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Metaphor and 'Metaphysic': The Sense of Language in D. H. Lawrence

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SUMMARY

This study contributes to the contemporary debate about the language of D. H. Lawrence concentrating on metaphor as the necessary vehicle of Lawrence's 'metaphysic'. The focus is on the different levels of attention to language in his work, and to Lawrence's responsiveness to the levels of metaphor within language. Lawrence is seen here as one who, in the Heideggerean sense, 'poetically thinks'. The texts outlined below are given special consideration, representing a particular body of language and thought within Lawrence's *oeuvre*.

Chapter 1 outlines the purpose of the study and establishes the importance of Nietzsche, Heidegger and Paul Ricoeur on language, specifically metaphor, in setting up the necessary philosophical context for discussion of Lawrence. Chapter 2 addresses the self-consciously metaphorical language of the nominally 'discursive' essays, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, underlining Lawrence's alertness to the efficacy of metaphor rather than a referential or conceptual idiom. Fresh emphasis is given to *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* as a central text in the language debate. The insights afforded by these essays make it possible to move to the fiction and, in chapter 3, to *Women in Love*. Here the thesis builds on Lawrence's philosophical understanding of the concept 'metaphor': in this novel, principally through a consideration of 'love', Lawrence is seen to pull metaphor away from its merely rhetorical status. Chapter 4 examines the different mode and language of *The Rainbow* focusing on its more enveloping, less 'frictional', medium. By chapter 5, called 'Lawrence and Language', the philosophical questions which emerge from a reading of these texts can be addressed more explicitly. Finally, a conclusion underlines the difficulties of talking about language stressing the importance, implicit throughout, of reading Lawrence on his own terms. The conscious and subliminal levels of metaphor within Lawrence's language have been seen to bear his thought. What philosophy generally explains analytically, Lawrence's language communicates metaphorically.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Works by D. H. Lawrence.

Wherever possible the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of D. H. Lawrence* has been used. Full publication details of the texts used are given in the bibliography.

AR	<i>Aaron's Rod</i>
CP	<i>The Complete Poems</i>
F	<i>The Fox</i>
F&P	<i>Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis of the Unconscious</i>
<i>Letters</i>	<i>The Letters of D. H. Lawrence</i>
LCL	<i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i>
<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence</i>
<i>Phoenix II</i>	<i>Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works by D. H. Lawrence</i>
PS	<i>The Plumed Serpent (Quetzalcoatl)</i>
R	<i>The Rainbow</i>
SCAL	<i>Studies in Classic American Literature</i>
SL	<i>Sons and Lovers</i>
STHOE	<i>Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays</i>
T	<i>The Trespasser</i>
WL	<i>Women in Love</i>

Other Studies.

<i>Anti-Oedipus</i>	Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, <i>Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia</i>
HHS	Paul Ricoeur, <i>Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences</i>
OWL	Martin Heidegger, <i>On the Way to Language</i>
PLT	Martin Heidegger, <i>Poetry, Language, Thought</i>
PT	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870s</i> ed. by Daniel Breazeale
RM	Paul Ricoeur, <i>The Rule of Metaphor</i>
SE	Sigmund Freud, <i>The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works</i> , ed. by James Strachey
TN I	Paul Ricoeur, <i>Time and Narrative</i> , vol. I
TN II	Paul Ricoeur, <i>Time and Narrative</i> , vol. II

Periodicals.

DHLR	<i>The D. H. Lawrence Review</i>
MFS	<i>Modern Fiction Studies</i>
N&Q	<i>Notes & Queries</i>
NLH	<i>New Literary History</i>
PQ	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
TSLI	<i>Texas Studies in Literature and Language</i>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THINKING METAPHORICALLY

The purpose of this study is to explore Lawrence's language. The texts discussed are Lawrence's essays on the unconscious, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, and the novels *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow*. These share a provenance coming as they do from the central period of Lawrence's writing. Their collective importance lies in their being texts which give us access to what is here called the sense of language in D. H. Lawrence.

The structure of this thesis bears witness to the need to approach Lawrence's writing radically. For anyone who is interested in Lawrence's language in itself, or as a theme in the fiction and particularly in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, there has been no shortage of critical involvement in the subject, particularly in recent years.¹ Even so, much more remains to be said perhaps because in some instances Lawrence's own sense of language has been subordinated to a more general insistence on how language works. My own interest in Lawrence's language derives from the period in his career which engendered the texts represented here, in which the language itself beckoned as a way of 'saying' something which 'ordinary' language could not say.

When I say that my intention is to explore Lawrence's language I am aware that this is a claim which has been made many times. Diane

Bonds, for instance, says that her study 'began as an effort to understand D. H. Lawrence's conception of language' (Bonds, p.1), and with a view to metaphor, but her terms signal an approach which I wish to challenge: in addressing the question of language in Lawrence we cannot speak of a conscious 'conception' of it as such, but of a partly conscious or subliminal alertness in Lawrence to the metaphorical levels in language, and what the fact of metaphoricity itself signifies about how we 'mean' and 'know' anything. In the introduction to her book Bonds explains that in seeking Lawrence's 'implied theory of language', she 'inevitably encountered the self-deconstructive or self-interrogative forces in his own writing' specifically in 'the play of his heterogeneous metaphors for human utterance' (Bonds, p.2). The tone of these remarks records the surprise of someone who does not really expect to find in Lawrence a sophisticated intelligence regarding language, although a certain linguistic ambivalence in the fiction, in particular *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, leads Bonds as she says to seek an 'implied *theory* of language' (my italics). She goes on to talk in intentionalist terms of Lawrence's 'linguistic system' (Bonds, p.5). This is despite Lawrence's own claim in the Foreword to *Women in Love*, to which she properly draws attention, that verbal consciousness is nothing to do with the superimposition of a theory.

I cite this approach to Lawrence at the outset in order both to underline an unhelpful tendency in contemporary Lawrence studies and to distinguish my own approach from it. As if to legitimize her insistence on a linguistic programme Bonds aligns Lawrence

unproblematically with the principal American theoreticians of deconstruction. In short, Lawrence's sense of language, which is not yet fully understood as a 'sense', is reckoned to be of value, or acquires value, only inasmuch as it can be measured against the recognitions of these contemporary theoreticians of language. This in itself is not the problem but in its present state Bonds' reading falls between two stools: she is refusing to respond to Lawrence as Lawrence; she is equally distorting the positive insights of deconstruction by turning it clumsily into a methodology, which it does not claim to be. Lawrence is therefore approached from the wrong direction and at the same time an injustice is done, in my view, to contemporary thought about language because its value, which is considerable, is also obscured. The upshot is that in the course of her book there is a reliance on disingenuous readings of Lawrence's fiction in order to satisfy a personal conception of a deconstructive principle. Consequently, and lamentably, the book is ultimately not a convincing demonstration that Lawrence scholarship can benefit, which I believe it can, from current post-structuralist thinking about language. The principal reason, however, for the limitations of Bonds' book as a contribution to Lawrence studies resides in the refusal to attribute to Lawrence any but a purely negative relation to language. The assumption underlying her argument is that Lawrence is in conflict with language, not that he is in control as far as he can be, or more significantly, as far as it is appropriate for him to be. It is profoundly unsatisfactory to argue that Lawrence is sensitive to the abstract qualities of language and at the same time that he resists them.

Without making the sort of claims made by this critic Michael Black in his latest book, a commentary on the language of the early philosophical essays, does acknowledge Lawrence's pervasive metaphoricity.² Apart from the interesting and valuable introductory essays this study can be taken as a thorough concordance of Lawrence's metaphors and metaphorical shifts -- the capacity one 'image' has of becoming another as the 'metaphysic' or personal philosophy unfolds. In parts this responsible study bears the traces of an exchange and meeting of ideas with Michael Bell whose book *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*³ is the first to examine in depth the ontological theme in Lawrence's language. An *oeuvre* based study which concentrates on a core of the longer fictions, Michael Bell's book shows how 'the thematised struggle with language continues to provide the significant focus for his [Lawrence's] representation of *being in the world*.' (Bell, p.10, my italics and brackets). In the course of his book he rightly develops the philosophical similarities between Lawrence and Martin Heidegger: the present thesis would hope to build on this sense of the shared recognitions of these two contemporary thinkers, at least in the domain of language, although I am not here pursuing an ontological theme. My appropriation of Heidegger is via Nietzsche.

It is important to stress from the outset that I differ from the critics represented here in that I do not share the traditional view of Lawrence as a writer who experiences problems with language. My emphasis does not fall on Lawrence as struggling with problems of expression but on his understanding of the limit-ations, as well as the potentialities, of language. *Women in Love* is

traditionally the focus for the debate on Lawrence and language, often with an eye to his problems in this domain: F. R. Leavis famously commented on the novel's 'jargon'.⁴ Michael Ragussis has written very perceptively on the language of *Women in Love* keeping a very tight focus on Lawrence and his genuine philosophical forerunners. However, the level of attention to language in his book is different from that in the present study. Where Ragussis focuses on language he does so with the novel's principal themes and events in mind, with the result that his reading is highly localized. Ultimately, therefore, although his theme is language, his book is less linguistically concerned than is this study which is partly motivated by the light which Lawrence throws on language in general. In my third chapter, on the levels of metaphor in *Women in Love*, I argue why I do not regard it in particular as characterized by the difficulties which are usually identified. The problems of expression there are not Lawrence's own: unlike Rupert Birkin he is not a man who hates his own metaphors.

Nevertheless, the resurgence of interest in Lawrence's language indicated by these approaches is positive. I take it that the dangers lie principally in refusing to read Lawrence because of the perceived need to enclose his texts within an alien frame-work. Diane Bonds' study in particular falls prey to this danger while Michael Black, Michael Bell and Michael Ragussis interact more subtly with Lawrence's language. To appropriate some common Heideggerean metaphors, I hope to show, in the course of the present study, that a 'listening' to the 'speaking' of the language is the appropriate way to it. Such a 'listening' provides access to an authentic language, to what

Heidegger calls 'the poetic character of *thinking*' (my italics).⁵ This study should also reveal if and when certain contemporary perspectives are appropriate and helpful in drawing nearer to Lawrence. This is not to argue that Lawrence and contemporary thought are incompatible. One example of a positive recognition and reappropriation of Lawrence is evinced in Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*.⁶ here Lawrence himself is not the subject, but his cultural criticism and responses to the dominant ideology, and his thinking through the implications of influential perceptions like those of Freud, for instance, are productively and intelligently worked into the larger argument. There is a strong point to be made in the fact of this intelligent return to Lawrence; a return not just to his 'thought' but to his language.

These introductory remarks help to explain the structure of the thesis. In starting my examination with two nominally discursive essays, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, I am deliberately stepping back from the fiction. This is because critics writing about Lawrence's language, in addressing the fiction as they normally do, constantly get drawn into the narrative reality and thereby lose grip on the ^{larger} question of language.

Good though his study is, Ragussis could be a candidate here. With this in mind my strategy in reading Lawrence has been to distance myself, in the first place, from *narrative* language, to step outside of it, the better to return to the two major novels. In doing so I am, nevertheless, staying within a *corpus* of language and a *corpus* of thought. In his essays on the unconscious, for instance, Lawrence is not simply taking issue with Freud but, more crucially, is underlining

his own understanding of the fundamental relation between language and the unconscious. Subsequent psychoanalytical thought, such as Lacan's, has seen the question of the unconscious as inextricable from language. I propose to show that Lawrence's essays on the unconscious clearly demonstrate his sense of this, indeed constitute his own version of it. I will also be showing why this profound recognition in Lawrence has hitherto gone unnoticed.

So it is that in the following chapters the focus is consistently on language: the value and purpose of the particular structure of the argument is to keep language constantly in view *as language*. Without the discipline of the discursive essays behind a study of this kind, with their own surprising and specific metaphoricity demanding to be apprehended, there would always be the danger of being seduced onto the different paths towards which the language of the fiction might beckon.

Chapters 3 and 4, respectively entitled 'The oxymoronic mode of *Women in Love*' and 'Undulating styles: *The Rainbow*', examine the different linguistic modes of the two mature novels, with a view to the actual handling of the language in each instance. The question of language in *Women in Love*, and its special relation to the 'metaphysic' of that novel, is brought into fresh focus because of the pressure which has been placed on metaphor in the essays on the unconscious. In both instances Lawrence has challenged the merely rhetorical function of metaphor, and opened us up to 'metaphoricity' as a non-analytical mode of thinking. This is also a feature of *The*

Rainbow but its metaphorical specificity is best seen in contrast to the more philosophical 'sister' novel.

In the penultimate chapter called 'Lawrence and Language' I am in a position to address more directly the philosophical questions which have been signalled all the way through as the study progresses. It is important that the philosophical recognitions be seen to grow out of the preceding discussion rather than appearing as a set of criteria imposed on Lawrence from the outset. In this fifth chapter I deal in part with the problems of imposing any external model on a work, particularly as a 'frame' in which to read Lawrence, which leads to a brief consideration of how he himself reads a literary work. This thesis is involved with how the body of Lawrence's work 'works': that is to say it attempts to read Lawrence from within Lawrence. Its structure and mode serve this end. Indeed, I will talk of 'frames' but to bring out a very different, more open and exploratory, significance.

The 'philosophical recognitions' suggested here are Lawrence's own. My assertion is that they can be seen to centre on the question of metaphor. Yet this question is only half-consciously posed in Lawrence. That is why we can properly speak of Lawrence as 'thinking metaphorically'. But what does it mean to argue that his work constitutes a 'thinking metaphorically'? That he does so, and that this is fundamental to his handling of language, is the preoccupation which underlies this study of works which in a special way bring us

closer to the importance and significance of metaphor in Lawrence's writing.

The most traditional conception of metaphor is articulated and authorized by Aristotle in Book III of the *Rhetoric* and in the *Poetics*. It is there delineated, as Paul Ricoeur rightly says, as a trope of resemblance; a single-word figure of speech predicated on a substitution theory, or the act of transference.⁷ The domain is semantics. Metaphor enables us to make comparisons using other, but as Aristotle insists, related terms: he himself uses the metaphor of 'kinship' in his thesis to describe the similarity between the substituting and substituted word or conception.⁸ More recent commentators on metaphor, like Max Black⁹ and Paul Ricoeur, have addressed the Aristotelean conception. Ricoeur in particular has tried to expand and deepen metaphor, with a concentration on living metaphor, and has tried to articulate it in broader terms as the whole of language. To do so involves a shift away from the Aristotelian conception although in my view, as I will argue, Ricoeur ultimately does not free metaphor from its rhetorical moorings. For him metaphor is itself ultimately a rhetorical mode. We must therefore ask whether we are in fact any closer to understanding the nature of language if we simply substitute one word for another? It is this question, and its profound implications, which these thinkers neglect to address, but which Lawrence himself has half-consciously apprehended. It could be the case that the question cannot really be handled conceptually, hence Lawrence's importance to the general issue.

