The Use of Mythology in

the Novels of D.H. Lawrence

by

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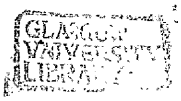

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Summary

Myth is so prevalent in D.H. Lawrence's novels that it constitutes a major subject-matter and an essential structural factor in his novels. Lawrence draws upon mythology for the plots, themes, symbols and imagery of his novels and uses myth as models for the form and shape of his novels. Lawrence was immersed in mythology and anthropology. He compared and interpreted many of the world's myths and adapted them to suit his own purposes. Myths from various cultures are woven into the fabric of his novels.

In this thesis I have attempted a study of the mythological background of Lawrence's novels. Various mythologies such as primitive, Babylonian, Egyptian, Indian, Greek, Etruscan, Roman, Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Norse, Druidic, Celtic, Aztec and Persian mythologies have been drawn upon to explain the meaning of the novels. A special use has been made of the anthropological, sociological and psychological study of myth to explain the action and the structure of the novels. Broadly speaking I have explained Lawrence's use of the myth of the Magna Mater in The White Peacock, The Trespasser, Sons and Lovers, Women in Love and Aaron's Rod. I have studied Lawrence's use of the Pan myth in The White Peacock,

The Plumed Serpent, and Lady Chatterley's Lover. I have interpreted Sons and Lovers as an Oedipal myth. I have pointed out Lawrence's use of the myth of Persephone and Pluto in his novels and interpreted The Lost Girl as a work deriving its theme and structure from this myth. The use of the myths of the Golden Age and the paradisal past in The Rainbow and Women in Love has been explained. Lawrence's utopian vision in Women in Love, The Boy in the Bush, and The Plumed Serpent has been explored. Lawrence's apocalyptic vision especially in Women in Love, The Plumed Serpent and Lady Chatterley's Lover has been examined. The use of the mythic hero in Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent has also been analysed. Lawrence's use of the myth of the tyrant god in Kangaroo, the wandering hero in The Boy in the Bush, the dying-resurrected god in The Plumed Serpent and various others, and Eros in Lady Chatterley's Lover have also been pointed out.

Myth, as used in Lawrence's novels is primarily functional. Lawrence uses myth and ritual for the structure of his novels. The formula of the mythic hero's adventure constitutes a structural factor in Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent. The pattern of initiation rituals is manipulated in Aaron's Rod and The Boy in the Bush and The Plumed Serpent. The ritual and myth of some fertility cults is used in Lady Chatterley's Lover.

Dionysic as well as death and rebirth rituals form an important part of the novels' patterns. Myth is also used to: evoke our deepest responses and to suggest meaning by employing some mythological symbols; to give intensity, seriousness and objectivity to the novels; to create an atmosphere of mystery and wonder; to revive the mythic vision in order to re-connect man with nature and to the roots of life; and to regulate human life by suggesting some ideals and models of behaviour.

Various mythological symbols and archetypes used in the novels have been pointed out. Stylistic devices connected with myth have also been discussed.

I have tried to trace the myths used in the novels to their sources and origins. I have also explained the influence which these sources exercised on Lawrence's thought and on the writing of the novels.

Introduction

This thesis uses myth criticism as its basic strategy of literary criticism. Although myth criticism is a well-established approach to works of literary art I shall attempt in this introduction to give a summary of the ways in which myth has been defined and to explain the way I understand and use it in this study.

Definitions of myth abound. For Edward Tylor and James Frazer myth is the primitive man's science. Following in the footsteps of Frazer many anthropologists, like Gilbert Murray, Jane Harrison, Jessie Weston and Lord Raglan interpreted myth as stories recited in connection with rituals. The ritualistic school held that art is based on ritual. "The thesis of this book," writes one of its exponents, "is that the traditional narrative, in all its forms, is based not upon historical facts on the one hand or imaginative fictions on the other, but upon dramatic ritual or ritual drama."[1]

Max Muller saw myth as a result of "a disease of language." Thus for him a myth about a hero defeating a monster was originally used to refer to dawn overcoming darkness. Andrew Lang exploded this idea and suggested

[1]Fitz R.S. Raglan, The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth and Drama (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1936), p.121.

that myth was a kind of science devised to explain nature. But later on E.O. James and others objected to Lang's view and put forward the theory that myth was explanatory of social customs, setting models and modes of behaviour to be followed. The euhemerists saw myth as stories about historical figures.

Psychologists opened a new way to myth. Freud viewed myths as dreams that originated in the infancy of the human race. For him myths are collective dreams and dreams are collective myths.[2] Thus myths, like dreams, are the expression of suppressed wishes: "It seems extremely probable that myths ..... are distorted vestiges of wish-fantasies - the age-long dreams of humanity."[3]

Like Freud, Jung saw myth as an expression of instinctual drives. But unlike Freud, Jung suggested that myths were not only the infantile dreams of humanity but also those of modern man. Myth takes its origin in the collective unconscious

> The collective unconscious ..... appears to consist of mythological motifs or primordial images, for which reason the myths of all nations are its real expo-

[2]Siegmund Freud, "Obsessive Action and Religious Practices," The Standard Edition, (ed.) James Strachey (London: The Houghton Press, 1955), Vol. IX, pp.126-127.

[3]Siegmund Freud, The Collected Papers, (trans.) Joan Riviere and James Strachey (London: the Hogarth Press, 1950), Vol. IV, p.182.

> nents. In fact, the whole of mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective unconscious.[4]

These "primordial images" are what Jung calls archetypes.

The above mentioned definitions concentrate on the origin of myth. Many other definitions concentrate on the relation of myth to art and literature. There are two main extremes: the first one claims that myth is literature. In 1948 Richard Chase argued that "myth is literature."[5] Although he repeated the same assertion in 1949, he later modified his opinion and said that myth is:

> a certain kind of literature, namely, that kind in which the characters and events are instinct with a super-human or quasi-transcendent force or brilliance, and have above them an aura of unusual and portentous significance.[6]

Northrop Frye holds that when myth is a story it becomes a kind of art: "As a type of story, myth is a form of

[4]C.G. Jung, The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, (ed.) Sir Herbert Read et al (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 195), Vol. 8, p.152.

[5]Richard Chase, "Myth as Literature," English Institute Essays (1948), p.10.

[6]Richard Chase, "Myth Revisited," Partisan Review, XVII (1950), p.888.

art, and belongs to the world of art.[7] Michael H. Jameson asserts that "for the Greeks not only was myth as a form of art, but the reverse was also true; literature, and to a great extent art as well, was myth."[8] In D.H. Lawrence's view art was originally equated with myth. Art in the modern world, therefore, is the "fallen" state of myth: "The primary or sensual mind begins with the huge, profound, passional generalities of myth and proceeds through legend and romance to pure, personal art."[9] In "Why the Novel Matters" Lawrence identifies the Bible with the novel: "The novel is the book of life. In this sense, the Bible is a great confused novel."[10] Joseph Campbell claims that "as an experience it [i.e. myth] is precisely art."[11] Like art,

[7]Northrop Frye, Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology (New York: Burlingam: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p.31.

[8]Michael H. Jameson, "Mythology of Ancient Greece," Mythologies of the Ancient World, (ed.) Samuel Noah Kranmer (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961) p.230.

[9]D.H. Lawrence, The Symbolic Meaning: The Uncollected Versions of Studies in Classic American Literature, (ed.) Armin Arnold (London: Centaur Press, 1962), p.137.

[10]D.H. Lawrence, "Why the Novel Matters," Phoenix, (ed.) Edward D. McDonald (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1961), p.535.

[11]Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology (London: Souvenir Press, 1973), p.179.

it releases the individual from his ego-linked obsessions.[12]

Various other scholars, on the other hand, have asserted that myth is not literature. "Literature is analogous to myth ..... but is not literature,"[13] writes Stanley Hyman. Lillian Feder considers it "a mistake to interpret all imaginative art as mythical or to define myth as literature."[14] Philip Rahv argues that "myth is a certain kind of fantasy to which literature has had frequent recourse for its materials and patterns; but in itself is not literature."[15]

The main tendency, however, is to regard myth as a form of narrative or story. Harold P. Simonson writes: "However else one describes myth, it can also be called a projection, a narrative or ritual that projects to the outside or conscious level of thought and action what lies inside."[16] Alan Watts defines myth as: "a complex

[12]Ibid., p.472.

[13]Stanley Hymon, "The Ritual View of Myth and the Mythic," Myth and Literature, (ed.) John B. Vickery (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p.57.

[14]Lillian Feder, Ancient Myth in Modern Poetry (Princeton: Princton University Press, 1971), p.28.

[15]Philip Rahv, "The Myth and the Powerhouse," Myth and Literature, (ed.) John B. Vickery, p.112.

[16]Harold P. Simonson, Strategies in Criticism (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1971), p.43.

of stories ..... which, for various reasons, human beings regard as demonstrations of the inner meaning of the universe and of human life."[17] For Meyer Reinhold, "The myth proper ..... is a narrative of an event believed to have taken place in the remote past (involving divinities and/or heroes), or a recurrent phenomenon."[18] Philip Wheelwright states that "a myth not only expresses the inner meaning of things; it does this, specially by telling a story."[19] Robert Heilman views myth as "a narrative embodiment of truth."[20] In Donald Straufer's opinion "a myth is a story which cannot with any success be reasonably accredited, but which is accepted without reasoning."[21] Isaac Asimov defines myth as "a particular kind of story; one which contains fanciful or supernatural incidents intended to explain nature or one which deals with the gods and demons that were invented by man."[22]

[17]Alan W. Watts, Myth and Ritual in Christianity (London & New York: Thames and Hudson, 1954), p.7.

[18]Meyer Reinhold, Past and Present (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p.30.

[19]Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), p.33.

[20]Robert B. Heilman, "The Lear World," English Institute Essays (1949), p.30.

[21]Donald Straufer, "The Modern Myth of the Modern Myth," English Institute Essays (1948), p.26.

[22]Isaac Asimov, Words from the Myths (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p.12.

For John Crowe Ransom, "a myth is a fable: it calmly alleges a miracle or impossible occurrence."[23] Northrop Frye defines myth as "primarily a certain type of story in which some of the chief characters are gods or other beings larger in power than humanity."[24] And finally, Lawrence viewed myth as "descriptive narrative using images."[25]

Apart from these definitions, myth has been defined to include modern ideologies such as Marxism and democracy and even science and the welfare state. Northrop Frye considers democracy as a myth culminating in Marxism.[26] And for Mircea Eliade, Marx's ideology is basically mythical.[27] In Donald Straufer's opinion "in the large terms of a conception commonly accepted and believed in without proof, we have today two great myths: the myth of science and the myth of the state."[28] John

[23]John Crowe Ransom, God without Thunder (Hamden: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965), p.65.

[24]Northrop Frye, Fables of Identity, p.31.

[25]D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.296.

[26]Northrop Frye, The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism (Bloomington

[27]Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, (trans.) Philip Mairet (London: Harvill Press, 1960), p.25.

[28]Donald Strauffer, p.30.

Crowe Ransom also alleges that even science contains an element of the mythic: "There is no meaning in a science that has no supernatural in it."[29] He also considers science as the new God of the modern world: "The new God is logos, the great Scientist."[30] For W.H. Auden "In Poetry all dogmas become myths."[31] In Richard Chase's view a myth can be not only a story but also an idea: "A story or idea understood, admired, or believed by a whole class or a whole society .... is a myth."[32] And in Lillian Feder's opinion "Myth is a form of expression which reveals a process of thought and feeling - man's awareness of and responses to the universe, his fellow men, and his separate being."[33]

Bearing all these definitions in mind one can easily agree with Haskel M. Block that "myth is one of the most muddled and abused concepts in our critical

[29]John Crowe Ransom, God Without Thunder, p.72.

[30]Ibid., p.206.

[31]W.H. Auden, "Yeats as an Example," The Kenyon Critics, (ed.) John Crowe Ransom (Washington: Kennikat Press, 1967), p.111.

[32]Richard Chase, "Myth as Literature," p.4.

[33]Lillian Feder, Ancient Myth in Modern Poetry, p.28.

vocabulary."[34] But despite the disagreement over the definition of myth there is no reason to deter us from using myth as a device to explain literature. The fact is that we do not need to wait until scholars agree on a unified definition of myth. Whether the origin of myth is ritual, history, or the unconscious does not matter very much to the literary critic. Even the variety of definitions does not harm literary criticism. The myth critic should view myth as a complex system of thought capable of various interpretations. I believe that none of the definitions I mentioned can by itself be a true definition of myth, and that the best definition of myth is the sum of all these definitions.

There is almost a general agreement that myth is the result of collective rather than private creation. Stanley Hyman observes: "No one ..... can invent myths or write folk literature."[35] And as Philip Wheelwright writes: "A man cannot create myths ..... myths are the expression of a community mind that has enjoyed long

[34]Haskel M. Block, "Cultural Anthropology and Contemporary Literary Criticism," Myth and Literature, (ed.) John B. Vickery, p.134.

[35]Stanley Edgar Hyman, "The Ritual View of Myth and the Mythic," Myth: A Symposium, (ed.) Thomas A.D. Sebeok (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1965), p.151.

natural growth."[36] Lawrence also recognized that myths cannot be created by one person:

> The images of myth are symbols. They don't 'mean something!' They stand for units of human feeling, human experience ..... It takes centuries to create a really significant symbol ..... No one can invent symbols.[37]

Psychologists have also demonstrated that myths stem from the collective unconscious.

Lawrence did not invent a mythology. But he was deeply concerned with the revival of the ancient mythic vision and what he conceived as a universal antediluvian religion. In his works Lawrence formulated what can be called a religious doctrine but it is by no means an independent, private religion. The truth is that Lawrence's doctrine was primarily the sum of various elements and ideas that he derived from other mythologies together with some of his own personal insights.

I shall attempt a summary of Lawrence's religious doctrine, since it has a bearing upon the discussion that will follow. The most important part of his doctrine is his animism. Lawrence saw things alive or he personified them as they were personified by the mythic view. He

[36]Philip Wheelwright, "Poetry, Myth and Reality," Language of Poetry, (ed.) Allen Tate (Priceton University Press, 1942), p.11.

[37]D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.299.

saw some kind of mystic relation between man and the cosmos and recognized the sacredness of creation as the mythological cultures did.

For Lawrence, behind nature was the impenetrable mystery which he approached with awe, fear and wonder. Thus for him the creative mystery is both fearful and attractive. God is eternal and unknowable but man's relation with Him is continually changing. Although Lawrence's vision was basically polytheistic he conceived a supreme God behind all creation. He recognized the basic unity of all mythologies and advocated a free worship of local gods. He believed that originally the world had one religion and hence his belief that "the great myths relate to one another."[38]

Lawrence was attracted to mythology. He was steeped in the Bible, and although he was brought up a Congregationalist he attended the meetings of the Primitive Methodists. But he renounced most of his traditional biblical teaching and preferred an independent creed. In Eliot's view, Lawrence was an example of the heretic,[39] and according to William Tiverton, he had striking

[38]D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (Melbourne, London, Toronto: William Heinemann Ltd., 1961), p.8.

[39]T.S. Eliot, After Strange Gods (New York: Harcourt and Company Inc., 1934), p.41.

affinities with the existentialists.[40]

Despite his rejection of orthodox religion Lawrence continued to be interested in religion and mythology. As Eliot said, Lawrence was a "restless seeker for myths."[41] He was particularly fascinated by the myths of creation, the myth of the lost continents, the flood myths, the annual cycle, the myths of the saviour-gods, the Golden Age, the Fall and the cycles of creation and many other myths. He believed that the best way for the salvation of modern man lay in the restoration of the mythological consciousness, a task to which he devoted himself and his art.

There are two main justifications for the writing of this thesis: first, the absence of a complete study of Lawrence's novels from the mythic view-point, and second, my belief in the importance of myth to literary art and to literary criticism. There is much truth in Mark Schorer's assertion that "great literature is impossible without a previous imaginative consent to a ruling mythology."[42]

[40]William Tiverton, D.H. Lawrence and Human Existence (London: Rockliff Publishing Company Ltd., p.1951), p.132.

[41]T.S. Eliot, After Strange Gods, p.48.

[42]Mark Schorer, "The Necessity of Myth, "Myth and Mythmaking, (ed.) Henry A. Murray (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), p.357.

The thesis of this work is that D.H. Lawrence is essentially a mythopoeic novelist and should be primarily studied as such. Myth criticism is essential in the case of a writer like D.H. Lawrence who rightly asserted, "Primarily I am a passionately religious man, and my novels must be written from the depth of my religious experience."[43] To him myths were a reality as they were to the poets and writers of antiquity. It is perhaps no exaggeration to claim that Lawrence's novels are "muddled" Bibles or private Testaments. Myth underlies their themes and structure.

A final word about the arrangement of the thesis. There are eleven chapters in all, each dealing mainly with one novel. The chapters maintain some continuity by following the chronological order of Lawrence's novels and by developing themes and subjects discussed in almost all the chapters with special attention to make the discussion a continuous whole, as much as possible. Taken as a whole, the thesis shows the development of Lawrence's use of mythology throughout his novels.

[43]D.H. Lawrence, Letter to Edward Garnet, 27 April 1914, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, (ed.) Harry T. Moore (London: Melbourne: Toronto: Heinemann, 1960), Vol. I, p.273.

Chapter One

The Use of Mythology in The White Peacock

In Lawrence's first novel The White Peacock, we see him using mythological themes and figures which he will use for more complex purposes and with greater subtlety in the novels to come.

The wood with the gamekeeper living in it suggests the ancient Arcadia and its inhabitant Pan. The location and the action of the novel have a mythological background - the wood is described realistically but it corresponds to the archetypal wood of myth and legend usually inhabited by the "King of the Wood"[1], with whom Annable can be equated.

In identifying Annable with Pan, Lawrence is enabled to express his conception of the Pan myth and its relation to the modern world as compared with its relation to the ancient world. The Pan in this novel is a fallen Pan. Annable is a fallen Pan. Annable is a fugitive figure terribly isolated in the wood. He renounces the social world in order to live closer to nature - but his existence is presented as a kind of banishment rather than retreat. Annable is a frustrated figure whose reaction to what he considers to be bad treatment is sheer hatred and primitive anger. As embodied by Annable, Pan has

[1] James George Frazer, The Golden Bough (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1963), p.163.

been reduced to a devilish figure.[2] In his essay on Pan[3] Lawrence claims that the conception of the devil was created by the early Christians. As a demonic figure, Annable is hated by the villagers (p.173) and his persecution by the local people is perhaps intended to show how much damage the modern world has done to the image of Pan. Annable's demonism, his single-mindedness, malevolence, spiritual sterility and brutality reflect the image of a fallen Pan. It is an image that lacks the vigour, the glory, the music, the charm, the power and fertility of the natural Pan of the ancient world. Annable is the ancient Pan without his music, nymphs, satyrs, dryads, springs, rivers, and maidens and without his animating power. That is what, in Lawrence's view, Pan amounts to in the modern world.

The Pan myth is closely connected with Lawrence's animistic vision. Annable's motto is "Be a good animal, true to your animal instinct" (p.173). Indeed Annable tries to live in harmony with nature and even calls his children by the names of animals and birds (p.157). Thus his philosophy and actions indicate some consanguiencity with the natural world. Despite this, his naturalism is incomplete because of his opposition to anything human or cultural (p.172). He is by no means presented

[2]D.H. Lawrence, The White Peacock (Penguin Books, 1968), pp. 79, 172. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

[3]D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, Introduction, p. 23.

as a character who carries complete authorial approval.

Annable's deficiencies in fact point out the need for the "possible other case". Lawrence is advocating the need for the restoration of the ancient Pan with his vital connection with the cosmos. The old Pan, as Lawrence conceives him later in his essay on Pan,[4] is a god who gives power to people and also receives power from them. The novel suggests the need for a natural Pan to replace the present fallen Pan - for men to establish a living relationship with their circumabient universe.

The descriptions of nature in the novel are by no means only "rhapsodies on Spring" as Lawrence claimed. Sometimes they seem to imply a regret for a lost religion of nature or an animistic view of the universe: "Snowdrops are sad and mysterious. We have lost their meaning. They do not belong to us, who ravish them" (p.153). They are also associated with an ancient but long lost religion, perhaps that of the Druids (p.154). Cyril is occasionally aware of the changing rhythms of nature and maintains some sort of animistic relation with the universe. Flowers are also used with the ritualistic significance of an animistic religion. Sometimes the characters decorate themselves with flowers in the manner of ancient Greek ritual (p.86). There are references to sacred flowers, plants and trees such as the anemones (p.87), the mistletoe (p.154), and

[4]D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.25.

the oak tree (p.153). Many of the descriptive passages of natural scenes, with their profusion of birds, animals, flowers, shrubs, plants and trees, suggest an Ovidian pastoral. Sometimes the natural world as presented in the novel is described in a too consciously "literary" manner, but even the consciously literary presentation of the characters in a landscape does not contradict the informing spirit, which is an animistic vision of man in relation to a living universe. What is dramatized in the novel is expressed explicitly in the essay on Pan: "Life consists in a live relatedness between man and his universe: sun, moon, stars, earth, trees, flowers, birds, animals, everything." [5]

The white peacock itself has mythic and symbolic connotations. The colour white draws its significance from the contrast between the two archetypal symbols of light and darkness. In his Study of Thomas Hardy Lawrence writes that "light is the constant symbol of Christ in the New Testament." [6] In the novel Annable and George represent the powers of darkness, Lettie and Leslie the qualities of light. The novel as a whole is concerned with any triumph of the powers of light over darkness. The powers of darkness are those of the senses and the passions; the powers of light are those of the spirit and intelligence. The Laurentian ideal is to preserve a balance between these

[5] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.31.

[6] Ibid., p.470.

two archetypal forces and the contrasting values they stand for.

The white peacock is a two-fold symbol representing the spirit, the intellect as well as the aloof, dominating deity. Lawrence often describes the gods of the modern man as white whereas the gods of the primitive man were dark. Lettie is represented as the incarnation of the white deity or the white goddess.

In his book The White Goddess Robert Graves suggests that the "White Goddess" was the chief female deity of ancient man and that she had been given various names such as Hera,[7] Demeter,[8] the moon goddess,[9] etc. He adds that the White Goddess "seems originally to have been the Danaan Barley-Goddess of Argos. Sir James Frazer regards her as either Demeter or her double, Persephone."[10]

Moreover, Robert Graves also theorises that in Europe the white goddess was the chief deity in the ancient times, since there were at first no male deities corresponding to her. Thus ancient man came to consider her as the master of his destiny. As a result of that the white goddess assumed a very prodigous power and was associated not only with creation but also with destruction:

[7]Robert Graves, The White Goddess (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), p.59.

[8]Ibid.,p.62 .

[9]Ibid.,p.64 .

[10]Ibid.,p.62 .

> The reason why the hairs stand on end, the skin crawls and a shiver runs down the spine when one writes or reads a true poem is that a true poem is necessarily an invocation of the White Goddess, or Muse, the Mother of All Living, the ancient power of fright and lust - the female spider or the queen-bee whose embrace is death.[11]

Graves tells us that in a myth in Ovid "Cardea was Alphito, the White Goddess who destroyed children after disguising herself in bird or beast form".[12] Grave's view of the immense powers that the white goddess used to have finds support in Joseph Campbell's theory:

> There can be no doubt that in the very earliest ages of human history the magical force and wonder of the female was no less a marvel than the universe itself; and this gave to woman a prodigous power, which it has been one of the chief concerns of the masculine part of the population to break, control and employ to its own ends.[13]

Indeed world mythologies portray the prodigous power of woman in the form of a chief mother-goddess and her obedient son-lover. Such is the story of Cybele and Attis, Astarte and Tammuz, Aphrodite and Dionysus, Venus and Adonis, Diana and Endymion, Isis and Osiris, etc.

Robert Graves points out some of the qualities of the white goddess:

[11] Robert Graves, The White Goddess, p.20.

[12] Ibid., p.63.

[13] Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology, Introduction, p. 315.

> The Goddess is a lovely, slender woman with a hooked nose, deathly pale face, lips red as rown-berries, startingly blue eyes and long fair hair; she will suddenly transform herself into sow, mare, bitch, vixen, she-ass, weasel, serpent, owl, she-wolf, tigress, mermaid or loathsome hag.[14]

I suggest that Lettie of The White Peacock can be equated with the white goddess of mythology. Lettie's white colour and her physical descriptions as a whole are similar to those mentioned above. Like the white goddess she can assume a shape different from her original form. Here she is presented as a white peacock. Indeed her association with a white peacock is significant. In mythology Hera, the chief goddess of the Greek pantheon was associated with the peacock which was sacred to her.[15] And in Hindu mythology Rudra is referred to as the White-complexioned goddess.[16] In mythology whiteness is usually the mark of sacredness and taboo. Whiteness is the colour of the sacred whale in Herman Melville's Moby Dick. To William Blake "Whiteness /is/ the archetypal color /sic/ of the heavenly tyrant;"[17] Lettie's pride and power are clearly shown in the scene where the peacock is pictured

[14]Robert Graves, The White Goddess, p.20.

[15]H.J. Rosen, A Handbook of Greek Mythology (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1928), p.176.

[16]Rig-Veda (trans.) H.H. Wilson (London: H. Allen & Co., 1850), Vol. II, p.291.

[17]Harold Bloom, Shelley's Mythmaking (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p.14.

desecrating the white statue of an angel in the churchyard,[18] and in her key role in the downfall of George, her first lover.

There is no doubt that in The White Peacock Lawrence is trying to embody his ideas in myth and archetypal symbols. The purpose for which the symbol of the white peacock is used is to point to the dominating power of woman and the destructive effects that might result from such a dominance. What Lawrence wants to say is that in our modern period woman is dominating man as she dominated him in some ancient periods. This discernable meaning is more clearly stated in Lawrence's Fantasia of the Unconscious: "In Certain periods such as the present, the majority of men concur in regarding woman as the source of life, the first term in creation: woman, the mother, the prime being."[19]

In The White Peacock Lawrence rejects woman's domination, her abstraction, her role as a Magna Mater and her desire to be worshipped - in short he rejects her role as a white goddess. Thus by the use of the white bird symbol Lawrence is rebelling against the idea of the ascendant deity. As a white peacock Lettie represents a deity in heaven or a dominant goddess on earth whose power and values

[18] The White Peacock, p.175.

[19] D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious & Introduction, p.95.

are repudiated and condemned by the author. Lettie wants to be adored as a goddess but Lawrence is satirical about her desire to rule with absolute and devastating authority in the name of a white goddess or a Magna Mater.

Ritualistic significance is integrated into the presentation of what might appear to be realistic scenes. Cyril and George are pictured ritualistically rubbing each other's body (p.257). Their ritualistic action is consummated by some kind of release and renewal (p.257). Thanks to that ritualistic rubbing George and Cyril achieve some kind of friendship they had never experienced before: "When he had rubbed me all warm, he let me go, and we looked at each other with eyes of still laughter, and our love was perfect for a moment, more perfect than any love I have since, either for man or woman". (p.250). This description of man-to-man relationship bears a great resemblance to that of the relation between David and Jonathan in the Old Testament:

> Jonathan my brother;
> dear and delightful you were to me;
> your love for me was wonderful,
> surpassing the love of women.[20]

Ritualistic dance also occurs in the novel. At the end of the dance that included George and Lettie we are told that George "looked big, erect, nerved with triumph, and she was exhilarated like a Bacchante" (p.72). This kind of dance

[20] The Old Testament, The New English Bible edition (Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press, 1970), 2 Samuel, 26-27.

and exhilaration is based on the ritualistic dances held in honour of the Greek god Dionyus. There is also some ritualistic decoration with flowers. Lettie, for example, plucks flowers as if it were a rite: "She leaned forward, her fingers wandering white among the shadowed grey spaces of leaves, plucking, as if it were a rite, flowers here and there (p.154). This action recalls the myth of Persephone plucking flowers before she was abducted by the King of the underworld.

As early as The White Peacock Lawrence was interested in the use of biblical images. In his thesis on the novels of D.H. Lawrence Grady J. Walker correctly writes:

> Even in Lawrence's first novel, The White Peacock, the Eden images are pervasive in the portrayal of a frustrated love affair between George Saxton and Lettie Beardsall. In fact two of the chapters are ostensibly named 'Dangling of the Apple', and 'The Fascination of the Forbidden Apple', both titles serving as 'framing' metaphors for the segment of action occurring in them.[21]

Indeed Lettie's temptation of George is pictured as the offering of the apple to him. "'Mother', he said, comically, as if jesting. She is offering me the apple like Eve" (p.114). But it is not only in terms of the apple in the story of Adam and Eve that the temptation is portrayed but also by an allusion to Paris's apple: "'Oh, Lum, his education!

[21] Grady J. Walker. The influence of the Bible on D.H. Lawrence as seen in His Novels. Ph. D. thesis, The University of Tulsa, 1972, p.88.

Paris's apple - Can't you see we've come to be chosen" (p.207).

Myth is also used allusively. There are references to the Narcissus myth (pp. 105, 244), and Cyril admiring George bathing in the river has a touch of the Greek Narcissus. There are references to Europa and Persephone, Juno, Venus and Minerva (p.206), Fauns and Bacchus (p.247), the Milky Way and the Madonna (p.316). Apart from the emphasis that the references to the Greek and Roman goddesses can add to the role of Lettie as a white goddess or a Magna Mater many of these mythical references as well as others are used more for decoration than for symbolic purposes and their effect on the mythological nature of the novel remains peripheral.

In The White Peacock Lawrence intermingles realistic and mythical plotting. The story of Annable is based on the Pan myth and the story of Lettie bears great resemblance to the myth of the mother goddess. Structurally the Pan myth forms an important part in the novel. Lawrence told Jessie Chambers that he wanted to keep Annable because "he makes a sort of balance".[22] Indeed the structure of the novel is based to a large extent on the contrast between the Pan myth and the archetypal symbol of the white peacock or the

[22] E.T. D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record, 2nd edition (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1965), p.117.

white goddess. In theory this contrast can make a structurally balanced novel. What is faulty in the structure of the novel is the premature death of Annable and so the end of an important factor on which the framework of the novel is hinged. The story of Annable has been interpreted as a desperate last minute attempt to save the novel,[23] as "effectively integrated"[24] and as an irrelevant story-within-a-story.[25] What happens is that the story which was designed to save the novel by preserving some sort of balance, as indeed it does for some time, is also its weak point.

Lawrence derived his knowledge of the Pan myth and the white goddess from his reading during the period from 1901-1906. In these years he made his acquaintance with Jessie Chambers and became a student-teacher at Nottingham University. During the period he was writing The White Peacock (1906-1910) Lawrence read books on anthropology and religion, especially during his stay in Croydon where he worked as a teacher.

Among the books and authors listed by Jessie Chambers as those that Lawrence read, the following might have had the

[23]Keith Sagar, The Art of D.H. Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p.13.

[24]George H. Ford, Double Measure: A Study of the Novels and Stories of D.H. Lawrence (New York: Chicago: San Francisco: Holt, Reinhart and Winston of Canada, 1965), p.51.

[25]Anthony Beal, D.H. Lawrence (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1964), p.9.

most important influence on Lawrence's thinking and the writing of The White Peacock: William Blake's Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience,[26] William James's Pragmatism,[27] Haegel's Riddle of the Universe,[28] Nietzsche,[29] Gilbert Murray's translation from Euripides such as The Trojan Women, Medea, Electra and The Bacchante,[30] Herbert Spenser,[31] and R.T. Campbell's The New Mythology.[32]

Although these books and authors as well as many others had their influence on Lawrence's religious experience and his knowledge and use of mythology it will be a difficult and pointless task to trace the myths used in this novel to their sources for they are conventional and cannot be traced to any particular source. Moreover in Lawrence's view myths survive in the instinctual rather than the rational and intellectual faculties and Lawrence rarely reproduced an idea as he found it.

[26] E.T. D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record, p.112

[27] Ibid., p.113.

[28] Ibid., p.112.

[29] Ibid., p. 120.

[30] Ibid, p.121.

[31] Ibid., p.113.

[32] Ibid., p.84.

Chapter Two

The Use of Mythology in The Trespasser

Lawrence's second novel The Trespasser shows his interest in Norse mythology. There is no doubt that Richard Wagner's music dramas, themselves based on themes and characters derived from the Scandinavian sagas and myths, furnish the subject and even the framework of The Trespasser.

Some critics have pointed out the influence of Wagner's Ring on Lawrence's novel. William York Tindall points out that the frame of The Trespasser comes from Wagner's Ring.[1] In a thesis on Lawrence's novels Billy James Pace discusses the elements of Wagner's music dramas in Lawrence's novels and particularly The Trespasser which he considers to be the most Wagnerian of all Lawrence's novels.[2]

The most outstanding influence of Wagner on Lawrence's novel can be seen in the obvious parallels of the relations of the characters in Wagner's dramas and in Lawrence's novel. The story of Siegmund and Helena is based to a large extent on the story of Siegmund and Sieglinde, Siegfried and Brunhilde,

[1]William York Tindall. Forces in Modern British Poetry 1885-1956 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1960), p.299.

[2]Billy James Pace, D.H. Lawrence's Use in His Novels of Germanic and Celtic Myth From the Music Dramas of Richard Wagner. Ph. D. thesis, University of Ar Kansas, 1973.

Tristan and Isolda. All these stories are in one way or other concerned with the archetypal conflict between love and matrimonial duties. In all of them tragedy comes as a result of the failure to reconcile between marriage and love.

In The Trespasser Siegmund is in love with Helena and is at the same time the husband of Beatrice. But [illegible] as in Norse mythology love is opposed to marriage. In both cases love is a mixture of joy and pain. The troubles of Siegmund the Volsung, Siegfried and Tristan result from their love. In the stories of these mythical heroes as well as in the story of Siegmund in The Trespasser love is depicted not only as an enobling passion but more significantly as an alienating factor. In Wagner's dramas Siegmund cannot settle in society and is out of harmony with it. In the same way Tristan rouses the animosity of his King, his friends and society by making a secret love relationship with his King's bride Isolda. Siegfried also antagonises many people as a result of his illicit love. Similarly in Lawrence's novel Siegmund is cut off from his social background and is kept apart from his fellows: "She had no idea how his life was wrenched from its roots!".[3]

In Norse mythology, as reflected in Wagner's dramas,

[3]D.H. Lawrence, The Trespasser (Penguin Books, 1967), p.24. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

the demand for revenge against the sinners comes from Wotan's wife Fricka, the guardian of marriage. When she knows of the elopement of Hunding's wife Sieglinde with her lover Siegmund she decides that the two lovers should be punished and she finally persuades Wotan, the chief god, that death should be their due punishment. In the novel Beatrice's role as a wife representing lawful marriage is similar to that of Fricka in Norse mythology who is the patroness of marriage and the household. Both are ruthless and inexorable when the breaking away from custom and established convention is the issue. Like Fricka, Beatrice is a nagging wife who tortures her husband by reprimanding him for his trespasses against the sanctity of marriage. When her husband returns from the Isle of Wight she teases him with her angry complaints: "You sit here sulking all day. What do you think I do? I have to see to the children, I have to work and slave, I go on from day to day. I tell you I'll stop, I tell you I'll do as I like ..."(p.168). Beatrice's main complaint comes from the fact that her husband has been on holiday for a few days leaving her and the children behind. Like his mythical counterpart Siegmund is condemned to death on the grounds of illicit love.

Although the story of The Trespasser has its most obvious parallels with stories and characters in Norse mythology it is not only with Norse mythology that the story of the novel offers some parallels. The world's mythologies almost

invariably contain a goddess whose task is to protect marriage and to punish those who trespass against its sacred laws. Such is Hera in the Greek pantheon and Juno in Roman mythology. And so the nagging of Beatrice and the punishment of the trespassing Siegmund are suggestive not only of Fricka and Norse mythology but of mythology as a whole.

In Wagner both Siegmund and Hunding die: Sieglinde also dies but is revived to give birth to Siegfried and dies soon after that. In Lawrence both Helena and Beatrice survive Siegmund. It is perhaps with reference to the myth of Siegmund and Sieglinde that Byrne teases Helena for keeping alive after her lover's death, contrary to Sieglinde who dies with her lover:

> 'You cannot say you are dead with Siegmund', he cried brutally .... 'You are not dead with Siegmund', he persisted, 'so you can't say you live with him. You may live with memory. But Siegmund is dead, and his memory is not he - himself'. He made a fierce gesture of impatience (p.10).

The story of Siegmund and Helena has parallels in the story of the mythical Siegfried and Brunhilde. In a way both are guilty of infidelity to a woman to whom they are supposed to be loyal. In Norse mythology, as reflected in Wagner, Siegfried vows love and loyalty to Brunhilde.[4] After drinking the potion prepared by Gutrune Siegfried falls

[4]Richard Wagner, The Dusk of the Gods (London: Schott & Co. n.d.), First Act, p.25.

in love with her and demands that she become his wife. Furthermore Siegfried and Gunther promise that Siegfried will bring Brunhilde as bride to Gunther who will give his sister Gudrun as a bride to Siegfried. In one sense both Siegfried and Siegmund McNair trespass against the sanctity of marriage and convention. The scenes of quarrel and disagreement between wife and a disloyal husband are paralleled in the novel and in Wagner's The Dusk of the Gods (p.153).

As a result of his disloyalty and sin Siegfried is killed by Hagen at the instigation of Brunhide. Similarly Siegmund dies as a result of his betrayal of Beatrice. In one way or other Beatrice and Brunhilde are good examples of the unmanageable wife; but neither Siegfried nor Siegmund succeeds in taming his "shrew".

