)

In this conversation, Birkin's hankering for this relation with others should come as no surprise. Earlier, in "Breadalby", Birkin tells Hermione that a new state must be established not on equality but on the difference of one star to another: "In the spirit, I am as separate as one star is from another, as different in quality and quantity. Establish a state on that. One man isn't any better than another, not because they are equal, but because they are intrinsically <u>other</u>, that there is no term of comparison."[21] This is the condition of the 'nowhere' Birkin desires. Lawrence's concern to establish a state not on equality but on otherness may be traced to Nietzsche; for example, Nietzsche's <u>Twilight of the Idols</u>: "'Equality', a certain actual rendering similar of which the theory of 'equal rights' is only the expression, belongs essentially to decline: the chasm between man and man, class and class, the multiplicity of types, the will to be oneself, to stand out - that which I call <u>pathos of distance</u>

- characterizes every strong age."[22] Of course, Nietzsche's notorious appeal is based upon his polemics written against such things as equality, Christianity, and democracy. Ursula on the contrary, recall that this dialogue between her and Birkin occurs after she has become aware of "a source deeper than the phallic source", still wants the egoisme a deux - "those 'few other people' depressed her"; indeed, the art here makes it clear that Ursula's weakness can only be satisfactorily prevented by this perfect relation with others. Perhaps it isn't really a geographic locality as Birkin says (although Lawrence spent most of his later years in travel trying to find such a place), it is Lawrence's Rananim nevertheless.

Much has been said about the apparent nonsense of the Dionysian experience in Women in Love: how the art transcends the bounds of plausibility to the ridiculous, the upshot being that the depiction of the Dionysian experience lacks any solid, vital connection with the given reality of enacted life in the novel. Now, after realizing the Nietzschean strains in this novel, which clearly help to establish the Dionysian reality, these maligned passages may be able to stand free as Lawrence intended:

> "Where are we?" she whispered.
> "In Sherwood Forest."
> It was evident he knew the place. He drove softly, watching. Then they came to a green road between the trees. They turned consciously round, and were advancing between the oaks of the forest, down a green lane. The green lane widened into a little circle of grass, where there was a small trickle of water at the bottom of the sloping bank. The car stopped.

> "We will stay here," he said, "and put out the lights."
> He extinguished the lamps at once, and it was pure night, with shadows of trees like realities of other, nightly being. He threw a rug on to the bracken, and they sat in stillness and mindless silence. There were faint sounds from the wood, but no disturbance, no possible disturbance, the world was under a strange ban, a new mystery had supervened. They threw off their clothes, and he gathered her to him, and found her, found the pure lambent reality of her forever invisible flesh. Quenched, inhuman, his fingers upon her unrevealed nudity were the fingers of silence upon silence, the body of mysterious night upon the body of mysterious night, the night masculine and feminine, never to be seen with the eye, or known with the mind, only known as a palpable revelation of mystic otherness.
> She had her desire of him, she touched, she received the maximum of unspeakable communication in touch, dark, subtle, positively silent, a magnificent gift and give again, a perfect acceptance and yielding, a mystery, the reality of that which can never be known, mystic, sensual reality that can never be transmuted into mind content, but remains outside, living body of darkness and silence and subtlety, the mystic body of reality. She had her desire fulfilled, he had his desire fulfilled. For she was to him what he was to her, the immemorial magnificence of mystic, palpable, real otherness.
> They slept the chilly night through under the hood of the car, a night of unbroken sleep. It was already high day when he awoke. They looked at each other and laughed, then looked away, filled with darkness and secrecy. Then they kissed and remembered the magnificence of the night. It was so magnificent, such an inheritance of a universe of dark reality, that they were afraid to seem to remember. They hid away the remembrance and the knowledge. (pp. 360-1)

Whether one agrees with Lawrence and Nietzsche, whether one believes in Dionysian consciousness, it has surely become evident by now that Women in Love is in part a magnificent continuation of Nietzsche's conceptual world.

Notes

1. Women in Love, p. 143.

2. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Portable Nietzsche, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 124.

3. The Collected Letters, p. 466.

4. Ibid., p. 491.

5. Colin Clarke, River of Dissolution: D.H. Lawrence and English Romanticism (London: Routledge & Krgan Paul, 1969), p. 101.

6. Women in Love, p. 275.

7. Ibid., p. 276.

8. Ibid., p. 277.

9. River of Dissolution, p. 101.

10. Recall that the name of Gerald's sister who drowned in Willey Water is Diana - the Roman name for the moon-goddess. Lawrence's interest in the moon is not just isolated in Women in Love. Elsewhere, in Apocalypse, for example, Lawrence argues that we are out of touch with the moon and the sun, out of sync with the Cosmos in effect. And we have been out of touch with the Cosmos "with the coming of Socrates and 'the Spirit'," which we now know as the historical moment for the death of the creative self and the birth of the antagonistic dualism. Thus we have lost the moon "who is the mistress and mother of our watery bodies, the pale body of our nervous consciousness and moist flesh" ...and "who could soothe us and heal us like a great Artemis between her arms." (Note the name Artemis, which is the Greek equivalent to the Roman Diana.) But this is not the moon Birkin is striking against.. Birkin is attacking the vindictive aspect of the moon which fulminates when we ignore our "eternal vital correspondence" with the Cosmos: "But we have lost her, in our stupidity we ignore her, and angry she stares down on us and whips us with nervous whips. (Recall Hermione's nervous debility.) Oh, beware the angry Artemis of the night heavens, beware of the spite of Cybele, beware of the vindictiveness of the horned Astarte." (From Penguin edition, 1974, pp. 29-30). Thus Lawrence wants a return to the caressive character of the moon: in other words, he wants the collapse of the dualism which pits man against the Cosmos and a return to the condition of living relatedness. Of course, Lawrence's examination of this whole process in Women in Love is much more complex and detailed than this.