The Aristotelean view does not accommodate this question because in the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* Aristotle's concerns are with style, taste and linguistic propriety. He relies on certain binary oppositions to reinforce his thesis, hence he distinguishes between 'regular' and metaphorical terms, and implicitly, therefore, between the literal and the metaphorical (*Rhetoric*, Bk. III, 1401b1). The appropriate representation of the world in language is therefore grounded in these oppositions. In fact, this distinction between the literal and the metaphorical is highly problematic if we adhere to a more modern conception of language, specifically that proposed by Friedrich Nietzsche and endorsed by Martin Heidegger.

In classical terms a conception of metaphor is only possible because of a conception of the literal: metaphoricity implies literalness. In which case 'metaphor' might be said to be a domain which exists *within* language. It could be conceived, and probably generally is conceived, as a body of language within language, and separate from what is ordinarily called 'language'. The process of substitution, the Aristotelean conception, involves the transference of a word from this domain to the other. However, as Nietzsche argues, and Heidegger agrees with him, all language is in fact metaphor.¹⁰ This recognition underpins the present study. The naivety lies in believing/^{unproblematically} in a notion of the literal at all; in holding up the notion of the metaphorical as somehow different from the rest of language. The literal simply means our normal conception of language (which is already metaphorical). In fact there is no 'literal', because even to

say 'literal' is to make a metaphor. In short, the pervasive metaphoricity of language is inescapable.

In this thesis, then, the focus is not on metaphor as a trope or figure of speech, a figure of resemblance, but on metaphoricity as a quality of language which is always at work.¹¹ To refer to a thing by means of a metaphor (the classical conception) is to refuse to allow the thing to be itself. The 'thing' or Idea can never be apprehended as such (as it really is) if it is interpreted by another term, even though the other term exerts itself to embody the idea or essence of the thing. This is the disadvantage of metaphor as substitution even if the motivation is resemblance. Metaphoricity, however, in the broader Nietzschean sense, dismantles this problematic dualism of word/substituted word. *Lawrence is one of the best examples of a* writer who fundamentally desires to apprehend the thing as it is, and the extensive metaphoricity of his writing partly answers this desire. What the present discussion highlights is the fact of two ways of understanding 'metaphor'. Put crudely, these are the Aristotelean and Nietzschean ways, although this rigidity of classification is ultimately limiting. I am proposing, in the light of Nietzschean and Heideggerean insights about language, a metaphoricity which pulls away from the purely rhetorical conception and which therefore constitutes a 'thinking' in language. I am, therefore, instituting a radically different way of viewing Lawrence's language than is usually proposed.

Lawrence does not *explicitly* address the question of metaphor, just as he does not *overtly* address the problem of language. Like Heidegger

he generally avoids the term 'metaphor' -- *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (1921) is an important exception -- as a term on which little can productively be built. But Lawrence is alert to the fact that to have access to anything it is imperative to use metaphor: the metaphoricity of language makes 'knowing' possible; all conceiving is the making of metaphors. The unknown must be articulated in ways which are sometimes surprising in order to become known. Yet paradoxically we are largely unconscious of the metaphoricity of the language we use. As Nietzsche says, a metaphor does not stop being a metaphor, but a 'forgetting' takes place in us so that we no longer recognize its metaphoricity, unless it is revived or rejuvenated (puns may have this effect).

If metaphor is as pervasive as all this, then the question 'Why Lawrence?' is begged. After all, all users of language are users of metaphor. The specificity of Lawrence's language must then come into view, as well as his particular alertness to language in general as a medium of understanding. His highly metaphorical styles demand attention because of the sense, outlined here, of a thinking which is at home in language. Metaphor in Lawrence is evidently not simply decorative or 'expressive'. It is not a purely functional linguistic category or structure but Language itself: this underlines the double-focus of this thesis which not only looks at Lawrence's language, but also at what is communicated about language in general. Lawrence interestingly does not write about language as if it were simply the writer's medium, in which something particular must be achieved. Instead we are confronted with his understanding of language as a

sense, like the other senses rooted in and not separable from the human being. What Heidegger calls human *Dasein* is grounded in language. Such a recognition, if not its terminology, would be meaningful to Lawrence. It is one which he, half-consciously, works through in his writing, in the discursive essays as in the fiction.

We now confront the question of how something is articulated. In a narrowly or overtly philosophical context Heidegger stands out as someone whose radical language embodies a critique of the established way of saying anything. His etymologies, for instance, are highly personal and speculative. Like his metaphors, his etymologies are an attempt to pull away from a purely conceptual language. Traditional language, or metaphysical language, is the only language we possess. It therefore delimits and determines the way we think, establishing the boundaries and problems of thought; but life goes beyond these limits. Heidegger's highly personal etymologies and metaphors get away from this language *the better to think*, or to think differently. His recognition is that traditional language, engrained ways of saying anything, overlooks the essence of language. This is evidently related to Nietzschean insights: Nietzsche's own style, metaphorical, aphoristic, is engaged in the same radical questioning pursuit.

To put this spatially and in relation to the main thinkers cited in the present study, Heidegger and Nietzsche are situated midway between Paul Ricoeur on the one hand, and Lawrence himself on the other. Ricoeur recognizes that metaphor should be apprehended in terms of language at large, even as language at large. What he does with this

recognition is the underlying thesis of *The Rule of Metaphor*. The paradox is his investment, perhaps an unconscious investment, in the conceptual language which has engendered his own thought. His style which is hardly metaphorical, except in the everyday inevitable way, situates him right at the other end of the spectrum, furthest away from Lawrence than either Heidegger or Nietzsche. However, Lawrence himself does not occupy the same ground as these two. Indeed, whatever the similarities in their thought, we can speculate about what Lawrence's response would have been to Heidegger's mode of expression. Very probably he would not have wanted to read Heidegger. He might have felt impatience at Heidegger's style, indeed he might have held the view that Heidegger's language does not reveal the essence of language, or life, enough. His view would conceivably have been that Heidegger's language is *itself too conceptual*. This underlines the importance of Lawrence's own language, and his own subliminal recognitions.

As I have begun to argue, the language of Lawrence's fiction, as of the discursive essays, is profoundly philosophical, perhaps more philosophical than Lawrence knew -- in the sense of being conscious of something -- when he lamented the general separation of philosophy and fiction (STHOE p.154). The fiction does not deal *overtly* with philosophical questions: it rarely proposes a philosophical problem or theme. Whatever we make of Rupert Birkin there are no characters which engender an explicitly or self-consciously recognizable philosophical discourse. But in the language itself, and specifically in the deep levels of metaphor, the question of language also asked by Nietzsche,

Heidegger and Ricoeur, is itself posed. Heidegger's understanding that there is no such thing as a purely philosophical language led him to the Poetic as an authentic language in which one thinks. This takes us to Lawrence but not necessarily, in the first place, to his fiction.

NOTES.

Chapter One. Introduction: Thinking Metaphorically

1. Full length studies published in the last five years which represent an interest in *language* include Diane S. Bonds *Language and the Self in D. H. Lawrence* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1987); Allan Ingram, *The Language of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Macmillan, 1990); Michael Black, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Philosophical Works. A Commentary* (London: Macmillan, 1991); Michael Bell, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Prior to these Michael Ragussis's reading of *Women in Love* in *The Subterfuge of Art: Language and the Romantic Tradition* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) deserves special notice. See also Colin Milton, *Lawrence and Nietzsche: A Study in Influence* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), especially chapter 4, 'Consciousness, Language and the Unconscious Self', pp.93-128. Further references to these studies are given after quotations in the text.

2. Black, 1991. See n.1. In his final chapter on 'The Reality of Peace' Michael Black briefly touches on the metaphorical/literal dichotomy, and how to 'read' Lawrence's metaphors. Black is concerned to identify what Lawrence was thinking of at the time of writing, both in terms of metaphors and ideas. An unpublished essay by Michael Black, 'A Kind of Bristling in the Darkness: Memory and Metaphor in Lawrence', to be published in a memorial volume to Sam Goldberg, contributes further to the debate on Lawrence's use of metaphor. In staying with Lawrence's language Black does not pursue the philosophical dimensions of Lawrence's understanding, which is the subject of the present study, but his paper is nevertheless interesting and useful.

3. Bell, 1992. See n.1.

4. F. R. Leavis, *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, in association with Chatto & Windus, 1955) p.177. See also: Derek Bickerton, 'The Language of *Women in Love*', *Review of English Literature (Leeds)*, 8, no.2 (1967), 56-67, and Laurence Lerner, *The Truth-tellers: Jane Austen, George Eliot, D. H. Lawrence* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1967). Lerner considers Lawrence's failures with language as well as his successes.

5. Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Martin Heidegger Works, General Editor, J. Glenn Gray, trans. and introduction by Albert Hoffstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p.12. Further references to this book are given after quotations in the text. Hereafter cited as PLT.

6. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane, preface by Michel Foucault (1972, London: The Athlone Press, 1984).

Further references to this study are given after quotations in the text.

7. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. by Robert Czerny, with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello S. J. (1975, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), p.3. Further references to this study are given after quotations in the text. Hereafter cited as RM.

8. See *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, the revised Oxford translation, edited by Jonathan Barnes, Bolingen Series LXXI 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), *Rhetoric* Bk III 1405a1, 37. Further references to Aristotle are given after quotations in the text.

9. Max Black, *Models and Metaphors*, Studies in Language and Philosophy (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962).

10. See 'On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense', in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870s*, ed. and trans. by Daniel Breazeale (New Jersey & London: Humanities Press, 1979), pp.79-97. Further references to this essay are given after quotations in the text. Hereafter cited as PT.

11. Most of the studies on metaphor, and the recent literature which takes up the metaphor debate, continue to concentrate on metaphor as rhetorical figure. Seminal studies of the rhetorical and linguistic dimensions of metaphor include: Max Black, *Models and Metaphors*, Studies in Language and Philosophy (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962); Christine Brooke-Rose, *A Grammar of Metaphor*, Mercury Books no. 65, General Editors, Alan Hill and Freddie Warburg (London: Mercury Books, 1965); George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Sheldon Sacks, ed., *On Metaphor* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979). Most of the essays in this volume are reprinted from *Critical Inquiry*, 5, no.1 (Autumn 1978). In Autumn 1974 *New Literary History* printed a special issue, 'On Metaphor'. Useful articles include: James Deese, 'Mind and Metaphor: A Commentary', *NLH*, 6, no.1 (Autumn 1974), 212-17; Jacques Derrida, 'White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy', trans. by F. C. T. Moore, *NLH*, 6, no.1 (Autumn 1974), 5-74 (originally appeared as 'La mythologie blanche,' *Poétique*, 5 (1971)). Reprinted in Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans., with Additional Notes by Alan Bass (1972, Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982), pp.207-71; Paul Ricoeur, 'Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics', *NLH*, 6, no.1 (Autumn 1974), 95-110, reprinted as 'Metaphor and the central problem of hermeneutics' in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, ed. trans. and introduced by John B. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1981; repr. 1988), pp.165-81; Tzvetan Todorov, 'On Linguistic Symbolism', *NLH*, 6, no.1 (Autumn 1974), 111-34. See also, Stephen Owen and Walter L. Reed, 'A Motive for Metaphor', *Criticism*, 21, no.4 (Fall 1979), 287-306.

CHAPTER TWO

LANGUAGE AND THE UNCONSCIOUS: THE RADICAL METAPHORICITY OF
PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE UNCONSCIOUS AND FANTASIA OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

Any serious examination of Lawrence's language should reserve a special place for his essays on the unconscious. On the face of it these essays are discursive, a forum where Lawrence can rehearse a number of his immediate preoccupations away from the discipline of the fictional narratives. Yet the extensive metaphoricity of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, which is wholly unexpected, alerts us to the distinctive relation between language and thought in Lawrence. This relation is the basis of the present chapter. Indeed, this chapter, in addressing these essays and the issues which are sharply focused by their language, sets up the principal terms, the principal areas of discussion, for the whole thesis.

'Language' is not identified explicitly as one of Lawrence's themes in these essays, even while metaphor is so evidently the starting point for saying anything. My strategy in this chapter, therefore, is to distinguish a number of other levels at work in these books, the better to engage with language. The following discussion consequently takes the form of a multi-layered debate with the reader reading dialectically, paying attention to the different levels of language in Lawrence and, through language, to the levels of unconscious creativity. Broadly speaking, these principal themes, or levels, are

what I propose to call Lawrence's 'poetics of presence'; the relation in his work between metaphor and 'metaphysic', which is very much Lawrence's word; the body/psyche polarity which he perceives to lie at the centre of modern thought and which he attempts to dismantle; vision, and its importance as a metaphor for knowing; the metaphoricity of dream; the unconscious. Because this chapter constitutes a working through these levels a significant degree of cross-referencing is necessary. Consequently vision, for example, will be addressed at one point only to re-surface in a different but related context later on. However, the argument always returns from theme to discourse and the larger question of language: everything in Lawrence has its own metaphoricity, or is articulated metaphorically, and for this reason, whether the critical focus is on presence, vision or knowledge, for instance, the real subject of this chapter is language.

Lawrence's essays on the unconscious are not marginal although they are typically relegated to that status. Often critical approaches to them are unsatisfactory, perhaps because of the problematically 'literal' status of Lawrence's 'metapsychology'.¹ Nominally about the unconscious, they first confront the reader with Freud, or at any rate with Lawrence's Freud. Lawrence 'reads' Freud dialectically, interacting with certain levels of his thought and by-passing others, but with his own 'metaphysic' clearly in view. I shall argue that, in assessing the significance of Freud in Lawrence's thought, the emphasis should be less on doctrinal questions and more on discourse.

Lawrence's sensitivity to Freud was in the first place a sensitivity to Freud's metaphors, particularly as they, in Lawrence's view, constitute an unacceptably rigid model of the psyche. It is largely the fixed term which Lawrence finds inadmissible.

Evidently Freud's ideas do not provide a structure which sustains Lawrence's essays. Such a structure would be a 'framework' and the basis of the essays which is not the case. Because my emphasis is on Lawrence interacting with Freud, responding to a certain level of language within his thought, I do not see Lawrence's essays on the unconscious as merely a response, a repudiation or a commentary. There is not simply Lawrence's text lying passively beside Freud's, but a circuit of thought which Lawrence sets up and which 'flows' between them: this 'flow', to refer to Lawrence's recurrent metaphor, cuts across any simple inside/outside relation between them. Freud's metaphors, his conceptions, might have given rise to Lawrence's essays but by the same token these essays also give rise to (Lawrence's) Freud. *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* are a 'frame' or more particularly, given the pictorial metaphors at work here, a *passe-partout*, which allow Lawrence's Freud to appear through the *medium*, as it were, of Lawrence.² Lawrence's essays are the frame which is there and then dissolves. Lawrence is not merely, then, framing his argument around Freud, but is creatively working in part with Freud's terminology, his discourse. There is a sense in which he is throwing a frame around some of Freud's central ideas and partly, therefore, framing Freud within them. But there is another sense in which Lawrence himself is framed by Freud, which I

will come to presently. For my purposes the 'frame' is not literal, but a notional concept across which things (concepts, arguments, words) 'flow'.