The story of Siegmund and Helena also reminds us of the medieval legend of Tristan and Isolda, the subject of one of Wagner's dramas. In Wagner's Tristan and Isolda Tristan becomes the illicit lover of his uncle's bride Isolda. As a result of this unlawful liaison Tristan has to suffer remorse and finally dies from a mortal wound. Likewise Siegmund McNair feels guilty for his actions: "I am a family criminal. Beatrice might come round but the children's insolent judgment is too much. I have nowhere to go. Why did I come back?"(p.153). Both Tristan and Siegmund are trapped between two conflicting responsibilities, two

loyal ties, two desires which cannot be reconciled. Death, therefore, is not only a kind of punishment for their disloyalty but an inevitable result of their insoluble impasse. But although Tristan and Isolda, like Siegfried and Brunhilde, are united in death, Helena refrains from an eternal union with her lover in death.

Like Beatrice in Lawrence's novel King Mark in the Tristan legend is outraged at knowing about the secret love between his bride and Tristan. Beatrice and King Mark represent loyalty to marriage. King Mark, however, is less stringent than Beatrice for he is finally willing to give up Isolda to her lover.[5]

In the novel there are many allusions to Norse and Celtic mythology. After forgetting about his wife and children Siegmund feels he is living in a world of romance reminiscent of Tristan: "How could it be Sunday! It was no time; it was Romance, going back to Tristan" (p.20). This reference to Tristan is not merely decorative; rather it is functional for it immediately reminds us of the myth of Tristan and Isolda and thus gives us a clue as to what Siegmund's and Helena's love relation is really like. From the beginning Siegmund is doomed. The reference to timelessness

[5]Richard Wagner, Tristan and Isolda, (trans.) H. and F. Corder (London: Brussels: New York: Breitkope & Hartel, n.d.), Third Act, Scene IV, p.93.

reminds us of mythology and impresses upon us the notion that we are transported to a mythological world where time stops and a return to a primordial period is possible. Indeed this is exactly what Siegmund feels at one moment later on: "The world had been filled with a new magic, a wonderful, stately beauty which he had perceived for the first time. . . . For long hours he had been wandering in another - a glamorous, primordial world" (p.77).

In fact the whole atmosphere of the novel suggests a mythological world - that of Norse mythology and tradition. The romantic love, the physical passion of the lovers, the reference to the band playing "The Watch on the Rhine" (p.55). The references to Wager (p.215), to Brunhilde being surrounded by a halo of fire (p.78), to Wagner's Siegfried and Tristan (p.91), to the land of Isolda (p.180), the excerpts from German poetry (p.72), the presence of some Germans in the carriage (p.131), the comparison of the sheep-dogs to the giants Fafner and Fasolt (p.211) in Norse mythology and the references to Sieglinde's island (p.21), to Wotan and Siegfried (p.23), the Rhine maidens (p.43), the sagas (p.45), to Walhalla (p.194) - all underline the important role of Norse mythology in the texture, theme: imagery, and atmosphere of Lawrence's novel. Furthermore the setting of the novel on an island and the sea-shore suggests the . . . settings of Wagner's dramas. And as Billy James Pace points out "Siegmund's arrival on the Isle of Wight suggests

Tristan's arrival in Cornwall."[6]

Back in Cornwall, Helena watching Tintagel recalls scenes and stories from Norse mythology:

> In the first place she found that the cove was exactly, almost identically the same as the Walhalla scene in Walkure; in the second place, Tristan was here, in the tragic country filled with the flowers of a late Cornish summer, an everlasting reality (p.194).

Indeed the Tristan myth which Helena recalls is more or less a revealing comment on her relationship with Siegmund. Like Tristan and Isolda, Siegmund and Helena are divided lovers suffering anguish from being separated.

Further parallels between Lawrence's The Trespasser and Wagner's Ring have been pointed out by Billy James Pace. These parallels include erotic love,[7] the theme of flight,[8] the sense of fate and doom,[9] the firelight surrounding Brunhide and Helena,[10] the love potion,[11] and incestuous

[6]Billy James Pace, D.H. Lawrence's Use in His Novels of Germanic and Celtic Myth from the Music Dramas of Richard Wagner, p.106.

[7]Ibid., p.52.

[8]Ibid., p.70.

[9]Ibid., p.74.

[10]Ibid., p.68.

[11]Ibid., p.106.

love between mother and son.[12]

As I mentioned before Lawrence in The Trespasser draws upon mythology as a whole and not merely on Norse mythology. As an example, he equates the Isle of Wight with the "Happy Isle" of mythology. In a letter to Edward Garnett he writes:

> For a title to that Ms. at present the Saga, will Trespassers in Cythera or The Trespasser or something like that, do? Or for Cythera what can one put - what are the Isles of the Happy - ? Evin, Evna? - Help me out.[13]

In Greek mythology Cythera is the name of the island where Aphrodite is supposed to have risen from the sea and where she and Ares had an illicit love affair and were caught by Hephaestus who reported them to the gods and held them to ridicule before the gods.[14] Thus the love relationship of Siegmund and Helena can be compared to that of Ares and Aphrodite. Again illicit love brings with it dangerous consequences.

The story of the "Happy Isles" is common to world mythology. Lawrence, however, is thinking of some particular isles in Celtic mythology. As his letter indicates he seems

[12] Ibid., p.65.

[13] D.H. Lawrence, Letter to Edward Garnett, 30 December 1911, The Collected letters of D.H. Lawrence, (ed.) Harry T. Moore, Introduction, vol. I, p.9.

[14] Gertrude Jobes, Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols (New York: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1961), vol. I, p.403.

to have forgotten the exact name of the particular isles he has in mind. My guess is that Lawrence is thinking of the Celtic islands of Annwfn since the name is similar to his "Evin" or "Evna".

Lawrence uses mythology to criticize the attitude of modern woman towards man. The novel is a criticism of romantic love that does not lead to real consummation and fulfilment in the body: "When Helena drew away her lips she was exhausted. She belonged to that class of 'dreaming women' with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth (p.36). Thus instead of realising the Old Hermaphrodite in the flesh she does it through a kiss: "It was the long, supreme kiss, in which man and woman have one being. Two-in-one, the only Hermaphrodite" (p.30).

Myth is used in this novel to criticize the tendency of modern woman to isolate herself from man and to assert her independence from him. Lawrence expresses this in terms of the myth of the Great Mother and her Son:

> As he lay helplessly looking up at her some other consciousness inside him murmured: 'Hawwa - Eve - Mother!' She stood compassionate over him. Without touching him she seemed to be yearning over him like a mother (p.74).

Lawrence, therefore, uses mythology to reject the idea of spiritual love and the tendency of women to dominate men by considering themselves the source of life and the origin of creation. The tragedy of Siegmund comes as a result of

his failure to find real fulfilment with his beloved. Helena's view of the ideal lover leads to Siegmund's destruction. The Trespasser is erotic in a special way: it is erotic in its attempt to restore Eros to a world lacking physical tenderness. In his aspiration for physical love Siegmund suggests Eros. In this sense The Trespasser is the forerunner of Lady Chatterley's Lover.

The Trespasser demonstrates beyond doubt Lawrence's good knowledge of Norse mythology. The sources of Lawrence's acquaintance with Norse mythology have been discussed by Billy James Pace. He points out that Lawrence's knowledge of Wagnerian myths come through three main channels: "the Wagnerianism in England, the literary Wagnerites, the stage performance of Wagner's music dramas themselves."[15] He argues that Lawrence lived in a period in which Wagnerism was an important element of its cultural milieu,[16] and that Lawrence read such wagnerites as Bennett, Moore, Thomas Mann and Shaw.[17] Billy James Pace also asserts that Lawrence attended stage performances of Wagner's dramas in

[15]Billy James Pace, D.H. Lawrence's use in his Novels of Germanic and Celtic myth from the Music Dramas of Richard Wagner, p.22.

[16]Ibid., p.1.

[17]Ibid., pp. 4,10.

Nottingham and London.[18] He also suggests that "on at least three occasions Lawrence hints that he might have read some of the old heroic Germanic and Celtic literature." [19]

As is well-known Lawrence changed the title of Helen Corke's manuscript. Thus her Neutral Ground: A Chronicle became The Trespasser. While he was writing the novel he was wondering about a suitable title for it, and almost invariably he seems to have had the Icelandic Sagas and Norse mythology in the back of his mind. In a letter to Helen Corke he asks her whether "The Saga" might be a good title.[20] In another letter he refers to it as "The S. of S."[21] or The Saga of Siegmund. Several other letters also refer to the novel as "The Saga".[22] Although Lawrence claimed that "This Saga ... is based on brief notes made from actuality"[23] there is no doubt that Norse mythology pervades the whole texture and structure of the novel and that Lawrence's knowledge of

[18] Ibid., pp. 18, 19, 20.

[19] Ibid., p.17

[20] Letter to Helen Corke, 1 June 1910, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.62.

[21] Letter to Sydney S. Pawling, 18 October 1912, p.66.

[22] See Letter to Edward Garnett, 3 January 1912, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.91, and letter to Helen Corke, 1 January 1912, p.97.

[23] Letter to Edward Garnett, 4 December 1911, p.86.

Norse mythology . . is most amply shown in The Trespasser. Indeed Billy James Pace concludes that "Lawrence is solely responsible [i.e. not Helen Corke] for the Wagnerian elements in his novel!" [24]

[24] Billy James Pace, D.H. Lawrence's Use in His Novels of Germanic and Celtic Myth From the Music Dramas of Richard Wagner, p.16.

Chapter Three

The Use of Mythology in Sons and Lovers

Although Lawrence uses autobiographical material as the basis of Sons and Lovers nevertheless it is possibly the greatest modern dramatization of the Oedipal myth. The Oedipus complex has been recognized as a universal archetype existing, according to psychologists and to Lawrence himself, in every age and everywhere. Freud asserted that the Oedipal myth is an expression of a permanent and universal psychical attitude and Jung saw it as a universal archetype. Harry T. Moore tells us that "Lawrence wrote in an unpublished foreword that was meant only for Garnett's eyes, 'the old son-lover was Oedipus. The name of the new one is legion!'"[1] Clyde Kluukhohn mentions that Rank and Raglan have collected about forty-eight Oedipal myths from different parts of the world.[2]

Generally speaking, the Oedipal myth symbolizes the eternal child and signifies the old primordial condition where the relations between father and son, and mother and son

[1]Harry T. Moore, The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence (London: Unwin Books, 1963), p.74.

[2]Clyde Kluukhohn "Recurrent Themes in Myth and Mythmaking", Myth and Mythmaking (ed.) Henry A. Murray, Introduction, p. 53.

were not clearly defined. In its category as an Oedipal myth Sons and Lovers contains most of the elements that can be found in this universal myth. There is first the antagonism between father and mother, culminating in the father becoming a stranger or a mere outsider. This is followed by the mother turning her love from her husband to her children. It is with Paul that Gertrude Morel achieves her deepest and most profound emotional relationship and it is Paul who is most affected by the Oedipal relationship with his mother.

A further element of the myth can be seen in the jealousy that develops between father and sons with the sons being jealous of the father for monopolizing the love of the mother, and the father jealous of the sons because of his fear of being displaced by them. Such jealousy occurs in the novel. But the theme of incest characteristic of the Oedipal myth is not explicitly stated in Sons and Lovers. And although in some Oedipal myths the son is the cause of his father's death, in Sons and Lovers the father does not suffer death.

Another element in this myth is the suffering and death of the hero. In the novel Paul undergoes a great deal of suffering and self-exploration in such a way and such a degree that he becomes very close to death as a result of his relationship with his mother, though he does not die in the end.

Although one might be tempted to interpret Sons and

Lovers as Freudian psychology, the novel has its deep roots in classical mythology. There are outstanding similarities between the Oedipus myth in Sophocles's King Oedipus and Lawrence's Sons and Lovers. There is perhaps an unconscious attempt on the part of both Jocasta and Gertrude to substitute the son for the father and to forget about the father. There is also a great deal of suffering in Sons and Lovers comparable to that in King Oedipus, and the conflict within Paul between life and death is similar to that within Oedipus:

> So the weeks went on. Always alone, his soul oscillated, first on the side of death, then on the side of life, doggedly. The real agony was that he had nowhere to go, nothing to do, nothing to say and was nothing himself.[3]

Although the hero of Lawrence's novel does not die as does the hero of Sophocles's play, Paul virtually stands on the verge of death before he finally turns away from the drift towards death to life: "But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked towards the city's gold phosphorescence" (p.511).

Sons and Lovers, like King Oedipus, is the product of a great intuitive faculty and knowledge rather than the result of a clinical or laboratory research. What Freud arrived at by experiment and study, Lawrence realised by

[3]D.H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers (Penguin Books, 1974), p.501. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

intuition and experience. Lawrence's novel is conceived on the most intuitive and primitive but permanent and universal level where the conception of fatherhood is hardly known. Despite its modernity, the novel deals with a universal theme that is part of the human subconscious in every age and everywhere. The novel can be seen as a recreation or a revival of the ancient mythmaking faculty rather than a treatise on the Oedipus complex. Mythically, the novel is concerned with the universal dream of a return to one's origin, to the womb, to the mother. Indeed the mother fixation in this novel corresponds to the mythical return to the security of mother earth. The son having an incestuous relationship with his mother is characteristic of the vegetation goddess and her son such as Cybele and Attis, Aphrodite and Dionysus, etc. And even the theme of the jealousy between father and son is typical not only of the primitive condition where the concept of parenthood is not well established but also of Greek mythology where Kronos revolted against his father Uranus, and Zeus replaced his father Kronos. In this way, Lawrence's mythmaking faculty can be related to world mythology in general and to Greek mythology in particular rather than to Freud's clinical experiments and psychological theories.

As a matter of fact Sons and Lovers as well as Lawrence's "Foreword" to Sons and Lovers show Lawrence's conception of the myth of the father being replaced by the Son. As

Evelyn J. Hinz has pointed out:

> the original 'Foreword' to Sons and Lovers ... demonstrates first, that Lawrence was familiar with the usurpation - matriarchy implications of the original Oedipus legend; second that he viewed Christianity as the perfect historical example of the Son usurping from the Father, and that he saw excessive formalism and individualism, and specifically the puritanical subordination of the sensual as later recurrence of the Word usurping the Flesh.[4]

In his foreword to Sons and Lovers Lawrence views the Father as representing the Flesh and the Son as standing for the Word. He believes that the Son has usurped the Father by becoming the Word.[5] Similarly in Sons and Lovers he views the modern situation as a replacement of the powers of the Flesh by the forces of the word. As Evelyn J. Hinz puts it: "The Oedipal situation is used to explain the contemporary situation, the usurpation of control by the forces of the puritanical and the industrial."[6]

Lawrence's relation to Freud has been dealt with by several critics, all of whom seem to agree that as far as the Oedipus theme is concerned, Freud had no direct influence

[4]Evelyn J. Hinz, "Sons and Lovers: The Archetypal Dimensions of Lawrence's Oedipal Tragedy," The D.H. Lawrence Review, 5 (Spring 1972), p.33.

[5]D.H. Lawrence, Letter to Edward Garnett, January 1913, The Letters of D.H. Lawrence (ed.) Aldous Huxley (London: William Hienemann, 1932), p.97.

[6]Evelyn J. Hinz, p.33.

on Lawrence. Frederick J. Hoffman asserts that Sons and Lovers "was written before Lawrence had any real acquaintance with Freud." [7] William York Tindall argues that "Lawrence first heard of Freud from Frieda at their first meeting, after he had written a draft of Sons and Lovers." [8] Graham Hough asserts that in the first version of Sons and Lovers (1910) the mother-son relationship "was there in actuality, and was recognized for what it was at the time." [9] He adds that "at this time (1910) the general diffusion of Freudian ideas was of course far distant, and it is exceedingly unlikely that Lawrence had ever heard Freud's name." [10] Harry T. Moore also asserts that "by 1912 many of the British intellectuals were reading Freud .... Lawrence is not supposed to have read him until somewhat later." [11] But a more cautious statement comes from Julian Moynaham who writes:

> We do not know whether Lawrence had read Freud before he wrote the final draft of Sons and Lovers, but it is definitely known that Frieda had read Freud and discussed psychoanalytic ideas with Lawrence

[7] Frederick J. Hoffman, Freudianism and the Literary Mind (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1959), p.151.

[8] William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), p.38.

[9] Graham Hough, The Dark Sun (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1968, p.39.

[10] Ibid., p.93.

[11] Harry T. Moore, The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence, p.74.

> on numerous occasions while he was working
> on the final draft of the novel.[12]

As for Lawrence, he said at the time that he never read Freud but he heard of him.[13] Later in 1914 he wrote: "I am not Freudian and never was!".[14]

What can be added to what these critics have said is that Lawrence's awareness of the Oedipus complex might have started perhaps as early as 1901 or a few years later during the period of his friendship with Jessie Chambers. E.T. claims in her book that "whatever approach Lawrence made to me inevitably involved him in a sense of disloyalty to his mother." [15] But we do not exactly know when Lawrence became aware of the Oedipal relation to his mother. What we know, however, is that Lawrence's interest in the over intensity of some parent-child relationship is evident in The White Peacock where Cyril who is a Lawrence-like figure is in love with his mother:

> 'You might have had a father -'
> 'We're thankful we hadn't mother.
> You spared us that.'[16]

[13] See Harry T. Moore, The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence, p.74.

[14] Letter to Gordon Campbell, 21 September 1914, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.291.

[15] E.T. D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record, p.200.

[16] The White Peacock, p.58.

And in another place we are told: "In the marital duel Meg is winning. Woman generally does; she has the children on her side."[17] Moreover, in 1910 Lawrence writes:

> I was born hating my father ....
> This has been a kind of bond between me and my mother. We have loved each other, almost with a husband and wife, as well as filial and maternal. We knew each other by instinct.[18]

In summary we can say that Freud's psychological theories had no direct influence on the writing of Sons and Lovers, but the discussions with Frieda about Freud's theories added a new dimension to Lawrence's own intuitive awareness of the Oedipus complex.

In Sons and Lovers Lawrence draws upon mythology for the portrayal/women. He uses myth to present Clara as a Magna /of Mater and Miriam as a virgin mother. As far as Clara is concerned mythical images are used to depict her as a giantess. She is compared to an Amazon (p.305). This comparison is perhaps intended to suggest her largeness as well as her liveliness and determination. Paul sees his figure as very little compared to her large stature. He sees his hands as "small and vigorous" but hers as "large to match her limbs" (p.333). When he is sitting beside her in the theatre he

[17] Ibid., p.342.

[18] Letter to Rachel Annand Taylor, 3 December 1910, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.69.

"felt himself small and helpless, her towering in her force above him" (p.403). His mother also "looked so small, and sallow, and done-for beside the luxurient Clara" (p.291). Clara reminds Paul of the goddess Juno because of her "stature and bearing" (p.320). When Paul is watching her he remembers Penelope (p.320). She is also identified by her friends and colleagues with the Queen of Sheba for her authority and dominance (p.403). When Paul is sitting beside her in the theatre "a kind of eternal look about her, as if she were a wistful sphinx, made it necessary for him to kiss her (p.352). On the sea-shore Paul compares her to the unsatisfied sea-foam (p.435), and even sees her as "'magnificent, and even bigger than the morning and the sea'" (p.436).

All the above mentioned comparisons point to Clara's giant figure which can be compared to the figure of the Magna Mater of mythology. Her comparison with some mythological women and goddesses gives her a touch of archetypal womanhood. This is emphasised by her comparison to the sea-foam and the sea itself. The first comparison recalls the image of Greek Aphrodite rising from the sea. Indeed Lawrence himself usually associates Aphrodite with the sea in the sense that she was born of the sea-foam.[19] In myth the sea or water is usually considered the origin of life; and so the association

[19]D.H. Lawrence, Twilight in Italy (Penguin Books, 1969), p.42.

of Clara with the sea gives her yet another touch of archetypal womanhood. By and large Lawrence's portrayal of Clara is rooted in mythology. It is also worth noticing that this kind of character portrayal recalls the early childhood of humanity which, as psychologists have explained, gave man his mythmaking faculty and led him to conceive mythical figures bigger than himself".[20] The conclusion that can be drawn from what I have said is that Clara's character is based to a large extent on the attributes of the mythical Great Mother and that Lawrence's conception of her character is reminiscent of the mythic view of ancient man.

Miriam represents the Virgin Mary or the virgin mother of mythology. As Charles Rossman points out, her name is a variation of "Mary" and she keeps a picture of the Virgin Mary herself.[21] In some scenes Miriam is identified with a nun. These lines, we are told, were like herself. "'It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,/The holy time is quiet as a nun'" (p.257). Later, Paul discloses to her that "I have given you what I would give a holy nun - as a mystic monk to a mystic nun" (p.307). Although she is Paul's friend her relation with him is like that of a nun rather than a lover.

[20]Daniel A. Weiss, "The Mother in the Mind," D.H. Lawrence: Artist and Rebel, (ed.) E.W. Tedlock (Albuqureque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1963), p.129.

[21]Charles Rossman, "The Gospel According to D.H. Lawrence: Religion in Sons and Lovers," The D.H. Lawrence Review, 3 (Spring 1970), p.32.

> 'But, Lord, if it is Thy will that I should love him, make me love him -- as Christ would, who died for the souls of men. Make me love him splendidly, because he is thy son'(p.212).

Here Miriam identifies herself with Christ to express her spiritual and sacrificial love to Paul. Miriam's religiosity and her spiritual love suggest the figure of the Virgin Mary. This is very much borne out by her evident and persistent concern about her virginity. According to Paul: "there seemed an eternal maidenhood about her" (p.341).

However, Miriam's fear of defloration and sin recalls not only the Bible but also the mythic outlook where there is great restriction imposed on sex in the shape of taboo. Miriam's abstention from sex may be inspired by a belief in God's retribution against his sinning creatures and by her desire to observe God's laws but it is also reminiscent of the primitive man's fear of defloration and his view of the sanctity of marriage.

As is usually the case in Lawrence's novels the Bible constitutes an important part in the form and substance of Sons and Lovers. Charles Rossman asserts that Lawrence's "Foreword" to Sons and Lovers "suggests that Sons and Lovers has a profound religious significance, and that Lawrence had conscious religious intentions in writing the novel".[22] In

[22]Charles Rossman, "The Gospel According to D.H. Lawrence: Religion in Sons and Lovers", The D.H. Lawrence Review, p.33.

his opinion the conflict in the novel is between the Word and the Flesh.[23] Thus for him Paul lives his youth in a world where "the Word has denied the Flesh";[24] the successful marriage of Gertrude and Walter Morel during its early months is "a genuine communion of the Flesh".[25] For him also, Miriam's spiritual love makes her remain "on the level of the Word";[26] and with Clara Paul discovers the Flesh ignored by his mother and Miriam.[27]

Furthermore Charles Rossman asserts that "Paul's nickname 'postle' ... reminds us of his namesake St. Paul, and of the spiritualized love he advocated and Paul Morel struggles against."[28] He also suggests, as I mentioned before, that Miriam's name is a variation of "Mary".[29] In addition he suggests that the forty references or so to eating food indicate a Holy Communion but instead of bringing people together, eating food in this novel estranges people from one another and does not contribute to fulfilment.[30]

[23] Ibid., p.32.

[24] Ibid., p.33.

[25] Ibid., p.33.

[26] Ibid., p.34.

[27] Ibid., p.34.

[28] Ibid., p.36.

[29] Ibid., p.36.

[30] Ibid., pp. 36-37.

Sons and Lovers has also been treated, like almost all Lawrence's novels, in terms of the classical myth of Persephone and Pluto. In his book on D.H. Lawrence George H. Ford asserts that there are parallels between the relation of man to woman in Lawrence's novels and the myth of Pluto and Persephone: "In the novels the woman is Gertrude Coppard and the man Walter Morel, or Anna Lensky and Will Brangwen, Alvina Houghton and an Italian named Cicio, or Kate Leslie and Cipriano." [31] On Sons and Lovers he writes:

> It is the tale of a dark man emerging from a cavern in the earth who discovered a fair princess gathering flowers in a field and persuaded her to be carried off to the underworld where he was a King and where she would reign as his Queen. For many months the fair woman was happy in the realms of darkness, but after a time she began to feel she had been taken out of one state of trance only to enter another. And she yearned to return to the land of light where there was white-walled temples, and books, and learned priests. Bewildered by the dissatisfaction of his wife the dark King fought hard to prevent her from brooding, but he had to give in and allow her and their children to return to the land of light above the underground darkness.[32]

My opinion is that this is a perceptive comment, but it is only one way of looking at a complex work as Sons and Lovers really is.

[31] George H. Ford, Double Measure, pp. 30-31.

[32] Ibid., p. 30.

Animism or the mythic concept of a living universe is used in Sons and Lovers as a touchstone of the characters' vitality and their chance of success or not. In this novel Lawrence is trying to establish as a standard the ability to respond to the rhythms of nature and the characters are judged by the reaction they make. When we are told that Miriam enjoys this description of nature: "'It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,/The holy time is quiet as a nun'" (p.257), we know that this is a telling comment on her character and on her relation with Paul. Miriam's spiritualism can reduce nature to a lifeless nun, something that upsets Paul, who views nature as a vital, living entity. In another scene Paul is distressed by Miriam's fondling of flowers, for to him this shows a desire to possess them and even to pull the heart out of them" (p.268). What is wrong with Miriam's approach to nature is that she does not see them alive as living things with an existence apart from herself. In Lawrence's view if Miriam were able to see all things in nature and recognize their "otherness", she would have maintained a balanced relationship with them, for her realization of a living universe would have led her to accept them as living objects and hence refrain from seeking a spiritual communion with them.

Miriam is also a failure in her relation with animals. Unlike Paul she is not willing to let the hen peck from her hand (p.158). When she finally attempts to do that "she

gave a little cry - fear, and pain because of fear - rather pathetic" (p.159).

All these examples indicate that Miriam is not capable of maintaining a living relation between herself and her circumabient universe. Her limited outlook is seen as faulty and inadequate.

Through the use of Miriam's reaction to nature Lawrence suggests the need of the modern man for an attempt to reconcile himself with nature, since a real life involves all nature or a view that sees all nature alive. The deeper and the more religious view of the universe that Lawrence seems to be advocating is very much akin to the animistic vision of the early period of man's life on earth. Sons and Lovers contains evidence of Lawrence's belief in the continuity of life and creation. The novel expresses the need for man's instinctive awareness of a living universe and suggests that a feeling of at-oneness with everything can be achieved through the sexual relationship. This is apparent in Paul's sexual experience with Clara: "They had met, and included in their meeting the thrust of the manifold grass-stems, the cry of the peewit, the wheel of the stars" (p.430). And it can be more clearly seen in the following description:

> If so great a magnificent power could overwhelm them, identify them altogether with itself, so that they knew they were only grains in the tremendous heave that lifted every grass-blade its little height, and every tree, and living thing, then why fret about themselves? They could let themselves be carried by life,

> and they felt a sort of peace each in the other (pp. 430-431).

The feeling of continuity of life and creation that we can discern in these lines bears a great resemblance to the mythic view under which man in the past lived in immediate relationship with plants and animals and all nature. The mythic view of the universe envisioned man's relation to nature in terms of continuity rather than separation, and it is that kind of vision and rapport that Lawrence is trying to regain in this novel.

Sons and Lovers contains evidence of Lawrence's rejection of a God in heaven in favour of God on earth present in every living object: "'God doesn't know things, He is things'" (p.307). During the time he was writing Sons and Lovers Lawrence seems to have already given up his orthodox creed as being "brought up a Protestant, and among Protestants, a Nonconformist, and among Nonconformists, a Congregationalist".[33] In this autobiographical novel Paul begins to question the orthodox creed at the age of twenty-one (p.237). Paul's rejection of the orthodox doctrine leads him not only to take up Agnosticism but makes him revert to the beliefs of the common people. His new religion is not a religion of the spirit or the mind but a religion of ... life and the

[33] D.H. Lawrence, "Hymns in a Man's Life", Phoenix II, (ed.) Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore (London: Heinemann Ltd., 1968), p.600.

body (p.313). The new religion involves some sort of animism that Lawrence was to develop in the later novels. This can be seen in Paul's relation to nature and in his disappointment at Miriam's inability to respond to it in the same way. Indeed during his acquaintance with Jessie Chambers Lawrence seems to have been living according to the animistic vision he deals with in the novel: "With all things, flowers and birds .... a living vibration passed between him and them."[34] There are indications in the novel that the biblical view of the world, by emphasizing the spirit and the mind, has hampered a living relation with the universe and even resulted in the death of the universe as the mythic view envisioned it. Orthodox religion, we are made to conclude, has resulted in the conception of a personal God separate from other objects; but in Lawrence's view, which is based on the pagan view of the universe, God is everywhere and in every object and there is no separation between God and nature.

Lawrence's reading in anthropology and religion contributed to the development of his religious doctrine. David Waterlow Norton has dealt with the development of Lawrence's religious thought, especially in the early period of his literary career. Among the influences that contributed to Lawrence's religious experience are R.J. Campbell's The New Theology (1907) and Ernest Renan's The Life of Jesus (1898). I believe that

[34] E.T. D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record, p.223.

these two books might have exercised the greatest influence on Lawrence's thought in Sons and Lovers. As David Waterlow Norton puts it Campbell's "Separation of Christianity and dogma is evidently one of the literary positions Lawrence found in Campbell. A second is his denial of the absolute authority of the Bible." [35] And as he writes about Renan's contribution: "Renan was a man in reaction against the church, and the nature of his reaction is similar to that of Lawrence's." [36]

The whole action of Sons and Lovers can be seen in the light of the mythic cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth. The novel is structured around the birth and childhood of Paul, his suffering which brings him very close to death and on his final rebirth. Indeed it is difficult to imagine how Lawrence could have reversed the tragic end that Paul was heading for; if he did not draw upon the mythic pattern of death and rebirth to effect a different ending. In mythology as well as in the novel the return to the womb or the mother fixation signifies a return to mother earth, to the pristine state of existence. Going down into the womb, destructive though it is, symbolizes the possibility of rebirth and renewal. It is only in myth that the hero does not die but dies and

[35] David Waterlow Norton, "Culture" and Individual Experience: The Development of D.H. Lawrence's Thought and Art to 1916. Ph. D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1974, p.85.

[36] Ibid., p.88.

rises again. As Joseph Campbell pointed out, "the idea of death-and-rebirth .... is an extremely ancient one in the history of culture!"[37] Anthropologists have pointed out that primitive man saw death as a natural phase of life just as the seeds are buried in the ground before they rise again. Death-and-resurrection, therefore, basically belong to the mythic view. It is on this mythic paradox of death-and-rebirth that the story of Paul seems to be based. Even the reunion of Clara and her husband after a period of separation and after what looks to be an unpatchable rift in their relation is perhaps built on the mythic pattern of death-and-rebirth or the mythic concept that destruction precedes creation. However, this theme will appear more obviously in the novels to come.

[37]Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology, p.66.

Chapter Four

The Use of Mythology in The Rainbow

The themes and structure of The Rainbow are nearly dependent on a mythic framework. Several mythologies are drawn upon, the most important being primitive, Jewish, and Christian.

The early parts of the novel are presented through an animistic vision. The life of the Brangwens is depicted as being in tune with the changing rhythms of nature and the correspondence and the harmony between man and nature is strikingly presented. The Brangwens work instinctually, dependent on and in close sensuous contact with earth. For them the earth is like a living body that becomes smooth and open to their furrow and hard and unresponsive when the crops are shorn away.[1] On the mythic level the Brangwens see in the sky and earth two parents from whose intercourse comes creation and productivity (p.8). They see everything alive (p.8). Their life is regulated by nature. In the movement of the birds they see the arrival of the winter season and when winter comes they stay at home, feeling the pulse of the cattle and vegetation (p.8).

[1]D.H. Lawrence, The Rainbow (Penguin Book, 1968), p.8. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

Gradually the life of the Brangwens changes but the change does not mean the end of their animistic life, though it certainly involves a weakening of it. At school Tom's development as far as feelings and instinct are concerned is tremendous but his mental development continues to lag behind (p.16). Even after he meets Lydia Lensky his life seems to be in tune with nature, for he feels tense and dejected in winter nights and happy and active in bright days when the feeling of being at one with his surroundings makes him alive and teeming with life and energy (p.73). On one occasion we witness him talking to the moon as if it were a woman (p.27).

The animism which I have discussed above is characteristic of primitive mythology. The cosmic awareness of the Brangwens as depicted in the novel is similar to the religious view of nature as primitive man conceived it. Their feeling of being at one with it, their view of the sky and earth as a father and a mother, their mystic union with the moon and their worship of the sun as the source of creation are all reminiscent of the mythic view of primitive societies.

Obviously this animistic vision is endorsed by Lawrence whose aim is to make modern man see nature alive as the man in the past saw it, to draw forth from the sun the power and the strength that ancient man drew from it, to be aware of the mystery of the moon and its connection with the human body, the mystery of fertility and sex. As he wrote later:

> There is an eternal vital correspondence between our blood and the sun: there is an eternal vital correspondence between our nerves and the moon. If we get out of harmony with the sun and moon, then both turn into great dragons of destruction against us.[2]

According to Lawrence the view that saw the cosmos as a living body and man as part of it was once a universal religion before the idea of a "moral" God emerged. As he wrote in Apocalypse: "The old religions were cults of vitality, potency, power ..... Only the Hebrews were moral".[3] In the novel Ursula and Winifred come to the conclusion that "religions were local and religion universal" (pp. 341-342).

However, the life of the Brangwen family on the farm can also be seen as a sort of Eden on earth, or as a Golden Age. Their life on the Marsh Farm suggests the story of Adam and Eve living a happy and perfect life in the garden of Eden. And so the Eden image pervades the first parts of The Rainbow. As Grady J. Walker has observed Alfred Brangwen can be equated with Adam. "Like Adam", Walker says "he is King and absolute authority in his secluded world".[4] The Brangwens live in a kind of antediluvian world similar to

[2]D.H. Lawrence, Apocalypse (Florence: G. Orioli, 1931), p.72.

[3]D.H. Lawrence, Apocalypse, p.97

[4]Grady J. Walker, The Influence of the Bible on D.H. Lawrence as seen in his Novels, p.49.

the early epoch of man's life as revealed in the Book of Genesis. Their innocence and their harmony with their surroundings make Alfred and his wife look like Adam and Eve. But as in the biblical myth a conflict starts between the two extremes of instinctual and spontaneous response on the other, with men representing the first extreme and women the second one. Unlike the men, the women on the Marsh Farm want a new kind of knowledge and awareness that can take them far beyond the blood intimacy of the men. Their role as knowledge-seekers is not much different from the story of Eve trying to taste the apple that grew on the Tree of Knowledge. Indeed their attempts to go beyond their present condition and to gain some new knowledge and their desire to educate the children in the new knowledge and to live a different way of life give the women the role of the temptress similar to that of Eve when she tempted her husband with the fruit of knowledge.

As a result of the women's desire for a higher and more conscious knowledge the story of the Brangwen family for the next two or three generations can be seen as a fall similar to the biblical Fall. The first fall in the novel is best reflected in the fall of Tom Brangwen when he loses his innocence with a prostitute at a public house. As Grady J. Walker has pointed out

> Tom in his youth is the Adam figure the man of the earth and of feeling, who does not get on well when he is pushed into attempts at education and who tries to

> shrink back into a shell of innocence after the experience with the prostitute.[5]

If the parallels that I have pointed out between the novel and the Bible are accepted then it is possible to assert that the plot of The Rainbow is based on the Bible. Indeed George H. Ford has asserted that "The Rainbow is a great confused Bible."[6] Moreover, Grady J. Walker argues in his thesis on Lawrence that the three generations in the novel (i.e. Tom and Lydia, Will and Anna, and Ursula and Skrebensky) correspond to the three generations in the Bible, roughly: the antediluvian age before Noah's Flood, the Old Covenant period from the Flood to the birth of Christ, and the New Testament period from Christ's birth to the end of time".[7]

Many of the novel's themes, symbols and structural elements are derived from the Bible. As in the Biblical Myth the gaining of knowledge entails some degree of suffering, for suffering is the price of knowledge. As a result of acquiring a higher knowledge the perfect life that preceded conscious knowledge is lost and the characters have to worry about their livelihood and to prepare for their future life. The life of perfect accord with nature has to come to an end and hardship and toil must follow.

[5]Grady J. Walker, The Influence of the Bible on D.H. Lawrence as Seen in His Novels, p.41.

[6]George H. Ford, Double Measure, p.134.

[7]Grady J. Walker, p.36.

The sort of life that follows the end of the first generation is a fall from a higher to a lower state of being. It is perhaps with reference to this notion that Lawrence thought of the novel as "a destructive work and gave it the title of "The Rainbow" to indicate the better life that will follow later: "I knew I was writing a destructive work, otherwise I couldn't have called it The Rainbow - in reference to the Flood".[8] Lawrence's words indicate that after a period of destruction following the loss of man's paradisal innocence and perfect happiness a period of restoration of that paradisal past will follow.

In fact it is the rainbow symbol which makes us view the novel in the above mentioned way. In the period of destruction that follows the rainbow is a symbol of hope and the better life to come. The significance of the rainbow symbol in this novel is that of the biblical bow in the cloud which was the sign of the Covenant between Noah and God.[9] Similarly the rainbow in Lawrence's novel is a sign of the coming of a new era after the destruction of the older period by the flood. The rainbow is also connected with the pillar of cloud which, according to the Biblical myth, God sent to guide the Jews on their journey in Sinai.[10]

[8]Letter to Waldo Fronk, 27 July 1917, The Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.519.

[9]The Old Testament, Genesis 9, 13-14.

[10]Ibid., Exodus 13, 21-22.