11. Women in Love, p. 113.

12. Women in Love, p. 283.

13. D.H. Lawrence, 'Prologue' to Women in Love, Phoenix II, eds. Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), pp. 92-108.

14. Women in Love, p. 232. A possible source for Lawrence's interest in the Blutbruderschaft, other than Frieda, is Wagner, especially in Gotterdammerung, when Siegried and Gunter make a blood pact. Ursula, who had thought Gerald like Dionysus, remarks to Gudrun when he is swimming (in "Diver") that he is "like a Nibelung," which certainly brings Wagner's Ring to mind. For further Wagnerian influences see F.R. Leavis's D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, p. 176.

15. D.H. Lawrence, "Morality and the Novel", Phoenix, ed. Edward McDonald (New York: The Viking Press, 1936), p. 528.

16. Knud Merrild, With D.H. Lawrence in New Mexico (New York: Barnes and Nobles, Inc., 1965), pp. 91-2.

17. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 226.

18. Women in Love, p. 164.

19. Ibid., p. 397.

20. The Portable Nietzsche, p. 182.

21. Women in Love, pp. 115-6.

22. Friedrich Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1972), p. 91.

Afterword

Before this study can be closed, I think it necessary to avoid the confusion which exists for many critics concerning the relationship of Lawrence's 'pollyanalytics' and his fiction. I do not want to misrepresent Lawrence's fiction, especially Women in Love, by saying that it is nothing more than the working out of his 'pollyanalytics'; but neither do I want this stance to be misconstrued as arguing that Lawrence's 'pollyanalytics' are insignificant in relation to the fiction. Although Lawrence writes unequivocally in the 'Foreword' to Fantasia of the Unconscious that his 'pollyanalytics' are "deduced from the novels and the poems, not the reverse," I firmly believe, as Charles L. Ross writes in his short essay "Art and Metaphysic in D.H. Lawrence's Novels", that the most honest presentation of Lawrence's method is that "the fiction and didactic essays were complementary activities furthering the exploratory process."[1] But what is the significance of this in terms of influence? Lawrence, with his characteristic knack for considering such questions in advance, hints at this in the 'Foreword':

> art is utterly dependent on philosophy: or if you prefer it, on a metaphysic. The metaphysic or philosophy may not be anywhere very accurately stated and be quite unconscious in the artist, yet it is a metaphysic that governs men at the time, and is by all men more or less comprehended, and lived. Men live and see according to some gradually developing and gradually withering vision. This vision exists also as a dynamic idea or metaphysic - exists first as such. Then it is unfolded into life and art.

Now it is to this "dynamic idea or metaphysic" that a study of

influence must turn. I attempted to disclose that metaphysic - which exists prior to the art (and consequently the didactic essays) and which is really the element of influence operating on the artist - by going first to the didactic essays which in certain ways made it easier to trace the Nietzschean influence, or at least to reveal the striking parallels between Lawrence's vision and Nietzsche's. This is I hope what I have achieved in 'A Description of the Main Themes', after I had established suitable probability in 'An Argument for Influence' that Lawrence (at least in the biographical and cultural context) was in fact influenced by Nietzsche. Finally, with 'The Nietzschean Element in Women in Love', I traced this guiding metaphysic to Nietzsche, namely, that in Women in Love Lawrence is imaginatively exploring a world conceptually similar to Nietzsche's.

Nevertheless, I must stress that I do not want to give the impression that Women in Love only tests Nietzschean propositions. This study acknowledges, I believe, the existence of Nietzschean strains in Lawrence's thinking and how this awareness helps to reveal the fictional rendition of those strains in the novel; but it is not intended that the 'pollyanalytics' and Women in Love should only be seen in terms of Nietzschean influence. As Mark Kinkead-Weekes said of the relation of The Crown to Women in Love: "(it) will provide a very useful interpretative basis; a full study of the manuscripts would show us the effort of imaginative exploration that went into the novel's growth; but only literary criticism of the finished work, proceeding from both of these,

could hope for adequate understanding."[2] To this I can only add that Nietzsche's influence (on both Lawrence's 'pollyanalytics' and his fiction) must also be taken into consideration.

But to reiterate: I believe that the only way in which to understand Lawrence is to use all that one has at hand, which includes not just the fiction but the 'pollyanalytics' too. Through this method and the awareness of Nietzsche's influence on Lawrence, we can get a better glimpse of the "dynamic idea" that governs him.

Notes: Afterword

1. Charles L. Ross, "Art and 'Metaphysic' in D.H. Lawrence's Novels," in D.H. Lawrence Review, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Summer, 1974), pp. 206-18.

2. Mark Kinkead-Weeks, "The Marble and The Statue: The Exploratory Imagination of D.H. Lawrence," in Imagined Worlds: Essays on some English Novels and Novelists in Honour of John Butt, eds. Maynard Mack and Ian Gregor (London: Methuen, 1968), pp. 371-418.

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