These preliminary remarks reveal a particular appropriation of Freud in relation to Lawrence. There is no attempt here to give a psychoanalytical reading of Lawrence's texts: such an approach would be far from the point, although Freud is a useful point of reference, for instance, where Lawrence engages with dreams, as well as with the unconscious in a broader sense. The focus is more especially on how Freud articulates his science and on the use of metaphorical structures like Oedipus (from which we can stand back), in contrast to Lawrence's radically metaphorical language (in which we are immersed). I propose to refer to the fiction only when critical awareness of Lawrence's metaphoricity begins to deepen, which it must do through a reading of these essays.

2.1 Framing Freud

Freud's work, translated and edited by James Strachey in the *Standard Edition* which remains the definitive English language text, was made readily available in Britain by the Hogarth Press in association with the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, thereby establishing Freud and Bloomsbury as perhaps improbable bedfellows. As a result of this publishing venture begun in 1924 it became possible to associate Freud with a specific *locus*, that of Bloomsbury and Tavistock Square and,

therefore, with its incumbent intellectual coterie. James Strachey was, perhaps alone among his contemporaries, adept at addressing the complexities and multi-layeredness of Freud's work because as Freud's translator he confronted head on the difficulties of communicating these 'new' concepts. Any translator knows that the transference of ideas from one language and culture to another is a particularly complex process. Not only that, but as Frederick Hoffman notes in his book *Freudianism and the Literary Mind*,³ Freud himself habitually reshaped his own language, giving new inflections to established terms as his ideas advanced.⁴ Other psychoanalysts, like Jung, would adapt Freud's terms to suit their own intellectual needs and theories. The terms themselves reflected a variety of positions. Hoffman describes the initial lay-reponse to Freud:

It is not at all surprising that the writers, of the twenties at least, should have been a bit confused about the exact meaning of Freudianism. The writer brought to the confusion his own preconceptions and prejudices. Many of the young intellectuals of the twenties confused the issue further by accepting Freudian terms immediately upon hearing them, or by attaching at the most a summary sketch of their meaning. Thus *repression* as Freud defined it lost much of its original meaning in a discussion; but it gained new cultural ingredients from the particular area in which it found an audience. (Hoffman, p.88)

At the heart of the problem was the elusive nature of the psyche. The terms required to define it have to be descriptive and metaphorical: the concepts themselves are dynamic and difficult to express. It is a commonplace that Freud, resistant to a technical vocabulary, had no choice but to use metaphor, principally that of the Unconscious which made it possible to speak about that 'territory' which is not available for direct examination. Lawrence's language of 'flows',

'circuits' and 'vibrations' to which I shall return, and Freud's metaphors of economic exchange from one agency to another, and his sense of 'reservoirs' of energy, indicate the prevalence of a certain kind of metaphoric language for expressing the individual's psychic profile. But with Freud the emphasis is on analogy, as it is not with Lawrence. Lawrence was sensitive to Freud's need for a metaphorical standpoint but he was also critical of what might be called Freud's 'models', what have come to be thought of as his conceptual apparatus. But by the same token words like 'ego', 'super-ego' and 'id' have ceased to be seen as metaphors: we no longer notice their original meanings because of what they have come to stand for. There are many words in Lawrence that function like this, words like 'blood-consciousness', for instance, by which Lawrence intends to describe an undeliberate functioning, something which eludes conscious awareness. Such words belong to a specifically Lawrencean lexicon and the focus will increasingly be on his metaphoricity as the only way to describe, or re-describe, unconscious functioning.

There is no doubt that in the 1920s it became very fashionable to read Freud -- a state of affairs to which Lawrence satirically refers in the Foreword to *Fantasia and the Unconscious*. The fact that Freud's work was suddenly made available in Britain to a wider public should have heralded a profound and critical confrontation with his ideas developed and re-formulated as they were throughout his life in his manifold publications. In fact the appearance of his work in Britain can be seen in retrospect as something of a false dawn. In the years after the 1920s perhaps up to the 1960s the evidence points to a

resistance not only to his work but, broadly speaking, to psychological theory in general. In the context of psychoanalysis Melanie Klein and Anna Freud are chief among the figures after Freud who maintain some sort of a continuum.⁵ That this is the case arguably signifies a deep seated resistance to theory in general, unless within clearly defined 'scientific' parameters.

In his fiction and specifically in his essays on the unconscious Lawrence at least reflects the importance of Freud; and Lawrence himself was in possession of a related interest in the instinctual life, in human relationships, in the development of child consciousness -- the projected theme of the essays -- and in the unconscious. His refusal to defend Freud's formulations might in a different intellectual and literary environment have presaged a more satisfying dialogue than actually occurred. Even given Lawrence's interest and the initial enthusiasm in some quarters for reading Freud and for bringing his ideas to bear in some degree on art, the wider relevance of Freud does not appear to have been understood, or if it was understood it never emerged convincingly in discussion of the arts. The implication is that the key Modernists had a sense of Freud on the horizon, and on occasion reference was made to this horizon, but on the whole a gulf persisted which today can be read as a deep-lying, if not to say unconscious, resistance to his theories. Lawrence's refusal to conceptualize the unconscious, to reduce it to a number of fixed metaphors, makes him more genuinely *post-Freudian* in his perceptions than many, if not all, of the British writers of the time. In 1977 one critic wrote 'When I look back at *Psychoanalysis and*

the Unconscious from the perspective of contemporary theory and practice, I see how close Lawrence was in 1921 to aspects of theory that are central for interpreters now.⁶ The theorists cited in this context, as in an important sense prefigured by Lawrence, include Marion Milner, D. W. Winnicott and J.-B. Pontalis. In my view Lawrence's insights have more in common with those of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, as I explain more fully as this chapter progresses. Certainly Lawrence's essays on the unconscious in some part articulate his own resistance to Freudian concepts and are important for that reason. More specifically, in their discursive mode and consciously metaphorical language, they allow us to focus tightly on the whole question of metaphor in Lawrence.

Lawrence's essays allow us to focus on metaphor, it is true, and it is just as true that Freud in some important respects motivates Lawrence to write in the way he does in these essays. The pressing question now is how to assess the role of metaphor in these works, and Lawrence's alertness to this role. This brings me necessarily to an argumentative chiasmus which will structure the immediate discussion: my line of reasoning is through Freud's theory to his language and, via Lawrence's response, to *his* language and ultimately to 'metaphysic'. Consequently, I propose to continue the exposition of Freud already embarked upon, but with language now particularly to the front. The movement is through theory to language, the better to move through Lawrence's language to his 'metaphysic', the former being the medium of the latter.

A survey of the reception of Freud generally in Britain might reveal, as a legacy of the partial interest described, a weak popular grasp of his ideas. One can speculate that such a survey would reveal the unconscious as a familiar enough term although one which is easily and uncritically interchangeable with the subconscious. In our own period the Freudian 'slip', and to a lesser extent the 'Oedipus complex' have inserted themselves into popular parlance; and most people have a sense of Freud unearthing the unpalatable in the context of sexual relations within the family -- Lawrence's terms rightly or wrongly are 'incest-craving' and the 'incest motive'. Beyond this there is a silence which indicates a resistance generally to Freud's theories. Typically in university departments of psychology Freud, and the whole question of psychoanalysis, are considered marginal. A significant number of clinical practitioners provide an exception to this, upholding the importance of Freud at least in a practical context. The other notable exception is provided by departments of literature where there is generally speaking a place for psychoanalysis as a critical discourse although few would describe themselves as Freudians. Even so, Freud in all likelihood would have thought it absurd that his work should find champions in what might well appear to him an unlikely and 'unscientific' context.

This marginality in an academic scientific context, and current centrality in various arts faculties is conceivably in part the result of the way Freud chose to express his 'science'. It is important not to obscure the fact that Freud's texts are grounded in clinical practice, that there is in his work a body of propositions which have

to be tested empirically. So, on the one hand we have a sense of Freud's work as a practical science and, on the other, we have a clear sense of the metaphorical texture of his writing. His language is a medium which has as many gaps, or *lacunae*, 'vanishing points', contradictions, deferred meanings and general turbulence as one expects to encounter in a literary text. *The Interpretation of Dreams* in particular institutes a self-examining and self-critical dialogue; and it is also a text in which Freud himself is present and can be overheard debating the degree of self-censorship to be practised with respect to his own dreams. The constant revision and notes added at later dates partially reveal the extent to which *Die Traumdeutung* is an open-ended structure, like its subject matter: dream. His works are among those which best illustrate, therefore, that a theoretical text is no more a closed structure than is a fiction or a poem. Malcolm Bowie highlights the importance of Freud's language when he remarks that,

Freud's own technical language, as is now well known, was the product of a daring syncretistic verbal imagination, and it was a triumph of rhetorical ingenuity. Similarly, the underlying mechanisms that he sought to delineate as a basis for his explanations of both normal and pathological mental processes were assembled from a variety of conceptual components; they were schematic and parsimonious despite these varied origins; and they always needed to be made malleable again if they were to handle successfully the shifting complexity of actual clinical cases. Freud as clinician brought a new rhetoric into play, one that spoke not of systems, mechanisms, apparatus or modes of functioning but of autobiographical human speech seized on the wing and in the density of its affective life.⁷

Bowie's concluding statement here also points to Lawrence's interest in language, at least in certain dimensions. Lawrence, consciously or

unconsciously, recognized the inadequacy of a 'technical' or conceptual (theoretical) language: it established a gulf between the individual and the emotional life. His own language is undeliberate, arising from an unconscious, or partly conscious, functioning: the result of the writer's intuitive awareness of its appropriateness (as the vehicle of his 'metaphysic' or personal philosophy) rather than through conscious design. But Bowie's statement returns us to the fundamental recognition shared by Freud and Lawrence (and Heidegger), and which makes the work of these figures distinctive: each recognizes the need to think metaphorically, but which of them can transform metaphor unconsciously into a radical 'thinking further'?

Freud's 'new rhetoric' develops, as I suggest earlier, because of the urgency of his recognition of the use of metaphor combined with the sense that verbal correspondences for psychic states can never be final. As he says in 'The Question of Lay Analysis', 'In psychology we can only describe things by the help of analogies. There is nothing peculiar in this; it is the case elsewhere as well. But we have constantly to keep changing these analogies, for none of them lasts long enough.' (SE, XX, p.195). This is a very simple statement of the special dependency of psychoanalysis on language. It is a dependency which underpins the work of Freud and his most prominent reinterpreter, Jacques Lacan, the two major psychoanalytical thinkers to date, but it also alerts us to the fact that for a psychoanalyst language is, as Bowie succinctly (and 'equipmentally') puts it elsewhere, 'the main source of clinical data' and the analyst's chief 'therapeutic instrument'.²⁸

Lawrence does not explicitly acknowledge the importance of Freud's conjoining of language and the unconscious. Pervading his essays on the unconscious is his outrage that Freud's authority is based on a set of rigid and repressive structures (like oedipalization) to which individual feeling is subsumed. In a letter written to Hoffman and quoted by Hoffman, for instance, Frieda Lawrence states that 'Lawrence's conclusion', about Freud, 'was more or less that Freud looked on sex too much from the doctor's point of view, that Freud's 'sex' and 'libido' were too limited and mechanical and that the root was deeper' (Hoffman, p. 154).

I propose to stay with Hoffman for the time being because of his insistence on the theoretical differences between Freud and Lawrence despite the fact that the essays on the unconscious are not an unproblematic commentary on Freud's ideas. They do not simply circumscribe Freud's writings: Freud is a part of their content, of course, but is far from being Lawrence's only preoccupation. Hoffman's book, one of the seminal discussions of the relation between Lawrence and Freud and published six years after the death of Freud, was among the first books to examine seriously the bearing of psychoanalysis on literature. But the title of Hoffman's chapter on Lawrence, 'Lawrence's *Quarrel* with Freud' (my italics), suggests that Lawrence's criticisms of Freud were essentially, if not purely, doctrinal: he does not examine critically, as I intend to, the role of language in Lawrence's thought about Freud. Hoffman properly underscores Lawrence's preference for Trigant Burrow who as a psychologist had moved away from Freud's thinking. Lawrence's review of *The Social*

Basis of Consciousness by Burrow is a further statement of his own ideas, or more precisely a re-articulation of his suspicion of theory. He highlights the universal striving for consciousness so that all experiences are 'in the head' as he famously puts it elsewhere, and of the 'ideal' which prevents the 'flow' of consciousness 'from within outwards' (*Phoenix*, p.380). This 'flow' is a crucial metaphor to which I shall return as it embodies Lawrence's fundamental disagreement with Freud and challenges Freud's metaphors as unconsciously repressive structures. Burrow's privileging of the social group and his emphasis on group analysis rather than the one-to-one relation of analyst and patient appealed to Lawrence because of its closeness to his own conception of a sympathetic community: 'what must be broken is the egocentric absolute of the individual' (*Phoenix*, p.379). In contrast Freud stands out as a single and singular figure of authority, dependent upon the hierarchy which Burrow, and Lawrence, wanted to dismantle and thereby disempower.

Hoffman persists in interpreting the differences between Freud and Lawrence as doctrinal: he only briefly focuses on Lawrence's response to Freud's language as negative:

His [Lawrence's] critical, philosophical works all refer at one time or another to psychoanalytic terms -- the unconscious, the oedipus complex, repression, sublimation etc. But his chief reason for reading psychoanalysis was to refute it; or, rather, to find his own explanations for the terms which psychoanalysis had offered him. (Hoffman, p.161, my brackets)

Whilst Lawrence does challenge psychoanalytic terms it is not merely in order to substitute his own language. Freud is, in his view, a

symptom of a universal malaise in human consciousness, but Lawrence's response is not simply to re-invest Freudian terms with new meaning. Hoffman proceeds by enumerating the points on which Lawrence disagreed with Freud -- making the unconscious conscious, and Freud's assessment of the mother-son relationship chief among them. In his essays on the unconscious Lawrence does reject Freud's concept of infantile sexuality. He does not criticize Freud for construing as fantasy events which might actually have occurred, but argues that the identification of sexuality in children is at best misguided and at worst dangerous. After that he does not pursue this theme, effectively ignoring or avoiding this aspect of Freud. Critics are familiar with the idea that Lawrence's resistance to this notion has been construed as a repression of something he recognizes in his own relations with his mother. Quite apart from psychoanalytic interpretations of *Sons and Lovers*, the recently discovered poem entitled 'Death-Paeon of a Mother' will reinforce such speculations.⁹ Given his own criticism of Freud's opinions it is ^{appropriately} paradoxical that Lawrence's fiction is so frequently the subject of psychoanalytic criticism. Lawrence's response to the reading of his third, and most overtly autobiographical, novel as an Oedipal drama is something which I will address presently.