As in Noah's story, the flood is a symbol of destruction in the Brangwen Saga. The flood in the novel bears a great resemblance to Noah's Flood, as several critics have observed.[11] Tom Brangwen, as head of the Brangwen family, represents the patriarchal Noah. Like Noah who became drunk and was seen naked by his sons[12] Tom Brangwen gets drunk (p.95) and is exposed to the family. As in the biblical story, the flood on the Marsh Farm marks the end of the old generation of the Brangwens, the end of their era, that is, and the start of a new generation of the Brangwens, a new world and a new way of life. But unlike Noah, Tom does not survive the flood to witness the new creation. Instead it is Ursula who has to undergo many troubles and hardships before she finally glimpses the rainbow, the equivalent of Noah's Covenant with God.

The rainbow appearing after the flood or the destruction of the old world is the token of the coming reconciliation between the old world and the new one. Each generation of the Brangwens is made to search for the rainbow and to follow it wherever they can see it. In the novel as in the Bible, the rainbow functions as a guide for its followers on their

[11]See Julian Moynahan, The Deed of Life, p.69; Harry T. Moore, The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence; Frank Kermode, "Lawrence and the Apocalyptic Types", Critical Quarterly X (Spring-Summer 1968), p.21.

[12]The Old Testament, Genesis 9, 20-23.

journey to the unknown. The fact that the rainbow assumes such a significance in the novel gives it its importance as a structural principle in the novel. The action unfolds as if it were tracing the journey of the Brangwens towards their unknown destination. Anna's life is to some extent guided by her expectations that something will come from the unknown. When she looks in the distance and sees the rainbow in the faint, gleaming horizon she feels almost fulfilled (p.195). For her, as in the Bible, the rainbow remains a symbol of salvation: "Dawn and Sunset were the feet of the rainbow that spanned the day and she saw the hope, the promise. Why should she travel any further?" (pp. 195-196).

Like her mother's, Ursula's life is also a kind of discovery or a connected series of adventure. The wandering Ursula has to follow the rainbow before she can find any salvation. The rainbow embodies her transfigured self, her perfected marriage and even a new life for her and her society. It becomes a kind of "Morning Star", a "Holy Ghost" or a "Crown" - symbols that Lawrence was to use later to represent the union of two worlds usually the embodiments of the two principles of "Law" and "Love" or the Old Testament and the New Testament and the two epochs of life they stand for.

Ursula runs through many difficulties before she is finally sure of her salvation and the arrival of a new way of life. Like mythic heroes she stumbles on many false ideals and embarks on some adventures before she finally reaches her cherished destination. She makes a disappointing relation-

ship with her perverted school mistress and a futile love relationship with Anton Skrebensky.

Since the Brangwens are following the rainbow, the action of the novel develops in the shape of a quest, an adventure or a journey into the future. Indeed the use of the rainbow gives the novel the features of the archetypal journey of the mythic hero. The misadventures of Ursula and her final success to see the rainbow make Ursula's life a kind of quest for salvation - a theme that underlies the archetypal journey of the mythic hero, be it Odysseus, Aeneas, Moses, etc. George H. Ford correctly writes:

> It can be said that The Rainbow is the story of the ancestry, birth, development, suffering, trials and triumphs of a prophet, or, more accurately, a prophetess, Ursula Brangwen, whose mission it will be to show the way out of a wilderness into a promised land.[13]

Ursula, therefore, is on an epic quest and her temporary failures endorse that notion. Like mythic heroes she has to pass many trials before she can finally achieve success. Thus The Rainbow has a touch of the epic form. Indeed it is the epic not only of the Brangwen family but of man's life as a whole, as the Bible is the epic of mankind. Grady J. Walker is perhaps right in his assertion that "Lawrence either consciously or unconsciously intended that his epic of man, his 'parable of the human race', should be structured like

[13]George H. Ford, Double Measure, p.130.

the Bible with its three great epochs".[14] At the end of the novel the rainbow is extended to symbolize not only the regeneration of the Brangwen family but the regeneration of the world as a whole:

> And the rainbow stood on the earth. She knew that the sordid people who crept hard-scaled and separate on the surface of the world's corruption were living still, that the rainbow was arched in their blood and would quiver to life in their spirit, that they would cast off their horny covering of disintegration, that new, clean, naked bodies would issue to a new generation, to a new growth, rising to the light and the wind and the clean rain of heaven (pp. 495-496).

However, the rainbow symbol is not restricted to Jewish mythology. In Greek mythology the rainbow is the symbol of the connection between heaven and earth. Hermes (in Latin Iris) as a god of the rainbow and the messenger of the gods descends from heaven to earth through the stairway of the rainbow. In The Aeneid the cloud or the rainbow is the sign for the hero to continue the quest:

> Immediately the Father Almighty thundered thrise from a clear sky above them, and displayed from the high air a cloud burning with rays of golden light, set quivering by his own hand, the rumour now rapidly spread along the Trojan lines that the day had come for them to found the promised city walls.[15]

[14]Grady J. Walker, The Influence of the Bible on D.H. Lawrence as seen in his Novels, p.47.

[15]Virgil, The Aeneid, (trans.) W.F. Jackson (Penguin books, 1956), p.179.

In Norse mythology the rainbow is represented by a bridge [16] - a metaphor that implies some sort of connection or hope. And to primitive thought "a rainbow was clearly a bridge." [17] And so Lawrence's use of the rainbow belongs not only to the biblical tradition but rather to world mythology, for the rainbow, as the above examples demonstrate, is an archetypal symbol common to the various mythologies of the world. Literature seems to borrow much of its symbols from myths and the rainbow is one of those mythological symbols or universal archetypes that works of art borrow from mythology or have the same things in common.

Nor are the references to the flood merely biblical. Rather they can be associated with the world-wide flood archetype. The world's mythologies contain references to a universal flood of one sort or another. In Ovid we read that the corruption that took place during the Iron Age made Jupiter submerge the earth with water. Few people survived but the earth was eventually restored.[18] In Indian mythology there is a deluge every four million years.[19] According to

[16]Richard Christiansen, "Myth, Metaphor, and Simile", Myth: A Symposium, (ed.) Thomas A. Sebeok (Introduction), p. 69.

[17]Frederick Clarke Prescott, Poetry and Myth (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1927), p.28.

[18]Ovid, Metammorphoses, (trans) Mary M. Innes (Penguin Books, 1955), pp. 40-41.

[19]Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By (London: Souvenir Press, 1973), p.74.

Aztec mythology one epoch of the world's cycles was destroyed by a flood.

Destruction by water is mythically significant. In many myths water is the origin of creation as well as destruction. Most myths of creation state that the world was created out of the primaeval watery chaos. In myth also water is a symbol of regeneration and renewal. In Babylonian mythology, gods emerged from the chaos of primaeval waters. According to Egyptian mythology the creation of the world started with the emergence of the sun-god from primordial waters.[20] Thus, in mythology, water - despite its tremendous destructive power - is a life-giving force. And as an archetypal symbol, water represents purity and a new life. Perhaps that is why water is usually used in rituals as a symbol of purification from all defilements. All this shows that Lawrence's use of the flood as a means to bring the old world to an end can be linked with mythology and that there is a great connection between literature and mythology. Moreover the fact that the old world is destroyed by water raises great expectations about the coming of a new life. As Lawrence once observed: "Flood and fire and convulsions and ice-arrest intervene between the great glamorous civilizations of mankind".[21] Structurally, the use of water as a means of destruction

[20] A.M. Blackman, "Myth and Ritual in Ancient Egypt", Myth and Ritual, (ed.) S.H. Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp. 15-16.

[21] D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.8.

automatically makes the events that follow the destruction a natural result of the earlier events. Thus myth assumes a great structural importance in the novel, and The Rainbow can be justly called a mythological novel.

To come back to the Bible. By and large the Bible penetrates almost every part of The Rainbow. Reference is made to the Bible in various ways. Besides the fall, the flood, the rainbow, the three generations, the epic quest for a promised land as the major borrowings from the Bible there are the church symbol and some ritualistic scenes. The church's arches seem to symbolize the unity of creation or the link between the innermost and the universe. Will Brangwen is absorbed in the symbolism of the church. To him it is a symbol of creation, the beginning and the end, the womb or the origin of life:

> His soul leapt, soared up into the great church. His body stood still, absorbed by the height. His soul leapt up into the gloom, into possession it reeled, it swooned with a great escape, it quivered in the womb, in the hush and gloom of fecundity, like seed of procreation in ecstasy (p.201).

To Will Brangwen the church symbolizes eternal time. It is the absolute symbol of creation, life and death combined. "Here in the church, 'before' and 'after' were folded together, all was contained in oneness. Brangwen came to his consummation" (p.202). The stones rising up until they culminated in the apex of the church represent to Will Brangwen an absolute fulfilment and consummation, the end of creation (p.202). Indeed the phallic symbolism of the church is implied in

Will's view of the church.

> Again he gathered himself together, in transit, every jet of him stained and leaped clear into the darkness above, to the fecundity of the unique mystery, to the church, the clasp, the consummation, the climax of eternity, the apex of the arch (p.202).

Julian Moynahan has suggested that the "pointed stone arch of the Gothic cathedral symbolizes a mystic mergence with Godhead".[22] This state of fulfilment and union recalls the primordial oneness between man and God before man attained his mental consciousness in the garden of Eden. Will's mystic union with the Godhead is a sort of return to that primordial oneness. But again it is the woman who drives him away from that paradisal state. His wife Anna does not accept mystic union, and instead insists on conscious knowledge:

> His soul would have liked it to be so: here, here is all, complete, eternal: motion, meeting, ecstasy, and no illusion of time, of night and day passing by, but only perfectly proportioned space and movement clinching and renewing ....:
>
> Her soul too was carried to the altar, to the threshold of eternity .... But ever she hung back in the transit, mistrusting the culmination of the altar (p.203).

Indeed Anna is presented as the serpent in Will's Eden. "Brangwen looked unwillingly. This was the voice of the serpent in his Eden" (p.204). Anna, however, seems to have succeeded in detracting Will from his mysterious union with the Godhead and from his paradisal fulfilment: "He was disillusioned. That which had been his absolute, containing

all heaven and earth, has become to him as to her, a shapely heap of dead matter (p.205).

It is the destruction of this state of at-oneness with the deity, the shattering and fall of man's beliefs and myths under the blow of mental and scientific knowledge that Lawrence is presenting in the story of Anna and Will Brangwen in the church. The worry that is expressed in the novel is intended to reflect the condition of modern man without his myths and beliefs.

> His mouth was full of ash, his soul was furious. He hated her for having destroyed another of his vital illusions. Soon he would be stark, stark without one place wherein to stand, without one belief in which to rest (p.205).

These lines indicate Lawrence's worry about modern man losing his beliefs and myths and as a result finding himself without roots, without anything to connect him to his origin or to give him a feeling of fulfilment and satisfaction.

Lawrence seems to have admiration for the mythic view or the primitive man's conception of the universe, and, to a less extent, to the period of the early Catholic church, for it kept God as a mystery and thus preserved a mystic relationship between man and God. This is obvious in the religious beliefs of Lydia, who is a Catholic: "It was as if she worshipped God as a mystery, never seeking in the least to define what he was" (p.103). She and her husband seem to embody the kind of life that Lawrence associated with the early Catholic Church: "There, on the farm with

her, he lived through a mystery of life and death and creation, strange, profound ecstasies and incommunicable satisfactions" (p.280). The traditional cycle of Christian festivals has also a word of praise. Will Brangwen thinks of Christmas as a day different from every other day in the passion and joy that accompany it (p.280). But the real essence of Christianity seems to him to reside in its cycle of festivals which can make a change in people's life as they move along with them (p.380). Later Lawrence denounced Christianity that preaches crucifixion and neglects the festival cycles:

> To preach Christ crucified is to preach half the truth. It is the business of the church to preach Christ born among men - which is Christmas; Christ crucified, which is Good Friday; and Christ Risen, which is Easter. And after Easter, till November and All Saints, and till Annunciation, the year belongs to the Risen Lord: that is, all the full-flowering spring, all summer, and the autumn of wheat and fruit, all belong to Christ Risen.[23]

And that is what Lawrence is trying to do in this novel: to purify Christianity of its dogmas and to restore to it the importance of the Christian festivals. The joy of the Brangwen family is greater when they feel themselves connected with the cycle of the Christian year:

> So the children lived the year of Christianity, the epic of the soul of mankind. Year by year, the inner, unknown drama went on in them, their hearts were born and came to fulness, suffered on the cross, gave up the ghost, and rose again

[23]D.H. Lawrence, Assorted Articles (Martin Seeker, 1930), p.105.

> to unnumbered days, untired, having at last this rhythm of eternity in a ragged inconsequential life (p.380).

Mythology plays an important role in the characters' life. Characterization in the novel is connected with mythology in the sense that mythology is used to distinguish character. The older generation of the Brangwens is different from the second which in turn is different from the third generation because of the thought-system or mythology each generation follows. The difference between some characters belonging to the same generation is pointed out by the contrast in their religious or mythic beliefs. The rationalism of Anna is in sharp contrast with the mysticism of Will. Will is interested in mystic beliefs as much as Anna is concerned with the didactic preaching of the church (p.158). Myth figures more prominently in the life of Will than in the life of Anna. His attitude to life, to his wife and children and to sex is connected with his mythic beliefs. Will, under the influence of his mythic beliefs, can find in his relation with Anna some kind of consummation and fulfilment, similar to his ecstatic experience with the church symbolism (p.237).

In Ursula's life the Bible forms an essential part. Grady Joe Walker has suggested that if Ursula is not definitely a Christ figure "one thing is certain: she is a New Testament figure in her pre-occupation with New Testa-

ment symbols and in her attempts at reconciliation." [24]
Her development from childhood to womanhood is inseperable from her attitude towards her religious or mythic beliefs. Like Lawrence, Ursula has been brought up on the Bible. Like her father she has some kind of mystical passion for the unseen God (p.75). The myth of the Sons of God taking to wife the daughters of men holds some truth for her that surpasses the facts of daily life: "So utterly did she desire the Sons of God should come to the daughters of men; and she believed more in her desire and its fulfilment than in the obvious facts of life" (p.277). Ursula's attitude reflects both Lawrence's as well as her mythic vision. They both see in mythic perception a claim to reality as much as the scientific has. Like Lawrence, Ursula accepts the absolutes of myth as truths that have deep and profound meanings that can never be rationally explained: "What sort of needless eye, what sort of a rich man, what sort of heaven? Who knows? It means the Absolute World, and can never be more than half interpreted in terms of the relative world (p.276). Ursula's view of myth is similar to if not identical with Lawrence's view:

> Myth is never an argument, it never has a didactic or moral purpose, you can draw no conclusion from it. Myth is an attempt to narrate a whole human experience, of which the purpose is too deep,

[24]Grady Joe Walker, The Influence of the Bible on D.H. Lawrence as Seen in His Novels, p.59.

> going too deep in the blood and soul,
> for mental explanation or description.[25]

Like Lawrence, Ursula prefers to interpret myths symbolically and not literally. Finding the literal interpretation of the Christian myths absurd, Ursula reverts "to the non-literal application of the scriptures" (p.278).

Ursula, reflecting the view of Lawrence himself, sees a correspondence between man and his religious festivals. Christmas seems to suggest to her, as it does to Lawrence, the return of life to nature, a new creation and a new life (p.279). In this way Lawrence seems to equate Christmas with the ancient pagan fertility rituals devised to celebrate the return of life to nature. In this novel Lawrence is expressing the need for the revival of ancient rituals. He wants man to participate in the rituals of day and night, summer and winter, and so become at one with nature. He is demanding that Christmas as well as all Christian festivals should bring about a change in man's life: "Alas, that Christmas was only a domestic feast, a feast of sweetmeats and toys! Why did not the grown-ups also change their everyday hearts, and give way to ecstasy?" (p.280). Later Lawrence wrote that the way to restore the ancient mythic view and man's connection with nature is through the practice of certain rituals:

> We must get back into relation, vivid
> and nourishing relation to the cosmos

[25]D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.296.

> and the universe. The way is through daily ritual, and the re-awakening.[26]

For Lawrence, the Christian cycle should involve every human, for it embodies the cycle of creation: "Still it [the ecstasy] was there, even if it were faint and inadequate. The cycle of creation still wheeled in the Church year" (p.280).

To Ursula, as well as to Lawrence, Resurrection is more important than the Cross and the death of Christ. At one point Lawrence becomes too much involved with the spiritual epic he is creating and directly expresses his grievances at the modern attitude to Resurrection:

> Alas that a risen Christ has no place with us! Alas, that the memory of the passion of Sorrow and Death and the Grave holds triumph over the pale fact of Resurrection! (p.251).

Both Ursula and Lawrence attach great importance to the resurrection of Christ in the flesh. Consequently a connection is made between the myth of resurrection and the acceptance of the blood and the body as well as sexual fulfilment as the way to salvation. From now on, Ursula's main struggle is to realize God in the flesh, to make God part of her sensuous, physical experience.

As a reflection of Lawrence's thinking Ursula believes that myth or religion is something universal and eternal, though gods can be local:

> Gradually it dawned upon Ursula that all religion she knew was but a parti-

[26] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix II, p.510.

> cular clothing to a human aspiration. The aspiration was the real thing, - the clothing was a matter of taste or need. The Greeks had a naked Apollo, the Christians a white-robed Christ, the Buddhists a royal prince, the Egyptians their Osiris. Religions were local and religion was universal (pp. 341-342).

Through Ursula, Lawrence is expressing his idea that each country should choose its own god or gods to look after its own needs, and that the religious or mythic faculty is common to every race and to every man. As he wrote later: "The true religious faculty is the most powerful and the highest faculty in man, once he exercises it: And by the religious faculty we mean the inward worship of the creative life-mystery." [27] It is obvious from what Ursula is saying that Lawrence is supporting the idea of a polytheistic rather than a monotheistic religion, though he believes there is only one God or what he calls the "creative life-mystery". Ursula also realizes that God is not only love but fear as well: "In religion there were two great motives of fear and love" (p.341). This seems to point to Lawrence's concept of the dualism of God, but as yet he does not develop this conception any further.

Ursula's life has been a search for God, for salvation and redemption. She finds God in nature, in man and in the invisible. She is aware of the annual cycle of nature and its ritualistic movement. The moon and the stars are alive for her. She is searching for a man who will realize her

[27] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.608.

idea of a God inseparable from the flesh and the blood. As yet she cannot find real fulfilment. She believes in an invisible, undefinable God and is seeking a connection with that creative force. Still she has not yet reached the end and so she has to travel a long way before she can reach her goal. Her spiritual journey, together with the story of the spiritual development of the Brangwen family as a whole, makes the novel look like a spiritual epic.

Lawrence saw his art as inseparable from his religious experience: "Primarily I am a passionately religious man, and my novels must be written from the depth of my religious experience." [28] He also believed that man is destined to search for God: "As a thinking being, man is destined to seek God." [29] Moreover, for Lawrence, the novel enables man to seek God and realize one's religious vision:

> God is the flame - life in all the universe; multifarious flames, all colours and beauties and pains and sombreness, whichever the flame flames in your manhood, don't make water on it, says the novel.[30]

Myth, therefore, constitutes an important part in Lawrence's thought and art. The Rainbow is perhaps the work where Lawrence's best use of mythology occurs. In The Rainbow Lawrence's aims and purposes are almost submerged. Elisco

[28] Letter to Edward Garnett, 22 April 1914, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.273.

[29] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix II, p.628.

[30] Ibid., p.462.

Vivas is right when he asserts that in this novel Lawrence's religious experience is transmuted into art.[31] Indeed, Lawrence's ideas in this novel, far from being preached, are very successfully and artistically dramatized and presented. Lawrence's mythopoeic doctrine is integrated with plot and character in a way that does not distort the action and in a manner that Lawrence, whether before or after this novel, never managed to match or to surpass. Indeed, The Rainbow represents the peak of Lawrence's use of mythology.

The novel also makes use of ritual in the making of some of its most memorable and effective scenes. There is first the ritual corn harvest scene during which Will is depicted courting Anna (pp. 122-132). Will and Anna collecting the corn are more or less participating in a ritualistic action. It has been suggested that:

> the corn sheaves, lying in the 'hoary silver' of the moonlight reinforce the notion of the mythical union of sun and moon, and, by extension, of heaven and earth. The corn is symbolic of the fertility of the earth, while its golden color is considered an attribute of the sun.[32]

If that interpretation is accepted it is possible to add that the union of the moon and the sun reflects the pros-

[31]Elisco Vivas, D.H. Lawrence: The Failure and the Triumph of Art (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1960), p.98.

[32]Rose Gallo, Mythic Concepts in D.H. Lawrence. Ph. D. thesis, Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey, 1974, p.108.

pected agreement between Will and Anne who symbolically speaking, represent the sun and the moon on the mythological level. This hypothesis is borne out by the fact that Anna's and Will's decision to marry comes at the close of the scene. In other words, the ritual has, in a way, contributed to the union of Will and Anna. Moreover, the ritual gives the scene some archetypal or universal significance. As Rose Gallo writes: "As participants in the sheaf-gathering, Anna and Will become the human counterparts of the universal antithetical forces that generate all activity."[33]

The ritualistic nature of the sheaf-gathering scene has been emphasized by A.M. Brandbur who argues that "Will is an artist and he participates in the ritual dance of the corn-harvest with Anna, not as a farmer, but with the self-consciousness of the artist."[34] Thus the scene is intended to be ritualistic and not just the narration of an ordinary sheaf-gathering.

Another important ritualistic scene is the one that pictures Ursula's mystical union with the moon (pp. 319-323). This ritualistic action occurs twice in the novel. In the first scene Ursula is depicted having her communion and even consummation with the moon: "She stood filled with the moon, offering herself .... She wanted the moon to

[33]Rose Gallo, p.108.

[34]A.M. Brandbur, "The Ritual Corn Harves Scene in The Rainbow", The D.H. Lawrence Review, 6 (fall 1973), p.286.

fill in to her, she wanted more, more communion with the moon, consummation" (p.321). Through this union, Ursula becomes identified with the moon and is, mythically speaking, transmuted into a moon goddess. Thus she becomes more powerful, dominant and terrifying than before. Anton Skrebensky can no longer assume dominance over her and she becomes the power controlling the situation:

> Her hands and wrists felt immesurably hard and strong, like blades. He waited there beside her like a shadow which she wanted to dissipate, destroy as the moonlight destroys a darkness, annihilate, have done with (p.320).

The scene reveals Ursula's dissatisfaction with Skrebensky, probably because she considers him as inferior to her or because she does not like some qualities in him. As Rose Gallo observes:

> The moon and the girl [i.e. Ursula] represent those purgative forces that must expel those aspects of Anton that are detrimental to Ursula's female individuality.[35]

On another occasion Ursula and Skrebensky go to the seaside while the moon is shining bright in the night (pp. 477-48). The scene portrays Ursula's union not only with the moon but also with the water of the sea: "She gave her breast to the moon, her belly to the flashing, heaving water" (p.479). The union of Ursula with the moon and the sea suggests the mythic moon goddess as well as the Greek goddess Aphrodite who rose from the sea and was a moon goddess. Indeed Ursula's love affair with Skrebensky during this scene is reminiscent of the

[35]Rose Gallo, p.126.

sexuality of Aphrodite and her dominance over her lovers. The scene as a whole reveals the release of Ursula's dark, sensuous powers.

Another ritualistic scene is the naked dance of Anna in pregnancy (pp. 183-184). Anna dances while the rain is falling down. This might suggest some kind of fertility ritual, especially because she is big with child. Furthermore, her naked dance, the novel makes it clear, is similar to that of David dancing naked before his Creator: "She liked the story of David, who danced before the Lord, and uncovered himself exultingly (p.183). The aim of Anna's dance seems to be similar not only to that of David but also to the Dionysic dance and even to the ritualistic dance devised by man in the past to gain some power or to help him achieve some of his purposes. Similarly, in the novel, Anna dances with the aim of gaining power so that her husband does not dominate her: "She walked in her pride. And her battle was her own Lord's, her husband was delivered over" (p.183). As David, Anna is trying to assert her individuality: "David dancing naked before the Ark asserting the oneness, his oneness .... the egoistic God, I am!" [36] Moreover, the dance seems to be intended, as in the case of Ursula, to release Anna's sensuous, Aphrodisic powers and ecstasy. As Scott Sanders has observed:

> In The Rainbow Lawrence has celebrated the release of 'the dark sensual or Dionysic or Aphrodisic ecstasy, within

[36] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.380.

> the individual - one thinks of Anna's dance in pregnancy or Ursula's violent trances in the moonlight.[37]

One of the most important books that affected Lawrence's thinking and art during the period he was writing The Rainbow is Jane Harrison's Ancient Art and Ritual. Her emphasis on the death and revival of nature,[38] the collective life of primitive communities,[39] the connection between primitive man's life and the cycle of the seasons,[40] the sense of continuity that ancient man felt between himself and his surrounding,[41] the ancient ritualistic dance,[42] the pagan spring festivals devised to promote the fertility of nature[43] might have had some effect on the writing of the novel. Almost all these elements or something similar to them are used in the novel. However, all these things are adapted or incorporated with a remarkable success to Lawrence's purposes and are transmuted into art, for what we find in the novel is not anthropology but an artistic dramatization of it.

[37]Scott Sanders, D.H. Lawrence: The World of the Major Novels (London: Vision Press Ltd., 1973), p.106.

[38]Jane Ellen Harrison, Ancient Art and Ritual (London: Williams and Morgate, 1913), p.26.

[39]Ibid, p.37.

[40]Ibid, p.51.

[41]Ibid, p.54.

[42]Ibid, p.30.

[43]Ibid, p.61.

But more important than these elements in Jane Harrison's book is the world-wide phenomenon of the dying and resurrected god which she deals with in her book. "Osiris", she writes "stands for the prototype of the great class of resurrection gods who die that they may live again." [44] She also points out how the death and resurrection of those gods was connected with the death and revival of nature.[45] Perhaps it is after he had read Jane Harrison's book that Lawrence became more interested in the life-and-death pattern characteristic of mythic culture. The possibility of the influence of her book on Lawrence may become more easily accepted when we compare The Rainbow with The White Peacock, and Sons and Lovers. When such a comparison is made the reader can notice almost a new trend in Lawrence's animism and in his conception of life-and-death pattern. In The Rainbow nature is not only alive but the characters can draw power from it and their life is closely connected with the annual cycle. Moreover, one can feel in The Rainbow that Lawrence is more conscious of the pattern of death-and-life and is confident about its validity that it constitutes for him a sort of faith. Lawrence singles out Ancient Art and Ritual as one of the books from which he learnt a great deal: "I got a fearful lot out of a scrubby book Art and Ritual ... It is stupidly put, but it lets one in for an idea that helps one immensely." [46]

[44] Jane Ellen Harrison, Ancient Art and Ritual, (London: Williams and Morgate, 1913), p.15

[45] Ibid., p.23.

[46] Letter to Henry Savage, 22 December 1913, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.259.

Other books which might have had some influence on the writing of The Rainbow are Gilbert Murray's translations of Greek drama and some of his works on Greek tragedy, Nietzsche's "The Birth of Tragedy, and Henry Jenner's Christian Symbolism.

Lawrence was fascinated by Greek drama and seems to have read Gilbert Murray's Five Stages of Greek Religion and perhaps The Rise of the Greek Epic. In a letter to Henry Savage, Lawrence writes: "When you lend me some books about Greek religion and rise of Greek Drama or Egyptian influences - or things like that - I love them."[47] Perhaps Murray's books and translations contributed to Lawrence's interest in ritual and myth.

Nietzsche's influence on Lawrence is well known. Lawrence read Nietzsche in his youth but Nietzsche's influence on him continued throughout Lawrence's literary career. In The Rainbow some of the ideas expressed as well as Christianity are almost certainly influenced by Nietzsche. To Nietzsche, Lawrence may have owed his conception of the Dionysic myth and ritual. Nietzsche mentions how man could get back into oneness with nature and even reach the maternal womb of being, through the use of the Dionysic ecstasy. In the novel the ecstasy of Will Brangwen in the church (p.201), the naked dance of Anna (p.183), the ecstasy that Lawrence associates with Christmas (p.280) and Ursula's violent trances in the moonlight (pp. 319, 479) are perhaps allusions to the Dionysic

[47]Letter to Henry Savage, 2 December 1913, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.250.

ritual and the great ecstasy that is supposed to accompany it. These words of Lawrence may perhaps support my hypothesis:

> And I knew, as I received the book, that it was a kind of working up to the dark or Dionysic or Aphrodisic ecstasy, which does actually burst the world, burst the world-consciousness in every individual .... There is a great consummation in death, or sensual ecstasy, as in The Rainbow.[48]

The Dionysic ecstasy in the novel is similar to what Nietzsche said before Lawrence about the Dionysian myth and its relation to modern life. Moreover, Lawrence's regret for the loss of mystery and mythology from modern life (p.205) almost parallels Nietzsche's words: "Man, today, stripped of myth, stands famished among all his pasts and must dig frantically for roots, be it among the most remote antiquities."[49]

In a letter to Gordon Campbell, Lawrence writes:

> We have been reading a book on Christian Symbolism, which I liked very much, because it puts me into order. It is a little half-crown vol. in the 'Little Books on Art' series by Methuen. This is written by Mrs. Henry Jenner.[50]

In her book Mrs. Jenner discusses several Christian symbols including the circle as representing eternity,[51] the dove, the shepherd, the lamb, the fish, etc. Her book includes a

[48]Letter to Waldo Frank, 27 July 1917, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.519.

[49]Frederick Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy and the Geneology of Morals, (trans) Francis Cloffing (New York: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1956), p.137.

[50]Letter to Gordon Campbell, 19 December 1914, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.304.

[51]Henry Jenner, Christian Symbolism (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1910), p.35.

chapter on the architecture of churches and some church symbols. The symbolism of both the doom and the spire, she says, is "the same, reaching up and striving after heavenly things."[52] She also discusses Gothic architecture.[53] In addition, she points out that "the Apostolic Constitutions speak of the long form of the church as symbolizing a ship, the ark of salvation."[54] Generally speaking much of the symbolism she talks about is echoed in Lawrence's novel in one way or another.

Despite the possible influence of the several sources I have mentioned, there is no doubt that part of Lawrence's great achievement in The Rainbow is his ability to absorb his large source-material and to transform it into literary art, after recasting it to suit the requirements of his work.

[52] Henry Jenner, p.117.

[53] Ibid.,, p.117.

[54] Ibid.,, p.135.

Chapter Five

The Use of Mythology in Women in Love

In Women in Love Lawrence draws upon a wider range of mythology than he does in The Rainbow. He uses in this novel African and Norse myths and mythological symbols and shows a growing interest in Eastern mythologies such as those of Egypt and Babylonia. By the time he revised and published Women in Love Lawrence had read several books on anthropology and his wide reading during the period he was working on this novel is reflected in the large number of mythologies he incorporates in it.

Biblical mythology is drawn upon for the characterization of some of the characters in the novel, especially in the case of Gerald and Hermione. Gerald, who had accidentally killed his brother and is involved in the death of his sister, is frequently compared to Cain.[1] The association of Gerald with Cain is perhaps intended to remind the reader that Gerald's attitudes and behaviour in the novel are as much sinful against humanity and life as Cain's murder of his brother Abel. Another aim achieved by this allusion is perhaps to underline Gerald's isolation and to foreshadow his solitary death in the Alps. Moreover, the failure of Gerald's relation with Gudrun and his death in the Alps explained in terms of plot and

[1] D.H. Lawrence, Women in Love (Penguin Books, 1967), pp. 28, 192. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

character are nevertheless given a more universal reference by the implication of the Biblical parallel. By linking Gerald with Cain we are made to conclude that Gerald is a doomed character and that his material success is just temporary and ineffectual. Throughout the novel Gerald's life is depicted as a gradual process from death to life until he is finally frozen in the snow.

Hermione's quest for knowledge is seen in terms of biblical mythology. In the Bible Adam and Eve had to suffer as a price of their newly acquired knowledge. Before they became conscious everything was in perfect condition; but after they became conscious their life became full of toil and hardships. Similarly, in the novel Hermione and Gerald bring upon themselves the curse of Adam and Eve, as it were, by their desire for knowledge. As in the Biblical myth, Hermione's and Gerald's lives become more difficult and less happy as a result of their knowledge.

Lawrence draws upon biblical mythology to explain the situation of Hermione. Thus Hermione is presented with reference to the "Tree of Knowledge": "She was a leaf of the old great tree of knowledge that was withering now (p.329). In the Bible we read that God forbade man to eat from the "Tree of Knowledge" or he will die.[2] Lawrence is obviously drawing upon this biblical myth when he makes Hermione's decay and Gerald's fall the result of their excessive knowledge.

In Women in Love Lawrence uses the story and the chara-

[2]The Old Testament, Genesis 2, 17.

cters to voice the warning that an increase in knowledge increases the likelihood of corruption - a theme that is characteristic not only of Hebrew mythology but of mythology as a whole. Arthur C. Lovejoy and George Boas have shown that discontent with knowledge had been characteristic of the human mind in antiquity.[3] This is not to say that Lawrence is repeating what writers have been saying over so many centuries. Lawrence's novel is not a mere nostalgia for a golden age as were most of the writings in antiquity dealing with this theme, though it includes, as indeed most of Lawrence's works do, some praise for the original. What Lawrence does in Women in Love is that he takes the myth of the golden age or the paradisal past and uses it to create a better or even an ideal life for the future. As in the case of the works dealing with the glorious past or the myth of the golden age, there is in Lawrence's novel an urge for simplicity and a condemnation of excessive knowledge and material advancement. Sir Johua's intellectualism is made fun of (p.101) as much as Hermione's and Gerald's knowledge is condemned by showing it as a total failure. Gerald's mechanical system is shown as a devastating and ant-life factor. Hermione's sex in the head leads to the failure of her relation with Birkin. Indeed, for Lawrence it is conscious knowledge which is the cause of man's misery as it was the cause of his overthrow from the garden of Eden: "Why were we driven

[3]Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas, Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity (New York: Octagon Book, 1965).

out of Paradise? .... Not because we sinned, but because we got our sex into our head."[4] He even views excessive consciousness as the cause of man's destruction:

> Every race which has become self-conscious and idea-bound in the past has perished. We are really, far, far more life-stupid than the dead Greeks or the lost Etruscans.[5]

On the other hand, life and simplicity are praised. Birkin and Ursula who represent the "tree of life" as much as Gerald and Hermione represent the "tree of knowledge" are able to achieve fulfilment and happiness. Birkin and Ursula seem to be aspiring for a kind of life similar to that associated with the Golden Age. In the Golden Age man did not care about property. Similarly, Birkin and Ursula renounce property and posession when they decide to give away the chair they had bought (p.406). They also condemn luxury and private ownership.

> 'I don't want to inherit the earth,' she said. 'I don't want to inherit anything.'
> He closed his hands over hers.
> 'Neither do I. I want to be disinherited.' (p.408).

Earlier Birkin and Ursula had decided they do not want a house or a permanent home, preferring to be free and able to live anywhere:

[4]D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.81.

[5]Ibid., p.82.

> 'The truth is, we don't want things at all,' he replied. 'The thought of a house and furniture of my own is hateful to me.'
> This startled her for a moment. Then she replied:
> 'So it is to me. But one must live somewhere.'
> 'Not somewhere - anywhere,' he replied. (p.401).

While Birkin is speculating on his life in the future he remembers what Gudrun called "Rupert's Blessed Isles." (p.494). Several mythologies including Greek, Babylonian and Celtic speak of something like the "Isles of the Blest" or the "Fortunate Isles" inhabited by some blessed mortals, who do not die. Plato told of "Atlantis" or the submerged continent of which the "Isles of the Blest" were the surviving isles. The conclusion that might be drawn from the reference in the novel to the "Blessed Isles" is that Lawrence was perhaps thinking of Atlantis when he was writing the novel. As a matter of fact, Lawrence believed there existed a world before our own until it was destroyed by a flood. His theory was that the world before the flood had a different kind of knowledge," a science in terms of life."[6] In that world people wandered freely.[7] Lawrence adds that the wisdom of the ancient world is necessary for life in the future: "The spark is from dead wisdom, but the fire is life."[8] It is possible,

[6]D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.7.

[7]Ibid., p.6.

[8]Ibid., p.8.

then, to suppose that Birkin is dreaming of a world that will have a science of life similar to that which dominated such continents as Atlantis and the Polynesian Continent, as Lawrence believed.

Thus Birkin's imagination takes him back to the period before the mythical flood. In the same way, it carries him into the future where a better life can be established. The mythical past should be the point from which any fresh start could begin. The future, therefore, will be a combination of the mythical past and the present, and roughly corresponds to what Lawrence was referring to in his letters as "Rananim".

Lawrence started to think about "Rananim" nearly six months after the outbreak of the war. "Rananim" represented the kind of ideal life that Lawrence wanted. His search for myths and for lost continents was part of his desire to create an ideal world or at least a small area which could be the the nucleus of the new world. In Women in Love Birkin's "Blessed Isles" correspond to "Rananim". Lawrence's and Birkin's "Rananim" reminds us of the utopias that most mythologies of the world talk about. There is a world-wide myth that a golden age or a paradisal past existed in the beginning. Utopias are, perhaps, attempts to recreate that past. Similarly, Birkin's concern with some imaginary isles suggests Lawrence's attempt to restore that golden age or paradisal past. As in the golden age myths, Lawrence's "Rananim" is perhaps the result of an unconscious desire to return to a primordial stage where man can be at

one with God and the universe. In the new society proposed by Birkin money and property would disappear, and so this might indicate thatBirkin's society is a way to the perfected life with which paradisal myths are concerned.