In assessing Lawrence's response to Freud Hoffman's theme is the familiar one that Lawrence rejected intellectualism especially when it obstructed and denied the unconscious life of the individual, but that he owed Freud a debt inasmuch as the latter recognized the importance of the unconscious at all:

For the metaphor of the unconscious, which Lawrence substituted for the notion of the soul, he was grateful to the psychologist. The incest-motive and its associate, the oedipus complex, puzzled Lawrence, and forced him to re-explain, in terms of a highly original version of biology. (Hoffman, p. 167)

This is perhaps to lend too much weight to the sense of Freud as an intellectual adversary of Lawrence: clearly everything which Lawrence achieved after the publication of *Sons and Lovers* was not in response to Freud, even though in the novels he was, half-unconsciously, developing his views on human consciousness *through* his language. And Lawrence's 'metaphysic' was not developed as a rejoinder to Freud. In regarding Freud as the major, indeed the only, point of reference in the essays on the unconscious, to which he has frequent recourse, Hoffman fails to pay sufficient attention to this 'metaphysic'. That the Oedipal theory put Lawrence in a vulnerable position because of the character of his relationship with his mother is a separate issue, to be examined in brief later. Neither is Lawrence re-explaining Freud in terms of biology, which is Hoffman's assessment of Lawrence's discussion of the body in the essays on the unconscious. Freud was to some extent rescuing psychic phenomena from purely physical explanations: very early on he felt that Charcot had been misled by visual symptoms believing them to have an organic origin, whereas Freud himself believed the origin to be mental and he famously challenged the womb's culpability for a variety of pathological conditions including insanity. Lawrence's attempts to renew a sense of the intrinsic relation of body and mind are not a retrograde step, a reversal of Freud's insights, but a sign of his holism which is in our

period gaining more and more credence. I deal more fully with Lawrence's dismantling of the polarity of body and psyche in modern thought later on in this chapter.

The fact is that in assessing Lawrence's response to psychoanalysis the focus properly returns to discourse. This is the arena which he sets up in his essays on the unconscious by writing them in such a self-consciously metaphorical mode: what is needed is a 'fantasia of' the unconscious rather than a 'discourse on' it. Freud's discourse, metaphorical as it needs to be, falls short because in Lawrence's view it attempts to circumscribe that which ultimately refuses to be circumscribed. Hoffman's discourse is even less metaphorical than Freud's. Certainly in contrast with Lawrence's essays on the unconscious we are able to perceive a certain critical 'blindness' on the part of Hoffman despite his assertions about metaphor. The fundamental difference must be that Hoffman (like Freud) regards metaphor as rhetorical, as a *figure*, whereas for Lawrence it is the flow of consciousness itself (not to be confused with the Modernist 'stream'). Hoffman's praise for the 'series of metaphors' devised by Freud for the 'definition, description and analysis of the psychic economy' (Hoffman, p.317) would draw Lawrence's fire because it realizes metaphor only as a descriptive or discursive instrument. Indeed Hoffman (in an Aristotelian gesture) posits a language which is the 'norm' distinct from the verbal aberrations and ambiguities which reveal the speaker's unconscious preoccupations. The central argument of Lawrence's essays on the unconscious is that the unconscious is simply not quantifiable in such a way. The productive focus in

Lawrence is on metaphor and not on 'metaphorical equivalents' as Hoffman calls them (Hoffman, p.320). Freud's discourse is, for Lawrence, already repressed, the 'flow' is obstructed.

The fluid metaphoricity of Lawrence's own essays on the unconscious must thus be seen as cutting across the 'mechanistic' theory contained in Freud's metaphors. Freud's error, Lawrence asserts, lies in constructing a theory at all, and sustaining it with 'static' plain metaphors like Oedipus. Criticising this reliance on the purely conceptual metaphor, Freud's 'model' of an unconscious drive, Lawrence argues that:

All theory that has to be applied to life proves at last just another of these unconscious images which the repressed psyche uses as a substitute for life, and against which the psychoanalyst is fighting. The analyst wants to break all this image business, so that life can flow freely. But it is useless to try to do so by replacing in the unconscious another image -- this time, the image, the fixed motive of the incest-complex. (*Phoenix*, p.378)

Nevertheless Lawrence cannot help -- as he implicitly acknowledges -- but to use Freud's basic terms even whilst challenging the status of Freud's central theory as a theory. So it is that the works of Lawrence and Freud have a supplementary or *parergonal* relation to each other. To say so is to take up, with a view to developing, my initial 'frame' metaphor. As I said at the opening of this chapter this is not 'frame' in the sense of an enclosing border, but a notional category across which things 'flow': there is no inside and no outside. In this context Jacques Derrida's understanding of *parerga* and *parergonal* logic is useful. Robert Young's headnotes to Barbara Johnson's essay

'The Frame of Reference: Poe, Lacan, Derrida' provide an accessible explanation of what has come to be seen more often than not as a Derridean concept:

The parergon, a word that Derrida finds in Kant, is the supplement to the 'ergon' (work) -- against, beside, above and beyond it. In the visual arts, the parergon will be the frame, or drapery, or enclosing column. The parergon could also be a (critical) text, which 'encloses' another text. But what it precisely is not, is a simple inside/outside dichotomy. (Young, p.226)

This last in part summarizes the relation, which I have begun to establish, of Lawrence's essays on the unconscious to Freud, if we understand by Freud the body of his work. It shows the relation between them to be more complex than that of text and commentary, argument and response. Lawrence's essays are paradoxically both frame to Freud's work and framed by it, the character of the relation of *parergon* to *ergon*. As Derrida remarks, 'Frames are always framed: thus, by part of their content'.

In the light of these comments we can say that Lawrence's remarks on Freud are inscribed in the margins, as it were, of Freud's texts and, more often than not, in the margins of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. In this work Freud not unexpectedly refers to other authorities as part of the scientific frame of reference for *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Lawrence makes a gesture of following the convention. In the Foreword to *Fantasia of the Unconscious* he writes:

I am no 'scholar' of any sort. But I am very grateful to scholars for their sound work. I have found hints, suggestions for what I say here in all kinds of scholarly books, from the Yoga and Plato and St. John the Evangel and the early Greek philosophers like Herakleitos down to Frazer

and his 'Golden Bough', and even Freud and Frobenius.
 (*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, pp. 11-12)

The casualness with which Freud is remembered at the end is itself significant. By listing the figures and body of work which must figure in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, even if they do so imperceptibly, Lawrence is ostensibly discounting a fixed starting place for his 'account'. If *Fantasia of the Unconscious* has its origin in these writings then its beginning is a perpetual drift between diverse co-ordinates (which would include the first shorter essay, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*). Lawrence's own travels are interesting in this regard. Travel itself is quite a literal dimension and for Lawrence it both governed and interacted significantly with his reading -- his correspondence frequently shows that on his travels Lawrence's priorities invariably included a library, or some other form of access to literature, with his friends frequently sending books and other reading matter *postea restante*. Geographical co-ordinates -- Lawrence's place in the world on any given journey -- have, therefore, a significant relation to the ones he here proposes in the Foreword. At these times Lawrence's reading matter was determined by a selection of texts from a diminished, at best limited, resource, with chance playing an important part, although Rose Marie Burwell's research confirms our sense of Lawrence reading profusely.¹² In the travel-writing Lawrence of course starts with the literal journey, but the experiences and landscapes he describes are meaningful at a level other than the purely empirical one.

In this context a single point of origin as such cannot be identified -- forewords are traditionally written last, after the body of the text is completed, and first words are rarely that.¹³ It is this insight which unmasks the fragmented boundaries of *Fantasia of the Unconscious* itself -- part Plato, part Freud, part Jung and others -- and shows the incomplete nature of borders, or frames, generally. In as much as the ever receding references identified in the Foreword actually defer a beginning, they also postpone the identification of a single subject of the essay. In *Fantasia of the Unconscious* Lawrence ostensibly has so many potential subjects that one dominant theme is difficult to identify. Within the text then he has also plotted another apparently infinite set of co-ordinates which he pursues in a multi-layered operation, continually resisting a traditional linear, traditionally logical, structure for his work; this resistance, as will be seen, is also a feature of *Women in Love*. It is also the method of organization employed in this study for the reading of Lawrence's major fiction.

This is to place *Fantasia of the Unconscious* in particular as a frame for Freud's writing into a clearer perspective. The casual reference to Freud, yoked together with Frobenius, at the end of Lawrence's list simply shows Lawrence denying him the central place which the titles of these essays, particularly the first, imply. Lawrence 'writes in the margins' of Freud's texts in order to 'marginalize' him. Inevitably we observe the tone which Lawrence adopts when he does refer explicitly to Freud. The opening pages of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* are declamatory. Freud is the

'psychiatric quack'; the 'psychoanalytic gentleman' (in other words the perfect *bourgeois*); Lawrence identifies an unmistakable 'Freud look' (clearly not an insightful gaze); psychoanalysts are accused of subversively establishing themselves as healers -- which smacks of mysticism -- physicians, which implies the authority of science, and finally apostles; their 'doctrine' has been subtly 'inoculated into us'; 'Psychoanalysis is out, under a therapeutic disguise, to do away entirely with the moral faculty in man.' (F&P pp.201-2). It sounds like a conspiracy theory. In *Fantasia of the Unconscious* Lawrence recants a little, opening with an apology to psychoanalysis and qualifying his opinions. After this Freud is a presence in the essay, but is infrequently named.

The conspicuous omission of Freud's name in an essay which is nominally a response to his ideas is juxtaposed with Lawrence's quasi-biological description of the plexuses and eight dynamic centres of feeling. This 'fantasy' is proposed implicitly as a substitute for Freud's theories. The anatomical plan provided by Lawrence is an instance of framing occurring in a more literal sense, in the sense of an internal order, proposed as a literal structure, which defines the emotional and instinctual shape of the individual. The body and the emotions hang upon this frame. The description of cell division forces us to be aware of boundaries -- we all recognize primitive cell structure as a nucleus inside a space defined by a boundary. The diaphragm, our organs including skin, are further divisions. In their study, Lakoff and Johnson show how 'container metaphors', which these are, are the way we culturally construct ourselves in our world:

We are physical beings, bounded and set off from the rest of the world by the surface of our skins, and we experience the rest of the world as outside us. Each of us is a container, with a bounding surface and an in-out orientation. We project our own in-out orientation onto other physical objects that are bounded by surfaces. Thus we also view them as containers with an inside and an outside.¹⁴

These concepts are so extensively entrenched in our thought and language that we tend to be unaware of articulating them. Lawrence naturally uses them but at the same time he is absorbed in questioning the in-out dichotomy, a questioning which is the basis of his holism. He can insist that the individual is separate from the world by repeating his formula 'I am I', but he also emphasizes the individual's integral relation or connection with the sensible world (a theme of the travel writing).

The pseudo-biological model described in Lawrence's essays functions both literally and metaphorically: indeed this is its force. It cannot and should not be taken as analogous to Freud's early concentration on the chemical-biological foundation of 'hysteria', for instance. The origin of Lawrence's anatomical plan is fragmented and imprecise: 'Authorized science tells you that this first great plexus, this all-potent nerve-centre of consciousness and dynamic life-activity, is a sympathetic centre.' (F&P p.28). The authors of this science are not named but the implication is that they are many and various, so once again origin is defined in terms of a drift between co-ordinates. This is also to omit Freud in particular from the gallery of authors, or authorizers, and this ellipsis becomes a legitimate subject of *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. Paradoxically

Lawrence is both constructing a frame around Freud's theory of the unconscious -- inasmuch as Freud's, and Lawrence's, lasting interest in psychoanalysis apparently provide the motivation for writing the essay -- and omitting that theory, and in doing so gainsaying it, almost altogether.

The 'frame' has a further application, perhaps the most obvious. It is almost impossible, given Lawrence's personal history or given the attention paid to the details of his family relations, not to speculate how far his dismissal of psychoanalysis is anchored in the fear of being himself unmasked and that *Fantasia of the Unconscious* in particular constitutes an unconsciously constructed rhetoric of fear. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, for example, there are many occasions when Freud protects himself from presumably moral censure by omitting details either of his own dreams or his interpretation. The interpretation of his own dream of 'Irma's injection' is a case in point where he qualifies his statement 'I have now completed the interpretation of the dream' with a note added later in 1909 confirming that 'I have not reported everything that occurred to me during the process of interpretation' (SE, IV, p.118). His concluding remarks to the chapter in question return to the theme of self-protection bearing in mind the force of public opinion. Elsewhere he reflects on the wisdom of not relying on the discretion even of his friends.

This dream deals with Freud's own professional competence and it is egoistic, even narcissistic. In an essay which begins by

considering the contradiction between Freud's intentionalism in interpreting 'Irma's injection', his quest to find a single 'meaning', and his assertion that such a reductive programme constitutes a 'psychoanalytic error', one critic has forcefully shown that 'Irma's injection' reveals both a repressing and a repressed wish.¹⁵ The dream-work itself attempts to disrupt the narcissistic autonomy of Freud's ego which aggressively asserts its own mastery over the patient. Mehlman consequently identifies a polemical dimension to 'Irma's injection' not stated by Freud which destabilizes its value as a 'truth' unmasked by the analyst. The underlying fear is of the interpretation's capacity to 'frame' the dreamer, therefore Freud keeps silent on certain themes, or embellishments of themes already revealed. In the context of an essay which posits all interpretations as repressions,¹⁶ and which confirms the desire of each interpretation to be ultimately authoritative, the interpretation provides a frame for the dream which is itself paradoxically framed by the dream's contents to the point where it is difficult to state categorically what lies inside the dream and what lies outside it. The dreamer/interpreter runs the risk of being exposed as participating in some unpalatable drama, that is to say, of being framed. This is Freud's position and to some extent may be Lawrence's, particularly when the text in view is *Sons and Lovers*.

Lawrence was dismissive of Alfred Kuttner's psychoanalytic reading of *Sons and Lovers* in 1916.¹⁷ This lack of enthusiasm on Lawrence's part combined with the tone of the essays on the unconscious is grounded in a dismissal of the Oedipus complex as a psychic structure.

In the tenth chapter of *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, 'Parent Love', Lawrence's initial strategy is to hit at the idealism of love between the parents and the child, and particularly the love of mother and child. The striking thing about Lawrence's 'fantasy' of biology -- to which he resorts here as elsewhere -- is that as a frame it seems to be intact, even rigid. As Lawrence locates real issues like parent-child relationships within his 'anatomical' model it takes on the role of a censor. In resorting to it ^{he discounts} all other possibilities in effect eliminating ^{them,} particularly those offered up by 'authorized science'. In particular Lawrence's sense of the wilful 'spiritual' love of the mother causes in the child 'an exaggerated sensitiveness alternating with a sort of helpless fury; and we have delicate frail children with nerves or with strange whims.' (F&P p.118).

Inevitably one wonders how much this is a portrait of the artist himself, feeling singled out and exposed by Freud's Oedipal theory and its implications. In as much as Freud has provided the terms by which Lawrence's fiction, and by implication Lawrence himself, can be judged Lawrence might well feel that even if the Oedipal theory does not apply to him Freud has somehow made it look as though it does and the response of Alfred Booth Kuttner, who might well be representative of a substantial body of opinion given the popularity of Freud in some quarters at that time, is proof of this. It is in this highly personal context that Lawrence himself is in danger of being framed and the essays on the unconscious are in part an attempt to resist this framing. Mabel Dodge Luhan, familiar with Freud's theories although not as familiar perhaps as Frieda Lawrence, subscribed to the view

that Lawrence had a 'mother-complex'.¹⁸ Frieda Lawrence imprecisely described Lawrence's love for his mother as 'sort of Oedipus' (*Letters*, I, p.449), and critics have plundered the sources to show Lawrence's resistance to Freud despite the fact that the Oedipus complex is, or was, frequently identified as the 'sickness' being shed in *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence later finding it necessary to resist Freud's terms. In *Fantasia of the Unconscious* in fact Lawrence can be seen trying to reclaim certain terms, specifically 'unconscious', from the Freudians. This theme of resistance is clearly written in to the novels: Rupert Birkin could be seen, in his defensive relations with Ursula Brangwen, as a resisting device for the author. Birkin's resistance to Ursula recalls Lawrence's opposition to Frieda in the early stages of their marriage, during the writing of 'The Sisters' and as it became two novels.¹⁹

Without wishing to exaggerate Kuttner's importance it is worth noting that in his concluding remarks to the essay on *Sons and Lovers* he writes of the 'cure' which the artist effects in himself in writing:

For Mr. Lawrence has escaped the destructive fate that dogs the hapless Paul by the grace of expression: out of the dark struggles of his own soul he has emerged as a triumphant artist. In every epoch the soul of the artist is sick with the problems of his generation. He cures himself by expression in his art. (Kuttner, in Salgado ed. (1969), p.94)

Kuttner could not have known of Lawrence's now famous statement about the artist shedding his sicknesses in art (*Letters*, II, p.90) but his remark is an interesting trace of Lawrence's deeper idea, even if the

reviewer appears to give the artist a *social* consciousness, 'In every epoch the soul of the artist is sick with the problems of *his generation*' (emphasis added). Kuttner at any rate focuses on literature as a privileged order of talking-cure. His position is that Lawrence has, independently of Freud, shown Freud's conclusions to be true. This stance is almost a convention as philosophers commonly find in literature some forceful echo of their own theory: this is not the same as constructing a 'system' and finding a text which is in agreement with it, but is more a case of recognizing in a text one's own system at work. Husserl's *Phenomenology* offers an example of this -- Husserl being one of the most famous recent constructors of a 'system' -- with its veiled and unveiled references to literature, and we can appositely refer to Lacan in this context. Freud himself does not ransack literature in order to see his own models and theories acted out, such a concept is too crude, but instead he finds in literature his own theory or 'system' in place as it were and, therefore, giving an unsuspected power to his own idea. As he says, 'It sometimes happens that the sharp eye of a creative writer has an analytic realization of the process of transformation of which he is habitually no more than the tool.' (SE, IV, p.246).²⁰

2.2 Anti-Oedipal

Kuttner is perhaps too close to Freud or too unfamiliar with Lawrence, judging him on the basis of his third novel as autobiographical, to know how to read him, believing Lawrence to have had such an 'analytic

realization' of a Freudian theme. Convinced by Freud's reconstruction of human relations, Kuttner is unable to recognize the anti-Oedipal in Lawrence.

So far I have drawn attention to the complex 'framing' relation which Lawrence's writing on the unconscious has to Freud's conceptions. I have also underlined Lawrence's rejection, or repudiation, of Freud and have qualified this by drawing attention to his possible fear of being 'framed'. The problem lies both in how sexuality is evaluated by each, and how Lawrence perceives Freud's evaluation of human relations in contrast to his own more 'instinctive' sense of them. It is time to see exactly how radical Lawrence's objections to Freud are, quite apart from how Freudian conceptions might apply to him. This involves a move from the 'content' of Freud's thought to the central question of 'discourse'.

In my view philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari have a point when they argue that Freud's conception of sexuality appals Lawrence exactly because it is just that, a conception, an Idea (*Anti-Oedipus*, p.323). In a study which, although written from within the domain of psychoanalysis, challenges the status of Freud in our culture, reassessing him as one of the 'poor technicians of desire -- psychoanalysts and semiologists of every sign and symptom -- who would subjugate the multiplicity of desire to the twofold law of structure and lack' (Michel Foucault in the preface to *Anti-Oedipus*, xiii), Lawrence is rightly cited as a radical and

innovative thinker and one of the first to identify the Oedipal mother-father-infant relation as both limited and censorious.

Of the two conceptions which Lawrence is seen to challenge the first is the Oedipal triangle, 'the holy family' as he ironically calls it in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, chapter 2), a description which Deleuze and Guattari revive for one of their chapter-headings (*Anti-Oedipus*, pp.51-137). The second is the idea of the Phallus as 'the despotic signifier prompting the most miserable struggle.' (*Anti-Oedipus*, p.351). It is precisely this conception which is the basis of what Lawrence calls sex-hatred. His essays on the unconscious force us to confront the fact that for Lawrence sexual orientation and sexual identity are not bound up either with the possession of the Phallus (and the subsequent anxiety about its loss), or conversely with its absence.

Deleuze and Guattari are with Lawrence inasmuch as they agree that Freud's conception of sexuality is predicated on the unearthing of something unpalatable; the 'dirty' secret of sex which inhabits the unconscious. Objecting to the 'sovereignization' of Oedipus in Freudian psychoanalysis, seeing it as a moral extension of nineteenth-century psychology, and eager to dismantle this *bourgeois* structure, they respond as much to Lawrence's language as to the challenge which it embodies. In the following passage they alight on Lawrence's metaphor of the 'flow' of human relations, and proceed to quote extensively from the essay 'We Need One Another' (in *Phoenix*, pp.188-95):

Lawrence shows in a profound way that sexuality, including chastity, is a matter of flows, an infinity of different and even contrary flows.... Lawrence attacks the poverty of the immutable identical images, the figurative roles that are so many tourniquets cutting off the flows of sexuality: "fiancée, mistress, wife, mother" -- one could just as easily add "homosexuals, heterosexuals," etc. -- all these roles are distributed by the Oedipal triangle, father-mother-me, a representative ego thought to be defined in terms of the father-mother representations, by fixation, regression, assumption, sublimation -- and all of that according to what rule? The law of the great Phallus that no one possesses, the despotic signifier prompting the most miserable struggle, a common absence for all the reciprocal exclusions where the flows dry up, drained by bad conscience and *ressentiment*. "... sticking a woman on a pedestal, or the reverse, sticking her beneath notice; or making a 'model' housewife of her, or a 'model' mother, or a 'model' help-meet. All mere devices for avoiding any contact with her. A woman is not a 'model' anything. She is not even a distinct and definite personality.... A woman is a strange soft vibration on the air, going forth unknown and unconscious, and seeking a vibration of response. Or else she is a discordant, jarring, painful vibration, going forth and hurting everyone within range. *And a man the same.*" Let's not be too quick to make light of the pantheism of flows present in such texts as this: it is not easy to de-oedipalize even nature, even landscapes, to the extent that Lawrence could. (*Anti-Oedipus*, p.351)

Lawrence's characters do not finish up being merely these 'representative egos' -- 'wife', 'husband' and so on -- and to many readers who want something more reductive than Lawrence offers this is a considerable problem. The aspect of the 'metaphysic' being identified here is that which evaluates sexuality as something other than the simple dichotomies, the binary oppositions, which more usually represent it: male/female; man/wife; heterosexual/homosexual. The metaphor of 'flow', which is fundamental to Lawrence and has an important status in the lexicon of his 'metaphysic', challenges the sense of the isolated individual, his psyche determined by the Oedipal drama, having meaning only in a psycho-sexual configuration based on

the family. Sexuality for Lawrence is rightly identified as a matter of notional 'flows'. Where there is a distinct physical object sexual exchange is described metaphorically to underline Lawrence's view that the act is not merely mechanical. Individuals become 'vibrations', unpredictably contrary or harmonious, or different. Devising psychological types or consigning individuals to certain sex roles goes against this understanding. The individual, for Lawrence, is principally responsive as s/he inhabits the present moment, rather than determined by oedipalization. Rather than constructing a framework as he perceives Freud to be doing, in the words of Deleuze and Guattari 'the framework of the "dirty little secret"' (*Anti-Oedipus*, p.350), Lawrence has placed the emphasis metaphorically on 'tides' of feeling and *their interaction in the present*. The point about Lawrence's 'flows and vibrations' is that they do *not* constitute a rigid explanatory model: in fact as I will argue they cut across and through any such models. Nothing can be 'hung' on them as it can be, in Lawrence's view, on the Oedipal example which is imposed on the susceptible individual: Lawrence's 'flows', not a model or rigid psychic structure, are interactive. In his mature work Lawrence's language, and this is the real point, carries the weight of this metaphysical recognition.

Deleuze and Guattari understand much better than Hoffman, who stays at the doctrinal level, the importance of Lawrence's language in his disagreement with Freud. If it were otherwise they would not have responded with such immediacy to his metaphors of 'tides' and 'flows'. This concentration on Lawrence's metaphors and on the alertness of his

insights about Freudian models and their cultural implications carries this discussion to its next stage; to the penetrating metaphoricity of Lawrence's essays on the unconscious.

2.3 Metaphor and 'metaphysic' in the essays on the unconscious.

Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (1921) and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922) are among the least discussed of Lawrence's prose works. *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, written second, is commonly printed first because of the publisher's view that it 'represents Lawrence's developed views on the subject, which are more tentatively outlined in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*'.²¹ In actual fact *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* is not as provisional as this suggests. Before addressing its particular importance a more general description of the two essays is necessary.²² I will then be in a position to move into a more detailed examination of their language.

The evidence is that Lawrence found the longer essay, *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, 'interesting' to write, that it was of considerable importance to him (*Letters*, IV, p.132) and that it progressed quite quickly in comparison with the novels most of which were radically re-drafted either in their entirety, or in large part, until the appropriate form emerged. The fact that the text is called a 'fantasia' throws the form, as well as the contents, into relief. 'Fantasia' is an old word reappropriated by Lawrence. Like 'unconscious' it has its origins in the eighteenth century although

largely because of Freud 'unconscious' has come to sound peculiarly modern whereas 'fantasia' retains its anachronistic air:²³ both 'fantasia' and 'unconscious' resonate strangely when coupled in Lawrence's title.

Quite apart from its musical implication, which I shall come to, 'fantasia' recalls words like 'fancy', 'fantasy' and 'phantasmagoria' with their senses of 'capricious preferment', 'individual taste', 'imagination' and dream. Although 'fancy' was eventually distinguished from 'imagination', 'fantasy' retained its Greek meaning, *phantasiā* signifying the imaginative faculty. Both 'fantasy' and 'fantastic' retain their senses of the extraordinary made visible, and 'phantasm' and 'phantasmagoria' *can be heard echoing in the modern word. All* these meanings exert a linguistic pressure on Lawrence's book. Certainly the sense which some of them bear of mental images, dream images, as 'fanciful', hallucinatory, chance phenomena, stimulated by external factors and less than serious as such, refer satirically to Freud's analyses of dreams as part of his scientific project, and to his plotting of the unconscious. This said, one can speculate whether Lawrence in a self-critical, or ironic, mood, found it appealing that 'fantasia' gave a name to a literary project which demonstrates his arguably 'capricious' preference for his own 'fantastic' projection given the cosmology, a pseudo-biology and so on.

More specifically, since the eighteenth century a fantasia has come to signify a musical composition, particularly one with an impromptu, improvised form. Fantasia, therefore, refers to a form where form

itself is subsidiary to caprice, desire and fantasy. The musical usage does have implications for the form of *Fantasia of the Unconscious* with its multiple points of entry and false starts, and the sense from Lawrence himself, describing the act of writing it, that it is an impromptu and largely spontaneous composition. Obviously there are many Modernist instances of texts which explore the interface between music and language without being fantasias: Mallarmé's *Un coup de dés* is one example. Lawrence's *The Trespasser* could also be cited as a text which makes structural and thematic uses of musical allusions although again this is clearly not a fantasia. Lawrence is familiar with a Romantic tradition which asserts a profound relation between music, like dream, and the representation of the unconscious, but he would resist the tendency, evident in Schopenhauer for instance, to establish a hierarchy which accords music a particular value, and the word another. Lawrence's word 'fantasia' also implicates 'fantasy' and connects very obviously with Freud's usage of 'phantasy' (*Phantasie*). Whilst it is not a fixed term in Freud who persistently gives it different and distinctive inflections, Lawrence would respond to the broad conception negatively, as he did to the Freudian notion of dream particularly given the emphasis on desire and *Wunschphantasie*, because of what Freud does with the underpinning premises of prohibition and repression.

The title of the longer essay presents us with two contradictory terms, 'fantasia' with its emphasis on the impromptu and free-form, and 'unconscious' defined by psychoanalysis as something determined by infantile experience. Lawrence's book occurs in the space opened up by

this contradiction. This alignment of unexpected terms in such a privileged place as the title is significant not least because it is linked to the important question of oxymoron in Lawrence which will be examined in detail in the next chapter. For the time being it is enough to note how the juxtaposition of 'fantasia' and 'unconscious' in the title represents a challenge to the determinism of Freud, as Lawrence saw it, in the former's assertion that the 'unconscious' could be known in the same way that the physical body is knowable. In using the word 'fantasia' Lawrence is suggesting the impossibility of containing the unconscious within what he regards from the first as repressive structures. The promise of the title is that Lawrence will draw attention back to the creative edge of language rather than to the return of the repressed.

Structurally, it is to be seen whether or not 'fantasia' is an appropriate description of the form which Lawrence's longer essay takes. Like *Women in Love*, *Fantasia of the Unconscious* is more spatial than temporal in structure. Even so, it is less inclined than the novel to progress by degrees towards a conclusion, and in fact ends abruptly giving no real sense of an argument completed. The chapter sequence also seems quite arbitrary. More important than the structure, however, is the language of the essay which is the proper subject of this chapter. Two groups of chapters out of the entire fifteen seem to be more closely related thematically than others: 'First Glimmerings of Mind' and 'First Steps in Education' in which Lawrence elaborates on his account of child development and education; 'Parent Love', 'The Vicious Circle', 'Litany of Exhortations', on

love. There are two acknowledged digressions, early on in 'Trees and Babies and Papas and Mamas' -- where the focus is on 'presence', a central question, if not to say quality, in Lawrence's writing -- and the entire chapter called 'Education and Sex in Man, Woman and Child'.

To all intents and purposes *Fantasia of the Unconscious* is a collection of essays on a few related themes, the principal one being that referred to as 'child consciousness', with Lawrence concentrating broadly on the biological development of the child and beyond that on family relations. 'The holy family', title of the second chapter as well as of one of Lawrence's paintings, is the trinity of mother, father and child which comprises the basic point of reference throughout the essays, but is also the focus for his critique of Freud. Orthodox psychology and conventional social mores provide only rudimentary frames of reference since Lawrence is highly critical of both. 'Love' and 'knowledge' are familiar themes generally for Lawrence. In both essays he returns to first things in order to explain what he regards as the perversion of these qualities in modern life. Orthodox psychology and Freudian psychoanalysis are implicated in that perversion. Tightly focused on the developing individual, Lawrence constructs his own systems -- which come to be seen as highly personal metaphors continually unfolding in the course of the essays -- to explain this development, plotting a middle way between the body and the psyche, polarized by Freud.

Regarding its style *Fantasia of the Unconscious* is one of several extended works where Lawrence continually makes use of direct address, referring to 'dear reader', 'gentle reader' and so on.