As a mythological novel Women in Love attributes the loss of a golden age to man's increasing consciousness and growing knowledge. And as a mythological work again, Lawrence's novel attempts to restore man to his paradisal past through the weakening of his mental consciousness and the increase of his instinctive feelings. That the novel envisions the end of one world to be replaced by a new and better one associates the novel with the myth of the cosmological cycles, according to which the world is continually destroyed and re-created. Periodic destruction and re-creation of the universe is characteristic of world mythology. Lawrence himself believed in the cyclical destruction and regeneration of the world: "Myself I don't believe in evolution .... I prefer to believe in what the Aztecs called Suns: that is, worlds successively created and destroyed."[9] Earlier he wrote: "I do not believe in evolution, but in the strangeness and rainbow-change of ever-renewed creative civilizations."[10]

Several critics have pointed out the apocalyptic vision of Women in Love. For Scott Sanders, the novel

[9]D.H. Lawrence, Mornings in Mexico and Etruscan Places (Melbourne: London: Toronto: William Hienemann Ltd., 1956), p.4.

[10]D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.8.

"fairly teems with apocalyptic imagery. Gudrun and Loerke envision the world ending by a cataclysmic explosion, or by war, or by glaciation ..... Birkin also imagines universal annihilation."[11] For Frank Kermode: "The apocalyptic climax of the .... /novel/ reflects the structure of the New Testament."[12] Indeed, the ideas, the language and the imagery of Lawrence's novel bear great resemblance to the Book of Revelation. The novel indicates that the world has almost reached an end and that it needs a new start. It also sees a corrupt and decaying world. Images of dissolution, disintegration and corruption fill the novel. Hermione is pictured as a dead leaf or a rotten fruit; Gerald and his father undergo a gradual process of dissolution before their final death; the African statuette as well as Loerke's art represent a decaying period and are concrete images of decay; humanity is compared to a butterfly that will never get beyond the caterpillar stage but will rot in the chrysalis (p.143). Moreover, people are pictured as dry-rotten fruits, withering leaves, apples of Sodom, Dead Sea Fruit and gall-apples (p.140). In Birkin's view modern life springs from the "dark river of dissolution" (p.143) and Gerald and Gudrun are born from the river of corruption (p.193). In one of his letters

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

[12] Frank Kermode, "Lawrence and the Apocalyptic Types", Critical Quarterly, X (1968), p.20.

to Halliday, Birkin expresses "a desire for the reduction-process in oneself, a reducing back to the origin, a return along the Flux of Corruption, tothe original rudimentary conditions of being" (p.431). Halliday and the other members of his tipsy party compare Birkin to Jesus (p.431), and his words to the scriptures (p. 432).

However, Lawrence's apocalyptic vision is not a slavish imitation of the Bible. In the Bible, apocalypse is generally the result of people's corruption. In Lawrence's novel corruption is not only condemned as in the Bible; it is condemned and praised at the same time, for without corruption, as the novel indicates, there can be no creation. The problem, however, is only with those people who do not accept corruption as a necessity and as an essential part of creation and hold on in the face of the process of corruption without accepting it, and so prevent themselves from undergoing any process of regeneration. This tendency is evident in the case of Hermione who would rather remain as a withering leaf not allowing herself to be regenerated and of Old Crich who does not accept the process of death as part of the cycle of life and so drags on instead of accepting reduction as part of renewal. Gerald, who represents the mechanical system, is not in a position to accept organic life with its process of decay and rebirth. Birkin and Ursula, on the other hand, accept disintegration and reduction as an integral part of life and so they are capable of renewal

and regeneration. On the mythological level this process of decay and regeneration may be either a kind of death and rebirth or some sort of metamorphosis. Both of these two themes are common to world mythology. Lawrence is, therefore, drawing upon this mythological aspect for his own purposes.

Lawrence's acceptance of corruption as part of re-creation is connected with his cyclical view of life. For him the creative principle at the beginning of a period is the means of its destruction at the end of that period:

> What was a creation God, Quranos, Kronos, becomes at the end of the time-period our destroyer and devourer. The god of the beginning of an era is the evil principle at the end of that era. For time still moves in circles.[13]

As a matter offact Lawrence's vision is not completely apocalyptic in the biblical sense of the word. According to the biblical tradition the world will be destroyed but paradisal life will be restored for ever. In Lawrence's view the world does not stop at the end of one cycle; rather it is a permanent process of cyclical destruction and creation. As evident from his conception of a gradual deterioration in every era, the beginning of an era is the best part of it, the rest being a gradual decline from that perfect state. However, this idea is basically mythical,

[13] D.H. Lawrence, Apocalypse, p.229.

for, according to the mythic view, man's history has always been a decline from a state of perfection and complete happiness.

Myth, therefore, underlies Lawrence's concepts and the structural principles of his art. The meaning of the novel as well as its general framework are rooted in myth. Indeed the plot can be better understood if the underlying mythic substructure is more or less explored. It is almost solely within a mythic context that Lawrence's insistence on disintegration as a prerequisite step for regeneration can be fully understood and willingly accepted. Thus from the mythic view-point Birkin's dictum that "'When we really want to go for something better, we shall smash the old'" can be more fully appreciated.

In Women in Love Lawrence takes up again the biblical myth of the Sons of God getting married to the daughters of men. He adapts the myth to express the separateness or the wonderful and mystical relationship that exists between Birkin and Ursula. At one point Ursula recognizes that Birkin is treating her as if they were two separate individuals. She immediately recalls the biblical story of the sons of God and the daughters of men:

> He seemed still so separate .....
> She saw a strange creature from
> another world in him. It was as if
> she were enchanted, and everything
> was metamorphosed. She recalled again
> the old magic of the Book of Genesis,
> where the sons of God saw the daughters
> of men, that they were fair. And he
> was one of these (p.352).

On another occasion she realizes that Birkin's passion is not an ordinary thing and that only a son of God could possess that passion.

> It was the strange reality of his being, the very stuff of being, there in the straight downflow of the thighs. It was here she discovered him one of the sons of God such as were in the beginning of the world, not a man, something other, something more (p.353).

Lawrence's use of the myth of the sons of God achieves several purposes. First, it underlines the magic and the sense of wonder that Lawrence envisioned in the relation between a man and a woman. Second, it gives the relation a touch of religiosity and sacredness. And third, it suggests the phallic consciousness which Lawrence associated with ancient cultures which were not as yet contaminated by excessive mental consciousness:

> He stood there in his strange, whole body, that had its marvellous fountains, like the bodies of the sons of God who were in the beginning .... She had thought there was no source deeper than the phallic source (p.354).

Lawrence, in other words, wants to go back to the origins, to the days when the relation between a man and a woman was a mystery. He also treats marriage as a sacred archetype, something modelled on the marriage of the gods.

Through phallic or blood consciousness Lawrence wants to revive the cult of Eros or something similar to that. In this novel phallic consciousness seems to be Lawrence's new religion of love. Although Lawrence couches his ideas

in biblical terminology and atmosphere, the basic root of his phallic consciousness can be found in ancient phallic cults and myths. It is, to a large extent, a re-creation of the ancient cults of fecundity and fertility and a revival of the old myth about the intelligence of the heart. As Lawrence once observed:

> In the blood we have our strongest self-knowledge .... The ancients said that the heart was the seat of understanding. And so it is: it is the seat of the primal sensual understanding, the seat of the passional self-consciousness.[14]

In his "Foreword to Women in Love" in 1920 Lawrence defended the novel against accusations of Eroticism:

> In America the chief accusation seems to be one of Eroticism. This is odd, rather puzzling to my mind. Which Eros? Eros of the jaunty 'amours', or Eros of the sacred mysteries? And if the latter, why accuse, why not respect, even venerate.[15]

Thus Lawrence draws upon ancient phallic cults to establish a respectable religion of love that can be as sacred as spiritual religions. Later Lawrence wrote: "Let us hesitate no longer to announce that the sensual passions and mysteries are equally sacred with the spiritual mysteries and passions."[16]

[14] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix II, p.236.

[15] Ibid., p.275.

[16] Ibid., p.275.

It is through this mysterious phallic consciousness in a man or a woman that they can become the quivalent of a god or a goddess. In Apocalypse Lawrence asserts that the Greeks called the mysterious or the dragon in man his "god". Thus it is through the presence of phallic consciousness or the dragon in him that Birkin becomes a "god" or a hero:

> Man 'worshipped' the dragon. A hero was a hero, in the great past, when he conquered the hostile dragon, when he had the power of the dragon with him in his limbs and breast.[18]

The new phallic religion would enable one to achieve union with God or to realize the divine through the sexual union between a man and a woman. As Lawrence once observed: "I can become one with God, consummated into eternity, by taking the rod down the senses into the utter darkness of power, till I am one with the darkness and the initial power."[19] Through the sexual union a new rebirth is achieved: "'I want love that is like sleep, like being born again, vulnerable as a baby that just comes into the world'" (p.208). Thus the sexual union becomes some kind of ritualistic death, death that is part of the ritual of initiation and rebirth. As Lawrence puts it: "Death is a great consummation, a consummating experience. It is a development from life" (p.214). The sexual act is a kind

[18] D.H. Lawrence, Apocalypse, p.222.

[19] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix II, p.377.

of return to the womb; hence it entails a new rebirth: "It is like death - I do not want to die from this life - and yet it is more than life. One is delivered over like a naked infant from the womb" (p.208).

It is evident from what has been said that Lawrence models the sexual union on some archetypal rituals especially initiation rituals. As Mircea Eliade writes: "The majority of initiatory ordeals more or less clearly imply a ritual death followed by resurrection or a new birth."[20] Lawrence's insistence on "death" in the sexual act as a step towards re-creation can also be linked with rituals. According to Mircea Eliade, in ritual, "in order to be created anew, the old world must first be annihilated."[21] Even the references to darkness in general and the darkness of the womb in particular also suggest some connection with initiation rituals: "Initiatory death often symbolized ... by darkness, by cosmic night, by the telluric womb, the hut, the belly of a monster."[22] Thus the "death" that Lawrence insists upon whether in ordinary life or in the sexual act can be linked with the initiatory death which, as Eliade puts it, is a "recommencement, never an end."[23] In both

[20] Mircea Eliade, "Introduction," Birth and Rebirth: The Religious Meanings of Initiation in Human Culture, (trans) R. Trask (London: Harvill Press, 1961), p.xii.

[21] Ibid., p.xiii. , 1961), p.xi

[22] Ibid., p.xiv.

[23] Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, (trans) Philip Mairet, Introduction, p. 224.

cases death belongs to the mimic death of the initiation ceremonies, the primary purpose of which is to effect a mimic resurrection. And as in primitive rituals[24] the purpose of the sexual act is the furtherance or the conservation of life, for in every time a sexual union takes place there follows a new rebirth.

Lawrence's idea of replacing traditional love and sex by some mystic blood or phallic consciousness is closely connected with his conception of the relation between man and woman in our modern world which he saw was similar to the old situation when woman was looked upon as a great mother or mother earth. In mythology the earth is usually associated with the female principle and the sky with the male principle. Most mythologies of the world animate heaven and earth and consider them as equivalent to a man and a woman. The marriage of heaven, therefore, became some kind of a mythological archetype. Woman or earth became the mother of all things, the origin of creation. A return to the womb therefore is, mythically speaking, a return to mother-earth, to the source of all life - a new creation. As a mythological writer or a myth-maker Lawrence must have realized all this and recognized that to make the sexual union a kind of return to the womb or mother-earth would make him look as if he were an advocator of the old myth which enabled woman to gain some

[24]Jane Harrison, Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion (Cambridge: The University Press, 1921) p.29.

ascendancy over man and with which he did not agree. And so it is perhaps because of his awareness of all this that he puts great emphasis on that polarity and the balance between a man and a woman:

> He believed in sex marriage. But beyond this, he wanted a further conjunction, where man had being and woman had being, two pure beings, each constituting the freedom of the other, balancing each other like two poles of one force, like two angels, or two demons (p.224).

Lawrence saw that since the present cycle of human life began sexual separation and polarity between a man and a woman have not been complete. It is time, therefore, for a new era to come where the polarization of the sexes can be achieved.

> In the old age, before sex was, we were mixed, each one a mixture. The process of singling into individuality resulted into the great polarization of sex. The womanly drew to one side, the manly to the other. But the separation was imperfect even then. And so our world-cycle passes. There is now to come the new day, when we are beings each of us, fulfilled in difference. The man is pure man, the woman pure woman, they are perfectly polarized (p.225).

It is worth noticing here that Lawrence's view of creation and sexual relationship is rooted in mythology. The concept of mixed sex implies a reference to the legend in Plato's Symposium according to which man was originally made of male and female joined together but were separated

by Zeus and Apollo, thus creating man and woman.[25] Moreover, the reference to imperfect polarization contains an allusion to the myth of the great mother which, Lawrence believed, has been the guiding principle in our era.[26] It is this traditional concept that Lawrence seems to be insistent upon bringing to an end:

> It filled him with almost insane fury, this calm assumption of the Magna Mater, that all was hers, because she has borne it. Man was hers because she had borne him ..... He had a horror of the Magna Mater, she was detestable (p.224).

It is obvious that Lawrence borrows some mythic terms and concepts to describe modern woman as being possessive and domineering. Such is Ursula before she learns the principles of the new phallic religion from Birkin: "She too was the awful, arrogant queen of life as if she were a queen bee on whom all the rest depended. He knew the unthinkable overweening assumption of primacy in her" (pp. 224-225). Gudrun and Hermione also behave as if they were the Magna Mater. They consider man as being fragments that belong to them, and they want man to worship them and to belong to them like their infants. Hermione tries to bully Birkin (p.113). She is voluptuous and

[25]Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By, p.79. See also Plato, The Myths of Plato (trans.) J.A. Stewart (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1905), pp. 401-403.

[26]D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.95.

possessive (p.117). She also assumes the role of a superior mother (p.336) and desires to be worshipped as a great mother (p.346).

Gudrun and Gerald are almost a replica of the archetypal model of the mother-goddess and her son-lover: "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 her and was made whole" (p.389). Thus Gudrun's attitude is based on the myth of the goddess who uses her youthful attendant as her tool. Part of Lawrence's purpose in the use of this myth as the basis of the relation between Gudrun and Gerald is perhaps to suggest how the great industrial magnate whose power has been established solely on an inorganic mechanical system can become a dependent child. Although Gerald triumphs over the machine and almost enslaves his workers he behaves with Gudrun like an infant expecting to be nursed and as an attendant ready to worship her. The result is that he cannot find fulfilment and a total failure is inevitable.

Blood consciousness is also connected with man-to-man relationship. The blood relationship which Birkin is trying to establish between himself and Gerald is perhaps based on the old myth that the mixing of blood gives sacredness to the oath taken by two men who have pledged friendship to each other. When Gerald and Birkin are talking about their eternal friendship they recall the

old story of the German Knights who used the mingling of blood as a way of pledging to be true to each other (p.232). More specifically, this scene might have been based on Wagner's music dramas where Siegfried and Gunther pledge blood-brotherhood by cutting a wound in the arm and mixing it with wine.[27] Thus Lawrence draws upon mythology in general and upon Norse mythology in particular for his treatment of the blood brotherhood and friendship between Birkin and Gerald.

The wrestling scene is perhaps an imitation of the rubbing of the arms against each other as was practised among the characters of the Icelandic Sagas and Eddas as a sign of friendship. Thus the wrestling scene is primarily ritualistic. Indeed at the end of their wrestling Birkin asks Gerald whether their wrestling has pledged anything (p.308) as if it were a ritual carried out to achieve a certain purpose as rituals usually are.

Although the ritualistic nature of the wrestling scene may give the friendship of Birkin and Gerald a sense of sacredness and religiosity the ironic nature of the scene may be discerned from the allusion to the pledge in Norse mythology between Siegfried and Gunther whose pledge was broken after a short period of its taking.

Lawrence's interest in Norse mythology, as I pointed out in the chapter on The Trespasser, goes back to his

[27]Richard Wagner, The Dusks of the Gods, Act 1, p.25.

early years as a writer. Apart from the myth which I have just mentioned Lawrence's debt to Norse mythology can be recognized in his depiction of some of the characters in the novel. In his thesis on D.H. Lawrence, Billy James Pace points out that Gudrun's name is derived from Norse mythology: "The character Gudrun," he says, "appears in the Eddas and in the Volsung Sagas, sources for Wagner's Ring, where she also appears."[28] He also asserts that "the name Loerke ... suggests the god Loki."[29] However, F.R. Leavis was perhaps the first critic to draw attention to the resemblance between Loerke and the god Loki in Norse mythology.[30] Like Leavis, Harry T. Moore saw a connection between Loerke and Loki. "This gnomish figure with full, mouse-like eyes," he writes, "seems to have much in common with Loki, the evil one of Scandinavian mythology."[31] Neither Leavis nor Moore elaborates on those things which Loerke has in common with Loki. Billy James Pace also says very little about the similarity between these two figures. A more detailed discussion of the subject is, therefore, justified.

[28]Billy James Pace, D.H. Lawrence's Use in His Novels of Germanic and Celtic Myth from the Music Dramas of Richard Wagner, p.120.

[29]Ibid., p.126.

[30]F.R. Leavis, D.H. Lawrence: Novelist (Penguin Books, 1968), p.176.

[31]Harry T. Moore, The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence, p.127.

There is a great resemblance between the character Loerke and the mythological figure Loki. Norse mythology presents Loki as a small, agile, cunning, malicious, mischievous figure who can easily disguise or change himself into a woman or an animal.[32] In Norse mythology Loki is associated with dwarfs and is presented as a Satanic figure.[33] He is also a thief, a raper and a deceiver and a homosexual.[34] He is known to have seduced Wotan's wife.[35] He is "an ambivalent character, neither wholly good nor wholly bad, although in Snori's tales the bad side predominates."[36] He is also the companion of the gods, especially Balder.[37] He is "fair and beautiful of face, but evil in disposition."[38]

In the novel we read that "Herr Loerke was the little

[32]P. Grappin, "Germanic Lands: The Mortal Gods," World Mythology (ed.) Pierre Grimal (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1963), p.378.

[33]Ibid., p.380.

[34]E.O.G. Turvill-Peter, Myth and Religion of the North: The Religion of Scandinavia (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1964), p.127.

[35]Ibid., p.131.

[36]H.R. Ellis Davidson, Gods and myths of Northern Europe (Penguin Books, 1971), p.176.

[37]Ibid., p.37.

[38]Snorre, The Younger Edda, (ed.) Rasmus B. Anderson (London: Trubner & Co., 1880), p.91.

man with the boyish figure" (p.456). He is "a maker of mischievous work-jokes, that were sometimes very clever, but which often were not" (p.474). Loerke entertains his companions as Loki entertains the gods but like Loki his humour can become sardonic and mocking (p.456). There are many references to Loerke as an animal: He is compared to a mouse (p.456), a rabbit (p.475), a troll (p.475 (a word originally derived from Norse mythology), a bat (p.480) and a rat (p.481). Loerke's hands look like talons (p.476). He has a dwarfish figure (p.474) and looks as devilish as Loki. His relation with Gerald andGudrun shows him as a cunning trickster who, by his craftiness and deceit, tries to seduce Gudrun perhaps as Loki seduced Thor's wife. Indeed he carries out his attempt to seduce Gudrun under the illusion that she might be Gerald's wife. Loerke seems to be a homosexual as his mythological model is (p.530). Like Loki who accompanies Balder, the youthful god in Norse mythology, Loerke accompanies Leitner who "was a great sportsman, very handsome with his big limbs and his blue eyes" (p.479). The ambivalence of Loerke's character is as obvious as that of his mythological counterpart. For Gudrun he is "so attractive, and so repulsive at once" (p.464) and "his licentiousness was repulsively attractive" (p.511). If Gudrun finds him occasionally attractive Gerald finds him utterly repulsive (p.510). Like Loki

who plays a part in the destruction of the world,[39] Loerke lives in a decadent and corrupt period of man's history and is involved in the symbolic death of Gerald in the snows of the Arctic region whose cold and atmosphere are not different from the cold winter during which, according to Norse mythology, the world will come to an end. Like Loki, he is finally punished for his wickedness when Gerald knocks him down (p.530), before he makes his last drift towards the deadly snow.

Billy James Pace has traced some parallels between some figures in Norse mythology and Gerald and Gudrun in Lawrence's novel. He asserts that Gudrun's "primary function is to wreak vengeance upon Gerald Crich."[40] He then goes on to say that Gudrun's desire for revenge parallels that of Brunhilde in Norse mythology: "Lawrence models his Gudrun - at least in her character as avenger - on Wagner's Brunhilde who tragically takes revenge on Siegfried whom she believes has tricked and betrayed her."[41]

Furthermore Billy James Pace compares Gerald to Alberich. "Gerald's physical and mental characteristics sometimes suggest Alberich, surrounded by Rhinemaidens,

[39] H.R. Ellis Davidson, Gods and Myths of Northern Europe, p.177.

[40] Billy James Pace, p.199.

[41] Ibid., p.199.

diving for gold in the Rhine."[42] Another parallel between these two figures is their inability to love.[43] Pace also suggests parallels between Gerald's interest in money and his treatment of his workers and Alberich's desire to get more gold and his enslaving of his men.[44] As Gerald kills his brother, claims Pace, Alberich subdues his brother Mime.[45] Like Alberich, Gerald introduces new techniques to get more gold from the ground.[46]

Most of these parallels sound sensible but the problem with Pace's comparisons is that he finds similarities not only between Gerald and Alberich but also between Gerald and Wotan[47] and Gerald and Siegfried[48] who are completely different from Alberich and Gerald as well. This may well lead us to believe that some of the parallels that Pace draws between Gerald and some figures in Norse mythology are somewhat far-fetched and possibly arbitrary.

[42]Billy James Pace, p.127.

[43]Ibid., p.127.

[44]Ibid., p.133.

[45]Ibid., p.138.

[46]Ibid., p.138.

[47]Ibid., p.124.

[48]Ibid., p.139.

Women in Love shows Lawrence's acquaintance with African mythology. The African statue in Halliday's house is a kind of fetish and the scene shows that the statue might have been worshipped as a fetish by the tribe for whom it was first created. Perhaps the statue represents some old African cult devoted to physical and sensual worship. After looking at the carved figure of the African woman Birkin comments: "She had thousands of years of purely sensual, purely unspiritual knowledge behind her" (p.285). He also concludes that among the people to whom this woman belonged there must have occurred a period of decay in which a separation between physical or sensual knowledge and mental knowledge took place:

> It must have been thousands of years since her race had died, mystically: that is, since the relation between the senses and the outspoken mind had broken, leaving the experience all in one sort, mystically sensual (p.285).

Here Lawrence is talking about two periods: the period before the statue, which was a synthesis of sensual and mental knowledge and the period in which a separation took place and knowledge became completely sensual and sensual knowledge was worshipped as reflected in the fetish. The first period seems to belong to the pagan world which Lawrence talks about in his Foreword to Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious:

> I honestly think that the great pagan world of which Egypt and Greece were

> the last living terms, the great pagan world which preceded our own era, once had a vast and perhaps perfect science of its own, a science in terms of life.[49]

What is mythological about that pre-statue period is that its knowledge was "erotic, invested in a large priesthood,"[50] like the knowledge of the pagan world that Lawrence talks about. Moreover, since the origin of the statue is West Africa it is possible that the period before sensual knowledge started belongs to Atlantis, the mythical continent which Lawrence read about in Leo Frobenius. As Lawrence tells us: "/Frobenius/ says there was a great West African-Zomban (?)-civilization, which preceded Egypt and Carthage, and gave rise to the Atlantic myth."[51] The statue as an image of sensual worship is perhaps a relic of some lost knowledge which had degenerated in the form of myth and symbol. As Lawrence puts it, after the flood

> some degenerated naturally into cave men ... and some wandered savage in Africa, and some like Druids or Etruscans or Chaldeans or Amerindians or Chinese, refused to forget, but taught the old wisdom, only in its half-forgotten,

[49] D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.6.

[50] Ibid., p.6.

[51] Letter to Cecil Gray, 18 April 1918, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.550.

> symbolic forms. More or less forgotten, as knowledge: remembered as ritual, gesture and myth-story.[52]

Sensual worship, however, is not restricted to West Africa. The mystical sensualism of the African statue recalls the myth of pygmalion where the statue can be seen as an embodiment of sensuality.

The African woman, because her face looks like a beetle's, reminds Birkin of the bull-rolling scarab that the old Egyptians worshipped because of their belief in "the principle of knowledge in dissolution and corruption" (p.286). By and large, the African statue, like the Egyptian scarab, reveals, according to Birkin, some mystery, the mystery of corruption and decay that can be worshipped as a cult, especially after a fall from the principle of creative knowledge has taken place.

The character of the statue, with its prominent features and its nakedness together with the emphasis on female nakedness to the exclusion of any male nakedness lead us to associate the statue with the mythic period of human history. As Joseph Campbell tells us: "In the earliest ritual art naked female form is extremely prominent, whereas the male is usually ornamented or masked."[53]

A Central scene in the novel where the theme of mythology is of paramount importance is the moon scene. In

[52] D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.7.

[53] Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology, p.59.

this scene Birkin throws some dead flower-husks on to the water and curses Cybele, the Babylonian deity (p.238). Then he throws a stone at the pond and immediately the bright moon in the water is distorted except for a narrow area on the surface of the water where the moon persists in gathering itself. Birkin stones the moon repeatedly. In the meantime Ursula has been watching with amazement until she gets dizzy. When she is able to talk she tells Birkin to stop stoning the moon because it has not done him any harm.

The moon scene is deeply rooted in myth. Birkin's cursing of the goddess Cybele after throwing some flower-husks on to the water seems to be a symbolic expression of his fear of the old moon goddess. Cybele of Babylon, who was later identified with Aphrodite in Greece and Venus in Rome, was a moon goddess and a nature and fertility deity as well. Such goddesses as Artemis, Diana, Juno, Astarte, Isis were also goddesses of the moon and nature. In Mexican mythology Metzli was the moon-goddess whose anger usually caused maladies.[54] In myth all these goddesses appear to have had a possessive and assertive character besides their prodigious power and great prestige on the grounds of their identification with "mother earth."

[54]Lewis Spence, The Civilization of Ancient Mexico (Cambridge: The University Press, 1912), p.75.

As Eliseo Vivas writes, Cybele "was a terrible goddess, for she destroyed the sacred King who mated with her on a mountain top by tearing out his sexual organs."[55] Astarte, we are told, superseded the male deity of Baal and became the supreme deity in Babylon.[56] I have also pointed out in the first chapter of this thesis that moon goddesses seem to have had power over their lovers be it Tammuz, Attis, Adonis, Eros, Cupid, Endymion, Osiris, etc., and that the moon was usually associated with women.

Bearing all this in mind it is easy to understand why Birkin stones the moon and to realize the significance of his stoning. Birkin has been dissatisfied with traditional love which is based on female superiority as laid down by the story of the moon-goddess and her subservient lover, and to which Ursula's love belongs, especially in the beginning. In stoning the moon Birkin is expressing his anger at women's insistence on their superiority over their lovers and his fear of their self-assertion and egotism. Later in the scene he makes his message very clear when he tells Ursula: "I want you to drop your assertive will" (p.283). By trying to make

[55]Eliseo Vivas, D.H. Lawrence: The Failure and the Triumph of Art, p.260.

[56]Zelia Nuttall, The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations (Cambridge, Mass: Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology, Harvard, 1901), p.345.

the moon disappear from the pond altogether Birkin is rejecting the tendency of women to assume superiority over men as the female deities tended to do with their youthful lovers.

A further point worth mentioning in connection with the moon is that it is depicted as a fearful and a hard object. Even to Ursula the moon "seemed so mysterious, with its white and deathly smile .... She hurried on, cowering from the white planet" (p.276). Like Birkin, Ursula dislikes the moon: "For some reason she disliked it" (p.277). For Ursula also the moon remains a symbol of sterility and abstraction: "She wished for something else out of the night, she wanted another night, not this moon-brilliant hardness" (p.277). Ursula's attitude contains the mythical terror of the moon. And so Lawrence's treatment of the moon as an object of terror is by no means arbitrary or personal. In mythology, the moon, as T.H. Robinson tells us, was considered either as kindly and beneficient or as dangerous and terrifying."[57] Lawrence is, therefore, following the lines of mythology when he associates the moon with terror, abstraction and hardness in Women in Love and elsewhere. Lawrence once wrote: "Oh, open silently the deep that has no end, and

[57] T.H. Robinson, "Hebrew Myths," Myth and Ritual (ed.) S.H. Hooke, pp. 190-191.

do not turn the horns of the moon against me."[58]

Lawrence conceived Women in Love as, more or less, a sequel to The Rainbow and thought of calling it Noah's Ark[59] – a reference to the rainbow as the sign of the covenant between God and Noah during the Flood and to Noah's ark which survived the Flood and was the refuge in which life was preserved. In other words, if The Rainbow is a novel about destruction, Women in Love is a novel about redemption and salvation; if The Rainbow contains the dream and the hope for a new life to come, Women in Love translates these hopes and dreams into reality. Ursula who has been running through many hardships in the first novel and has shown much dissatisfaction with her world while dreaming about the sons of God but finding only false gods as Skrebensky, finally finds her dreams come true in the form of her saviour Rupert Birkin who, like other prophets, will lay down the new principles and the guidelines for the new era. Lawrence's words about the ark as the refuge of life and the source of a new life are enlightening:

> And that is what it is, the Ark, the Arx, the womb. The womb of all the world, that brought forth all the world, that brought forth all the

[58] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.131.

[59] Letter to Joseph Mannsel, 18 November 1917, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.533.

> creatures. The womb, the arx, where life retreats in the last refuge. The womb, the ark of the covenant, in which lies the mystery of eternal life, the manna and the mysteries.[60]

The anthropological study of myth established firmly by Tylor and Frazer had a considerable influence on the writing of Women in Love. Lawrence knew about Frazer indirectly through his reading of Jane Harrison's Ancient Art and Ritual which reflects a large part of Frazer's views. But his first direct knowledge of Frazer came towards the end of 1915: "I have been reading Frazer's Golden Bough and Totemism and Exogamy,"[61] writes Lawrence in one of his letters. After his reading of Frazer Lawrence asserted:

> Now I am convinced of what I believed when I was about twenty - that there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and the nerve system: there is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness.[62]

Thus Lawrence has blood consciousness in common with Frazer. Allowing that Lawrence knew about blood consciousness before he read Frazer, he never used it before so openly and so largely as/in Women in Love. Blood

[60] D.H. Lawrence, Mornings in Mexico and Etruscan Places, p.14.

[61] Letter to Bertrand Russell, 8 December 1915, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.393.

[62] Ibid., p.393.

consciousness or the capacity for knowledge in the blood includes blood brotherhood as well as phallic knowledge, itself similar to the phallic cults and mystery sex rituals of ancient man, as explained in Frazer's book.

Perhaps Frazer gave Lawrence some assurance and encouragement in the use of myth, especially the myth of the ever-dying, ever-resurrected vegetative gods and the myth of the mother-goddess and her son-lover. From Frazer Lawrence might have added to his knowledge of Egyptian pharaohs to whom he refers in the novel (p.358). From him also Lawrence might have derived knowledge of fetishism and totemism, and the African statue might be a good evidence. By and large Frazer's influence on Lawrence is that, besides suggesting to him some new ideas and assuring him over the use of some others, made Lawrence more interested in myth and ritual.

Another book which Lawrence seemed to have borrowed from is Edward Tylor's Primitive Culture. "It is a very good sound substantial book, I had rather read it than The Golden Bough or Gilbert Murray,"[63] writes Lawrence about Tylor's book. Lawrence might have liked Tylor's book more than Frazer's because it treats the animistic vision

[63]Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 7 April 1916, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.466.

and myths of ancient man with a more sympathetic attitude. In Women in Love Birkin's going out to nature completely naked and his becoming at one with nature (pp. 119-120) may resemble the kind of animism that Tylor deals with in his book. Another correspondence between the novel and Tylor's book is the feeling of continuity that some of the characters like Birkin feel between themselves and animals. Birkin, for example, sees in the behaviour of the cat an example of keeping the female into a pure and stable equilibrium with the male and compares it to the equilibrium which he believes Adam kept between himself and Eve in Paradise (p.167).

Tylor's theory of the degeneration of culture from a higher to a lower level[64] bears some resemblance to Lawrence's ideas about dissolution and corruption. Apart from this, Tylor's discussion of fetishism and his assertion that West Africa is a world of fetishes[65] might have enhanced Lawrence's interest in the subject and added some new information to Lawrence's knowledge of fetishism.

By the time Women in Love was revised and published

[64]Edward B. Tylor, Primitive Culture (London: John Murray, 1929), Vol. I, p.38.

[65]Ibid.,Vol. II, p.158.

in 1920 Lawrence had read John Burnet's Early Greek philosophy,[66] James Henry Breasted's A History of Egypt,[67] some books on the Druids,[68] H.P. Blavatsky's Isis Unveiled and The Secret Doctrine,[69] William James's varieties of Religious Experience,[70] some of C.G. Jung's writings[71] and many other books and magazines on literature, history, occultism and other subjects.

In Burnet's book Lawrence found the idea of a divine cosmos reflected in Anaximander's divine Boundless and Anaxime's divine air.[72] Perhaps Lawrence's knowledge of these Greek philosophers encouraged him to become more and more antagonistic towards traditional Christian doctrine: "I have been wrong, much too christian in my

[66]Letter to Dollie Radford, 5 September 1916, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, pp.473-474.

[67]Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 15 February 1916, Ibid, p.426.

[68]Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 21 January 1916, p.416.

[69]William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.133. See also Letter to Cecil Gray, 18 April 1916, Vol. I, p.550.

[70]Letter to S.S. Koteliansky, 9 May 1919, Vol. I, p.587.

[71]Letter to Katherine Mansfield, 21 November 1918, Vol. I, p.565. See also William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.40.

[72]John Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy (London and Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1892), pp.60, 82.

philosophy. The early Greeks have clarified my soul. I must drop all about God."[73]

From Breasted's book Lawrence could have derived some knowledge about the religious beliefs of ancient Egypt, particularly the position of the pharaoh in ancient Egyptian priesthood. To this knowledge he added some information from his other readings on history such as Gibbon's The Decline and Fall of theRoman Empire and Niccolao Manucci's books on the East.

H.P. Blavatsky's esoteric doctrine that history unfolds itself in cycles[74] bears great resemblance to Lawrence's apocalyptic vision in Women in Love and to his view of dissolution as an essential part of life and creation. Blavatsky's views on magic, occultism, ritual and myth, her preaching of a universal God,[75] her idea of death-and-rebirth pattern,[76] her belief in degeneration from a higher to a lower level in human culture[77] have much in common with Lawrence's views and beliefs

[73]Letter to Bertrand Russell, 7 July 1915, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.350.

[74]H.P. Blavatsky, Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1923) Vol. II, p. 723.

[75]Ibid.,Vol. I, p.56.

[76]Ibid.,p.462.

[77]Ibid.,p.575.

expressed in Women in Love. Her ideas about the impossibility of explaining the Ever Unknowable,[78] the universality of the law of periodicity,[79] her emphasis on darkness as the origin and root of life,[80] her belief in divine races of human beings which preceded our human race[81] are, more or less, echoed in one way or another in Lawrence's novel.

Despite all this Blavatsky's influence should not be pushed too far. Her ideas might have interested Lawrence or agreed with his own, but surely he does not follow in her footsteps as a more devoted disciple, William Butler Yeats, had done before him. There is much truth in Lawrence's assertion: "I am not a theosophist, though the esoteric doctrines are marvellously illuminating, historically. I hate the esoteric forms. Magic also has interested me a good deal. But it was all of the past."[82]

Like Jung, Lawrence maintained that the unconscious is basically healthy and creative. In Women in Love Lawrence tries to do what Jung had tried in his writing on the unconscious, namely to reconcile such opposites as

[78] H.P. Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy (The Philosophical Publishing Company, Ltd., 1888), Vol. I, p.14.

[79] Ibid., p.17.

[80] Ibid., p.70.

[81] Ibid., Vol. II, p.194.

[82] Letter to Waldo Frank, 27 July 1917, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. I, p.519.

the conscious and the unconscious, the civilized and the primitive, the Dionysic and the Apollonian, the mythic and the factual. In their different ways they voiced the same warning, namely that any failure to reconcile these opposites will lead to disastrous results.[83] Jung's writings on the unconscious and his view of it as the reservoir of myths and instincts[84] might have contributed to Lawrence's view of the importance of myth.

[83]C.G. Jung, The Collected Works of C.G. Jung,(ed.) Sir Herbert Read et al (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 19) Vol. 10, p.21.

[84]Ibid.,Vol. 8, p.152.

Chapter Six

The Use of Mythology in The Lost Girl

The story of The Lost Girl is, to a large extent, based on the myth of Persephone who, according to Greek mythology, was carried off by Hades, King of the underworld, to be the queen of his Kingdom.

Alvina Houghton, the lost girl of the novel, is seduced by the dark man of the underworld, Cicio, who eventually succeeds in bringing her down to his dark world as Hades did with Persephone. That Cicio is the Hades of The Lost Girl can be seen from the way he is treated in the novel. His qualities are those usually associated with the creatures of the underworld. To Alvina he looks more animal than human: "He turned like a quick-eared animal glancing as he approached."[1] He also looks "a little bit repellent and brutal, inverted" (p.200). Frequently he is described as an animal (pp. 160, 185, 186, 192, 323, 331, 334).

Cicio's dark, sensuous nature is also reminiscent of Hades. In the novel, Cicio is associated with darkness: his eyes and skin are dark (p.196). His dark nature is equated with sensuality, that sensuality which Lawrence

[1]D.H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl (Penguin Books, 1968), p.200. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

invariably associates with darkness and the dark gods. There is also something remote and passionate about him and his dark sensuality: "Cicio was handsome now: without war-paint, and roused, fearless and at the same time suggestive, a dark, mysterious glamour on his face, passionate and remote" (p.197). His sensuality is perhaps as compulsive and mysterious as that of the dark god Hades: "She felt his heavy, muscular predominance. So he took her in both arms, powerful, mysterious, horrible in the bitch dark" (p.244). His sensual power which always seems to pull Alvina downward recalls Hades forcing Persephone to go down to his realm: "The sense of the unknown beauty of him weighed her down like some force" (p.244). The mysterious spell which Cicio seems to be casting on Alvina is suggestive of the story of Hades and Persephone. Cicio's ability to force Alvina to submit to his will is also reminiscent of the same story. Indeed Alvina seems on one occasion to have descended to a mythic realm similar to that of Hades:

> Now Alvina felt herself swept away - she knew not whither - but into a dusky region where men had dark faces and translucent yellow eyes, where all speech was foreign, and life was not her life. It was as if she had fallen from her world on to another, darker star, where meanings were changed (p.279).

The fact that Cicio's eyes have "a demon quality of yearning compulsion (p.340) and his smile looks like a

demon's" (p.340) reminds us of Hades abducting Persephone. His attempts to persuade Alvina, indeed to force her, to go with him to his remote, cut off and primitive rural area in Italy are parallel to the relentless attempts of Hades to pull Alvina down to his Kingdom in the Underworld. In both cases the cultured girl has to submit to the will of her dark lover and to his dark sensuality which leaves her unfree and hypnotized.

Alvina's descent into the Hades of Cicio is foreshadowed by several experiences in which she is involved with darkness and some kind of descent into the underworld. Her first experience with descent comes from the fact that she comes from a family whose fortunes have been rapidly declining. James Houghton's business is losing money, and when he dies his debts far exceed his assets (p.282). This, of course, means Alvina's downfall.

Alvina's life in Manchester House is like living in a grave or a small underworld. "'I can't bear it. I'm buried alive'" (p.41). There are also many references to the house being empty, dark and lifeless. We are told that "visitors were out of place in the dark sombreness of Manchester House" (p.63). We also read: "Dark, empty feeling, it seemed all the time like a house just before a sale" (p.70). Later Alvina sees Woodhouse, the village where she had spent most of her life as the centre of a great coffin:

> England, like a long, ash-grey coffin slowly submerging. She watched it, fascinated and terrified. It seemed to repudiate the sunshine, to remain un-illuminated, long and ash-grey and dead, with streaks of snow like cerements. That was England! Her thoughts flew to Woodhouse, the grey centre of it all, Home! (p.347).

Manchester House is also associated with descent and the underworld because of the neurotic mother living in it: "For more than twenty years she cherished, tended and protected the Young Alvina, shielding the child alike from a neurotic mother and a father such as James" (p.24). The mother's neurosis is a kind of descent to a level beyond her normal, conscious level. The frequent deaths in the family also suggest some sort of descent.

Alvina's descent into the mines can also be equated with the descent to the mythical realm of Hades. Down the mine Alvina feels as if "she were in the tomb for ever, like the dead and everlasting Egyptians" (p.54). The miner who guides her in the mine - something that recalls the guide who attends the mythic hero on his journey to the underworld - looks like a creature of the underworld rather than a human being:

> And still her voice went on clapping in her ear, and still his presence edged near her, and seemed to impinge on her - a smallish, semi-grotesque, grey-obscure figure with a naked brandished forearm: not human: a creature of subterranean world, melted out like a bat, fluid (p.64).

Before Alvina meets Cicio, the novel's arch creature of darkness and the underworld, she falls in love with Alexander Graham who is also "dark in colouring, with dark eyes" (p.36). Alexander is better known as "the darkie" (p.37). Like Cicio, his darkness seems to be a sign of his sensuality. Alvina's relationship with Alexander Graham involves some sort of descent not only because he suggests through his dark sensuality a creature of the underworld but also because Alvina has to descend to a lower level since she considers him her inferior: "She felt him a terrible outsider, an inferior, to tell the truth" (p.38). Like Cicio who insists on taking Alvina to his home village in Italy, Alexander persistently tries to drag her with him to Australia.

Alvina's career as a maternity nurse also involves some kind of descent, since it is a profession that seems to her father to be below the level of her middle class upbringing: "'I can't understand that any young girl of any - any upbringing, any upbringing whatever, should want to choose such a - such an - occupation'" (p.44). In the hospital, we are told, Alvina sees many "infernos":

> But the dreadful things she saw in the lying-in hospital, and afterwards, went deep, and finished her youth and her tutelage for ever. How many infernos deeper than Miss Forst could ever know, did she not travel? the inferno of the human organism in its convulsions, the human social beast in its abjection and its degredation (p.47).

Alvina's occupation as a maternity nurse implies a return to the womb and its darkness which in the Laurentian canon means a return to the origin and a descent to the source. Moreover, Alvina's profession as a nurse involves a descent from her high mindedness as a woman of middle class background, since her profession includes visits to very poor slum areas and because she is forced to deal with her patients in ways contrary to her ideals (p.48).

Alvina's relation with Natcha-Kee-Tawra troupe results in her degredation and the lowering of her social status, especially because of her special liaison with one member of the group:

> She had lost her class altogether. The other daughters of respectable tradesmen avoided her now, or spoke to her only from a distance. She was supposed to be 'carrying on' with Mr. May (p.146).

By associating herself with such rootless and odd people, Alvina uproots herself from her original background and descends to a lower world:

> Odd, eccentric people they were, these entertainers .... Most of them had an abstracted manner; in ordinary life, they seemed left aside, somehow. Odd, extraneous creatures (p.147).

As a result of her joining the Natcha-Kee-Tawra troupe Alvina becomes involved in the secret hunt for the members of the troupe carried out by the secret police. The whole operation suggests an underground activity that makes it

and those involved in it belong to the underworld rather than to the bright life of day. Alvina and all the members of the troupe are considered by the police as mischievous beasts while Alvina sees the police as "low-down" dogs.

> Every minute of these weeks was a horror to her: the sense of the low-down dogs of detectives hanging round .... All the repulsive secrecy .... The feeling that they, the Natcha-Kee-Tawras, herself included, must be monsters of hideous vice, to have provoked all this (p.293).

Alvina's final descent can be seen in her visit to Cicio's old and almost aboriginal village. Now she descends to a very low level of human culture: "She had gone beyond the world into the pre-world, she had re-opened on the old eternity (p.392). The local villagers there seem not to belong to this world and are, more or less, lost creatures: "They all seemed lost, forlorn aborigines, and they treated Alvina as if she were a higher being" (p.373). On the mythological level this is no more than the cultured princess descending to a strange underworld. In the village Alvina feels as if she were living in a mythic region. Its mountains stir her nostalgia for the pagan past (p.381), its animones remind her of Venus and Adonis (p.393), the mysterious place reminds her of the Furies (p.394) and the hyacinths remind her of "the many-breasted Artemis (p.393). In that place pigs are "almost an object of veneration" (p.373), and the vine is given special attention that amounts to some sort of worship

(p.395). Thus the spirit of place together with the animals and the flowers and plants make the whole area look for Alvina as if it were part of the pagan world, indeed a kind of pre-world, a world more pristine and more ancient than ours.

Darkness, descent to the underworld, loss and suffering which fill the novel are popular themes in world mythology. The descent of Persephone to the underworld to which the plot of the novel bears a great resemblance is but one of the many mythic stories in the world's mythologies dealing with the descent of goddesses as well as gods and heroes to the underworld and their return from it. Gods such as Attis, Adonis, Osiris, Dionysus, Krishna and Jesus, etc. descended to the realm of the dead and rose to life again. Heroes such as Odysseus, Herakles and Aeneas and many others also descended to the underworld and returned from it. In those myths the descent to the underworld is not the end of life but the beginning of it.

Similarly, Alvina descends to the underworld but eventually returns to the upper world with many indications to suggest that she will start a new and better life. If that hypothesis is acceptable then it is true to say that the story of Alvina, her descent and return or her loss and revival is based on the myth of the descent of a god, a goddess or a hero to the underworld and their return from it. In fact stories such as that of The Lost Girl abound

in world literature. As Meyer Reinhold observes: "The visit of a living person to the underworld is one of the recurrent themes of world literature."[2]

In myths the underworld has some beneficial effects on whoever goes there. In the underworld the god or the hero encounters darkness and has to undergo a great deal of suffering, but through this experience he learns wisdom and even conquers death. Likewise, Alvina's experience with darkness and hardships leads to a new turn in her life. ~~Indeed the largest part of Alvina's life belongs to darkness and hardships leads to a new turn in her life.~~ Indeed the largest part of Alvina's life belongs to darkness and the underworld. She rejects her traditional background and descends into a darker world until she becomes a "lost girl" (p.260), as Miss Pinnegar calls her. Darkness and the underworld, suffering and hardships, the novel suggests, are attractive and vital, though they may seem repulsive and worthless. Alvina's communication with darkness down the mine opens her eyes to the beauty of the upper world:

> When she was up on the earth again she blinked and peered at the world in amazement. What a pretty, luminous place it was, carved in substantial luminosity. What a strange and lovely place, blubbing iridescent-golden on the surface of the underworld (p.64).

[2]Meyer Reinhold, Past and Present: The Continuity of Classical myths (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p.311.

It also makes her more aware of the dark elements of life and the need for a god to control them: "The puerile world went on crying out for a new Jesus, another Saviour from the sky, another heavenly superman. When what was wanted was a Dark Master from the underworld" (p.65). Through her relationship with Cicio, the greatest representative of darkness in the novel, Alvina finds fulfilment: "In all the passion of her lover she had found a loneliness, beautiful, cool, like a shadow she wrapped round herself and which gave her a sweetness of perfection. It was a moment of stillness and completeness" (p.279). Although Cicio seems repellent and brutal to the conventional Alvina he is attractive and fascinating to the less conventional girl who is looking for the darker elements of life:

> She clung to Cicio's dark, despised foreign nature. She worshipped it, she defied all the other world. Dark, he sat beside her, drawn into himself, overcast by his presumed inferiority among these northern industrial people (p.258).

Alvina's reaction to darkness continues to be a mixture of attraction and repulsion until she finally appears to appreciate its value and its necessity as a step towards her regeneration.

Alvina accepts suffering, sacrifice and destruction as a prerequisite for renewal and rebirth. Again Lawrence draws upon the mythic concept of sacrifice as a way to salvation in order to effect Alvina's revival after

becoming a lost girl. Anthropologists have found out that in order to ensure the continuity of life ancient man invented the idea of sacrifices. In the same way Alvina has to make many sacrifices before she can build up her new life. She loses her family, her fortune, her friends and practically everything before she is able to start a new and better life. She also loses her conscious will and submits to a man whom she considers inferior to her before she can find a way out. Alvina sees her submission to Cicio as a kind of sacred prostitution (p.341), the beautiful maid sacrificing herself for the pleasure of the priest. Despite all this Alvina seems to be confident that her suffering and ruin are but temporary measures on the way to salvation. Instead of regretting her fortunes Alvina seems to be rejoicing over them:

> 'You're a lost girl!' cried Miss Pinnegar. 'Am I really?' laughed Alvina. It sounded funny.
> 'Yes, you're a lost girl,' sobbed Miss Pinnegar, on a final note of despair.
> 'I like being lost,' said Alvina (p.266).

In fact Alvina is not a lost girl after all. Paradoxically, her loss and her ruin are her means of redemption and revival. Her rebirth after her loss shows, as in myths, that death can be conquered and that a transcendental life after death can be better than the one before it. Alvina is not the victim of Fate, as people were according to Greek mythology. Instead she is the master of her own fate

(pp. 49, 54, 290). She is perfectly aware of the mythic paradoxical concept that she will not gain anything unless she loses everything.

Chapter Seven

The Use of Mythology in Aaron's Rod

Aaron's Rod is based primarily on the myth of the divine mother or mother-earth and on the myth of the god-king or the divine hero. The action and the structure of the novel are largely modelled upon these two archetypal myths.

Up to the writing of Aaron's Rod Lawrence has been greatly concerned with the myth of the divine mother as the model on which the image of the modern woman has been based. From this novel onward Lawrence's attention is concentrated more on the image of the modern man and how it should ideally exist in relation to the modern woman. To do this Lawrence draws upon the mythology of the divine king. He conceives the leader of people in the modern world in terms of the mythic hero in his society, and instead of giving the leading role to women he gives it to men.

Lawrence has been rejecting in his novels the dominance of women based on the myth of the divine mother. However, in The Rainbow and in Women in Love he seems to satisfy himself with the establishment of a balanced and polarized relationship between men and women. In Aaron's Rod he explores the question in a very different way.

Instead of just rejecting the role of woman as divine mother and the origin of creation together with all the values that such a concept includes, he proposes the idea of a god-King, thus substituting the image of the divine mother with the image of the divine hero.

The relation of Aaron and his wife is a kind of conflict for mastery, with Lottie insisting on her higher position on the grounds that she is the originator of life, the source of creation:

> Under all her whimsicalness and fretfulness was a conviction as firm as steel: that she, as woman, was the centre of creation, the man was but an adjunct. She, as woman, and particularly as mother, was the first great source of life and being, and also of culture. The man was but the instrument and the finisher.[1]

Aaron refuses to submit to his wife on this basis which he considers to be typical of all women in the modern world: "She did but inevitably represent what the whole world around her asserted: the life-centrality of woman. Woman, the life-bearer, the life-source" (p.192). Aaron's determination to fight against the desire of the modern woman for dominance singles him out as a leading pioneer in this activity, for almost all men seem to accept as a sacred belief the priority of woman and so tend to worship

[1] D.H. Lawrence, Aaron's Rod (Penguin Books, 1968), p.142. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

her as the image of the sacred mother: "Practically all men, even while demanding their selfish rights as superior males, tacitly agree to the fact of the sacred life-bearing priority of woman" (p.192).

Aaron's refusal to accept the divine role that his wife insists upon sparks off the main action of the novel, and it is around this nucleus that the whole novel turns. It is significant that the action of the novel starts with Christmas Eve and with this a new era in the life of the Sissons takes place. From now Aaron is going to become the lonely wanderer and Lottie the lonely housewife. It is as if the coming to an end of the annual cycle coincides with the end of a cycle in the life of the Sissons and the start of a new one.

Thus Lawrence uses the myth of the divine mother to depict character and to shape action, for the behaviour of Lottie as a woman and as a mother together with the pattern of conflict that ensues between Lottie and Aaron have their origin in myth. Lottie's disregard of her husband and her desire to treat him as her instrument, to make him succumb to her wishes, to worship her as a superior being are all based on the myth of the divine mother or the Magna Mater. Aaron, of course, corresponds to the man in this myth. But instead of playing the role as designed in the myth he determines to fight against it and prefers to be independent, thus creating the pattern of conflict on which the relation of Lottie and Aaron is based.

Aaron's Rod marks the beginning of Lawrence's interest in the heroic figure. The hero in this novel is based on the god-King archetype. Although Aaron is the hero of the novel as far as the action is concerned, it is Lilly who represents Lawrence's conception of the ideal hero or the god-King. Lilly's powers and position resemble those of the mythic hero. He sees himself as the undisputed master and his will, like the heroes in Homer's epics and elsewhere, is law. Aaron should submit to him and accept and even venerate what Lilly tells him:

> He remembered Lilly - and the saying that one must possess oneself, and be alone in possession of oneself. And somehow, under the influence of Lilly, he refused to follow the reflex of his own passion (p.309).

Like the mythic hero Lilly is drawn as half man, half god - a divine man. Like the heroic figure, Lilly is a superman but, unlike him, he does not possess any supernatural powers and so he does not perform any miracles as his mythic counterpart usually does. Although Aaron submits to him and accepts his teachings, Lilly is not an incarnation of a god as those figures in The Plumed Serpent are. Although his actions are nearly divine and his words are almost sacred law, Lilly is not worshipped as a god.

Lawrence's conception of the hero is not an exact copy of the mythic hero but a mixture of the mythic hero and Lawrence's view of the ideal hero. The kind of obedience that Aaron offers to Lilly belongs to what is called in

the novel "energetic slavery" or "real committal of the life-issue of inferior beings to the responsibility of a superior being" (p.327). Lawrence's hero is a man with a heroic soul but without the supernatural natural aura that almost invariably surrounds the mythic hero. He is a man whose "dark, living, fructifying power" (p.345) is greater than that of any other man. Thus the new submission of the ordinary man to the heroic figure will be a sort of "life submission" (p.347) which, while demanding obedience to a greater soul recognizes that "every man is a sacred and holy individual, never to be isolated" (p.328). Although Lawrence's hero is superhuman he basically possesses a human form. However, the degree of submission that Lawrence demands to his hero has its parallel in myths where submission is urged to be made to a god-King or a priest whose will and teachings are taken as uninfringible and sacred laws.

Lawrence's quest for the hero is closely connected with his search for power and leadership. In this novel Lawrence is looking for a powerful and authoritarian but responsible and beneficial ruler. Behind Lawrence's quest for the hero is his desire to make the ancient aristocratic order replace the modern democratic chaos. In his handling of power the Laurentian hero is close to the authoritarian but friendly and beneficial god-King of the mythic period and there is no doubt that Lawrence's conception of the ideal

hero owes a great deal to this. Lawrence seems to be fascinated by the kind of relationship he believed to have existed between the leader in the past and his subjects. And that is why he shows a special admiration for the Aztecs (p.119) and the ancient Egyptians (p.345). We know that the Aztecs and the ancient Egyptians considered their leaders as demi-gods upon whom depended the welfare of the whole community.

Perhaps the power-urge that Lawrence is looking for might have been suggested to him from the beliefs of the old Egyptians with which he was well acquainted. In this novel the ancient Egyptians seem to be his model for leadership:

> We've got to accept the power motive, accept it in deep responsibility, do you understand me? It is a great life motive. It was that great dark power-urge which kept Egypt so intensely living for so many centuries (p.345).

Alain Hus tells us that "the conception of the divine King, protector of his subjects with the heavenly powers, was foreign to the Greek mind. It was an Egyptian idea which spread in the East and met with some success in Greece."[2] In Egyptian mythology, therefore, the King was considered a god and even begotten by the god Ammon.[3] The Egyptians

[2]Alain Hus, Greek and Roman Religion (London: Burns & Oates, 1962), p.76.

[3]James George Frazer, The Golden Bough, p.142.

worshipped their monarchs as gods and believed that the state was part of a divine plan with the King being responsible for its well-being. Thus the pharaoh ruled by divine right. And so Lawrence's desire to submit the life of ordinary people to the authority of a superior leader endowed with a greater heroic soul bears great resemblance to the old Egyptian idea of a divine King.

However, the idea of a divine King was not restricted to Egypt. In Babylon, in India, in Mexico, in Greece and Rome and elsewhere leaders and heroes were regarded as Kings or deified after their death. The Laurentian hero, therefore, belongs to the universal myth of the divine King or the man born to be King. And so the urge for the rule of one superman and the antagonism shown towards democracy are reminiscent of the mythic view which made the individual submit to his society and its leadership.

As the mythic hero is almost invariably surrounded by an elite of disciples Lilly is surrounded by his disciple Aaron Sisson. In myths there is an archetypal relation between the hero and his disciple or disciples. The hero is usually like a special teacher whose words and teachings are very much respected and venerated. Obedience is made to him by his followers instead of to another authority. Aaron's relationship with Lilly belongs to that kind of teacher-disciple archetypal relationship:

"'You, too, you too have the need to submit. You, too,

have the need livingly to submit to a more heroic soul, to give your self'" (p.347).

However, because of the resemblance between Lawrence's Aaron and the mythic Aaron in name and the rod or the staff, the relation of Aaron and Lilly suggests the relation between Aaron and Moses in the Old Testament. Like Moses, Lilly is a prophet-like character who comes to save society with a new social and spiritual order. Like the mythic Aaron, Lawrence's Aaron enacts and promulgates the mission of the prophet Lilly by accepting his teachings and by performing some wonders among the people, wonders that can restore to people, such as the Marchesa and himself, their individualism, singleness and vitality. Aaron's flute, which is more often called rod, seems to have magical effects on those who listen to it, especially the Marchesa to whom it brings not only "a natural relaxation in her soul, a peace" (p.297) but also releases her inner faculties making her burst with joy and happiness and end up with her passions and love directed not towards her husband but towards the wonder-maker Aaron Sission:

> Manfredi knew that Aaron had done what he himself never could do, for this woman. And yet the woman was his own woman, not Aaron's. And so, he was displaced .... And as in a dream the woman sat, feeling what a joy it was to float and move like a swan in the high air (p.300).

What Aaron does to himself is even greater than what he

has done to the Marchesa, for "the male godliness, the male godhead" (p.301) which he restores to himself is part of the power-urge that Lilly is preaching.

The resemblance between the rod of Lawrence's Aaron and the rod of the Biblical Aaron is pretty obvious. Lilly foresees that Aaron's rod will "put forth" as the rod of Moses's brother "put out scarlet-runner flowers" (p.132). The power which Lilly attributes to Aaron's rod reminds us of the magical rod in the hands of Moses which turned into a serpent and in the desert produced water from the rock. In the Bible, however, both Moses and Aaron have rods, and so the miracles which Moses performed were also done by his brother. In the novel, the rod seems to be endowed with some magical powers usually attributed to the mythic rod. The function of the rod in the novel is to re-activate the old element in man as Moses's rod drew out water from the rock in the desert. Indeed when Aaron releases the old element in the Marchesa and himself by playing the flute he thinks he has performed a miracle: "Aaron, sitting there, glowed with a sort of triumph. He had performed a little miracle, and felt himself a little wonder-worker, to whom reverence was due" (p.300). The Marchesa is also described as a budding flower: "The woman looked wonderingly from one man to the other - wondering. The glimmer of the open flower, the wonder-look still lasted" (p.300). Power rises in Aaron as water

rose out of the rock: "His manhood, or rather his maleness, rose powerfully in him" (pp. 300-301). Before this new metamorphosis Aaron seems to have been living in a sort of arid waste land where vital life hardly exists:

> For such a long time he had been gripped inside himself, and withheld .... He had wanted nothing, his desire had kept itself back, fast back. For such a long time his desire for woman had withheld itself, hard and resistant (p.301).

The revitalizing power of Aaron's rod is reminiscent of the mythic rod which brought forth water in the desert. Moreover, the rod seems to have turned into a serpent in the sense that it re-activates the power of the serpent or the dragon inside Aaron (p.301). The "godhead" that now exists inside Aaron is what Lawrence refers to in Apocalypse as "the dragon" or the serpent. Lawrence claims that the Greeks called the power of the dragon in man as the "god" in him.[4] By liberating the power of the dragon in himself, Aaron becomes a hero in Lawrence's definition of the word: "A hero was a hero, in the past, when he had conquered the hostile dragon, when he had the power of the dragon with him in his limbs and breast."[5] The novel suggests that the rod is life-bringer, for it is only when it stirs the power of the serpent inside Aaron that Aaron becomes really alive.

[4] D.H. Lawrence, Apocalypse, p.220.

[5] Ibid., p.222.

Having achieved its purpose the rod is no longer necessary. Not before long the rod is symbolically broken in a bomb blast. But that does not mean the end of it, for when Aaron drops the remaining half of the broken flute Lilly assures him it will grow again: "'It'll grow again. It's a reed, a water-plant. You can't kill it.'" (p.331).

The rod is not restricted to Jewish mythology; rather it is a world-wide tradition. In Greek mythology the wand was the distinctive symbol of Hermes, the messenger of the gods.[6] With his wand Hermes used to cast some magic spells.[7] In the hands of Athene the wand had magical powers:

> As she spoke, Athene touched him [i.e. Odysseus] with her golden wand, and behold, a clean mantle and tunic hung from his shoulders; his stature was increased and his youthful vigour restored.[8]

In Roman mythology the wand of Mercury was capable of metamorphizing people from one condition to another.[9] Andrew Long tells us that "Cicero speaks of a fabled wand

[6] Meyer Reinhold, Past and Present, p.113.

[7] Homer, The Odyssey, (trans.) E.V. Rien (Penguin Books, 1959), p.351.

[8] Ibid., p.249.

[9] Virgil, The Aeneid, p.104. See also Ovid, Metamorphoses, p.50.

by which wealth can be produced."[10] Aaron's rod may also bear some resemblance to Virgil's golden bough in that the bough, as Frazer sees it, is a rod or a staff which the wandering and the forlorn Aeneas carried with him as his best companion.[11] Thus in myths the wand or the rod is the companion of forlorn travellers or heavenly messengers. Usually the wand is connected with fertility and good luck: "From time immemorial ... /the wand/ had been a fertility symbol in the Agean and Near East."[12] The wand associates Aaron with the archetypal wanderer travelling from one place to another and performing some wonders and miracles that are usually pleasing and beneficial. The wand also associates Aaron with the archetypal wonder-maker, for as Andrew Lang pointed out: "In all countries rods or wands ... have a magical power."[13]

Since the rod has such legendary powers it becomes feasible to suggest that Lawrence uses the rod as a symbol of salvation not only for Aaron but also for mankind. What Lawrence is saying is that the modern world is in need of a saviour who can redeem it from its aridity. Aaron's

[10]Andrew Lang, Custom and Myth (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1898), p.183.

[11]James George Frazer, The Golden Bough, p.707.

[12]Meyer Reinhold, Past and Present, pp. 113-114.

[13]Andrew Lang, Custom and Myth, p.182.

rod with its magical powers is but a fictional way of saying that such a salvation is possible. In the novel there are several references to the blossoming or budding rod.[14] The idea is that the rod is identified with a tree or a plant that can die and grow again. People are compared to these ever-dying, ever-growing trees: "'And I don't see why a race should be like an aloe tree, flower once and die. Why should it? Why not flower again? Why not?'" (p.277). Later Lilly tells Aaron that the "God-head" inside him is his own tree, his own Tree of Life, or his rod.

> 'You are your own Tree of Life, roots and limbs and trunk. Somewhere within the wholeness of the tree lies the very self, the quick: its own innate Holy Ghost: puts forth new buds, and pushes past old limits, and shakes off a whole body of dying leaves (p.344).

The rod, therefore can be equated with or related to the Tree of Life. In this sense the rod is reminiscent of the Cross which has also been identified with the Tree of Life. As Joseph Campbell observes: "throughout the Middle Ages [the cross] was equated with the tree of immortal life."[15] Mircea Eliade also points out that "the symbols of the Cosmic Tree and the centre of the world [are] incorporated into the symbolism of the Cross."[16]

[14] Aaron's Rod, pp.132, 251, 277, 331.

[15] Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By, p.29.

[16] Mircea Elide, Birth and Rebirth, p.119.

Alan W. Watts also asserts that Moses's rod came down to Solomon, to Joseph, to Judas and became the cross upon which Jesus was crucified, and so the Cross became the Tree of Salvation.[17] Like theCross, the rod shows the turning of the cycle from death to life. Aaron's rod, therefore, stands for the Tree of Life as well as for salvation. It also symbolizes the everlasting cycle of death and rebirth. In the novel, the rod heralds the turning of the cycle from the exhausted period of "Love" to the vital epoch of "Power".

> We've exhausted our love-urge, for the moment. And yet we try to force it to continue working. So we get inevitably anarchy and murder. It's no good. We've got to accept the power motive (p.345).

The fact that Aaron's name is borrowed from the Bible indicates that Lawrence is using the biblical myth to give weight and support to his subject and to confirm his belief that a new revival of the old principle of power and heroism is possible.

In the novel the rod is another name for Aaron's flute. Naturally Aaron's flute recalls some stories about the flute in the world's mythologies. In Indian mythology, as Joseph Campbell observes:

[17] Alan W. Watts, Myth and Ritual in Christianity, Introduction, pp. 54-55.

> there is the figure .... of the Lord Krishna playing his flute at night .... at the sound of whose irresistible strains young wives would slip from their husbands' beds, and stealing to the moonlight wood, dance the night with their beautiful young god in transcendent bliss.[18]

In Ovid we read that Orpheus made the wood and rocks follow the sound of his music[19] and that by his music he used to lure away husbands from their wives.[20] That Aaron's music makes people stop to listen to it (p.21) and entices women away from their husbands to fall in love with him suggests a connection between Aaron's music and that of Krishna and Orpheus. The music of all these players seems to have magical effects on those who listen to it.

The structural pattern of Aaron's Rod largely derives from ritual, particularly initiation ritual. Joseph Campbell has outlined the stages which comprise initiation rituals:

> In any rite, or system of rites of initiation the same three stages are to be distinguished as in the rituals of Australia, namely: separation from the community, transformation (usually physical as well as psychological), and return to the community in the new role.[21]

[18] Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By, p.153.

[19] Ovid, Metamorphoses, p.268.

[20] Ibid., p.268.

[21] Joseph Campbell, Primitive Mythology, p.118.

Structurally the novel is made of three main movements corresponding to those in the initiation ritual as pointed out by Joseph Campbell. In the first movement Aaron is separated from his home, wife and children, in short from the community to which he belongs. Thereafter Aaron's life remains that of a wanderer cut off from society, though he occasionally meets some people with whom he does not have a lasting friendship.

In the second movement Aaron becomes closely connected with Lilly and it is during this period of his acquaintance with Lilly that his transformation begins. As in the initiation rituals the second movement starts with Aaron's retirement to a secluded place in Lilly's house. There he seems to be completely isolated from people apart from his initiator and his doctor. In initiation rituals the initiate goes through some difficult ordeals or a symbolic death before he is reborn later.[22] Similarly Aaron undergoes some sort of symbolic death as shown by his falling ill and becoming almost completely dependent upon Lilly who nurses him through this period of illness. Indeed at one stage Aaron feels he is closer to death than to life: "'I'm only fit to be thrown underground, and made an end of'" (p.115), he tells Lilly. At the end of this ordeal Aaron is ritualistically anointed by Lilly.

[22] Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.36. See also William Simpson, The Jonah Legend (London: Grant Richards, 1899), p.39; E.O. James, "Initiatory Rituals," Myth and Ritual, (ed.) S.H. Hooke, p.147.

Anthropologists have pointed out that the second stage of the initiation ritual includes a symbolic return to the origin. Mircea Eliade writes: "The initiatory cabin represents not only the belly of the devouring monster but also the womb. The novice's death signifies a return to the embryonic state."[23] William Simpson also tells us that: "in the Brahmanical initiatory rite .... the novitiate becomes an embryo, in order to be born again."[24] Likewise Aaron seems to have returned to the period of childhood during this second stage, for he is nursed by Lilly as a child is nursed by his mother, and as Lilly tells him: "I'm going to rub you as mothers do their babies whose bowels don't work" (p.118).

The metaphoric return to childhood and the rubbing with oil seem to be the preliminary step towards the introduction of Aaron into a new way of life. Anointment occurs in some initiation rituals especially those in the Bible. Moses, for example, anoints Aaron, installs and consecrates him to become God's priest.[25] Samuel anoints Saul to become King.[26] The anointment of Aaron by Lilly seems to have some connection with the old ritualistic

[23]Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.36.

[24]William Simpson, The Jonah Legend, p.36.

[25]The Old Testament, Exodus, 28, 41.

[26]The Old Testament, Samuel, 10, 1.

anointment and can be part of Aaron's initiation into the new way of life and a sign of his importance in the new priesthood. That this anointment is part of Aaron's rebirth can be recognized in the change that follows the rubbing of Aaron with oil: "He saw a change. The spark had come back into the sick eyes, and the faint trace of a smile, faintly luminous, into the face. Aaron was regaining himself." (p.118). Lilly also sees the rubbing of Aaron with oil as a way of rubbing life into him: "'I suppose really I ought to have packed this Aaron off to the hospital. Instead of which here am I rubbing him with oil to rub the life into him'" (p.120).

As the novice in initiation rituals is instructed into some new beliefs belonging to his own community[27] so in the novel Aaron learns from Lilly about the futility of the old system of love and the need for a new system, a new power-urge.

Most initiation rituals include the performance of some feats.[28] Similarly before Aaron's final rebirth is achieved he has to perform some miraculous feats. Aaron's feat is the miraculous transformation he brings upon the

[27]Charles H. Eckert, "Initiatory Motives in the story of Telemachus," Myth and Literature (ed.) John B. Vickery, Introduction, p. 162.

[28]Ibid., p.162.

Marchesa as well as upon himself. Having achieved this, Aaron's rebirth is complete and now he lives in a new order. In fact Aaron's behaviour after this rebirth follows the principles of the ideology into which he has been instructed.

In the third and final stage Aaron is restored to society and to normal life. He is no longer the obstinate enemy of women and is able to make some sort of relationship with the Marchesa. His friendship with Lilly has now strengthened and his relation with other people has now improved. Whether he will return to his wife or not is not clear in the novel, but he tells the Marchesa that he still loves his wife and can't help it (p.311). Probably this might be a sign that he will eventually return. But whether he returns or not it is obvious that now Aaron's life has undergone a new transformation and that he is finally established in society in the new role.

Chapter Eight

The Use of Mythology in Kangaroo

In Kangaroo Lawrence continues his search for the dark gods and the power-urge. Indeed this novel contains the second largest treatment of the dark/ among all Lawrence's /gods novels. The contrast between the dark gods and the Judeo-Christian God constitutes the major theme of this novel.

In Australia Somers comes to know two secret political organizations in the country: a rightist organization headed by Kangaroo and a leftist one under the leadership of Struthers. Somers turns to the dark gods as an alternative to these two ideologies after he realizes their futility to save the country. More emphasis is laid in the novel on Somers' relation with Kangaroo who represents the Judeo-Christian God than on Struthers who stands for the "sacred" power of the workers.

Lawrence takes pains to portray Kangaroo as a Jehovaish character. His love of power and his desire to destroy his enemies undoubtedly reveal his Jehovah-like qualities. Like Yahweh he is a powerful figure who likes to be held in fear, although he shows some signs of ostentatious love. Like Yahweh he seems to be kind but through his shrewdness and subtlety can score a decisive victory over his opponents and enemies. Kangaroo is as authoritative as Yahaweh

and considers his will and authority as law that ought to be obeyed and respected. Like the Jewish deity Kangaroo is a protective figure who likes people to put their affairs in the trust of his loving care. Kangaroo is an incarnation of the deity who likes to rule people by the power of the old Law or the Ten commandments. He abstracts himself from human beings by insisting that he is not a man but a King of beasts and men - a claim that makes him look like the greatest Almighty. The fact that he is a Jew together with his claim that he is Abraham's bosom suggest his connection with Jehovah more than with any other god. His assumption that "'the fire that is in my heart is God'"[1] recalls the appearance of God to Moses "in the flame of a burning bush."[2] His desire to "'collect all the fire in all the burning hearts in Australia'" (p.137) is reminiscent of Jehovah who is "a devouring fire, a jealous god."[3] As a Jehovah-like figure Kangaroo sees his enemy in the demon or the devil inside Somers, or the Satanic power that resists God's will. His identification with a "thunder-cloud" (p.148) recalls Yahweh who often appears in the Bible in the form of a pillar of cloud.

[1]D.H. Lawrence, Kangaroo (Penguin Books, 1968), p.136. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

[2]The Old Testament, Exodus 2, 3, 2.

[3]The Old Testament, Deuteronomy 4 , 24.

Kangaroo's fury at Somers' desire to worship other gods than Kangaroo's God reminds us of Yahweh's anger with the Jews when they turned to foreign gods, and so the jealousy of Kangaroo suggests Yahweh whose "name is the jealous God, and a jealous God he is."[4] Kangaroo's terrifying power is reminiscent of Yahweh who is a "great god and mighty and terrible God."[5]

In myths gods appear in the form of animals. In this novel Kangaroo is used allegorically to stand for the Jewish God. Physically, what connects the two is the pouch or the belly which is used in the novel as a symbol of domination and possession. In other words, the belly-pouch of Kangaroo is a symbol of his desire to contain other people and to make them submit to him as Jehovah did to his people. Kangaroo's large belly enhances his physical largeness, thus suggesting a father-like god who wants to make people subservient to his own will. More specifically Kangaroo's belly-pouch is a symbol of his desire to save Australia by carrying it in his belly. The belly-pouch is a symbol of Kangaroo's absolute, Jehovaish authority. Kangaroo wants to make Australia a new Jerusalem under his control. The press of the opposition sees him as a would-be "absolute, a Dictator" (p.205).

[4]The Old Testament, Exodus, 34, 14.

[5]Ibid.,p.653.

As I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter Kangaroo stands for the Judeo-Christian God. Having shown what is Jehovaish about him I now move on to explain what makes him a Christ figure. Kangaroo is portrayed in the novel as the God of love. He appears as a loving father who considers people as his children who need his fatherly love: "'They are my children, I love them'" (p.147). For Kangaroo love is the only value that matters: "'I believe in the one fire of love. I believe it is the one inspiration of all creative activity," (p.148). Kangaroo is ostensibly concerned with love and here we can recall that in the Laurentian canon Christianity is equated with the principle of Love.[6] That Kangaroo's love comes, as Somers tells him, from the spirit and the head (p.151) suggests the Christian God. That Kangaroo is simultaneously a man and a god, a father (p.126) and a son (p.151) reminds us of Christ. As a Christ-like figure Kangaroo wants to make Somers accept his principle of love by exorcising the demon in him (p.151). Kangaroo's spiritualism as revealed in his sexual asceticism, his desire to establish a fatherly autocracy, his role as a saviour and his preaching of the principle of love suggest a Christ-like figure.