In the Foreword he sets about dissuading the 'generality' of readers and critics from reading any further. This, in accord with a rhetorical tradition, encourages the reader to stay with the book. Such gestures make us, if we are already alert to Lawrence's subtle intelligence regarding language, think whether his devices are in fact merely 'rhetorical' and ornamental or whether they are not really intrinsic to his thought.

The shorter and earlier essay, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, is divided into six relatively concise chapters which rehearse the principal themes of *Fantasia of the Unconscious* although it is erroneous to regard the former merely as an adumbration of the latter. The first two chapters represent a direct attack on Freud's ideas but thereafter, as I have said, Freud disappears. The content of the essay is essentially the same as that of *Fantasia of the Unconscious* but is dealt with much more economically: the expansion in the second essay actually adds very little. Certainly for my purposes *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* is much more tightly focused than *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, and much richer in what it communicates about Lawrence's thought on language. *Fantasia of the Unconscious* is, in contrast, subject to genuine repetitions and narrative looseness. In terms of language and content *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* would seem to be the more conventional essay but its significance lies in the fact

that a close reading shows it to be the more radically *unconventional* of the two. Crucially, the central statements which come from Lawrence on metaphor are to be found, although they can be, and have been, overlooked, in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*.

I now propose to move from this general account of the essays to a closer examination of their mode and language. Critics are increasingly showing how Lawrence challenges logocentric modes in his writing and my reading of Lawrence partly contributes to that recognition. Essentially this is a response to the linguistic mobility of Lawrence's texts whilst recognizing that there are certain appointed themes which *direct his thought*. In the discussion to follow the post-structuralist concept of the 'frame', which I proposed at the beginning of this chapter, again comes into view. This drawing on certain post-structuralist notions where appropriate is in keeping with my generally Nietzschean perspective on Lawrence: Nietzsche's status is typically high among many contemporary French thinkers, some of whom have formulated what are to me extremely useful critical terms.²⁴

This raises the question, briefly posed in my introduction, as to the usefulness of post-structuralist perspectives at all with regard to Lawrence. It is a question which critics writing about Lawrence's language increasingly find themselves confronting. In a recent article which focuses on this issue, Gerald Doherty, directing his comments at *Women in Love*, which is the obvious text in this context given its overt language theme, is content to regard Lawrence as intrinsically

Derridean calling him 'an ardent deconstructor of logocentric modes of completion and closure'.²⁶ However, Doherty, like Diane Bonds, runs the risk of pushing the comparison with Jacques Derrida so far that much of what is important about Lawrence is lost. Obviously for Lawrence there is no Derrida even remotely on the horizon. Allan Ingram, possibly with this in mind, writes that 'For Lawrence, language is there to convey what needs to be conveyed, not to be contemplated and enjoyed as a field of play.' (Ingram, p.17). But those critics who find Derridean parallels with Lawrence useful are in fairness responding to the philosophical quality of Lawrence's language, just as others have underlined, and continue to underline, the relation of Lawrence and Nietzsche, for instance, and more recently the kinship between Lawrence and Heidegger.²⁶

Michael Bell has noted that up to a point Lawrence and Derrida share a vocabulary if not a conception of language, and he implicitly raises the question whether the concepts 'logocentric' and 'the metaphysics of presence' would have interested Lawrence had he heard them. As Michael Bell has pointed out, the fact that the words 'metaphysics' and 'presence' are absolutely central to the thought of each makes a comparison alluring (Bell, pp.53-4). It is a coincidence which motivates Doherty's reading of Lawrence, for instance. In her preface to Derrida's *Of Grammatology* Gayatri Spivak writes, 'Derrida uses the word "metaphysics" very simply as shorthand for any science of presence'.²⁷ Such a shorthand is unthinkable in Lawrence. Whilst he and Derrida are engaged in the deconstruction of Western metaphysics (as is Heidegger), both lean very differently on the key word

'presence'. This is something which I will come back to in my chapter on *The Rainbow*. There is a sense in which this kind of coincidence, given that 'metaphysics' and 'presence' are central to both thinkers, is potentially fruitful, but if Lawrence and Derrida are to be grafted together in some fashion the end must be a deeper understanding of Lawrence rather than a demonstration of the suitability of a deconstructive consciousness in yet another writer. Doherty warns that 'one must guard against transforming Lawrence into a Derridean *avant la lettre*' (Doherty, p.484) but throughout his article Derrida is the yard-stick against which Lawrence is judged. So although Doherty's article raises important questions it does not significantly advance our understanding of Lawrence's language.

The fact is that both Lawrence and Derrida celebrate a 'living' and highly metaphorical language, but for each the terms 'metaphysic' and 'presence' signify very differently. For Derrida, who insists on *différance*, an indispensable neologism because Derrida's thesis requires a word which does not have an orthodox etymology, the emphasis is always on the deferred term, something which effectively erases, or problematizes, the here and now. The sense is of something which is continually out of reach, evading capture as it were, something which is known by the play of *différance* which is the trace it leaves behind. A hostile critic might ask whether the present, the here and now, is inconceivable to Derrida who, or so it could be argued, seems to deal with the Other more effectively than with the thing itself. It is not my view that Derrida is locked *unproductively* into the warring of signifiers and the continual free-play of

language, but to the hostile critic his seeming so suggests that there is no authentic philosophical project in his activity. I would prefer to argue that Derrida's particular brand of self-conscious metaphoricity results in a language which despite itself is still fundamentally analytic and conceptual, and that this is its fundamental weakness. Freud was an older contemporary of Lawrence (he died nine years after Lawrence), and most critics agree that his views on the unconscious inevitably drew the writer: Lawrence was, of course, in a position to comment on Freud's thought. One can speculate, however, that had he and Derrida been contemporaries -- Derrida was born in 1930 -- Lawrence would have been similarly compelled to remark not only on the conceptual nature of his language, but also on Derrida's negative view of presence.

It is not within the purview of the present study to enter more deeply into the debate on the value or otherwise of deconstruction, other than to state that, with respect to the comparison with Lawrence, Derrida is concentrating principally on *différance* and Lawrence on presence, in particular the possibility of inhabiting (for once, he would argue) the 'immediate present' which is not in his view characterized by closure but is 'nothing finished' (CP p.182). In this, at least, he and Derrida are not talking about the same thing at all. They have been juxtaposed here, and elsewhere, because of the apparent co-incidence of some of their key terms: it is that co-incidence, and what each writer does with or means by those terms which is useful in throwing Lawrence's 'metaphysic' as well as his language into relief. The intention is not

to justify Lawrence to Derrida but to treat sensitively the current notion of their ideas overlapping. For instance, despite the differences highlighted above, Lawrence might conceivably have agreed with Derrida's description of the unconscious in terms of language. Derrida: 'The unconscious text is already a weave of pure traces ... a text nowhere present, consisting of archives which are *always already* transcriptions.'²⁸ Metaphor is a way of reconstructing the text which is 'nowhere present', which is also Freud's task, which brings me closer to the central question of metaphor in Lawrence's essays on the unconscious.

The value of post-structuralism in the present context lies in the richness of the *metaphors* which continually surface as modern thinkers turn their attention to the problem of language and meaning. For example, in the translator's introduction to *Dissemination*, which is itself quite self-consciously a border or adjunct to Derrida's text, Barbara Johnson writes that 'Derrida's writing, indeed, is always explicitly inscribed in the margins of some preexisting text'.²⁹ In *The Truth in Painting*, for example, the pre-existing text is Kant's *Critique of Judgement* and shorter works on related subjects, like Heidegger's essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art'. This provides us with one way of thinking about texts and commentaries, the latter as positive adjuncts with a vital connection to the body of the chosen text, written as it were at a later date between the lines of that text. Johnson's words also serve to make a distinction between active readers (or transformers: readers who read dialectically) and, although the phrase is not used explicitly, passive consumers.

Derrida, as he reads, relies on immense metaphorical leaps resulting in the mobile, often impenetrable texture of his own essays with their available blank margins also awaiting inscription and, in *The Truth in Painting*, framed spaces extended between the blocks of text which silently invite inscription.³⁰

In the light of these comments it becomes possible to reread *Fantasia of the Unconscious* as inscribed in the margins and between the lines of the shorter, tighter essay, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. Indeed, its opening lines indicate its supplementary nature, Lawrence writing that 'The present book is a continuation from *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*.' (F&P p.11). To this could be added Barbara Johnson's words 'In French, the word *supplément* has two meanings: it means both "an addition" and "a substitute"',³¹ as both senses can be brought to Lawrence's longer essay. In fact, the flaws of *Fantasia of the Unconscious* are entrenched in its supplementary nature. We can say that in it Lawrence has 'over-written': figuratively speaking he has saturated the margins of the first essay, *Psychoanalysis of the Unconscious*, in his insistence on presence.

In the fourth chapter of *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, 'Trees and Babies and Papas and Mamas', Lawrence refers to his own physical presence, his environment and the act of writing the text which we are reading. Far from being simply an act of will, writing is described as a 'forgetting' (F&P p.43). This can be compared to his comments on his hand as it writes 'Why the Novel Matters', apparently without the intrusion of consciousness. It is a passage which recalls Nietzsche's

remark that 'we lack any sensitive organs' by which to perceive the 'inner world':³²

Why should I look at my hand, as it so cleverly writes these words, and decide that it is a mere nothing compared to the mind that directs it? Is there really any huge difference between my hand and my brain? -- or my mind? My hand is alive, it flickers with a life of its own. It meets all the strange universe, in touch, and learns a vast number of things, and knows a vast number of things. My hand, as it writes these words, slips gaily along, jumps like a grasshopper to dot an i, feels the table rather cold, gets a little bored if I write too long, has its own rudiments of thought, and is just as much *me* as is my brain, my mind or my soul. Why should I imagine that there is a *me* which is more *me* than my hand is? Since my hand is absolutely alive, *me* alive.

('Why the Novel Matters', in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, p. 193)

The orthodox duality of mind and body is here rejected completely. We are being asked to regard the physical hand which writes as more than a mere appendage to the mind which thinks: 'The whole is greater than the part' (STHOE p. 195). The hand, a sentient 'organ' as is the eye, *knows*, a word which Lawrence sometimes italicizes because all the meanings which meet in the word give it special significance to him beyond day-to-day usage, but it learns and knows in a different way from the eye. Lawrence, looking down, can see his hand in front of him as physical, as flesh, but additionally regards it as having more than a simply mechanical function. After all, hands are 'in touch' both with the world of things and, in writing, with the creative levels within the writer. The 'flow' of writing and language is the 'flow' of thought. Lawrence is after a kind of physicality which is not simply or solely fleshly, corporeal. Hands figure in Lawrence: the longer passage contrasts, for instance, with a passing remark about Clara

Dawes, watched by Paul Morel, as she makes lace in 'Clara' (*Sons and Lovers*, chapter X): 'And her arm moved mechanically, that should never have been subdued to a mechanism' (SL p.304); or the reference to Gudrun's 'perfectly subtle and *intelligent* hands' which, 'greedy for knowledge', feel Gerald's face in 'Death and Love' (WL p.332, my *italics*). This both mirrors and contrasts with the touch of Ursula on Birkin in the previous chapter, 'Excuse' (WL p.314, p.316). Hands reach out to the unknown as language does. Lawrence's meditation underlines the percipient and intuitive quality of composition. The hand that writes, whilst not autonomous, is not simply the instrument of the will, or purely a collection of nerves and cells.²⁹ The focus is sharply on the *subliminal* dimension of composition: the novels, coming 'unwatched', are not formally constructed in accordance with a theory, and in the act of creation the body is not separable from the mind. In this example, presence, that entirely positive quality for Lawrence, is given a fundamentally positive connection with writing and language.

The passage quoted above *embodies* Lawrence's 'metaphysics of presence'. Regarding presence, living for Lawrence is evidently the richness, specialness or realness of the present moment, like the moment of writing. Effectively, for him, if what one is looking for is not present in the present then it is unlikely to be elsewhere, in the future for example, or inhabiting some other dimension. Presence, for Lawrence, is the quality of being dynamically present, present-at-hand, and so the word 'presence' is invested with a particular philosophical significance in his writing. In 'Trees and Babies and

Papas and Mamas' the trees of the Black Forest, where Lawrence sits writing the book, are characterized by their presentness. He describes them as 'so much bigger than me, so much stronger in *life*, prowling silent around. ... Today only trees, and leaves, and *vegetable presences*.' (F&P p.42, emphasis added). He adds 'They have no faces, no minds and bowels: only deep lustful roots stretching in earth, and vast, lissome life in air, and primeval individuality.' (F&P pp.45-6). If this is the living tree then the dead tree, in the familiar equipmental form of pencil and paper, is no less present, and is implicated early on in the writing both of the passage and the book. Lawrence describes himself writing as 'a fool, sitting by a grassy wood-road with a pencil and a book, hoping to write more about that baby. ... so am I usually stroked into forgetfulness, and into scribbling this book. My tree-book, really.' (F&P pp.42-3).

This is a passage in which priority is clearly given once again to writing and presence. For Lawrence human consciousness, that is to say verbal consciousness and consciousness at the deepest non-verbal levels, is a matter of being purely present. The fact that Lawrence places such emphasis on presence, that it motivates a great deal of his writing, is ^{possibly} a sign of his consciousness of its slippery and elusive quality. Implicit in his 'poetics of presence' must be the sense that the present moment can only, paradoxically, be conceived of because the human being inhabits only the past and future moments. Speech passes into the past as it is spoken. The present moment may therefore be most present to the individual at a non-verbal level: in feeling, for instance. But language must communicate the experience.

The English tradition, literary or philosophical, does not give Lawrence the articulation he needs. His uniqueness very largely hangs on this: the language which we can call 'Lawrencean', and which I am in the course of examining, constitutes a radically different poetics of presence than any he might find in his own culture. Wordsworth might be a comparable figure, but essentially Lawrence's difference underpins the present study. Lawrence is certainly the only Modernist writer in English to have a 'metaphysic' that even comes close to being articulated (i.e. in full). The question of metaphor is so central in reading Lawrence precisely because his 'metaphysic' is rooted in language.

In Lawrence especially we can see that metaphor and 'metaphysic' are inextricable. 'Metaphysic' is a word which, in relation to Lawrence, I usually write in inverted commas. In talking about Lawrence's 'metaphysic' we usually, and rightly, keep them. The inverted commas, written or 'spoken', show that the word has its own *parergonal* logic; that is to say it is distinguished by these marks from the body of the text in which it appears and as such -- as both an adjunct to the text and simultaneously something that lies within it -- it has an important framing relation, as described earlier, to that body of text. Indeed, Lawrence's 'metaphysic' both frames and is framed by the language of his texts, to the point where the inside/outside polarity of metaphor/metaphysic can be dismantled. Remarks in the Foreword to *Fantasia of the Unconscious* suggest that the philosophy comes after the fiction: 'This pseudo-philosophy of mine -- 'pollyanalytics', as one of my respected critics might say -- is deduced from the novels and poems, not the reverse.' (F&P p.15).