Although Kangaroo has much in common with Lawrence's conception of Christianity Kangaroo is not intended to

[6]D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.453.

be an accurate replica of Christ. Besides representing Lawrence's basic conception of Christianity Kangaroo is a representative of Christianity gone wrong. His love, although it pretends to be Christian is far from being so in actual fact. Instead of being the innocent lamb as Christ is usually represented Kangaroo is, as Lawrence puts it, "the lamb of God grown into a sheep" (p.127). Undoubtedly there is some exaggeration in Lawrence's portrayal of Kangaroo as a representative of the Judeo-Christian God. But as a means of driving home to the reader the meaning of the novel and the intention of the author such an exaggeration can be justified.

In Kangaroo Lawrence firmly reiterates his earlier rejection of a monotheistic God as preached by the Jewish and the Christian churches. Instead he advocates a polytheistic principle which allows for the introduction of various deities according to man's needs and aspirations:

> The pagan way, the many gods, the different service, the sacred moments of Bacchus. Other sacred moments: Zeus and Hera, for example, Ares and Aphrodite, all the great moments of the gods, from the major moment with Hera to the swift short moments of Io or Leda or Ganymede (p.160).

Early in his career Lawrence showed some dissatisfaction with traditional religion. Here he starts to work out a religion of his own. The new god or gods should not be rationalized: "The God must be unknown. Once you have defined him or described him he is the most chummy of pals,

as you'll know if you listen to preachers" (p.311). Instead of an ideal, well-defined, mentally explained God Lawrence prefers his God or gods to remain dark or unknown: the dark gods. And instead of a sky God who enters people from the head and the spirit the new Gods should be on earth and enter from the below, from the dark regions of the human body, to use one of Lawrence's own phrases: "'Not through the spirit. Enter us from the lower self, the dark self, the phallic self'" (p.150). Thus the new religion will allow for the gods of the flesh and the blood instead of merely for those of the mind and the spirit. In other words it is phallic consciousness rather than love which is the driving force in the new religion: "Not love - just weapon-like desire. He knew it. The god Bacchus." (p.159).

In the new religion there is no separation between God and his creatures as in most monotheistic religions, but rather an identification between God or gods and man, in the sense that God is present inside man through some sort of communion: "And every <u>living</u> human soul is a well-head to this darkness of the living unutterable .... Into his unconscious surges a new flood of the God-darkness" (p.294). Thus all people can be permeated by the deity to varying degrees. The new religion contains no absolutism: "The dark God, the forever unrevealed. The God who is many gods to many men: all things to all men" (p.312).

Thus God is not a fait accompli but a phenomenon capable of being imaginatively and creatively pursued. God is in an ever-changing process with the old conception being superseded by a new one:

> Alas, there is no Morse-code for interpreting the new life-prompting, the new God-urge. And there never will be. It needs a new term of speech invented each time. A whole new concept of the universe gradually born, shedding the old concept (p.326).

Man is free to seek God or gods in the way he likes and to the degree he wants; but obedience should be made to those in whom God is more manifest than in others: "Sacrifice to the dark God, and to the men in whom the dark God is manifest" (p.312).

According to the new religion the best period of life is not in the afterlife but should be on this earth. Somers objects to the despising of the material world as preached by Christianity (p.111). While Christianity and Judaism and some other mythologies looked to the afterlife and to a kingdom in heaven the new mythology is concerned with establishing its kingdom here on earth. The way is that "the men with the real passion for life, for truth, for living and not for having ... must seize control of the material possessions" (p.111). This means that an elite minority should be in control and the general public should follow them. The leader or leaders in the new system should have the greatest degree of communion with the dark God or gods:

> Before mankind would accept any man for a King, and before Harriet would ever accept him, Richard Lovat, as a lord and master, he, the self-same Richard who was so strong on kingship, must open the doors of his soul and let in a dark Lord and Master for himself (p.96).

Submission to a greater soul is inevitable and the novel insists that this submission does not negate individuality, for paradoxically enough, submission to the dark God is the real source of freedom: "The man by himself - that is the absolute - listening - that is the relativity - for the influx of his fate, or doom" (p.310). Moreover, the submission of one man to another includes some sort of polarity that makes each man a listener and an answerer at the same time (p.333). In short, this submission becomes a sort of sacred contact in the dark (p.361).

Lawrence's new religion hardly includes any animism, the mythological system of ancient man; rather, emphasis is put on the relation of man to woman, man to God and man to society. The hero in the new system is the person who can achieve a "living" relationship with these (p.182). Like the relation of man with God and of man with other men the relation of man with woman includes some sort of submission. In this case the amount of Godhead in the individual as the decisive factor in the question of who is going to submit to whom is of no importance; woman should invariably submit to man. Lawrence, however, qualifies this submission by making it not to the will of man but to

"the mystic man and male in him (p.133), and by insisting that before any submission like this can be made man should submit to the dark God (p.194). In this way submission would not be some kind of slavery but a mystic submission very similar to the submission of man to man. It is also a sacred submission, for indirectly it is a submission to the dark God.

Having outlined the basic principles of Lawrence's mythological system it now remains to explain the originality of that system. The greatest amount of this originality comes from the new terminology which Lawrence almost invented to talk about his mythological system. This terminology is so large and obvious that a detailed explanation of it is not necessary. Apart from this, the second major contribution by Lawrence is the ability to assemble so many diverse elements from so many mythologies and to assimilate them into one and almost coherent whole. Lawrence's religious cult of the dark gods includes elements derived from the mighty and jealous God of the Old Testament as well as qualities from the God of love in the New Testament: "And the Unknown is a terribly jealous God, and vengeful" (p.314), "not that even now he dared quite deny love. Love is perhaps an eternal part of life. But it is only a part" (p.261).

From Greek, Roman, Egyptian as well as other mythologies Lawrence borrowed the phallicism of his dark gods:

"The pagan way, the many gods, the different service, the sacred moments of Bacchus" (p.160); "there was a down-slope into Orcus, and a vast, phallic, sacred darkness, where one was enveloped into the greater god as in an Egyptian darkness" (p.160). Lawrence once wrote that the idea of a"God" who enters from below was recognized by the mythologies of the ancient world: "The old, dark religions understood. 'God enters from below,' said the Egyptians, and that is right."[7] Undoubtedly anthropologists would agree with Lawrence about the phallicism of ancient mythologies.

From Egyptian, Babylonian and Indian mythologies Lawrence derived the idea of mystic submission to God and the incarnation of God in man. Thus his principle of lordship or the submission of one soul to a greater one is deeply rooted in these ancient mythologies: "Perhaps the thing that the dark races know: that one can still feel in India: the mystery of lordship" (p.120). The submission of woman to man bears great resemblance to her situation in theBible where man is the master, and to Indian mythology where woman is supposed to accept her husband as her lord and master.[8]

[7]Letter to Willard Johnson, 12 October 1922, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. II, p.726.

[8]Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By, p.152.

The aristocratic principle according to which the differentiation between people is made and the question of leadership is decided has its origins in Indian, Babylonian and Egyptian mythologies where Kings were considered as gods incarnated. In the novel we read:

> 'Of course you can't go on with a soft, oh-so-friendly life like this here. You've got to have an awakening of the old recognition of the aristocratic principle, the innate difference between people' (p.305).

Lawrence's hero has as much power as the mythological hero and the god-King. Like them he possesses spiritual and temporal power.

In Kangaroo Lawrence is more or less a myth-maker. He starts with the assumption that no new change can be made without a new religious system and that men cannot go on without having something to believe in. Thus the existence of a mythological system is both beneficial and necessary. In this novel Lawrence feels that time has come for the ancient gods to be revived again. He revives those ancient gods and adapts them to his own purposes. Moreover, he manipulates them to support his ideas of male leadership and phallic consciousness as the driving force or the power-urge of the new era. Like the works of many mythological writers, Lawrence's mythological system is a life-suggesting force and his gods are intended to be life-bringers. His approach is one of expansion rather than reduction and the multiplicity of his gods matches his religious and creative

aspirations which found fulfilment not in one single mythology but in world mythology as a whole: "It is not that he is jealous of Thor or Zeus or Bacchus or Venus. The great dark God outside the gate is all these gods" (p.314). Thus all the mythologies of the world have a common ground, although gods are of different shapes and colours. Although Lawrence does not create a new mythology of his own, there is no doubt that Lawrence's success in combining different elements from various mythologies to make a mythological system is in itself a good achievement.

Structurally, the rôle of mythology can be seen in the adventure as the major structural pattern of the novel. It is not only a physical adventure like that of the mythic hero but also a thought-adventure, that is similar to it. Lawrence tells us that a novel is not merely a "record of emotion-adventures, flounderings in feelings" but that it is also "a thought-adventure, if it is to be anything at all complete" (p.308). Having arrived in Australia from Europe Somers embarks on a series of adventures with some unusual people assuming the role of saviours. Somers' main adventures are those in which he allows his imagination to carry him from one thought to another, and each time discovering a new idea or a novel conception. The final result of these thought-adventures is that the novel becomes a sort of discovery, and the hero learns a great deal from his experience as he moves along through the

course of these adventures. Struthers and Kangaroo, Labour and Capital are pictured as the rocky Scylla and the whirling Charybdis, with each side facing and threatening the other and blocking the passage in the face of any person who wants to cross between them. The hard line policy and the obstinacy of Struthers remind us of the mythic Scylla and the big belly-pouch of Kangaroo recalls the devouring whirlpool of the mythic Charybdis. On his course of adventures Somers is metaphorically entangled between these two straits, but like the mythic hero he manages to extricate himself from their dangerous power, and to carry on with his mission of seeking the dark gods and establishing a better order.

The thought-adventure as the shaping pattern of the novel makes it abound in ideas, arguments and deviations. It is very likely that students who approach this novel expecting a traditional pattern will immediately denounce the novel as formless and lacking in action. However, I believe that we can do more justice to Lawrence by treating this novel as a novel of ideas rather than of feelings and emotions. In this way its digressions, bits, sermons, and intellectual arguments and discussions can be more easily appreciated.

Besides the thought-adventure, Kangaroo contains the pattern of the archetypal adventure or the journey of the mythic hero as outlined by Joseph Campbell:

> A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from his mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boon on his fellow men.[9]

Joseph Campbell recognizes three main stages common to all mythic adventures:

> Whether presented in the vast, almost oceanic images of the Orient, in the vigorous narratives of the Greeks, or in the majestic legends of the Bible, the adventure of the hero normally follows the pattern of the nuclear unit described above: a separation from the world, a penetration to the source of power and a life-enhancing return.[10]

Joseph Campbell adds that usually there is a figure who acts as a guide to the hero.[11] The effect of the adventure, he observes, is "the unlocking and release again of the flow of life into the body of the world."[12]

In the novel we can recognize the three stages of the mythic adventure, namely separation - initiation - return. Somers leaves Europe and comes to Australia accompanied by his wife Harriet. Somers' real guide, however, is not Harriet but a local character, Jack whose

[9]Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York: Bloomington Foundation Inc., 1953), p.30.

[10]Ibid.,p.35.

[11]Ibid.,p.55.

[12]Ibid.,p.40.

early acquaintance with Somers and whose briefing of Somers about the situation in Australia makes his role look similar to the guide in the mythic journey. Jack gives Somers some information about Kangaroo and guides him (though not in a very friendly way) during his contacts with Kangaroo. Having introduced Somers to Kangaroo and guided him through Kangaroo's underworld Jack's role becomes of secondary importance and so he is not frequently mentioned afterwards, although he had figured prominently in the early chapters of the novel.

The second stage marks Somers' descent into the underworld of Kangaroo. The conflict between Somers and Kangaroo may be linked with the archetypal fight between the monster and the mythic hero. Benjamin Cooley is presented as a kangaroo who is the king of beasts in Australia. With his desire to dominate other people and to engulf them, so to speak, and to carry Australia in his pouch, together with his terrifying power Kangaroo suggests the monster in myths. Joseph Campbell has pointed out some of the characteristics of the tyrant-monster common to the various mythologies of the world:

> self-terrorized, fear-haunted, alert at every hand to meet and battle back the anticipated aggressions of his environment, which are primarily the reflection of the uncontrollable acquisition within himself, the giant of self-achieved independence is the world's messenger of disaster, even though in his mind, he may entertain himself with

human intentions.[13]

Kangaroo is a good example of the tyrant-monster described above. Like the mythic hero Somers fights the monster till the monster is defeated. However, Somers' battle with Kangaroo is a battle of tongues rather than a physical one, with Somers winning a decisive victory in the end. Even before Somers wins his final victory there are many occasions when Kangaroo seems to be losing and on his way to defeat: "Without another word Somers went, leaving the other man sunk in a great heap in his chair, as if defeated. Somers did not pity him" (p.153). Kangaroo's death does not come directly through a fight with Somers but as a result of the fatal wound he receives in his belly during the violent row between the two rival political organizations in Australia. Still Kangaroo continues to accuse Somers of killing him: "'You've killed me. You've killed me, Lovat!'" (p.368).

The death of Kangaroo reminds us of the monster in myths by whose death people are saved. After Kangaroo has been fatally wounded Somers becomes free to leave Australia, and quite safely. On the mythological level this means that Somers has emerged triumphant from the monster's belly after spending some time in it. For a long time in the novel the reader is given the impression that Kangaroo is engulfing or swallowing Somers as well as other people and so the analogy between Somers' release

[13]Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p.15.

after Kangaroo is wounded in his belly and the emergence of the mythic hero from the monster's belly is not a far-fetched analogy. Symbolically Somers' entry and return from it signifies, as in myths, the passage from chaos to creation.[14] And as in the case of the mythic hero Somers learns new wisdom through his ordeal inside the engulfing belly of the monster.

Thus the story of Somers and Kangaroo belongs to the universal myth of the hero and the tyrant-monster, like the story of Jonah and the whale or the myth of Kronos who swallowed his children to avoid their possible danger. The same story also belongs to the myth of the descent of the hero into the underworld and his return from it, if we accept Mircea Eliade's claim that "the sea monster's belly ... . represents the bowels of the earth, the realm of the dead, Hell."[15]

The third stage of the hero's adventure in this novel starts with Somers' release after the death of Kangaroo and culminates with his departure from Australia. Somers, however, does not return to Europe but goes straight to America. But his adventure has been a life-enhancing one like that of the mythic hero. Through this adventure Somers has learnt a great deal and gained a large experi-

[14]Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, p.224.

[15]Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.64.

ence. In addition to that, the death of Kangaroo seems to have freed Australia from the harmful grip of its monster masquerading in the form of a saviour.

Kangaroo's two-fold role as a tyrant-monster and as a despotic god also suggests the myth of the hero who revolts against a tyrant-god. Kangaroo is, to a certain extent, Lawrence's Prometheus Bound. Like Prometheus Somers is the champion of humanity fighting against the absolutism of a despotic god. Metaphorically Somers is tied like Prometheus until the god (Kangaroo) loses and the human patriot (Somers) triumphs. Somers' fear and terror before he is free to leave is tantamount to the suffering of Prometheus before he is finally released. Like Prometheus, Somers is thirsty for knowledge and thought adventure. Like him again, Somers is the patron of a new age and the representative of energetic opposition. Structurally the pattern of revolt, suffering and release characteristic of the Prometheus myth is also true of the story of Somers and Kangaroo.

A further mythic element in Kangaroo can be seen in the way the sea is treated in this novel. The sea figures prominently in the mythologies of the world; and so it does in Lawrence's novel. Frequently Somers wants to plunge into the depths of the sea as a way of avoiding Kangaroo and a humanity gone wrong.[16] In the coldness of the sea Somers seems to find a suitable outlet for his

[16] Kangaroo, pp. 139, 140, 154, 155, 163, 164, 365.

tendency towards isolation and his desire for independence and individualism. Although the sea depths may well suggest death the aim behind the plunge into the sea is not to seek death but rather to find life and to achieve renewal. By going down into the sea Somers reaches an embryonic state where he is very close to the first origins of life and creation: "To be an isolated swift fish in the big seas that are bigger than the earth; fierce with cold, cold life, in the watery twilight before sympathy was created to clog us" (p.140). In the depths of the sea Somers hopes to gain the vigour of a fish and then to re-emerge into a new life (p.154). By plunging into the sea Somers hopes to encounter the darkness which he is looking for and then learn to meet people in the complete fulfilment of darkness (p.154). In taking his imaginary dives into the sea Somers seems to have shed the past and its toils and to have emerged as a new creature (pp.164, 315).

Lawrence's treatment of the sea is basically mythological. In myths the sea is usually considered as the source of life. William Simpson pointed out that in many mythologies "it appears that the sea became a great abyss out of which everything came."[17] Somers' return to the sea, therefore, suggests a return to men's primordial stage as well as achieving renewal. From the darkness of the sea Somers is reborn.

[17]William Simpson, The Jonah Legend, p.143.

The plunge into the sea is a common feature in world mythology. In Homer, Dionysus plunges into the sea,[18] Christ is symbolized by a fish, Goliamesh undertakes a journey below the waters of the sea, Jonah is swallowed by the whale, and in Hindu mythology the fish appears as the incarnation of the god Vishnu.[19] In all these myths the plunge into the sea is part of a process of regression and reappearance, symbolic death and new rebirth. Down under the waters of the sea the mythic hero overcomes death and emerges newly born. Thus Somers' imaginary journey under the sea-waters and his return from there signify his passage from decay to creation and renewal.

Finally the cyclone at the end of the novel reminds us of the mythic typhoon, the sea monster or the mythic flood. The cyclone creates a great deal of havoc and destruction in Australia. The ferocity of the cyclone makes Somers think as if it were the end of the world (p.384). Periodic destruction of the world by a flood, as I pointed out earlier in this thesis, is found in most mythologies. Usually it occurs after a period of decadence. The cyclone is manipulated as a destructive power that will put an end to the old decaying world so that a new world can be created. And since water is, mythically speaking, the origin of life and a means of purification and renewal there are good signs to indicate that Kangaroo, despite the

[18]Gutherie, The Greeks and Their Gods (London: Methuen & Co., 1950), p.161.

[19]William Simpson, The Jonah Legend, p.126.

cyclone at the end, pins great hopes on the future by making the symbolic destruction of the decadent past the first step towards the creation of a better order.

Chapter Nine

The Use of Mythology in The Boy in the Bush

The Boy in the Bush is an archetypal story of the wandering hero. Jack, the hero of the novel, is leading a wandering and an adventurous life in the bush. Although the story of the wandering hero is common to world mythology and literature it is particularly to the biblical tradition that the story of the hero in The Boy in the Bush offers some striking similarities.

Jack finds his ideal of the wandering hero in the Bible. As a boy living an adventurous life in the bush Jack feels himself as the opponent of civilization and the advocate of a more natural and less tamed life. Jack wants his life to be like that of Abraham:

> He wanted to pitch his camp in the wilderness: with the faithful Tom, and Lennie, and his own wives. Wives, not wife. And the horses, and the element of wilderness. Not to be tamed .... He wanted to go like Abraham under the wild sky, speaking to a fierce, wild Lord and having Angels stand in his doorway.[1]

Inspired by the example of Abraham Jack wants to lead a wild life in the bush. Once he is in the bush he realizes he cannot go back to civilized life to become part of it

[1] D.H. Lawrence and M.L. Skinner, The Boy in the Bush (Penguin Books, 1963), p.374. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

again: "No, in the end he would go back to civilization. But the thought of becoming a part of the civilized outfit was deeply repugnant to him (p.380). Jack's aim is to introduce into modern life a dose of the wild element in life: "He wanted the wild nature in people, the unfathomed nature, to break into leaf again. The real rebel, not the mere reactionary" (p.380).

Like mythic heroes and particularly like Abraham Jack wants to marry more than one wife:

> The legal marriage with Monica, his own marriage with Mary .... The old heroes, the old fathers of red earth, like Abraham in the Bible, like David even, they took wives they needed for their completeness (p.370).

After getting married to Monica, Jack tries to persuade Mary to marry him, and when he fails he tries Hilda with whom he arranges to meet again and live a wild life in the bush.

Jack's attempts to live a wild life in the bush with his wives and his cattle indicates his desire to create a new utopia. It is obvious that Lawrence draws upon the mythic past for the creation of Jack's utopia:

> What a fool! To think of Abraham, and the great men in the early days. To think that I could take up land in the North, a big stretch of land, and build my house and raise my cattle and live as Abraham lived, at the beginning of time, but myself at another, late beginning (p.380).

Broadly speaking, Jack is a mythic wanderer dreaming of establishing a new Kingdom, of creating a new race of human

beings and a new way of life as well as a new approach to God:

> And my children growing like a new race on the face of the earth, with a new creed of courage and sensual pride ..... With my Lord as dark as death splendid with lustrous doom, a sort of spontaneous royalty, for the God of my little world (p.380).

In evoking the mythic past Lawrence is trying to revive the aristocratic system of the ancient world where a few elite people established themselves as heroes among their fellow men and became what Lawrence conceived as a natural aristocracy: "The spontaneous royalty of the other overlord, giving me earth-royalty, like Abraham or Saul, that can't be quenched and that means a perfection in death" (p.380). For Jack as well as for Lawrence, the way to the restoration of that natural aristocracy lies in picking up the wild element of life and integrating it into modern life: "Jack wanted to make a place on earth for a few aristocrats-to-the-bone. He wanted to conquer the world" (p.345).

As an opponent of civilization Jack conceives himself as Cain: "Jack knew he would never get on well with the world. He was a sinner" (p.10). Thus Lawrence views his modern sinner in mythic terms: the everlasting Cain. Lawrence, therefore, manipulates the myth of Cain to express the feeling and the attitude of Jack. In fact the biblical image of the sinner against humanity is ingrained not only in Lawrence's consciousness as a mythological

writer but also in Jack's as a rebel against humanity and civilization. "The Bible language exerted a certain fascination over him, and in the background of his consciousness the Bible images alw ays hovered" (p.8). And so Lawrence views the relation between the civilized and the wild elements of life in terms of the myth of Abel and Cain. He uses the myth to distinguish between two races of humanity:

> Somewhere in his consciousness he was aware of it, and in this awareness it was as if he belonged to a race apart. He never felt identified with the great humanity. He belonged to a race apart, like the race of Cain (p.216).

Thus Jack becomes an archetypal outcast who cannot live in harmony with society and who is eventually driven to rebellion. Jack cannot avoid becoming the enemy of Easu who, in Jack's opinion, does not have the untamed element in him (p.343). In the end he becomes a kind of Cain not only by opposing humanity but also by killing Easu. However, neither his opposition nor his murder of Easu is condemned. On the contrary the reader is made to show sympathy with Jack's actions.

Presumably Lawrence assumes that the life of the heroes in the Bible was in harmony with the universe. Jack sees the sun, the moon and the stars alive and recognizes their influence on his life:

> He had seen the glory of the sun, the glory of the moon, and both these glories had had a powerful sensual effect upon him. There had been a great passional reaction in himself, in his own body (p.196).

Lawrence seems to believe that in those days the planets were seen not in the same scientific way they are seen now. Rather they used to have their mystery and fascination. Jack's attempts to establish a living relationship with the cosmos suggest Lawrence's desire to revive the mythic view.

Apart from being in harmony with the planets Jack seems to be at one with animals as typified by his relationship with his horse: "Perhaps the horse was the only creature with which he had the right relation. He did not love it, but he harmonized with it" (p.382). The harmony between Jack and the animals is also indicated in Jack's suggestion to Mary to sleep with him in the stable (p.372). It is also reflected in the instinctive attraction between his horse and Mary's mare (p.386). Significantly enough this takes place while Jack and Mary are pledging to meet again in the wood to become man and wife. The harmonious relationship between Jack and the animals seems to have some beneficial effects upon himself:

> And when Jack made a fool of himself, as with Mary, and felt tangled, he always craved to get on his horse Adam, to be put right. He would feel the warm flow of life from the horse mount up him and wash in its flood the human entanglements in his nerves (p.382).

Like his ideal heroes in the Bible Jack is trying to establish a close relationship between himself and God and to bring his life and actions under the control of his Lord: "At the back of Jack's consciousness was always this mysterious Lord, to whom he cried in the night. And this

Lord put commands upon him" (p.186). Indeed Jack sees his happiness and well-being dependent upon maintaining an intimate connexion with God: "He had his own Lord. And when he could get into communication or communion with his own Lord, he always felt well and right again" (p.187). Jack's approach to God is based upon the example set by the prophets in the Bible: a personal relationship with God and a first-hand knowledge of Him rather than through another person or medium. Perhaps that is why Jack refuses what he has been told about God and seeks God in his own way:

> When he seemed to lose connexion with his great, mysterious Lord, with whom he communed absolutely alone, he became aware of hell. And he couldn't share with his aunts that Jesus whom they always commanded (p.187).

In Kangaroo Lawrence rejects the Judeo-Christian God in favour of a dark God who is different from the God in the Bible. In The Boy in the Bush the dark and mysterious god that Jack is seeking is not really different from the God of the Old Testament: "Somewhere outside himself was a terrible God who decreed" (p.92). Since Jack is seeking an untamed life in the wilderness and is longing to have as many wives as he possibly can it is quite plausible that he rejects Christianity and seeks a religion that offers some similarities to his ideas and thus can sanction his deeds and beliefs. It is natural therefore, that Jack is looking in the Old Testament for some inspi -

ration for his dark god. Indeed Jack's God can be roughly equated with the God of the Old Testament. Lawrence, however, makes the Jewish God more terrible and vaster than he really is. He also connects God with the body and the senses rather than with the mind or the spirit:

> Yes, in the wild bush, God seemed another God. God seemed absolutely another God, vaster, more calm and more deeply, sensually potent. And this was a profound satisfaction. To find another, more terrible, but also more deeply-fulfilling God (p.255).

There is no doubt that Jack's seeking of God in the bush was inspired to Lawrence from mythology and particularly from the Bible. In the Old Testament the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses "in the flame of a burning bush."[2] In Greek mythology Dionysus was frequently represented as appearing within a bush.[3] In the novel Jack hears the sound of God in the bush: "It seemed to Jack this sound in the bush was like God" (p.109); "Yes, in the wild bush, God seemed another God" (p.255).

Structurally The Boy in the Bush offers some resemblance to the world-wide initiation ritual. Since the novel is set in Australia it is the initiation ritual as practised by the Australian aborigines which immediately comes to the reader's mind. Mircea Eliade has pointed out the phases of the puberty initiation rites among the Australian

[2]The Old Testament, Exodus, 392.

[3]John M. Robertson, Christianity and Mythology (London: Watts & Co., 1910), p.100.

tribes:

> Broadly speaking, the initiation comprises the following phases: first, the preparation of the 'sacred ground,' where the man will remain in isolation during the festival; second, the separation of the novices from their mothers and, in general, from all women; third, their segregation in the bush, or in a special isolated camp, where they will be instructed in the religious traditions of the tribe; fourth, certain operations performed on the novices, usually circumcision, the extraction of a tooth .... [4]

The Boy in the Bush comprises two of these phases: the second and the third ones, which seem to be the most important phases. Jack leaves his parents in England and arrives in Australia to start a new life. After his arrival in the country he is sent by George to Ellis's place where he is going to stay with the Ellises, a large family living in the bush. Throughout his stay in the bush there is hardly any contact between Jack and his parents. This makes Jack look as separate and isolated from his parents as the initiate is isolated from his mother during the period of initiation in the bush.

However, Lawrence slightly modifies the life-pattern of the initiate as laid down in the initiation ritual. Instead of keeping his hero separate from women during the period of initiation he allows him to mix with women. But in spite of some modifications the similarity between Jack's life in the bush and that of the novice is quite

[4]Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.4.

obvious. Most of the boys and girls who are staying with Jack in the bush are fatherless and motherless (p.60). This makes their life as well as Jack's similar to that of the novices who are completely separate from their parents. According to Mircea Eliade, the novice usually enters an initiatory cabin.[5] Similarly Jack shares a "cubby hole" with the other Ellis boys (p.53). In addition, the rooms of the house, we are told, are like coffins (p.93).

In the initiation rituals instructors teach the novices the myths of the tribe. Likewise Jack is not without instructors. George is the first person who makes himself ready to help Jack and offer him advice. Aunt Matilda and her husband also give Jack some instructions. Gran's advice to Jack is:

> Trust yourself, Jack Grant. Earn a good opinion of yourself, and never mind other folks. You've only got to live once. You know when your spirit glows - trust that - that is you! That's the spirit of God in you (p.85).

Jack, however, does not strictly follow the instructions of his self-appointed instructors. Most of what he learns is different from what they tell him or from what he had been taught earlier at home. For Jack, God is not merely inside him as Gran has told him nor a gentle Jesus as his aunt had instructed him but is a powerful and terrible God

[5]Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.36.

outside himself, though he is connected with him: "The choice he had was no choice. 'Yourself is God.' It wasn't true. There was a terrible God somewhere else. And nothing else than this" (p.92).

Most of the new knowledge that Jack gains after his stay in the bush comes to him either as a result of his personal experience or from his contact with Tom: "He went ahead about, like a travelling animal, pointing out to Jack first one thing and then the other, initiating him into bush wisdom, teaching him the big-cipher-book of the bush" (p.246). Jack's new conception of God constitutes just one part of his newly-acquired knowledge; the other half being the information that he gets from Tom about the history of the tribes in the bush.

In myths the forest is usually a place of initiation and rebirth. As Mircea Eliade has pointed out: "Psychologists have shown the importance of certain archetypal images; and the cabin, the forest, and darkness are such images - they express the eternal psychodrama of a violent death followed by rebirth."[6] And as in myths and rituals Jack's retirement to the bush is part of his initiation into a new religious experience and his new rebirth. In the bush Jack is brought up to manhood: "The boy Jack never rose from that fever. It was a man who got up again.

[6]Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.344.

A man with all the boyishness cut away from him, all childishness gone" (p.330). He is also born into a new experience and outlook:

> Jack had learned all these things. He refused to be tamed ..... Only the wild, untamed souls walked on after death over the border into the porch of death, to be lords of death and masters of the next living (p.344).

Jack's rebirth into a new manhood and a new religious order belongs to the ritualistic tradition of death and rebirth. His life inside the "cubby hole," in the camp and in the bush as a whole suggests, as in myths and rituals, the end of his old self and the old order and his rebirth into a new form. Moreover, the ordeals and the symbolic death that Jack goes through are similar to those we find in the initiation rituals where the novice usually undergoes some fixed ordeals.[7] Thus like the novice Jack goes through some difficult ordeals and even suffers some sort of symbolic death before he is introduced into adult life and born into a new religious order. And so the long series of adventures in which Jack is involved and which constitute a large part of the novel can be looked at as being based on the ordeals that the initiate has to undergo before his final rebirth.

Jack's ordeals include his sleep in a confined place, his loneliness as a result of his separation from his

[7]Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.4.

original background, the attack by the dangerous kangaroo called the Old Man, his being at enmity with Easu and his deadly fight with him, his disappointment in love and his hostile human and natural surroundings as a whole. His ordeals culminate in his symbolic death after he kills Easu and wanders blindly in the wilderness until he finds himself lost in the bush with no water to keep him alive. When he realizes he has been lost he also feels he is going to die. "Now I am going to die. Well, then so be it. I will go out and haunt the bush, like all the other lost dead" (p.321). For some time Jack continues to waver between death and life until finally "he stumbled and fell, and in the white flash of falling knew he hurt himself again, and that he was falling for ever" (p.325). But it is not long before Jack wakes up from his trance. His rise is pictured in terms of death and rebirth: "The subconscious self woke first, roaring in distant wave-beats unintelligible, unmeaning, persistent, and growing in volume. It had something to do with rebirth. And not having died" (p.326).

Jack's ordeals, his loss in the wilderness, and his symbolic death are similar to those of the novice in the initiation ritual, and generally belong to the archetypal death followed by rebirth. Through his experience with the darkness of the bush as well as of death Jack symbolically returns to the embryonic state to which the novice is supposed to return. As Mircea Eliade writes: "The initi-

atory cabin represents not only the belly of the devouring monster but also the womb. The novice's death signifies a return to the embryonic state."[8]

Jack's life as an imitation of the archetypal pattern of death and rebirth can also be seen in his loss in the wilderness and his running out of water. In mythology, as I pointed out earlier in this thesis, it is an established principle that before you can gain anything you have to lose everything. By losing himself in the wilderness Jack has, mythically speaking, been enabled to regain his life which seems to have been shattered and destroyed after he killed Easu. Furthermore, water in myths, as I have pointed out in the earlier chapters, is usually considered the origin of life. Jack's running out of water is symbolic of the end of his life. When he awakes his reawakening is pictured in terms of a new baptism with the waters of life:

> Someone was tilting his head, and pouring a little water again. He swallowed with a crackling noise and a crackling pain. One had to come back. He recognized the command from his own Lord. His Lord was the Lord of Death. And he, Jack, was dark-anointed and sent back (p.326).

And so Jack's experience with darkness whether in the cabin or in the bush or in his trance, his loss in the wilderness and his symbolic death indicate a return to the origin from which a new life can emerge again. Jack

[8] Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth, p.36.

survives all these trials and when he rises he is born into a new order: "You must be born again. But when you emerge, this time you emerge with the darkness of death between your eyes, a lord of death (p.326).

Chapter Ten

The Use of Mythology in The Plumed Serpent

"I had no permanent feeling of religion till I came to New Mexico and penetrated into the old human race-experience there,"[1] wrote Lawrence in his article "New Mexico". Despite his wanderings in various parts of the world to find something "religious" it was only among the Mexican Indians that Lawrence found what he believed he had been looking for over so many years: the trails of a lost religion that once spread all over the world: "A vast religion which once swayed the earth lingers in unbroken practice in New Mexico."[2]

The Plumed Serpent is a dramatization of Lawrence's religious experience in New Mexico. It is a transmutation into art of Aztec myths and Lawrence's concept of the imaginary religion that "once swayed the earth." Here mythology becomes the subject-matter and its principles are, to a certain extent, the shaping elements of the novel. In a way Lawrence is trying to do to Aztec mythology what Homer did to Greek mythology. Out of Aztec fables and myths he attempts to reconstruct a guiding mythology as well as a plausible narrative. In The Plumed Serpent,

[1] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.144.

[2] Ibid., p.145.

more than in any of his novels, Lawrence is almost a myth-maker or at least a mythological writer. In this chapter I shall discuss Lawrence's use of mythology in the novel with special reference to the source-material he used.

Lawrence's readings on Aztec mythology include many books, most of which have been pointed out by William York Tindall.

> I found from allusions in his works and from correspondence with Mrs Luhan, Witter Bynner, and Mrs Lawrence that, while or before he was in New Mexico, Lawrence read Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, Thomas Belt's Naturalist in Nicaragua, Adolph Bandelier's The Guilded Man, Bernal Diaz's Conquest of Mexico, Humboldt's Vues des Cordillieres, and several volumes of the Anals del Museo Nacional of Mexico.[3]

Tindall adds that he was told that while in Mexico Lawrence stayed with Zelia Nuttall, an archeologist whose "home contained a complete library of Mexico"[4] and to whose book Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations Lawrence "owed most of his wide but inaccurate knowledge of primitive Mexico."[5] Another book which Lawrence probably read is Lewis Spence's The Gods of Mexico.[6]

[3]William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.114.

[4]Ibid., p.115.

[5]Ibid., p.115.

[6]William York Tindall, "D.H. Lawrence and the Primitive," Sewanee Review (April-June 1937), p.203.

Other books which had a bearing on the writing of The Plumed Serpent include Frederick Carter's The Dragon of the Alchemists which he read in manuscript,[7] James M. Pryse's The Apocalypse Unsealed,[8] H.P. Blavatsky's Isis Unveiled and The Secret Doctrine. Lawrence's early reading of the works of Jane Harrison, James Frazer and Edward Tylor also had some effect on the writing of The Plumed Serpent.

The above mentioned books contain a large amount of information on Aztec mythology, mythological symbols and animism. The new mythology that we find in the novel is not a replica of the ancient Aztec religion. Rather it is composed of some ideas derived from several books on Aztec mythology and combined with Lawrence's own notions of the ancient Aztec religion. The ancient myths are reinterpreted, purified and improved by Lawrence's own treatment. Lawrence selected from Aztec mythology what suited him and served his purpose. He curbed the excesses of blood-shed and violence he found in the Aztec myths. He found the old Huitzilopochtli too violent and so he replaced him by a more human and less violent god. Ramon wants Cipriano to be "'not the old Huitzilopochtli -

[7]William York Tindall, "D.H. Lawrence and the Primitive," Sewanee Review (April-June 1937), p.208.

[8]William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.151.

but the new!"[9] The shedding of blood is reduced to a minimum and the old myth of the necessity of human sacrifice for the survival of the sun is greatly modified. The sacrifices in the novel do not compare with the large number of victims mentioned in the sources. The victims who are believed to go to the sun after their death and whose blood is thought to be swallowed by the sun (p.398) are not treated in accordance with the Aztec myth that unless human sacrifices were made the sun will die of exhaustion and the universe will fall apart. The offering of blood to the sun, though based on the ancient Aztec sacrificial ritual, does not constitute an important part in the new religious cult as it used to be in ancient Aztec mythology. As in Aztec mythology Lawrence makes the sun the origin of life. The dead men return to the sun in order to be renewed: "'Give them to me and I will wrap them in my breath and send them the longest journey, to the sleep and the far awakening'" (p.398), says Ramon to Cipriano. However, the idea of renewal in this way is not characteristic of Aztec mythology but is something inculcated upon it by Lawrence himself. According to Lawrence there was once in all aboriginal America and even in all the ancient world an aboriginal religion which viewed the sun as the origin of life:

[9] D.H. Lawrence, The PlumedSerpent (Penguin Books, 1968), p.330. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

> To the animistic vision there is no perfect God behind us ..... Behind lies only the terrific, terrible, crude source, the mystic sun, the well-head of all things ..... This is the religion of all aboriginal America ..... Perhaps the aboriginal religion of the world.[10]

In The Plumed Serpent Lawrence retains the ancient Aztec concept of a god-King. Ramon and Cipriano are incarnations of the two ancient deities Quetzalcoatl and Huitzilopochtli. In the Aztec tradition, Quetzalcoatl was a kind of culture-hero or a divine man.[11] The Aztec rulers seem to have ruled as priests of either Quetzalcoatl or Huitzilopochtli or both of them. Zelia Nuttall points out that at the time of the Conquest Montezuma was called the priest of Quetzalcoatl and the "living personification of Huitzilopochtl."[12] Lawrence puts power in the hands of two men instead of one, although he makes Ramon the leader of the new religious movement, and makes each ruler a representative of one deity.