Yet there is also the argument that without it the fiction could not be:

And finally, it seems to me that even art is utterly dependent on philosophy: or if you prefer it, on a metaphysic. The metaphysic or philosophy may not be anywhere very accurately stated and may be quite unconscious, in the artist, yet it is a metaphysic that governs men at the time, and is by all men more or less comprehended, and lived. Men live and see according to some gradually developing and gradually withering vision. This vision exists also as a dynamic idea or metaphysics -- exists first as such. Then it is unfolded into life and art.
(Foreword to *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, p. 15)

Stating the case, and this dictum famously underpins Lawrence's best literary criticism notably in *Studies in Classic American Literature*, Lawrence himself is unable to pull away from the fundamental and complex interaction between the two domains of 'art' and 'metaphysic'.

Lawrence is a writer who has recognized the inappropriateness of the literal/metaphorical opposition and shifted the emphasis instead to the potentially more interesting duality of dead metaphor and living metaphor. The general assumption is that 'literal' refers to something which is not metaphorical, although the very etymology of the word tells us that *literal* ultimately 'means' *letter*, that it pertains to language. The word 'literal' is itself therefore a metaphor, as is all language. This is a fundamental point which I rehearsed in my introductory chapter. With any number of words in a language the etymology suggests the deep-lying problems of the familiar distinction. Living metaphor is something which we can easily identify, something which we notice whenever it happens in any context, either written or spoken. In contrast dead metaphor is

'transparent', that is to say we barely notice it; it is the language that passes through us all the time. But living metaphor and dead metaphor are traditional distinctions to which can be added a third: language which is no longer recognized as metaphor at all.

Metaphoricity is conventionally described in terms of wear and tear, of effacement, to exercise the familiar coin metaphor for this operation.³⁴ In fact there are grounds for turning away from this metaphor of effacement and erosion, at least in the context of Lawrence, and for substituting a metaphor of journeying, because what are typically considered to be Lawrence's key words at the heart of his philosophical enterprise, words like 'presence', 'reality' and 'knowledge', are taken on different journeys in the course of his work.³⁵ These journeys are a part of the larger life of language as words are *metaphorized* in the course of history. Metaphor itself has been through many transformations since Aristotle consigned a classical theory of metaphor to writing thereby establishing it as authoritative. I do not suggest that Lawrence has a *theory* of metaphor, but his collapsing of the boundaries between metaphor and 'metaphysic' is the single most important key to an understanding of his language and hence his 'metaphysic'. The fact is that Lawrence's essays on the unconscious spring their first surprise by being so unexpectedly and self-consciously metaphorical. Without adopting Allan Ingram's pejorative sense of the word 'play' it can be argued that what we have in Lawrence is a continual 'play of language', one which displays a kind of *jouissance*, a joy in metaphor.³⁶

These observations on dead and living metaphor may be of use in confronting and dismantling the claim made by Daniel Albright that the essays on the unconscious constitute 'the last, rather shrivelled attempt of an author to imitate a grand romantic system of metaphors.'³⁷ That this simply is not so is evinced in the first instance by what I consider to be a very important essay, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. There are two passages in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* which lie at the very heart of my thesis and which, given that they are not obviously awarded any special status within the text, are easily overlooked. Both, however, potentially transform our understanding of the relation between metaphor and 'metaphysic' in Lawrence and suggest the importance of the language and mode of the essays on the unconscious. The broad theme of the fifth chapter of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, called 'The Lover and the Beloved', is the developing consciousness. Within this context Lawrence writes:

It is not merely a metaphor, to call the cardiac plexus the sun, the Light. It is a metaphor in the first place, because the conscious effluence which proceeds from this first upper centre in the breast goes forth and plays upon its external object, as phosphorescent waves might break upon a ship and reveal its form. The transferring of the objective knowledge to the psyche is almost the same as vision. It is root-vision. It happens before the eyes open. It is the first tremendous mode of *apprehension*, still dark, but moving towards light. It is the eye in the breast. Psychically, it is basic objective apprehension. Dynamically, it is love, devotional, administering love.
(*Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, F&P, p.236)

If it is not merely metaphor to call the cardiac plexus the sun or 'Light' then is it in some way literal, and is Lawrence in some way distinguishing the metaphorical from the literal? The capitalization

of 'Light' suggests that some distinction is being made between them. Also when he is talking about metaphor 'in the first place' can we say whether Lawrence has a logical order or an evolutionary order in mind? It is, by virtue of the questions it raises, a passage which focuses some of the most central issues addressed by Lawrence.

We are being asked in this passage to distinguish between the knowable and the unknowable. In our 'mind's eye' we can *imagine* without any difficulty a phosphorescent wave breaking over a ship and in doing so revealing the ship's form. The wave, by its engulfing movement, reveals the ship as present: without the wave we might have missed it altogether. The ship as an object, that is to say, is knowable -- we can know what a ship is without difficulty. It is knowable in the way one's body is knowable: a tangible material thing, physically present. We feel the presentness of our own body and others'. Regarding Lawrence's meditation on his own hand in 'Why the Novel Matters', referred to earlier, the hand as a part of Lawrence's body was knowable, but that meditation also refers to something happening which is inconceivable, that is to say, the relation between the mind, brain and hand is difficult to *conceive*, although we *know* the hand as a physical thing, and know it to function in conjunction with the brain. 'Knowing' can thus be contrasted with 'conceiving': if the body is knowable, 'life' is inconceivable -- Lawrence's point is that we only know or perceive life in the living. Seeing it in the living we are aware that it is a continually deferred term -- we pass from living thing to living thing recognizing that each is living but with no fixed sense of what life *is*. It evades definition in a way

which 'body', for example, does not. The body is present, it bleeds: 'if I cut it [my hand] it will bleed' ('Why the Novel Matters' in STHOE p.193, my brackets). In another sense, however, the body, like the writing hand, is also inconceivable. Lawrence's oceanic metaphor gives rise to a sense of language as a sea of the conceivable, or knowable, *flowing around* reality which is 'knowable' yet not 'conceivable'. The problem is that people generally take that which is known for reality, an illusion which is created by our habituation of seeing language as the limit. Lawrence's view, on the other hand, is that language gives us a sign or a 'shape', some form, but not the thing that essentially *is* that shape, or form. The important distinction here is between a 'referential' conception of language and the *flow* of a medium *around* an *object*: central to an understanding of Lawrence's idiom, it is a distinction which will emerge elsewhere in the present study.

To call the cardiac plexus the sun is to make a metaphor: the cardiac plexus, or network of nerves around the heart, is not the sun. However, as Lawrence writes a little earlier in the second of the two central passages to be extracted from *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, 'When the ancients located the first seat of consciousness in the heart, they were neither misguided *nor playing with metaphor*' (F&P p.231, my italics). The heart is not merely mechanical, a valve for pumping blood: it is commonplace to feel physical sensations in the region of the heart -- it can be felt to race with excitement, or to pound with fear for example. It is not accidental that it is traditionally associated with the emotions,

specifically love and sexual feelings. Similarly the individual feels fear, panic and misery in the 'pit' of the stomach, in the region of the solar plexus, which is so central to Lawrence. His preoccupation with the physiological dimension of emotional experience arises from its centrality to his 'metaphysic', which is why he constructs what comes to be seen as a peculiarly Lawrencean physiology in the course of the essays on the unconscious. This preoccupation is part of his dismantling, in these essays, of the body/psyche polarity, which I shall examine more fully in my next section. So to call the cardiac plexus, associated with the heart (and traditional seat of the emotions), the sun is not *merely* metaphor -- it is because of the sun and the light (capitalised by Lawrence) that we see at all, and the heart 'sees feelingly'.

Here Lawrence turns his attention to vision. His sense of language, imaged as a phosphorescent wave, has been described as revealing the form of something that is, without language, inexpressible. Here, rather than 'inexpressible' the adjective 'invisible' could be substituted. In the first and longer passage the transference of 'objective knowledge' to the psyche is called 'root-vision'. This is '*almost the same as*' (my italics) ordinary vision but there is an important difference. Lawrence, in agreement with classical thought, writes that 'Vision is perhaps our highest form of *dynamic* upper consciousness', but he adds 'But our deepest lower consciousness is 'blood-consciousness.' (F&P p.173). At the risk of piling metaphor upon metaphor it is sufficient to say here that 'root-vision' is a form of 'blood-consciousness'. 'Root-vision' is a way which Lawrence

has found of describing a special kind of vision, or knowledge, different from mere ocular perception. It is a characteristically Lawrencean compound noun and as such it helps us to focus tightly on the life and function not only of vision but of *metaphor* in his thought. For joining together so graphically with a hyphen two terms from such diverse realms is itself a kind of metaphor and Lawrence is undoubtedly conscious of the status of this and his other constructions, of which 'root-vision' and 'blood-consciousness' are important examples. To be sure there is some difference between these: with a phrase like 'blood-consciousness' one is not always aware of having two unrelated terms yoked together such is the extent that the 'consciousness' part of the construction is subsumed to 'blood'. Hence for a great many people the immediate sense is that this is simply another term relating to Lawrence's emphasis on the blood, an assumption which diminishes the force of the word 'consciousness' as part of the construction. However, these two terms in particular seem to be more closely related than those which comprise 'root-vision' where the difference between the two words seems greater. The semantic difference between the separate elements makes us aware of the unique standing of the construction. 'Root-vision' depends on the meaningful proximity of unlike terms and as such recalls the principle of oxymoron. Significantly, with oxymoron expressivity is derived from the *difference* between the terms involved rather than resemblance. Traditionally, of course, metaphor is a trope of resemblance, but with the emphasis placed too much on resemblance metaphor is in danger of becoming glorified simile. In Lawrence, as will be seen particularly in *Women in Love*, the potent end of metaphor is in fact oxymoron with

its emphasis on semantic difference. I will examine this more fully as the study progresses. Suffice it to say that, as examples like 'blood-consciousness' and 'root-vision' show, an oxymoronic consciousness is at the heart of metaphor in Lawrence, at the heart, that is to say, of a style which is both vital and *subliminal*, subliminal because the oxymoronic implication gets subsumed to metaphor so that its full impact is not conscious. It is a common recognition that experience is already understood through metaphor -- this is how the world is perceived (Lakoff and Johnson deal with this form of conceptualizing). In 'root-vision' and 'blood-consciousness', however, new metaphors are being coined for the 'old' familiar experiences which ordinary language generally bypasses, or conceptualizes.

The attention which he pays to sight, and the way in which vision is addressed in his work, highlights Lawrence's awareness of a philosophical tradition with its roots in Platonic thought. He shares the historical moment with Heidegger who writes in *Being and Time* about the primacy of sight as a sense in the Western philosophical tradition. But, as in Lawrence, his recognition of the origins of an idea involves a critique of it. Heidegger labours to articulate what the passages from *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* reveal Lawrence intuitively knows and metaphorically, poetically, expresses. This passage from *Being and Time* could serve as Heidegger's conceptualizing definition of Lawrence's understanding:

'Seeing' does not mean just perceiving with the bodily eyes, but neither does it mean pure non-sensory awareness of something present-at-hand in its presence-at-hand. In giving an existential signification to "sight", we have merely drawn upon the peculiar feature of seeing, that it lets

entities which are accessible to it be encountered unconcealedly in themselves. ³⁸

The everyday tendency, he argues, is only to see, or to apprehend, things which are present as such. This everyday tendency represents a desire to see what is new, therefore it runs ahead to seek newness, but this is a desire which is not fulfilled because others have already been there. The philosophical tendency, in contrast, attends to the possibility of this desire because it wants to see *the truth*: it wants to have seen something new, not yet 'seen', that is to say, not yet known or apprehended. This is a version of the Lawrencean preoccupation and is expressed by the 'phosphorescent wave' metaphor. The emphasis which Heidegger places on the eye and on the sense of sight in his writing is bound up with his thought on 'otherness' (as in the debate on animality, and the animal as Other, and whether or not the human being has access to this 'otherness'), and ultimately with his conception of Being. Whilst these questions are meaningful in relation to Lawrence I propose to concentrate here on the question of vision as a form of knowing in his work, in the context of the insights offered by the essays on the unconscious, but informed by Heideggerian perceptions on the 'eye'.

In the mature novels Lawrence makes dramatic use of his sense that there are different kinds of vision. In fact 'seeing' is a recurrent theme in his fiction. When Tom Brangwen first sees Lydia Lensky, seeing her from different distances means he experiences her differently. Espying her from a long way away he is almost indifferent, 'he saw a woman approaching. But he was thinking of the

horse.' (R p.29). As she passes, 'unseeing', his vision of her changes: 'He saw her face clearly, as if by a light in the air. He saw her face so distinctly, that he ceased to coil on himself, and was suspended. / "That's her," he said involuntarily.' (R p.29). Until his proposal of marriage Brangwen sees her on occasions from different distances: from far off, at a relative closeness in the church, in the farm kitchen, with Anna on visits to the farm and 'Gradually, even without seeing her, he came to know her.' (R p.39). This 'knowing' is 'root-vision'. In the baby, about which Lawrence writes so much, the capacity to know like this characterizes its specialness. The baby 'knows' things at a very deep level and certainly prior to speech. Such knowledge is instinctive rather than reasoned. In *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* Lawrence describes the baby's 'pre-visual discerning ... pre-visual apprehension' (F&P p.238, my italics).

On the evening of his proposal Brangwen finds Lydia and the baby Anna 'framed' for him in the vicarage window. He sees a vision which, although he does not formulate it in these terms, is Rembrandtesque in its stillness and in the play of light on the child's face.:

The fair head with its wild, fierce hair was drooping towards the fire-warmth, which reflected on the bright cheeks and clear skin of the child, who seemed to be musing, almost like a grown-up person. The mother's face was dark and still, and he saw, with a pang, that she was away back in the life that had been. The child's hair gleamed like spun glass, her face was illuminated till it seemed like wax lit up from the inside.
(*The Rainbow*, p.42)

This 'Dutch' stillness is not a visual style which characterizes the novel as a whole. One critic has assessed its significance as the

first of five iconographical moments in the novel which arrest the reader's attention and which, when considered in relation to each other, demonstrate the novel's changing, or accelerating, rhythm. He refers to this scene as the novel's 'first icon' which 'in itself and in its social and cultural implications, represents virtually a complete stasis'.³⁹ This stasis emphasizes the scene's presentness to Tom, the onlooker. Anna, framed in this way, and in contrast to the external turmoil which is seen as representing Tom's state of consciousness, represents the 'stabilising relationship' of the marriage and in Tom's attraction we witness the inclination of the (early) Brangwens 'to refer and assign to woman' (Alldritt, p.134).⁴⁰ Whilst the configuration of mother-and-child is retained from a long tradition Lawrence is also working against its conventional significance. Tom's gaze is not devotional. Neither is he looking at a painting but at a 'real' social grouping. In this Lawrence may well be anticipating Will Brangwen's dependence on the visual arts as a means of achieving intensity of feeling and will therefore be comparing Will negatively to Tom's propensity to attend to presence. The question is to what extent this vision is a 'medium' or means to a dimension of feeling which is otherwise inaccessible to the character. Describing Will Brangwen's experience Alldritt rightly says: 'art for Will Brangwen is not a means for better understanding or appreciating reality but rather a means of experiencing the heightened consciousness that life does not ordinarily allow' (Alldritt, p.86). For Tom Brangwen, however, the vision through the window is a sign that his reality will change. His world will shrink to encompass the lives, and life, represented within the frame which is not, however,

to be understood in terms of either a sentimental 'ideal' or a narrowly reductive domestic routine. On the contrary, Tom has an interactive *parergonal* relation to the framed 'picture'. He is not unproblematically 'outside' it. In the act of looking he is also participating in it, unconsciously creating the life it represents. Consequently he is both outside it *and* a part of it. As I will indicate more fully in a later chapter, it is a relation which the reader (never separate from language) has with Lawrence's texts: the reader, like Tom Brangwen here, reads *parergonally*.