The god-King concept is not restricted to Aztec mythology but is a world-wide phenomenon. The mythologies of the world are full of heroes who are half-gods, half-men. Among ancient peoples the queen was identified with the

[10] D.H. Lawrence, Mornings in Mexico and Etruscan Places, p.66.

[11] Zelia Nuttall, The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations, p.66; William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico (London: Richard Bentley, 1844), Vol. II, p.83; Lewis Spence, The Gods of Mexico (London: T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1923), pp.10, 123.

[12] Ibid., p.71.

goddess and the king with the god. In Aztec mythology as well as in many mythologies the hero holds temporal as well as spiritual powers. Besides being kings or leaders Ramon and Cipriano are priests and even gods. The characters of both Ramon and Cipriano are based not only on Aztec mythology but on the universal god-King archetype. Like the god-King of the mythic period, Ramon and Cipriano are a kind of culture-heroes or saviours whose task is to educate and to civilize their people.

However, the characters of both men are inseparable from Lawrence's conception of the hero: "Whoever can establish, or initiate, a connection between mankind and the circumbient universe is, in his own degree, a saviour;"[13] "he who has the sun in his breast, and the moon in his belly, he is the first, the aristocrat of aristocrats;"[14] "a hero was a hero in the great past, when he had the power of the dragon with him in his limbs and breast."[15] As a Laurentian hero Ramon sees the earth and the sky alive: "The earth is alive, and the sky is alive" (p.211). He also feels some kind of continuity and connection between himself and both the earth and the sky: "'Earth has kissed my knees, and put strength in my belly. Sky has perched on my wrist, and sent power into my breast'" (p.211). Likewise,

[13] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix II, p.478

[14] Ibid., p.483.

[15] D.H. Lawrence, Apocalypse, p.222.

Cipriano is the leader of his men because he has "the strength that comes from behind the sun" (p.260).

Ramon and Cipriano, therefore, embody Lawrence's conception of the ideal hero. The concept of the hero and the qualities that distinguish him are derived partly from Aztec mythology, partly from world mythology and to a certain extent from Lawrence's own notion of the hero. In his treatment of the hero Lawrence does not restrict himself to the source but goes beyond it and even adapts it for his own purpose. Thus he revives the ancient Aztec myths, combines them with some kind of animistic vision derived from his reading as well as from his own personal intuitive knowledge and makes the connection between man and the universe the standard by which the hero is to be assessed. Through Ramon and Cipriano Lawrence expresses his conception of the "Natural Aristocrat" or the hero who stands for a deity and rules as a representative of that deity. Lawrence's aim is to allow for every country to have its own gods with their own representatives. In the long run this will lead to all "Natural Aristocrats" of the world coming closer together and having some unity among themselves, especially because "'the mystery is one mystery, but men see it differently'" (p.261). Obviously Lawrence is reiterating here what he had said earlier in his novels about a universal mythology and various local gods. Undoubtedly Lawrence partially owes his conception of "Natural Aristocracy" to the hero-worship of the mythic period.

Although Prescott makes Huitzilopochtli the chief god in the Aztec pantheon[16] Lawrence elevates Quetzalcoatl to the highest rank in the revived mythological system. The result is that despite Lawrence's attempt to preserve some sort of balance between Ramon and Cipriano it is obvious that Ramon is the leader and Cipriano is his follower. Indeed the relation between them is similar to the teacher-disciple relationship characteristic of mythology as in the case of Buddha and Anandra, Moses and Aaron, Christ and his disciples, and various other examples. The degree of submission which Lawrence recommends to be made to the hero or the politico-religious leader has its best parallel in myths where religious beliefs and rules are taken as uninfringible or sacred laws. "'I believe in him, too. Not in your way, but in mine. I tell you why. Because he has the power to compel me'" (p.217). Moreover, Kate realizes that Ramon has power over Cipriano: "She saw now his power over Cipriano. It lay in this imperative which he acknowledged in his own soul, and which really was like a messenger from beyond" (p.330).

Although dualism is, as Graham Hough has pointed out,[17] basic to Lawrence's thinking, there can be no doubt that Lawrence derived much of the dualism he associates with

[16]William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. I, p.53.

[17]Graham Hough, The Dark Sun, p.224.

Quetzalcoatl from his reading of several works on Aztec mythology and particularly from Zelia Nuttall's book: The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations. In her book she explains the duality implied by the word "coatl":

> The duality and generative force implied by the word 'coatl' are clearly recognizable in the native invocations addressed to 'Our lord Quetzalcoatl, the Creator and Maker or Former, who dwells in heaven and is the lord of the earth .... who is our celestial father and mother, great lord and great lady."[18]

She also points out that Quetzalcoatl means "the Divine Twain, the Creator, the Father and Mother of all."[19] In addition she asserts that duality was basic to Mexican mythology.[20] The Aztecs, she explains, divided heaven and earth into the Above and the Below, and associated the first with masculine elements and the second with feminine elements.[21] Moreover, she points out that in Aztec mythology the bird or the eagle "typified the upper state and diurnal cult of heaven"[22] while one of the titles of the Mexican Chieftainess was "serpent or female twin."[23] Apart from her

[18]Zelia Nuttall, The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations, p.32.

[19]Ibid., p.270.

[20]Ibid., p.130.

[21]Ibid., p.62.

[22]Ibid., p.282.

[23]Ibid., p.428.

interpretation of the duality of Aztec mythology and its symbolism, Zelia Nuttall shows that in addition to Aztec mythology Indian, Babylonian and Egyptian mythologies preserved a dual deity comprising a sun-god associated with light, heaven, day and the Above, and an earth-deity or a moon-goddess associated with night, darkness and the Below. The cult of the male god Vishnu, she says, corresponds to the Aztec cult of the Above or heaven and the cult of the female Siva forms a parallel to the Aztec cult of the earth-goddess or the Below.[24] In Egyptian mythology, she adds, the sun and the moon were regarded as personifications of Osiris and Isis and were named respectively the right and left eye of Amen-Ra.[25] The Egyptian god Horus, she states, was represented as "air and earth, the Above and the Below."[26] She also points to another dualism in Egyptian mythology: "The hawk-headed sphinx, seated on four petals, clearly expresses the idea of the lord of Heaven and Earth, the father and mother of all."[27] And finally she asserts that "the positions assigned to Osiris and Isis ... were intended to represent separate incorporations of the male and

[24] Ibid., p.314.

[25] Ibid., p.389.

[26] Ibid., p.420.

[27] Ibid., p.420.

female principles which were united in Ammon-Ra, the 'Divine Twain.'"[28]

In Zelia Nuttall's book Lawrence must have found a rich source-material for the dualism he wanted to use with his Quetzalcoatl. Even the symbolism of heaven and earth, the Above and the Below, the bird and the serpent had been clearly explained in her book. What Lawrence did to the material he found in the source was that he transmuted it into art and interpreted it with a deeper and greater insight. He interpreted the dualism pointed out by Zelia Nuttall and retained a great part of it, including the Morning Star which in her book is also a symbol of dualism.[29]

In the novel the dualism of the Quetzalcoatl cult is extensively and almost exclusively worked out, with the main emphasis being put on the contrast between the masculine and the feminine principles as represented by heaven and earth, the eagle and the serpent, the above and the below, and man and woman. Quetzalcoatl represents heaven and earth, referred to respectively as a bird (p.211) and a serpent (p.208). He is also god of rain and earth as expressed in the ritualistic union of water and earth during the marriage ceremony of Cipriano and Kate (p.344). His symbol is "an eagle with the ring of a serpent that had

[28]Ibid., p.433.

[29]William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.116.

its tail, in its mouth" (p.128). He is also the Morning Star, "midway between the darkness and the rolling of the sun" (pp.134-135). He is "lord of two ways" and "master of up and down" (p.241). Quetzalcoatl's aim is to elevate the native Mexicans and help them unite the above and the below, the spirit and the instinct. The men of Quetzalcoatl are "lords of the day and night. Sons of the Morning Star, Sons of the Evening Star" (p.190). They are also "Lords of Life" and "Masters of Death" (p.396). Besides all these examples we find that the Quetzalcoatl movement comprises two main deities with two women.

In The Plumed Serpent Lawrence is caught between two extremes: the cult of the hero who rules with absolute power and the cult of Quetzalcoatl whose aim is to seek balance as symbolized by the Morning Star. Lawrence tries to make Quetzalcoatl a preserver of balanced relationships but this leads to an almost insoluble conflict with his desire to create or revive the "aristocratic" hero whose power is indisputable. The result of this sharp conflict is that the Quetzalcoatl movement, as H.M. Daleski has pointed out, fails in its aim to point to the Morning Star.[30] Although there is great concern with dualism still it remains an unbalanced dualism, with some men being superior to other men and men placed at a higher

[30]H.M. Daleski, The Forked Flame (London: Faber & Faber, 1965), p.225.

position than women. Later Lawrence rightly referred to what was intended to be a kind of "Morning Star" relationship as "the leader-cum-follower relationship."[31]

There is no reason to suppose that the dualism in The Plumed Serpent was inspired only by Aztec mythology or only by Zelia Nuttall's book. Dualism is a very ancient concept and a universal phenomenon found in the world's mythologies. It is also an integral part of Lawrence's thinking. What is significant about the way in which the novel's dualism is presented is that it follows almost strictly the basic principles of mythology. The division of the cosmos, into the above and the below, father-heaven and mother-earth, and the representation of the sky by a bird and the earth by a serpent is characteristic of the various mythologies of the world. As H.R. Davidson writes: "the earth as bride of the sky is one of the universal motifs of world mythology."[32] And as Alan W. Watts observes: "It is a general principle in mythology that material is the feminine correspondent and spirit the masculine, their respective symbols being water or earth and air or fire."[33] The novel speaks of the serpent of earth and the bird of heaven (pp. 61, 140, 209, 210, 211, 356). In the marriage

[31]Letter to Witter Bynner, 13 March 1928, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. II, p.1045.

[32]H.R. Davidson, Gods and Myths of Northern Europe, p.46.

[33]Alan W. Watts, Myth and Ritual in Christianity, p.46.

ceremony Cipriano is associated with heaven and Kate with earth, and their marriage is symbolic of the union of heaven and earth whose union is found in world mythology.

The symbolization of gods by animals is a popular phenomenon in world mythology. In Egyptian mythology Isis as an earth-goddess was represented by a cow and Osiris by a bull. In Indian mythology the goddess Aditi was symbolized by a cow and the god Indra was addressed as a bull.[34] In Greek and Roman mythology many gods were represented by animals. Generally speaking, in mythology the earth has been represented as a cow, the moon as a bull, and the sun as a bird.

In the novel Quetzalcoatl is represented by a bird and a serpent. In mythology the serpent has been used to symbolize the earth. Lawrence must have known about the significance of the serpent in mythology early in his career through his reading in anthropology. Edward Tylor's Primitive culture, which Lawrence said he read with great interest, contains some references to the serpent symbolism.[35] Other sources from which Lawrence learnt about the importance of the serpent in world mythology include H.P. Blavatsky's Isis Unveiled and The Secret Doctrine. Blavatsky discusses the serpent symbol in her two books.

[34]Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Oriental Mythology (London: Souvenir Press, 1973), p.63.

[35]Edward B. Tylor, Primitive Culture, Vol. II, p.241.

"In all ages," she writes, "the serpent was the symbol of divine wisdom, which kills in order to resurrect, destroys but to rebuild the better."[36] She also points out how to the Brahmans the earth in the beginning took the shape of a serpent with its tail in its mouth - an emblem, as she says, of eternity.[37] Lawrence was also familiar with the serpent symbol through his acquaintance with Frederick Carter and through his reading some of Carter's works. In a letter Lawrence writes to him: "Dear Mr Carter: I have read the Dragon."[38] Through his correspondence with Frederick Carter and through the reading of his works in the early 1920's Lawrence's interest in Apocalyptic symbolism, particularly the dragon symbol, greatly increased.

Lawrence's interest in the serpent symbol was perhaps enhanced after he read Zelia Nuttall's book. In her book she points out that "to the native mind, the serpent upon merely shedding its skin, lived again."[39] She also asserts that the Mexicans saw the serpent as a symbol of eternal renewal and of fecundity: "The ancient Mexicans not only employed it as a symbol of an eternal renewal or continuation of time and of life, but also combined it with the

[36] H.P. Blavatsky, Isis Unveiled, Vol. II, p.484.

[37] Ibid.,pp.489-490.

[38] Letter to Frederick Carter, 18 June 1923, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. II, p.744.

[39] Zelia Nuttall, The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations, p.31.

idea of fecundity and reproductiveness."[40] To the Mexicans, she adds, the serpent signified the generative force of the Creator.[41]

As a mythological writer Lawrence associates the serpent with some symbolic significance similar to that we find in mythology. Joseph Campbell has pointed out that "the wonderful ability of the serpent to slough its skin and so renew its youth has earned for it throughout the world the character of the master of the mystery of rebirth."[42] Similarly, Lawrence uses the serpent as a symbol of regeneration and renewal. Quetzalcoatl and Jesus as well as ordinary people are presented as undergoing a continual process of death and regeneration like the serpent. The idea of gods growing old and disappearing to return in a fresh form is, therefore, connected with the idea of the serpent sloughing its old skin as part of her renewal. Even the death of Kate's old self and her subsequent regeneration are based on the same idea. The novel also envisions the revival of the Mexicans as the rise of the serpent in them: "'Snake of the fire of the heart of the world, coil round my ankles, and rise like life around my knee'" (p.208).

[40]Ibid., p.32.

[41]Ibid., p.32.

[42]Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology (New York: The Viking Press, 1969), p.9.

The use of the serpent in the novel as a major symbol of regeneration and renewal underlines the mythic theme of death and rebirth. Although the serpent symbol might have provided Lawrence with a good example of destruction and rebirth, it is true to say that Lawrence bases his idea of death and rebirth not only on the example of the serpent but also on the myth of the dying and resurrected gods characteristic of world mythology. The departure of Quetzalcoatl and his return are reminiscent of the gods who descend to the underworld and return newly created. The idea behind the use of this myth is that since gods rise after death everyone of the Mexican people, and indeed of all mankind, can rise to life after destruction. The same myth is also used to explain the coming of Christianity to Mexico and the need for the departure, as it were, of Jesus from Mexico to be renewed:

> Then the greatest of the great suns spoke aloud from the back of the sun. I will take my son to my bosom, I will take His Mother on my lap. Like a woman I will put them in my womb, like a mother I will lay them to sleep, in mercy I will dip them in the bath of forgetting and peace and renewal (p.134).

Lawrence's view of death is largely mythic. The mythic notion that death can be conquered and life never stops by death permeates the whole novel. The revival of Mexico's ancient gods, the renewal of Kate's virginity through the dance (p.140) and her rebirth after the metaphorical death of her old self, and the rise of the Mexicans to life after their plunge in death and destruction are based

on the mythic pattern of death and rebirth and can be appreciated only in a mythic context. I agree with Maud Bodkin that "the rebirth pattern dominates this book."[43] In this novel it is obvious that Lawrence takes the myth of death and rebirth quite seriously. But although this notion is common to almost all the mythologies of the world it is to Christian mythology in particular that Lawrence seems to owe his use of it, as it is obvious from the terminology that he uses to express it: "Ye must be born again. We must be born again" (p.65).

The Plumed Serpent contains references to three animals, frequently found in mythology: the bull, the horse and the serpent. The novel shows how these three mythically sacred animals have been misused as symbols of death and destruction. In the bull-fight the horse is depicted as the victim and the bull as the victimizer, and both the bull and the horse as the victims of the toreador and the eccentrecities of the spectators. The serpent is also occasionally described as an emblem of regression and dragging: "It was what the country wanted to do all the time, with a slow, reptilian insistence, to pull one down. To prevent the spirit from soaring" (p.81). The novel attempts to restore to these mythically sacred animals their traditional position as symbols of creation and productivity. The sympathy that Kate shows towards

[43]Maud Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p.295.

these animals indicates Lawrence's desire to see these animals approached with veneration and respect as they had been in the mythic period.

Out of the Aztec pantheon that constituted many gods Lawrence chose two gods whose names he kept the same as in the source and a third deity, Malintzi, who, as William York Tindall pointed out, does not originally belong to the Aztec pantheon.[44] Tindall ingeniously explains the change in the name of the goddess by suggesting that "She seems to be the result of a casual union in Lawrence's fancy between two persons mentioned by Prescott, Metzli the moon and Malinche the mistress of Cortes."[45]

As Tindall has observed, Lawrence adhered to Zelia Nuttall's book by allowing Quetzalcoatl "to remain god of wind, rain, the above and at the same time the supreme god of the union of rain with earth."[46] Primarily, Quetzalcoatl is presented as the god of air and earth, the above and the below and their union:

> I am Quetzalcoatl of the eagle and the snake.
> The earth and air.
> Of the Morning Star (p.356).

Some of the descriptions used in connection with Quetzal-

[44]William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.117.

[45]Ibid., p.117.

[46]Ibid., p.116.

coatl are similar to those found in Zelia Nuttall and Lewis Spence. The dualistic nature of Quetzalcoatl is pointed out in Nuttall's book as I mentioned earlier. Most of the descriptions used by Lawrence are similar to those mentioned in her book. In Lewis Spence's The Gods of Mexico Quetzalcoatl is life-giver[47] and creator of the world.[48] In Lawrence's novel Quetzalcoatl is "the breath of life" (p.64) and without whom people are nothing (p.133).

The physical features of Ramon, the representative of the mythic Quetzalcoatl, are similar to those attributed to the god in Aztec mythology. According to Lewis Spence, Quetzalcoatl was "a white man, large-bodied, broad-browed, great-eyed, with long black hair and a beard heavy and rounded."[49] William Prescott gives a similar description: "He was said to have been tall in stature with a white skin, long, dark hair, and a flowing beard."[50] Alexander De Humboldt also describes him as "a white and bearded man."[51] In the novel Quetzalcoatl is conceived as "a sort of fair bearded god" (p.64). He is "a tall, big, handsome man who gave the effect of

[47]Lewis Spence, The Gods of Mexico, p.119.

[48]Ibid., p.128.

[49]Ibid., p.120.

[50]William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. I, p.54.

[51]Alexander De Humboldt, The Views of the Cordilleurs and Monuments of the Natives of America, (trans.) Helen Maria Williams (London: Longmans, 1814), Vol. I, p.92.

bigness" (p.44).

A major deviation from the sources is the sensuality and the physical attraction that Lawrence associates with Quetzalcoatl. Although the mythic Quetzalcoatl is generally known as an ascetic and celibate god[52] Ramon, as the incarnation of the deity, insists that gods should be accompanied by women: "'Ramon doesn't believe in womanless gods, he says'" (p.248). He also considers sensual fulfilment as a basic principle in his doctrine: "I am a man who has no belief in abnegation of blood desires. I am a man who is always on the verge of taking wives and concubines to live with me, so deep is my desire for that fulfilment'" (p.286). As a matter of fact he is married twice.

Although the Aztecs gave Huitzilopochtli a higher position than Quetzalcoatl[53] whom they borrowed from the Toltecs, Lawrence reverses that order and makes Quetzalcoatl the leader of the new religious movement and the chief god of the Aztec pantheon. He even attributes to him some of the qualities of the supreme god whom he refers to in the novel and who is considered to be higher in rank than Quetzalcoatl. Some of the attributes used to describe Quetzalcoatl such as the creator, the father

[52]Lewis Spence, The Gods of Mexico, p.26. See also William Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. III, p.237.

[53]William Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. I, p.53.

and mother of all, the life-giver, "the eyes that see and are unseen" (p.64) are similar to those that the Aztecs used to describe what they conceived as the supreme creator. Zelia Nuttall observes:

> An examination of the texts of several native prayers preserved, establish that the Mexicans addressed their prayer to a supreme creator and ruler, whom they termed 'invisible, incomprehensible, and impalpable,' and revered as the father and mother of all.[54]

Lawrence refers to this supreme creator as the Father and the Morning Star and to Quetzalcoatl as the Son of the Morning Star, and attributes to the Father most of the qualities pointed out by Nuttall: "I am the Son of the Morning Star, and child of the deeps. No man knows my Father, and I know Him not" (p.355).

This Father-Son relationship is not typically Aztec; rather it is reminiscent of biblical mythology where the concept of Father and Son is one of its basic features. Moreover, Lawrence seems to have borrowed mainly from Jewish mythology the idea of a terrible and revengeful god. Lawrence's description of Quetzalcoatl as pointed out in the following quotation reminds us of the Jewish god:

> And I wait for the final day, when the
> dragon of thunder, waking under the
> spider-web nets
> Which you've thrown upon him, shall
> suddenly shake with rage,

[54]Zelia Nuttall, The Fundamental Principles of Old and New World Civilizations, p.8.

> And dart his electric needles into your
> bones, and curdle your blood like milk
> with electric venom (p.272).

As in Jewish mythology, the idea here is of a god whose people have forsaken him and who decides upon revenge as a sort of punishment and threat.

As I mentioned earlier, Lawrence reduces Huitzilopochtli, the god of war in the Aztec pantheon and once their chief god, to a secondary place in the new religious revival. But he makes him god of fire, war and earth and assigns to him the protection of the new religious movement from its opponents. In Aztec mythology Huitzilopochtli is represented as a god wearing the feathers of the humming bird.[55] Lawrence keeps close to the source by making Huitzilopochtli/with some feathers in his dress /appear (p.397).

There is not much said about the goddess Malintzi. In fact her character remains vague and undeveloped. All that we know about her is that she is Malintzi of the green colour (pp.394, 395, 400). Her green colour is perhaps intended to make her a goddess of fertility. This possibility might be borne out by Cipriano's reference to the time "when the water of Malintzi falls/Making a greenness" (p.401).

Although hymns are almost invariably found in every mythology the hymns in the novel seem to have been parti-

[55]Lewis Prescott, The Gods of Mexico, p.17. See also William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. I, p.53.

cularly inspired by the fact that the Aztecs were known to have had some hymns which contained their legends and myths. Most of the sources I mentioned earlier refer to the Aztec hymns but the greatest influence on Lawrence, as far as the writing of the hymns is concerned, might have come from Lawrence's reading of the several hymns included in Lewis Spence's The Gods of Mexico. William York Tindall argues that the similarity between the hymns in Spence's book and those in The Plumed Serpent increases the likelihood of the influence of this book on Lawrence's novel.[56] Although the hymns in the novel do not show a direct borrowing from the hymns in the book the similarity of tone and even of phraseology between them is sometimes so explicit to suggest some influence. As an example, the Huitzilopochtli hymns in Spence's book bear some resemblance to those in the novel in that their tone is one of threat, confidence and power. Similarity is also found in the diction of the hymns. Here is an example:

> Huitzilopochtli the warrior, no one is
> my equal; Not in vain have I put the
> vestment of yellow feathers,
> For through me the sun has risen.[57]

Compare the above quotation from a hymn in Spence's book with this one from Lawrence's novel:

[56]William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.117.

[57]Lewis Spence, The Gods of Mexico, p.80.

I am Huitzilopochtli,
The Red Huitzilopochtli,
The blood-red.

I am Huitzilopochtli
Yellow of the Sun,
Sun in the blood (p.389).

In the "Song of the cloud-serpents" in Spence's book we read that "Out of the Seven Caverns he sprung (was born)."[58] In the novel we find thatQuetzalcoatl had slept in "the cave which is called Dark Eye" (p.128) before he was reborn.

A deviation from the original myth can be seen in Lawrence's treatment of Quetzalcoatl's departure and return. In Aztec mythology there are different stories about the departure of Quetzalcoatl. According to a story in Alexander De Humboldt's book Quetzalcoatl left his native country after he was offered a beverage "which inspired him with a taste for travelling."[59] William H. Prescott cites a myth according to which Quetzalcoatl departed after a dispute with another deity.[60] While the story in Alexander De Humboldt's book indicates that Quetzalcoatl disappeared on the mouth of a river [61] the story in Prescott shows that he disappeared on the great Atlantic ocean.[62]

[58]Lewis Spence, The Gods of Mexico, p.314.

[59]Alexander De Humboldt, The Views of the Cordilleurs and Movements of the Natives of America, p.495.

[60]William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. I, p.54.

[61]Alexander De Humboldt, p.494.

[62]William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. III, p.313.

In a myth mentioned in Lewis Spence's book Quetzalcoatl was forced to leave after he was deceived into drinking by some sorcerers.[63] According to another myth he tarried four days in the underworld and then returned to heaven.[64] In all these myths Quetzalcoatl is reported to have promised a return to Mexico some future day.

Lawrence modifies these myths to suit his own purposes. His Quetzalcoatl is not so ascetic to make drink or loss of chastity a reason for his departure. Instead he makes the departure of Quetzalcoatl the result of the arrival of a younger god (i.e. Jesus) and the old age of Quetzalcoatl. In this way Lawrence was able to integrate the departure of Quetzalcoatl into the imaginative unity of the novel as a whole.

Another change in Lawrence's treatment of the Quetzalcoatl myth is that he makes the disappearance of the god less mysterious than it is in Aztec myths.[65] In the novel Quetzalcoatl grows old, climbs up a mountain and ascends into heaven for renewal. The myths do not speak of any specific place to whichthe departing Quetzalcoatl went.

In The Plumed Serpent Lawrence is trying to restore to Mexico its golden age and its old religion and to the countries of the world their ancient gods and religions. According to Aztec mythology the reign of Quetzal-

[63] Lewis Spence, The Gods of Mexico, p.123.

[64] Ibid., p.137.

[65] William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico, Vol. I, p.54.

coatl was Mexico's golden age. Destruction followed Quetzalcoatl's departure.[66] Lawrence revives the Mexican culture-hero and makes Ramon the incarnation of the old man-god and the new saviour who can lead the country to find "a new way out, to the sun" (p.145). Quetzalcoatl returns with a somewhat new vision since, according to Lawrence, people have now lost their connection with God and so are in need for a new connection carried out by a new saviour, with a new vision (p.178).

The vision which Lawrence wants to restore to Mexico and to the world is mainly animistic. The hymns of the new religion concentrate on a living cosmos in which the earth, the sky and the planets are alive and man is inextricably connected with them: "For the sun and the moon are alive, and watching with gleaming eyes./ And the earth is alive" (p.225); "a man's blood can't beat in the abstract. And man is a creature who wins his own creation inch by inch from the nest of the cosmic dragons" (p.285). Ritualistic dances are also used to effect a reunion with the living cosmos. The revived dances are similar to those of the ancient Indians. In Lawrence's opinion, the Indians "still have the secret of animistic dancing. They dance to gain power; power over the living forces or potencies of the earth " (p.280). Cipriano tells his men to get "the second strength" out of the earth and

[66]Lewis Spence, The Gods of Mexico, p.124.

from behind the sun (p.382). Kate also realizes the need for some vision to connect modern man with the mystery of the cosmos: "We must go back to pick up old threads. We must take up the old broken impulse that will connect us with the mystery of the cosmos again" (p.147).

The animism which Lawrence wants to restore to Mexico belongs, in Lawrence's view, to the old animistic vision that once was the religion of the world before the flood destroyed the ancient Atlantis and other lost continents:

> She had a strange feeling in Mexico, of the old prehistoric humanity, the dark humanity of the days, perhaps, before the glacial period ..... when great plains stretched away to the oceans, like Atlantis, and the lost continents of Polynesia, so that seas were only great lakes, and the soft, dark-eyed people of that world could walk around the globe. Then there was a mysterious, hot-blooded, soft-footed humanity with a strange civilization of its own (p.431).

In those prehistoric days "the mind and the power of man was in his blood and his backbone, and there was the strange, dark intercommunication between man and man and man and beast" (p.431). Lawrence seems to have conceived the ancient gods of every country as a relic of that pre-historic animistic vision:

> Kate was more Irish than anything, and the almost deathly mysticism of the aboriginal Celtic or Iberian people lay at the bottom of her soul. It was a residue of memory, something that lives on from the pre-Flood world and cannot be killed (p.432).

Lawrence associates animism not only with this prehistoric religion but also with Pan. In The Plumed Serpent Pan is associated with a living cosmos besides phallic mystery (p.324) and dominant male power (pp.325, 327). Ramon tells Kate: "We must change back to the vision of the living cosmos; we must. The oldest Pan is in us, and he will not be denied" (p.330). The novel views the Pan element in man as something necessary and everlasting: "The oldest Pan is in us, and he will not be denied. In cold blood and in hot blood both, we must make the change. That is how man is made" (p.330). Lawrence does not associate Pan with Greece only but considers him as a relic of the old prehistoric animistic religion which he believed was the accepted religion of the world. In Lawrence's view, therefore, the Pan element is something universal and survives in every age as part of the prehistoric world's animistic religion: "The god-demon Pan, who can never perish, but ever returns upon mankind from the shadows" (p.331). According to Lawrence the Mexicans had their animistic vision or the Pan element before many other countries: "The Red Indian seems to me much older than the Greeks, or Hindus or any Europeans or even Egyptians."[67]

Lawrence's interest in the Atlantis myth and his belief in a prehistoric religion which he claims once

[67] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.144.

was the religion of the whole world have so much in common with H.P. Blavatsky's theosophy that the reader is led to suppose some influence by her on Lawrence. William York Tindall was perhaps the first critic to point to such an influence: "Lawrence's most animistic novel, The Plumed Serpent, is also his most theosophical. Its theme is that of Mme Blavatsky's Secret Doctrine: The recovery of Lost Atlantis by means of myths and symbols."[68] Lawrence shares with Mme Blavatsky her belief in the lost continents and their lost knowledge. According to her all religions of the world spring from one universal religion.[69] This view of hers is shared by Lawrence, as reflected in the novel. "Different peoples must have different Saviours, as they have different speech and different colour. The final mystery is one mystery. But the manifestations are many" (p.357). Indeed the Quetzalcoatl movement is based upon the belief that different countries need different saviours but all countries can be united under one universal religion.

Lawrence improved on Blavatsky's idea of universal, ante-diluvian religion by adding to it some elements derived from the animistic vision. In other words, he makes the undefined religion imagined by Blavatsky basically animistic.

[68] William York Tindall, D.H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, p.144.

[69] H.P. Blavatsky, Isis Unveiled, Vol. I, p.560.

There can be no doubt that Lawrence's animistic vision owes a great deal to his early readings in anthropology. Lawrence draws upon his reading for the construction of the animistic religion he talks about. Thus during the period when this ancient religion prevailed "the whole life-effort of man was to get his life into direct contact with the elemental life of the cosmos."[70]

The Plumed Serpent is, to a large extent, a commentary on the aridity of the modern world. This is perhaps underlined by the fact that the heroine who crosses into a pre-historic, primitivistic and mythopoeic region is forty years old. Forty may be taken to suggest forty years in the wilderness - a reference to the period of forty years which the Israelites spent in the wilderness. Kate's journey to Mexico is similar to Lawrence's journey to America. James C. Cowan argues that the task of Lawrence's journey to America was "to find some symbols adequate enough to express the wasteland of contemporary life and a myth potent enough to transform it."[71] Kate considers the modern world as an arid place without mystery or myths: "She felt she could cry aloud, for the unknown gods to put the magic back into her life, and to save her

[70] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, pp.145-146

[71] James C. Cowan, D.H. Lawrence's American Journey (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University 1970), p.64.

from the dry-rot of the world's sterility" (p.112). The aim behind Kate's journey to Mexico is to find a refuge from the sterility of modern life. The modern world's sterility is further underlined by contrasting it with the vital life of the mythopoeic period. Before coming to Mexico Kate had felt that her life was at the end of its tether; but/a short stay in Mexico and following her /after involvement in the Quetzalcoatl revival she feels that her life has been completely renewed: "She felt a virgin again, a young virgin. This was the quality these men had been able to give back to her" (p.140).

Structurally, the unity of The Plumed Serpent has been firmly established by comparing its structure with the pattern of the journey of the mythic hero as outlined by Joseph Campbell. As I mentioned in the chapter on Kangaroo Joseph Campbell outlines three stages as the common pattern of the adventure of the mythic hero: separation - initiation - return. Jascha Kessler is perhaps the first critic to view the novel as an adventure following in almost minute detail the pattern of the monomyth as mentioned above. Drawing upon this formula he asserts that The Plumed Serpent comprises the first two parts of the pattern of the universal myth.[72] He analyses the novel's structure by subsuming the events of the novel under the various stages of the mythic hero's adventure.

[72]Jascha Kessler, "Descent in Darkness: The Myth of The Plumed Serpent," A D.H. Lawrence Miscellany, (ed.) Harry T. Moore (Cambridge: Southern Illinois University Press, 1959), p.240.

The first three chapters, he says, include the call to adventure.[73]

After the "call to adventure" comes "the crossing of the threshold" which, as he says,"is usually denoted by a trip across water ... sometimes the threshold is depicted by womb or rebirth imagery, as in the Biblical tale of Jonah's stay in the whale's belly."[74] Thus in the case of Kate the crossing of the threshold comes with her journey across the lake. This crossing, he says, "marks a dying of the old self and figures the promise of rebirth."[75] During her trip over the lake, Kate changes her traditional attitude and decides to let the sunrise sympathy of unknown people steal into her. To shut doors of iron against the mechanical world" (p.113). It is as if Kate is now approaching life with a new outlook and her rebirth is quite possible.

According to Kessler the second stage of Kate's initiation starts with her settlement at Sayula.[76] During her stay there, as Kessler observes, Kate is subjected to the ordeals to which the mythic hero is usually subjected. She has to suffer annoyance at the hands of her servant

[73]Ibid., p.243.

[74]Ibid., p.244.

[75]Ibid., p.244.

[76]Ibid., p.246.

Juana.[77] Later she suffers from the attack on Jamiltepeo and from being pursued by her demon lover Cipriano.[78]

Kessler views Kate's presence in Mexico as comparable with the journey of the mythic hero into the underworld. Thus to him, Kate is actually in the midst of a mythic region. Juana, he says, acts as Kate's mythic guide by bringing her news and by helping her.[79] As in the case of the mythic hero, Kate's presence in this region helps towards her renewal and the enrichment of her life: "At the centre of her cosmos, Kate finds the fountain of youth, the secret of renewed life which is the boom the hero must bring back to the world."[80]

I agree with Kessler's analysis of the novel's structure. There is no doubt that the events of the novel can be interpreted in the light of the stages which constitute the pattern of the mythic hero's adventure. It may be true to say, as Kessler does, that the novel contains only the first two parts of this pattern. Still, the novel does not make clear whether Kate is going to return or to stay in Mexico. But whether Kate returns or not, her adventure has achieved its purpose. According to Joseph Campbell, "the effect of the successful adventure of the hero is the unlocking and release

[77]Ibid., p.247

[78]Ibid., p.247

[79]Ibid., p.252

[80]Ibid., p.257

again of the flow of life into the body of the world."[81] On one occasion Ramon asks Kate to tell her people to substantiate their gods in case she returns home: "'Let them find themselves again, and their own universe, and their own gods. Let them substantiate their own mysteries'" (p.443). In effect this amounts to the release of vital life that Joseph Campbell associates with the mythic journey. In the context of the novel the return of ancient gods means the return of vitality to the world. From what I have said it may be possible to conclude that the third stage of the monomyth formula is more or less present in the structural pattern of the novel, though its presence can be elicited mainly from the effect that the success of the hero's journey has on the people to whom he belongs.

However, Kessler's analysis of the novel as a monomyth does not explain the whole structure of the novel. His interpretation accounts only for the events in which Kate as a mythic hero is involved. But the novel contains more than one hero and so Kessler's analysis by itself is not enough to explain the complex structure of The Plumed Serpent or to account for all its events. I suggest, therefore, that The Plumed Serpent can also be seen as a translation into art of the ancient ritual of

[81] Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p.40.

death and rebirth as laid down by the ancient mythologies of the Near East. Herbert Weisinger has reconstructed a formula of that ritual. It includes the following stages:

> 1. The indispensable role of the divine King; 2. the combat between the God and an opposing power; 3. the suffering of the God; 4. the death of the God; 5. the resurrection of the God; 6. the symbolic regeneration of the myth of creation; 7. the sacred marriage; 8. the triumphal procession; and 9. the settling of destinies.[82]

The Plumed Serpent contains all the elements of this formula and almost exactly in the same order. Throughout the novel the indispensable role of the divine King is greatly emphasized: "'Without me you are nothing'" (p.133). We are also told that nations can become "entombed under the slow subsidence of their past" unless "there comes some Saviour, some redeemer to drive a new way out to the sun" (p.145). The novel as a whole shows the dependence of the people on their hero.

The second step of this ritualistic formula is done in the novel in the form of a flashback. On several occasions mention is made of the conflict between the old deity, Quetzalcoatl and the new one, Jesus:

[82]Herbert Weisinger, "The Myth and Ritual Approach to Shakespearean Tragedy," Myth and Literature, (ed.) John B. Vickery, p.151.

> Then the dark sun reached an arm, and lifted Quetzalcoatl into the sky. And the dark sun beckoned with a finger, and brought white men out of the East. And they came with a dead god on the Cross (p.133).

Before Quetzalcoatl finally dies and ascends to heaven for renewal he is submitted to weakness, old age, neglect by his people and a final defeat by the new Saviour.

The resurrection of the dead Quetzalcoatl forms an important part of the action of the novel. After a period of death and regeneration Quetzalcoatl returns to earth newly created:

> 'So they laid me in the fountain that bubbles darkly at the heart of the worlds, far, far behind the sun, and there lay I, Quetzalcoatl in warm oblivion.
> 'I slept the great sleep and dreamt not.'
> 'Till a voice was calling: Quetzalcoatl!' (p.239).

With the return of Quetzalcoatl to Mexico, a different world, as it were, is newly created. The renewed Quetzalcoatl brings to his people a new order and a different way of life. Through symbol and ritualistic dance the prehistoric world is recreated and a return to the origin is realised:

> Kate, who had listened to the drums and the wild singing of the Red Indians in Arizona and New Mexico, instantly felt that timeless, primeval passion of the historic races, with their intense and complicated religious significance, spreading on the air (p.126).

After watching the dance, Kate feels as if a new world was created: "It was like a darkly glowing, vivid nucleus of new life" (p.131). She also feels as if she were born again: "She felt a virgin again, a young virgin" (p.140). Following the closure of the church there occurs a symbolic stoppage of time and the clock:

> The clock didn't go. Time suddenly fell off, the days walked naked and timeless, in the old, uncounted manner of the past. The strange, old, uncounted, unregistered, unreckoning days of the ancient heathen world (p.301).

The opening of the church of Quetzalcoatl marks the birth of a new world and a new way of life: "The people had opened hearts at last. They had rolled the stone of their heaviness away, a new world had begun (p.366).

The creation of a new world is emphasized by making the lake the origin and centre of the new order: "It was as if, from Ramon and Cipriano, from Jamiltepec and the lake region, a new world was unfolding, unrolling" (p.374). In making the new order spring from the lake region, Lawrence is implying a reference to the myth of creation from water. In mythology water is, as I mentioned before, usually considered the origin of life and creation. In Egyptian mythology, Ra came out of primeval waters.[83] According to Genesis God created the world out of the primeval watery chaos. And in Homer's view "everything in

[83]Joseph Kaster, The Literature and Mythology of Ancient Egypt (London: The Penguin Press, 1970), p.34.

the universe began and subsequently evolved from an eternal body of water called oceanus."[84] In Babylonian mythology, water was considered the primordial origin of things.[85] In the New Testament Christ teaches that "unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."[86] Lawrence also conceived water as the origin of life.[87] In the novel water is also associated with creation: "But he slept his sleep, and the invisible ones washed his body with water of resurrection" (p.212). And so in many ways the novel enacts the myth of creation.

Lawrence makes the triumphal procession precede the sacred marriage. For the opening of the new church Ramon organizes and leads a big procession which takes all the Christian images from the church (p.296) and burns them in a great ceremony (p.299).

Ramon crowns his triumph with his marriage to Teresa. The reverence and awe with which Teresa deals with her husband suggest a sacred rather than an ordinary marriage:

> 'It is not simply love,' flashed Teresa proudly. 'I might have loved more than one man if many men are lovable. But

[84] Meyer Reinhold, Past and Present, pp.56-57.

[85] Ibid., p.58.

[86] Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Creative Mythology (London: Secker & Warburg, 1968), p.12.

[87] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix II, pp.235-236.

> Ramon! - My soul is with Ramon.' - the tears rose to her eyes (p.425).

Finally, the settling of destinies comes with the spread of Quetzalcoatl's religion and its establishment as the official religion of Mexico (p.375). After some opposition to the new religion the people seem to accept it. The novel ends with the new religious leader firmly established in power and a new order of life likely to follow.

Chapter Eleven

The Use of Mythology in Lady Chatterley's Lover

In Lady Chatterley's Lover Lawrence, by manipulating the Pan myth, tries to restore ancient man's worship of nature. The novel celebrates the return of the old animistic vision and condemns the mechanical and materialistic system of the modern world.

The wood and the house, Wragby, stand for two different and conflicting world-views: the animistic vision and the materialistic outlook. Mellors, the gamekeeper, as an inhabitant of the wood, plays the role of Pan as an idea and as a character, while Clifford, the owner of Wragby and the mines surrounding it, represents the triumph of the machine and money as the gods of modern man. The difference between them is one between life and death. According to Lawrence, Clifford represents "the death of the great humanity of the world"[1] while Mellors "still has the warmth of a man."[2]

Lawrence associates the idea of a living universe with a dominant Pan and views the triumph of money and the machine as the end of vital life. Pan in this novel

[1] D.H. Lawrence, "Apropos of Lady Chatterley's Lover," Phoenix II, p.513.

[2] Ibid., p.513.

stands for the connection between man and his circumbient universe. Mellors, as a representative of Pan, is the protector of plants and animals in the wood and the promoter of vital and living relationship with them. The wood where Mellors dwells suggests a diminutive picture of Pan's Arcadia.

As an incarnation of Pan, Mellors is the champion of growth, fertility and physical touch or what Lawrence refers to as "tenderness". There is a great emphasis in the novel on the growth of plants and trees, the blooming of flowers and the increase of animals in the wood. Connie's reproductive power is also restored to her after a long period of sterility and hopelessness. Indeed Mellors' relation with Connie marks her rescue from death to life. Before she meets Mellors, we are told that "vaguely she knew herself that she was going to pieces in some way. Vaguely she knew she was out of connexion: she had lost touch with the substantial and vital world".[3] With Mellors' help Connie is able to achieve a living relationship with natural life in the wood. After her acquaintance with Mellors, Connie is newly born and her love of life and her belief in the body are restored.

[3]D.H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover (Penguin Books, 1972), p.21. Subsequent references to this edition will be indicated by page number in my text.

As a champion of tenderness, Mellors reflects Lawrence's concept of phallic knowledge and blood consciousness. In the novel we notice Lawrence's attempts to revive the old phallic cult as the contrast to modern mental-spiritual consciousness. The phallic quality of this novel recalls ancient religious cults. According to Lawrence, Buddhism has its phallic symbols.[4] To Lawrence also "The Etruscan consciousness was rooted quite blithely in these symbols, the phallus and the arx."[5] Besides these two examples we find that many ancient religious systems worshipped the phallus as the generative force in nature. The Egyptian gods were associated with a phallic cult. Hathor, for instance, was "Lady of the Buttocks"[6] and Horus was "Lord of the Phallus."[7] In Greece and Rome phallic cults were connected with some gods such as Dionysus and Cupid.

For the phallicism that characterizes Lady Chatterley's Lover Lawrence owes a great deal to mythology. Lawrence himself conceived the phallicism of his novel as part of the old religious cults that once were dominant in various parts of the world:

[4]Letter to E.H. Brewster, 8 November 1927, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. II, p.1018.

[5]D.H. Lawrence, Mornings in Mexico and Etruscan Places, p.14.

[6]Joseph Kaster, The Literature and Mythology of Ancient Egypt, p.147.

[7]Ibid., p.147.

> You will understand what I'm trying to do: the full natural rapprochement of a man and a woman; and the re-entry into life of a bit of the old phallic awareness and the old phallic insouciance.[8]

In this novel Pan is used to represent the phallicism and the sensuality characteristic of ancient mythological systems. He is a god of "phallic insouciance", of dance and song:

> They ought to learn to be naked and handsome, and to sing in a mass and dance the old group dances .... They should be alive and frisky, and acknowledge the great god Pan (p.315).

That Pan is used in this novel as a god of fecundity, of song and dance is nothing new in the history of the Pan myth. In myths Pan is said to personify the sensual attributes in human beings. As Meyer Reinhold writes: "Pan was himself an erotic god, a joyful companion at the revels of Dionysus."[9] Like the mythic Pan, Mellors is fertile, vigorous, sensual, merry and playful. Mellors' sexual acts in the wood and particularly outside in nature (p.231) remind us of the Dionysic rituals at which Pan was usually present and of the youthful Pan chasing nymphs in the woods. Indeed the animal side in Mellors which makes him closer to the half-human, half-animal Pan of myths is clearly pointed out in the sexual scenes

[8]Letter to Ottoline Morrell, 24 May 1928, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. II, pp.1063-1064.

[9]Meyer Reinhold, Past and Present, p.142.

and especially in this one:

> The rain streamed on them till they smoked. He gathered her lovely, heavy posteriors one in each hand and pressed them in towards him in a frenzy, quivering motionless in the rain. Then suddenly he tipped her up and fell with her on the path, in the roaring silence of the rain, and short and sharp, he took her, short and sharp and finished like an animal (p.231).

Moreover, the ritualistic decoration of Connie's and Mellors' bodies with flowers (pp.237, 238, 245) suggest a sensual and frisky Pan.

What is new about Lawrence's use of the Pan myth is his new attitude to Pan as compared with his delineation of him in The White Peacock and in The Plumed Serpent. In Lady Chatterley's Lover Pan is no longer the terrifying god of The White Peacock or the powerful deity of The Plumed Serpent. It is only during the first time Connie sees him that Pan, Mellors that is, appears to be terrifying:

> She was watching a brown spaniel that had run out of a side-path, and was looking toward them with lifted nose, making a soft, fluffy bark. A man with a gun strode swiftly, softly out after the dog, facing their way as if about to attack them; then stopped instead, saluted, and was turning downhill. It was only the new game-keeper, but he had frightened Connie, he seemed to emerge with such a swift menace. That was how she had seen him, like the sudden rush of a threat out of nowhere (pp.47-48).

After this scene and all along he appears gentle and kind and without the demonic power of Pan in The Plumed Serpent:

"She had awakened the sleeping dogs of old voracious anger in him, anger against the self-willed female. And he was powerless, powerless. He knew it" (p.93). I agree with Patricia Marivale that in Lady Chatterley's Lover

> Pan is demoted from his lofty position as a key symbol for divine beauty and horror. 'The all-tolerant' is seen as a suitable god for the frisky, naked masses, a lesser god of the common people, one suitably associated with song, dance, and country festivals.[10]

In Lady Chatterley's Lover, and to a lesser extent in The Plumed Serpent, Lawrence adopts a more compromising attitude towards the terrifying Pan than he did in The White Peacock. The violent and powerful Pan of The Plumed Serpent is also associated with phallic mystery and is susceptible to women. In Lady Chatterley's Lover Pan, although he starts aloof and isolated in the beginning, eventually relinquishes his aloofness and even becomes a champion of physical contact and human relationships. The Pan of The White Peacock, on the contrary, has no connection with phallicism or the resurrection in the flesh with which he is associated in the two later novels.

I have no doubt that Lawrence's best treatment of the Pan myth can be found in Lady Chatterley's Lover. Mellors is identified with Pan throughout the whole novel, whereas in The White Peacock and even in The Plumed Serpent the role of Annable and Cipriano as representatives of the

[10]Patricia Merivale, "D.H. Lawrence and the Modern Pan Myth," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 6 (1964-1965), p.304.

god is short and not fully explored. In Lady Chatterley's Lover Pan receives full and even exhaustive treatment. Moreover, by making Mellors play the role of Pan from beginning to end Lawrence, more or less, secures the unity of the action and preserves some consistency throughout the novel. Indeed Lawrence's dramatization of the Pan myth in Lady Chatterley's Lover is one of the best of its kind in modern literature. Lawrence identifies Pan with one of his main characters and makes the actions of that character a reflection of his concept of the Pan myth. The result is that as a chracter and as a representative of Lawrence's idea of Pan, Mellors is quite convincing and his actions as a chracter and as a god are in harmony with each other.

The success with which Lawrence deals with the Pan myth reveals that in Lady Chatterley's Lover Lawrence assumes the role of the artist rather than the propagandist, as he occasionally appears in some of his works. The evoking of the ancient god and the pagan renascence strike one as something natural, spontaneous and wholly aesthetic. In this novel Lawrence dramatizes what he wanted to say, and the message is brought home to the reader through plot and character rather than through intrusive preaching. Lawrence's ideas about Pan are knitted into the texture of the narrative. Pan's fertility, youthfulness, playfulness and vitality, etc. are artistically presented, for it is through the action that

we come to know about Pan and his basic qualities and characteristics. A great part of our knowledge of Pan in this novel comes through imagery, symbol and ritual. Arcadian images picturing human, animal and plant life in the wood fill the novel and undoubtedly suggest the god Pan. Phallic symbolism and ritualistic scenes also abound in the novel and unmistakably contribute towards the artistic presentation of the Pan myth.

Pan as a god standing for the connection between man and nature is expressed through the feeling of at-oneness that exists between the characters and nature. This attitude is apparent in Connie who is, in a way, Mellors - Pan's disciple and follower. Early in the novel Connie is keen on finding a connection between herself and the outside world: "Vaguely she knew she was out of connexion: she had lost touch with the substantial and vital world" (p.21). After a few visits to the wood Connie starts to feel her connection with nature until she reaches a stage where she imagines her revival in terms of growing plants:

> 'Ye must be born again! I believe in the resurrection of the body! Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it shall by no means bring forth. When the crocus cometh forth I too will emerge and see the sun!' (p.87).

Connie's awareness of her connection with nature is also rendered through her picking flowers and her treatment of plants as living entities with which she shares the same

destiny of growth and revival: "Constance sat down with her back to a young pine-tree, and powerful, rising up. The erect, alive thing, with its top in the sun!" (p.88). Her connection with nature is also revealed through her appreciation of the new life in the wood whether of plants, animals or humans. When she witnesses the blossoming anemones Connie almost identifies herself with them as people used to do in the past:

> In the hazel copse catkins were hanging pale gold, and in sunny places the wood-anemones were wide open, as if exclaiming with the joy of life, just as good as in past days, when people could exclaim along with them (p.96).

Connie also sees the hens and their chicks as living entities which can give her warmth and communicate to her their vitality: "Now she came every day to the hens, they were the only things in the world that warmed her heart" (p.117). Connie's awareness of their life and individualism suggest primitive man's view of a living world where there is no separation between animal and human life.

Connie's recognition of Pan is also revealed in her realization of the need for a connection between herself and a man. In this attitude she embodies the idea of Pan as a lover and as All-Nature or the Great-All that represents a connection with all the universe: "And she knew, if she gave herself to the man, it was real. But if she kept herself for herself, it was nothing" (p.121).

In his essay "Pan in America" Lawrence claims that the tree represents Pan: "It is a tree, which is still Pan;"[11] "it /the tree/ vibrates its presence into my soul and I am with Pan."[12] This perhaps explains the great emphasis that Lawrence puts on trees in Lady Chatterley's Lover: "Today she could almost feel it in her body, the huge heave of the sap in the massive trees, upwards, up, up to the bud-tips, there to push into little flamey oak-leaves, bronze as blood" (p.126); "Constance sat down with her back to a young pine-tree, that swayed against her with curious life, elastic, and powerful, rising up" (p.88). The conclusion that might be drawn from such references in the light of what Lawrence wrote in the above mentioned essay is that Connie's awareness of trees and their vital life is tantamount to her worship of Pan.

A further aspect of Connie's attitude as an embodiment of Pan can be seen in her belief in the flesh and the instincts. In mythology Pan personifies the sensual and the animal in man. Connie is keen on giving an important role to the body and the instincts: "'Give me the body. I believe the life of the body is a greater reality than the life of the mind: when the body is really awakened to life" (p.245). Connie is

[11] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.25.

[12] Ibid., p.25.

also thrilled by the animal in Mellors. Her free and sensuous life in the wood and Clifford's allegations about her "running out stark naked in the rain, and playing Bacchante" (p.245) suggest that Connie is, to a large extent, a follower of Pan.

In Lady Chatterley's Lover human and natural life coincide. The resurrection of Connie in the flesh happens during the spring season when all plants in the wood are budding with flowers and the sap of life is running through them again. It also coincides with the growth of animal life in the wood as typified by the hatching of the new chicks. The new life inside Connie (i.e. the baby) also corresponds to the new life in the wood:

> It feels like a child, she said to herself; it feels like a child in me. And so it did, as if her womb, that had always been shut, had opened and filled with new life, almost a burden, yet lovely (p.140).

By conceiving the child Connie takes part in the process of creation that is going on in the wood. In fact, in Lady Chatterley's Lover animal, plant and human creation and revival coincide and move alongside one another in complete harmony and impressive sympathy.

It is this harmony between the natural and the human worlds that Lawrence wants to revive through the Pan myth. In Lawrence's view man's life should be

regulated by the seasons as much as natural life is regulated by them:

> Sex is the balance of male and female in the universe .... the long neuter spell of Lent, when the blood is low, and the delight of the Easter kiss, the sexual revel of spring, the passion of midsummer, the slow recoil, revolt, and grief of autumn, greyness again, then the sharp stimulus of winter of the long nights. Sex goes through the rhythm of the year, in man and woman, ceaselessly changing.[13]

Through the Pan myth Lawrence is trying to revive the animistic vision which he believed was once the accepted religion of the world. The aim is to put man again into a living relationship with the Cosmos. Lawrence's aim is partially dramatized through the story of Connie, as I have explained. But despite this, Mellors remains the chief spokesman of the Pan myth in the novel. He is the incarnation of the deity and the saviour of the heroine. Mellors' retirement in the wood reveals his dissatisfaction with modern life and his search for a more vital system that will enable him to keep a close relationship with nature. As a man who comes from the common people he is liable, according to Lawrence's canon, to preserve the religious mystery more than Connie, who comes from an aristocratic background: "It is down in the mass that the roots of

[13] D.H. Lawrence, "Aprapos of Lady Chatterley's Lover," Phoenix II, p.504.

religion are eternal. When the mass of people loses the religious rhythm, that people is dead."[14] Mellors' common background also enables him to adhere specifically to the cult of Pan, since Pan in this novel is the god of the common people:

> Whereas the mass of people oughtn't even to try to think, because they can't. They should be alive and frisky, and acknowledge the great god Pan. He's the only god for the masses, forever. The few can go in for higher cults if they like. But let the mass be forever pagan (p.315).

Unlike Connie who is concerned only about her own re-awakening, Mellors is concerned with the re-awakening of all human beings. It is, therefore, through Mellors that Lawrence tries to communicate his message. Mellors expresses his disappointment at the triumph of the machine and the disappearance of the vital element from human life: "Money, money, money! All the modern lot get their real kick out of killing the old human feeling out of man, making mincemeat of the old Adam and the old Eve" (p.326). Most of Mellors' warnings reflect Lawrence's apocalyptic vision:

> And if we go on in this way, with everybody, intellectuals, artists, government, industrialists and workers, all frantically killing off the last human feeling, the last bit of their intuition, the last healthy instinct;

[14] D.H. Lawrence, "Apros of Lady Chatterley's Lover," Phoenix II, p.509.

> if it goes on in algebraical progression, as it is going on: then ta-tah! to the human species! (p.327).

Hence the urgent need for the revival of the Pan myth and the animistic vision. Mellors seems to have in his mind a programme to make such a revival:

> 'Let's live for summat else. Let's not live ter make money, neither for us-selves nor for anybody else .... Bit by bit, let's drop the whole industrial life an' go back' (p.228).

Thus Mellors sees that the only way out is to get again into a vital relationship with the living cosmos and to weaken the influence of the industrial system. The way back into a living relationship with the universe implies a revival of the old phallic consciousness, of old rituals, and of communal dances and songs: "We must get back into relation, vivid and nourishing relation to the cosmos and the universe. The way is through daily ritual, and the re-awakening."[15] Apart from ritual, sex and physical touch or tenderness are also ways to salvation: "'We've got to come alive and aware. Especially the English have got to get into touch with one another, a bit delicate and a bit tender. It's our crying need'" (p.290). Songs and dance are also singled out as some of the means through which salvation can be

[15] D.H. Lawrence, "Apropos of Lady Chatterley's Lover," Phoenix II, p.510.

achieved: "If they could dance and hop and skip, and sing and swagger and be handsome, they could do with very little cash" (p.315).

In Lady Chatterley's Lover sex is identified with the gods. Connie worships the male in Mellors as much as he worships the female in her. Sex, therefore, becomes something sacred and divine. Obviously Lawrence associates sex with Pan; but whether sex is connected with Pan or with any other deity, there is no doubt that Lawrence is intent on restoring some kind of "Eros" back. As Frederick Carter observed long ago: "For he /i.e. Eros/ it was .... that Lawrence sought, he the divine original, the far off divinity in whose shape man was made."[16] Lawrence's conception of sex as a source of fulfilment and a way to a better life led him to search in the mythologies of the world that contained some fertility gods. In this novel he associates sea with Pan whom he considers the mysterious god of sex: "You can't insure against the future, except by really believing in the best bit of you, and in the power beyond it. So I believe in the little flame between us" (p.316); "but this winter I'll stick to my little Pentecost flame, and have some peace .... I believe in a higher mystery, that doesn't let even the crocus be blown out" (p.316). Thus

[16]Frederick Carter, D.H. Lawrence and the Body Mystical (London: Denis Archer, 1932), p.57.

for Lawrence sex and religion are inseparable: "Religion is an experience, an incontrollable sensual experience, even more so than love: I use sensual to mean an experience deep down in the senses, inexplicable and inscrutable."[17] As Richard Aldington once observed: "For Lawrence sex was a flowering of the mysterious life force, an unknown god who must be brought into the unconscious."[18] What Lawrence is trying to do in Lady Chatterley's Lover is to make the gods responsible not only for man's spiritual being but also for his body and instincts.

For Lawrence sex is a divine act that connects man with God and with the origins of life and creation: "I can become one with God, consummated into eternity, by taking the road down the senses into the utter darkness of power, till I am one with the darkness of initial power."[19] It is also important to notice that Lawrence viewed the consummation of the sexual relationship in terms of a return to the garden of Eden where man used to be at one with God and his surroundings:

> And this is the meaning of the sexual act: this Communion, this touching on one another of two rivers, Euphrates and Tigris .... and the enclosing of

[17] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix, p.144.

[18] Richard Aldington, Portrait of a Genius But ... (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 195), p.105.

[19] D.H. Lawrence, Phoenix II, p.377.

> the land of Mesopotamia, where Paradise was, or the park of Eden, where man had his beginning. This is marriage, this circuit of two rivers, this comm-union of the two blood-streams, this and only this: as all religions know.[20]

And so Lawrence conceived sex as a way of regenerating the world and achieving paradisal happiness. Through sex man and woman can be put into a better relationship with one another and with the universe. The sexual act is a way of creation, revival and renewal: "In his emotional passion of a woman, man is reborn."[21] In this novel Connie is reborn after her sexual union with Mellors: "The quick of all her plasm was touched, she knew herself touched, the consummation was upon her, and she was gone. She was gone .... she was born: a woman" (p.181).

Lawrence was never more interested in the phallic consciousness than when he was writing Lady Chatterley's Lover. This is reflected in his letters at the time and in his interest in the ancient Etruscans. In a letter to Rolf Gardner he writes: "We need to come forth and meet in the essential physical self, on some third ground. It used to be done in the old rituals, in the old dances."[22]

[20] D.H. Lawrence, "Apropos of Lady Chatterley's Lover," Phoenix II, p.506.

[21] D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, pp.95-96.

[22] Letter to Rolf Gardiner, 11 October 1926, The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence, Vol. II, p.941.

Lawrence's interest in the Etruscans goes back to the early 1920's:

> Will you tell me what then was the
> [illegible] went to. Please don't forget to tell
> me, as they really do rather puzzle me,
> the Etruscans.[23]

In 1926 Lawrence was collecting material for a book on the Etruscans. During the period he was interested in the Etruscans Lawrence was also writing the first version of Lady Chatterley's Lover.

It was in 1927 that Lawrence visited the Etruscan [illegible] with his friend Earl Brewster. After the visit he revised Lady Chatterley's Lover and the effect of his interest in the Etruscans can be recognized in it. The Etruscans are known for their love of feasting, dancing and music.[24] Lawrence interpreted this tendency in the Etruscans as a kind of phallic consciousness. In his book on the Etruscans he refers to the importance of phallic symbolism in their civilization.[25] Lawrence's writing on the Etruscans is a reflection of his philosophy at the time and particularly in Lady Chatterley's

[23] Letter to Catherine Carswell, 25 October 1921, Vol. I, p.668.

[24] H.H. Scullard, The Etruscan Cities and Rome (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), p.52.

[25] D.H. Lawrence, Mornings in Mexico and Etruscan Places, pp.12, 14.

Lover. Apart from phallic consciousness the similarity between Lawrence's book on the Etruscans and the novel can be seen in the aboriginal religion which he associates with the Etruscans in the book and which permeates the whole texture of the novel:

> Behind all the Etruscan liveliness was a religion of life, which the chief men were responsible for. Behind all the dancing was a vision, and even a science of life, a conception of the universe which made men live to the depth of their capacity.[26]

To a large extent Lady Chatterley's Lover is a dramatization of what Lawrence wrote in his book on the Etruscans. Most of the symbols, rituals and even the concept of a living universe are discussed in the book and transmuted into art in the novel.

Although it is true to say that Lawrence was attracted by the places and civilizations which seemed to offer similar ideas to his own it is difficult to ignore the influence of Lawrence's Etruscan experience on the writing of Lady Chatterley's Lover. Historically the Etruscans were well-known for their love of life or what Lawrence termed tenderness. The sudden change in Lawrence's thought from the male dominance in The Plumed Serpent to the physical tenderness in Lady Chatterley's Lover can be more easily understood if the influence of the Etruscan

[26]Ibid., p.49.

tradition on Lawrence is taken into account. It is for this reason that I believe that Lawrence's knowledge of this Etruscan tradition affected the writing of this novel, especially in its phallic quality and symbolism, and that the meaning of the novel can be better explained with reference to this knowledge.

Apart from the Etruscan tradition Lawrence derived some material from the Bible. In this novel Lawrence views life as it is presented in the Bible: a fall from the origin. The wood is pictured as a remnant of the garden of Eden where man spent his best period of life. The industrial life as compared with life in the wood points to a fall from a paradisal state to a sterile mode of existence. As in the Bible knowledge is considered responsible for man's fall and unhappiness. This is obvious in the case of Clifford who has to pay a high price for his material success by becoming physically paralyzed.

Scott Sanders has rightly observed that Lady Chatterley's Lover:

> suggests an inverted form of the Eden myth: Adam and Eve are cast back into the garden, where they rediscover innocence by destroying sham, which was only a product of the mind.[27]

[27]Scott Sanders, D.H. Lawrence: The World of the Major Novels, pp.200-201.

Thus the retirement of Mellors and Connie to the wood represents man's regaining Paradise after a long period of alienation. That this is so is borne out by the fact that in The First Lady Chatterley Parkin, Mellors' counterpart, compares himself and Connie to Adam and Eve: "'We are Adam and Eve in the garden.'"[28] The name "Parkin" also reminds us of the park of Eden and the biblical myth.

The way to Paradise, the novel suggests, is through the weakening of mental consciousness, the end of the excessive pursuit of money and by making sex belong to the body and the blood rather than the spirit and the mind. Sex, the novel advocates, should be kept a mystery and part of the unconscious rather than getting it into the head. Lawrence once wrote: "Why were we driven out of Paradise?..... Not because we sinned, but because we got our sex into our head."[29] Starting from that assumption Lawrence makes Mellors and Connie renounce their sham and all the taboos that man has created about sex and approach it as spontaneously and as naturally as it can be. In this way Lawrence reverses the Eden myth, for unlike Adam and Eve who were driven out of Eden because they got their sex into their head, Mellors and

[28] D.H. Lawrence, The First Lady Chatterley (London: Heinemann, 1972), p.154.

[29] D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.81.

Connie find their way back to Paradise through their becoming unconscious about their sex.

Undoubtedly the Bible had some effect on the form and style of Lady Chatterley's Lover. Apart from the use of the Eden myth as an organizing principle, the influence of the Bible can be seen in the use of biblical parables, symbols and even rituals. The story of the seed buried in the soil to rise to fruitfulness, which is a major parable in the Bible, is used in the novel. "In truth, in very truth I tell you, a grain of wheat remains a solitary grain unless it falls in the ground and dies; but if it dies, it bears a rich harvest."[30] In the novel the same parable is drawn upon to support Connie's belief in her resurrection in the flesh: "'Ye must be born again! I believe in the resurrection of the body! Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it shall by no means bring forth'" (p.87). Here the use of the biblical language and style gives authority and weight to Lawrence's idea of death and rebirth. Moreover the same parable is manipulated to explain Connie's position. By citing the biblical parable Connie is comparable to the person who hears the word of God and acts upon it. By viewing herself as a seed Connie reminds us of the seeds in the Bible as being the word of God:

[30]The New Testament, John, 12, 24.

> The seed is the word of God .... The seed sown on a rock stands for those who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but have no root .... But the seed in good soil represents those who bring a good and honest heart to the hearing of the word, hold it fast and by their perseverance yield a harvest.[31]

The story of Connie bears a great resemblance to this biblical parable. Connie hears the word from Dukes and acts upon it:

> 'Give me the resurrection of the body!' said Dukes. 'But it'll come, in time, when we've shoved the cerebral stone away a bit, the money and the rest ....'
> Something echoed inside Connie: 'Give me the democracy of touch, the resurrection of the body!' She didn't at all know what it meant, but it comforted her, as meaningless things may do (pp.77-78).

Another borrowing from the Bible can be recognized in the naked dance of Connie under the rain. As Kate Millett has observed:

> In thanksgiving for her lover's sexual prowess, Lady Chatterley goes out into the rain before their hut to dance what the reader recognizes to be a mime of King David's naked gyrations before the Lord.[32]

From the Bible Lawrence borrowed the "Pentecost flame" which figures as an important symbol in the novel.

[31]The New Testament, Luke, 8, 11-15.

[32]Kate Millett, Sensual Politics (London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1972), p.24.

In the Bible God appears to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.[33] In Christian mythology Pentecost has been adapted to commemorate the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. Lawrence borrows the "Pentecost flame" and uses it as a symbol of the connection between man and woman instead of between man and God and makes God as the power behind the flame:

> You can't insure against the future, except by really believing in the best bit of you, and in the power beyond it. So I believe in the little flame between us ..... It's my Pentecost, the forked flame between me and you. The old Pentecost isn't quite right. Me and God is a bit uppish, somehow (p.316).

H.M. Daleski has rightly observed that in Lady Chatterley's Lover "the rainbow is replaced by the Pentecostal forked flame."[34] Indeed the Pentecostal forked flame in this novel is a symbol of hope, of trust in the future, of a new covenant (though in this case not between man and God but between man and woman), of the reconciliation of the here and the beyond, of a new way of life and a new universe, of a returning spring, of the bridge or the connection between the separate Connie and Mellors, and in Lawrence's terminology of "ever-renewed creative civilizations."[35]

[33]The New Testament, Acts, 2, 1-4.

[34]H.M. Daleski, The Forked Flame, p.300.

[35]D.H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, p.8.

There is also some symbolic significance behind the use of the flame. In mythology the deity is usually represented by fire. In the Hebrew tradition fire is the form in which God revealed himself to Moses.[36] In the Christian tradition the Holy Ghost descends upon the apostles in the form of Fire.[37] In Greek mythology Zeus is god of lightning or fire. In Indian mythology Agni is the god of fire and in Zorastrianism Mazda is the god of fire. According to Joseph Campbell: "Fire ..... may well have been the first enshrined divinity of prehistoric man."[38] In mythology, therefore, fire is emblematic of the divine principle, of purity, of life force and of renewal and perenniality.

As a mythological writer Lawrence uses the flame to suggest most of the meanings associated with this archetypal symbol. In Lady Chatterley's Lover the flame is the symbol of the Holy Ghost or the deity that connects man and woman. It is also a symbol of the generative force from which creation starts. Moreover, it is a symbol of chastity and purity. In mythology fire is the form typifying "one who successfully passed through the ordeals of earth and had adequately purified his

[36]The Old Testament, Exodus, 2, 2.

[37]The New Testament, Acts, 2, 3.

[38]Gertrude Jobes, Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols, Vol. I, p.581.

corporeal grossness."[39] In the novel, although physical contact is not condemned or treated as "corporeal grossness", the flame as a symbol of chastity comes as a result of physical contact: "I'll stick to my little Pentecost flame, and have some peace" (p.316).

Structurally Lady Chatterley's Lover is perhaps based on the mythic pattern of suffering - death - rebirth. Connie, the heroine of the novel, goes through these three stages. Her suffering starts after the paralysis of her husband. In the house and in the village she lives in Connie suffers from lack of physical and human contact. Clifford's way of life results in making her bored and dissatisfied. As a result of all this Connie becomes restless and gets thinner (p.21).

Gradually Connie starts to feel as if her vital life has been destroyed and consequently as if she is lost (p.21). The novel suggests that, as far as the life of the body is concerned, Connie is dead, for she has no organic connection with her surroundings.

After her suffering and following the death of her vital self Connie starts a long process of regeneration. It is in the wood that Connie's regeneration takes place. As from her second visit to the wood Connie starts to feel some connection between herself and the trees in the

[39]Gertrude Jobes, Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols, Vol. I, p.581.

wood: "She liked the inwardness of the remnant of forest, the unspeaking reticence of the old trees. They seemed a very power of silence, and yet a vital presence" (p.67). Her resurrection in the body is also promoted by her contact with the gamekeeper, Mellors. A large part of the novel is devoted to the description of the physical relationship of Connie and Mellors and the vital connection between her and plant andanimal life in the wood. Through this contact Connie is gradually regenerated.

Connie's revival is accompanied by the restoration of life to the wood through the coming of the spring season. It is also underlined by presenting her in terms of the mythic Persephone trying to come to the life of day after being hidden in the underworld. "It was the breath of Persephone, this time; she was out of hell on a cold morning ..... It, too, was caught and trying to tear itself free, the wind, like Absalom" (p.88). Thus Connie's revival is reminiscent of the young goddess in Greek mythology caught by the king of the underworld and trying to set herself free from hell or the realm of the dead. The use of the myth to picture Connie's revival strengthens our belief that the resurrection of the heroine is well under way. Indeed in The First Lady Chatterley Connie and Parkin or Mellors are compared to Persephone and Pluto: "He was one of the hounds of spring: a Plutonic hound ..... And she was an escaping Persephone, Proserpine."[40]

[40] The First Lady Chatterley, p.62.

Connie's resurrection in the body is emphasized by her comparison to a Bacchante (p.141) and by her bearing a child to Mellors after a long period of sterility. This amounts to a restoration of her regenerative force, a new rebirth, a revival in the body.

Once her resurrection is completed, her phallic consciousness is brought to maturity and her relationship with Mellors is firmly established Connie decides to leave Clifford for good and to start a new life on a farm.

Another structural factor in the novel is the contrast between Clifford and Mellors and the two systems they stand for. On the mythological level Clifford and Mellors represent the old king and the young prince. Scott Sanders has pointed out the use of this fertility ritual and myth in the novel:

> The crippled and sterile King (Clifford) rules a barren country (the mining district); his queen (Connie), who suffers from the barrenness of his realm is restored to fertility by a potent prince (Mellors), who has survived various ordeals (the war, pneumonia, his first wife) to reach her. Only the final segment of the myth is lacking; the restoration of fertility to the land and its people.[41]

Sanders' explanation of the novel's structure as an imitation of the above mentioned myth is based on James Frazer's theories about the myth of the old king who used to be killed, whether actually or metaphorically, to be

[41]Scott Sanders, D.H. Lawrence: The World of the Major Novels, p.200.

replaced by a more vigorous and youthful prince, so that fertility can return to the waste land ruled by the ageing and impotent king. A more detailed treatment of this myth was carried out by Jessie Weston in her two books From Ritual to Romance and The Quest of the Holy Grail. Her conclusions are very much similar to Frazer's. But one of the things that the literary critic may benefit from her conclusions is her assertion about the universality and perenniality of this myth:

> This close relation between the ruler and his land, which resulted in the will of one becoming the calamity of all, is no more literary invention, proceeding from the fertile imagination of a twelfth century court poet, but a deeply rooted popular belief, of practically immemorial antiquity and inexhaustible vitality.[42]

Jessie Weston also argues that the Grail romances are "the fragmentary record of the secret ritual of a Fertility cult."[43] In other words the romances are based on the myth which itself is based on the ritual.

In a way Lady Chatterley's Lover is connected with this ancient ritual and the myth that resulted from it almost as much as the romances of the Holy Grail owe to the same ritual and myth. The connection between Clifford and the barrenness and sterility of the land on the one

[42]Jessie Weston, From Ritual to Romance, (New York: Doubleday Company, Inc., 1957), p.65.

[43]Ibid., p.66.

hand and the relation between Mellors and the fertility and fruitfulness of the wood and all that lives in it on the other, parallel the close connection that Jessie Weston had pointed out between the king in the Holy Grail legend and the sterility or prosperity of the land:

> I hold that we have solid ground, for the belief that the story postulates a close connection between the vitality of a certain king, and the prosperity of his kingdom; the forces of the ruler being destroyed, by wound, sickness, old age, or death, the land becomes waste, and the task of the hero is that of restoration.44

The archetypal conflict between the old and the new king or between Clifford and Mellors is closely connected with the mythic pattern of suffering - death - rebirth I have mentioned earlier. The story of Connie's suffering and death is inseparable from the story of Clifford's paralysis, sterility and the barrenness of his realm, and the story of her resurrection is closely connected with that of the potent Mellors and his powers to restore to her and to the realm their fertility. This interaction between the two mythic patterns helps tie up the plot and give the novel its structural unity.

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