A second passage shows Lydia's significance not as a madonna figure but as a 'presence', a word which occurs in the description and which asserts the central problem of the difference between the 'knowable' and the 'conceivable'. Whatever the vision through the window might suggest, even in terms of visual cliché, Lydia is fundamentally and always mysterious to Tom quite apart from the cultural and social differences between them:

She turned into the kitchen, startled out of herself by this invasion from the night. He took off his hat, and came towards her. Then he stood in the light, in his black clothes and his black stock, hat in one hand and yellow flowers in the other. She stood away, at his mercy, snatched out of herself. She did not *know* him, only she knew he was a man come for her. She could only see the dark-clad man's figure standing there upon her, and the gripped fist of flowers. She could not see the face and the living eyes.'

He was watching her, without *knowing* her, only aware underneath of her *presence*.

(*The Rainbow*, p. 43, emphases added)

The stillness in which both mother and child were unconscious of Brangwen observing them has been dispersed by the emotions caused by

his 'presence'. In the last sentence Brangwen's vision of Lydia has altered by virtue of proximity and a tacit commitment to 'know' her. Whilst both these scenes have visual properties, the quality of each vision is different. The neatly framed Dutch painting effect has been replaced by a more expressionistic way of seeing, and once again the metaphor of the frame is pertinent. In the first passage the frame was literal, provided by the window. Its more literal function was to single out and isolate the object. In the second passage the featureless figure of Tom is 'framed' by the light which minutes before had an illuminating function. But on the whole in this passage the 'frame' has dissolved and the essential relationship has been problematized beyond the simple pictorial configuration. In the plays, where the only language is dialogue, it is possible to communicate these essential relationships visually (the openings of *The Daughter-in-Law* and *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd*, for instance, do so very effectively), but in these novels the metalanguage bears the weight of the 'metaphysic'.

In this section I have concentrated on what I call Lawrence's poetics of presence, and proposed the essays on the unconscious as a radical instance of Lawrence thinking metaphorically. Whilst the focus is on his linguistic configurations Lawrence's preoccupation can never be simply with language, because language is always already busy in the event of saying or describing something other. Consequently, it is impossible (or at least inappropriate) to isolate language in Lawrence without also addressing 'metaphysic' and perennial themes like vision, knowledge and presence, and their interaction in his thought. In my

next section I attend further to Lawrence's sense of 'bodily' seeing, that is to say, of the whole body being implicated in the act of seeing, feeling and knowing. The focus is on what becomes in Lawrence a lengthy meditation on the *knowable* and, conversely, the *inconceivable* dimensions of physical existence. In debating the interaction between these two 'felt' domains, Lawrence's highly metaphorical language becomes for the reader the 'phosphorescent wave'.

2.4 Dismantling the body/psyche polarity

The word 'hysteria' entered the language at an early stage to describe the culpable womb. When King Lear, furious at the implicit insult directed at him in Cornwall's action of putting Kent in the stocks, declares

O! how this mother swells up toward my heart;
Hysterica passio! down, thou climbing sorrow!
 Thy element's below.
 (*King Lear*, II. iv. 54-6)

he is trying to repress the feminine in himself, the chaos, madness and abnormality that *hysterica* was until relatively recently perceived as signifying. This attitude persisted largely until Freud rescued psychic phenomena from purely physical explanations. Without taking retrograde steps, Lawrence is implicating the psyche *and* the body in his representation of emotional experience and human consciousness. The planes, plexuses and centres of feeling initially set out in

Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious are ambivalently present in the body, and this is very much the point. Lawrence's own grounding of the instinctual life in the configuration of planes, plexuses and ganglia -- the upper and lower centres of psychic activity -- insists on being taken both literally and metaphorically. The 'biology' is an elaborate metaphor gradually unfolding. Although we are asked to treat it literally, as we now expect, it ultimately works as a 'metaphor'. Crucially, Lawrence's insistence on the literal *dissolves* the very distinction on which it rests. The 'solar' plexus, for instance, exists and gets its name from its resemblance to the sun inasmuch as it is a structure of nerves and ganglia radiating from a central network of nerves, but as a metaphor it has a special status of which Lawrence is particularly conscious.

In his introduction to volume four of the *Standard Edition* James Strachey briefly summarizes Freud's early, largely speculative, theoretical writing on neuro-physiology and outlines what he calls 'the anatomical doctrine of the neurone' (SE, IV, xvii) in Freud's 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' (1895). This is principally interesting with regard to Lawrence only inasmuch as a single cell is identified as 'the functional unit of the central nervous system' (SE, IV, xvii). Lawrence derives the organization of his 'sympathetic' and 'voluntary' centres from the principle of cell-division. Of interest is the apparent co-incidence of certain fundamental ideas. Lawrence describes concepts which have something in common with excitation and cathexis although these are not named as such, and the exchange of psychic energy between centres in Lawrence's scheme very roughly

corresponds to Freud's notion of neurones being subject to cathexis and the resulting nervous excitation.⁴¹ However, Lawrence's interest is not primarily in the biology of feeling but in pre-conceptual modes of understanding.

In the first instance Lawrence is not working without a precedent. Freud's teacher Brücke, for example, was trained in physiology. It is commonly known that Freud's early interests included neuro-physiology and he was concerned early on that psychology should be governed by physical principles. But, whatever the origins of Lawrence's proposition,⁴² with its decidedly neuro-physiological basis, it becomes pointedly anti-Freudian given the direction of Freud's thought after *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Not, of course, a 'Freudian', Lawrence is focused enough discursively to disagree with Freud, even given that Freud is largely unnamed throughout these essays.

Far from being anachronistic and eccentric Lawrence's 'physiology' as a stage in his metaphorical thought can be seen as a form that has its own truth and discipline. In *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* he refers to the 'great sympathetic centre of the breast' as the '*heart's mind*' (F&P p.230, my italics) and to the solar plexus as 'the active human *first-mind*' (F&P p.225, my italics). He talks of a knowledge metaphorically called 'the treasure of the heart' (F&P p.231). This knowledge is formulated as 'objective knowledge, *sightless, unspeakably direct*' (F&P p.231, my italics). These are descriptions which emphasize the non-verbal nature of knowing. As we shall see,

they also substantiate Lawrence's sense, which I outlined in my last section, of there being different kinds of vision.

In *Lady Chatterley's Lover* one of Lawrence's themes is the difference between 'mechanical' vision and vision through desire. Seeing Mellors at his ablutions Connie's response is ambivalent as 'shock' turns into a 'visionary experience':

In spite of herself she had had a shock. After all, merely a man washing himself; commonplace enough, Heaven knows!

Yet in some curious way it was a visionary experience: *it had hit her in the middle of the body.*

(*Lady Chatterley's Lover*, p.61, my italics)

The point is made unequivocally a few lines later: 'Connie had received the shock of vision in her womb, and she knew it; it lay inside her. But with her mind she was inclined to ridicule.' (LCL p.61). The birth metaphor looks ahead to the conception of their child and in that sense is perfectly consistent with the events and the relationship that will develop. However, there is also an important philosophical point being made about the differing kinds of vision here represented. Seeing is returned, in this brief passage, to the physical centre of the human being, not to the eye as the 'natural' organ of sight, but to the body and in particular the womb. In the discursive essays, notably the essays on the unconscious, the breast is more usually given this value. In pinpointing the womb Lawrence may be feeling towards a conception of the woman as Other, that is to say, formulating the 'otherness' of one human being to another in terms of a gendered 'seeing'. Importantly, the character is not simply gazing, but is 'seeing' with her whole body. The common view is that

subjectivity lies behind the eyes, but here it is not only Connie's eyes which do the seeing, but the whole body of the woman.

The breast and the mind, solar plexus and cardiac plexus, these rather than simply the eye are posited by Lawrence as the physical centres of knowing and vision. In *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, looking ahead to the key passage from 'The Lover and the Beloved' discussed earlier, he writes:

The breasts themselves are as two eyes. We do not know how much the nipples of the breast, both in man and woman, serve primarily as poles of vital *conscious* effluence and connection. We do not know how the nipples of the breast are as fountains leaping into the universe, or as little lamps irradiating the contiguous world, to the soul in quest.
(*Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, F&P, p.231)

This breast/eye metaphor encapsulates the visual theme which is at the centre of Lawrence's personal philosophy. It recurs in *The First Lady Chatterley*. Connie veils her face, not her eyes, and looks at herself naked in a mirror:

Her breasts were also eyes, and her navel was sad, closed, waiting lips. It all spoke in another, silent language, without the cheapness of words.
(*The First Lady Chatterley*, p.15)

Lawrence omits this idea of the body as a face in the next two versions of the novel but this does not lessen the significance of the perceived similarity between the eye and the nipple as sentient organs, and as sentient in the same way. The nipple is posited as a primal, or primordial, eye. There is a mode of seeing, argues Lawrence, 'before the eyes open' (F&P p.236). The metaphor recalls the

observations of anthropologist and philosopher Susanne Langer who has considered the development of the eye as, in its first stages, a purely sentient organ reaching out to something external. Her view is that 'The recognition of an image as something connected with the external world is intuitive, as the response to external things in direct visual perception, which all seeing animals exhibit, is instinctive.'⁴³ In the same discussion the quality of 'openness to influence' describes the process of external stimuli, like a familiar smell, evoking an image or a (visual) memory in the subject. Image making in this sense is free from its initial association or attachment to a percept. If the eye, in the first place, does indeed reach out to something external then it is like the nipple which can also be said to do so under some sensory stimulus.

It is not, therefore, a perversity, or a far-fetched metaphor, in Lawrence to insist on the similarity between the eye and nipple. Both are organs which are integrated into the organism (the human being) which has a unique capacity to see/know/feel. And it could be argued further that these organs are present in the human being *because* the human being possesses this faculty. Do we see/feel because we possess these organs, or do we possess these organs because we can see/feel?⁴⁴ Lawrence's recognition, like Heidegger's, is that the sense-organs themselves do not perceive, but that perception is *through* them (and for Lawrence from the breast). In his quite extensive description of sight in 'The Five Senses' (*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, chapter 5), the phrase 'I go forth' (in the act of seeing) occurs several times. This going forth to meet something, a reaching out for something, is

'from the centre of the glad breast, through the eyes.' (F&P p.63). Conflating the eye and the breast, here the eyes (and nipples) are clearly channels or instruments. This is the force of the passage quoted where Lawrence talks of the breasts as eyes. Interestingly, he says we 'do not know' how they function but we have a *sense* of them as 'gates' or more aptly 'lamps' shining from the soul into the external world. He is also concerned with the fact that vision and feeling both, like consciousness, come into being at some point. Identifying the moment at which they come into being is not in itself important, but the fact that vision and feeling have a common origin is part of Lawrence's point.

Langer describes the eye as an organ, or *organon*, as an instrument for seeing: 'The eye is the end organ of the visual apparatus; what goes on behind the retina, and especially, perhaps, beyond the chiasma, is the rest of our seeing, with all its reverberations and complications and their astounding effects.' (Langer, pp.45-6). Rather than interpreting biology in a philosophical way, and entering the debate about the value of 'seeing' in our culture as a metaphor for 'knowing', which is where Lawrence's interest lies, Langer is bound, as I have suggested, by certain biological imperatives. In contrast, when Lawrence discusses the eye in 'The Five Senses' he continues to dwell metaphorically on the concept 'vision', returning to the position taken up in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* represented by the key passages discussed in my last section. The now familiar thesis is that 'the root of conscious vision [not literal vision] is almost entirely in the *breast*' (F&P p.63, my italics and brackets). Even

cognition in Lawrence is 'thought' metaphorically: Noah's use of the dove to find land as the flood-waters draw back from the earth becomes a metaphor for the cognitive aspect of sight as knowing, or as finding something out that was previously concealed: 'The eyes are the third great gateway of the psyche. Here the soul goes in and out of the body, as a bird flying forth and coming home.' (F&P p.63). In our culture the bird which is sent out and returns home represents the eyes of Noah. The bird goes forth, and is the source of knowledge. The very metaphoricity of this as a description of perception is significant.

The word 'sensual' is also one which is subject to different semantic pressures in this text. Talking of our faulty human vision Lawrence argues that 'sight is the least sensual of all the senses' (F&P p.65). This is because, in our cerebral, inquisitive mode 'we strain ourselves to see, see, see -- everything, everything through the eye, in one mode of objective curiosity.' (F&P p.65). This describes the everyday tendency of the human being to see what is new, when sight runs ahead merely to apprehend what is external. Yet Lawrence also argues that 'The eyes have, however, their sensual root as well. But this is hard to transfer into language, as all *our* vision, our modern Northern vision, is in the upper mode of actual seeing.' (F&P p.64). Here the word 'sensual' means something more than the sense of sight as the faculty of perception. It refers to the sensation in the breast (or womb) which is not separable from a 'knowing' which is non-verbal, being 'hard to transfer into language'. The whole body, not just the eye, 'sees'. It is quite clear, then,

that in Lawrence 'seeing' and 'see' are two different things, an insight which resonates with Heideggerean significance, which is my next point.

In the course of his discussion Lawrence, like Heidegger, finds himself confronting the animal, and, in Lawrence's now outdated parlance, the 'savage'. Heidegger confronts animality, or the animal as Other and different from human beings, by focusing on the eye and questioning the assumption that the organ is merely an instrument. His argument that the animal cannot 'see' as we can would have interested Lawrence who effectively pursues a related idea, although Heidegger argues that 'you' the subject, rather than the 'eye', does the seeing whereas Lawrence re-states it in *bodily* terms. Heidegger makes some problematic assumptions with some profound ethical implications, but the important philosophical question is nevertheless one which also preoccupies Lawrence. Heidegger's project is an analysis of animality. His thesis presupposes that this question, the question of the animal's essence, is valid, but his analysis is, as he admits, incomplete. The role of vision in his analysis is, however, central as Heidegger finds himself forced to ask whether human seeing and animal seeing are identical although humans and animals possess eyes with a related anatomical structure.⁴⁶ Such biologism is, I would suggest, inadequate. To 'see', meaning to know what is new, or to know afresh -- that is, to have knowledge which is in Lawrence's words 'sightless, unspeakably direct' -- is posited by Heidegger as a purely human capacity.

Lawrence has in effect internalized the thesis that Heidegger was later to articulate, that the animal is poorer in world than the human being because it does not have the same faculty of gaining access to whatever is available to it.⁴⁶ However, with his gaze still fixed on the question of vision, Lawrence, who hierarchizes more than Heidegger, turns this thesis around by means of his negative interpretation of the human being's purely, or merely, 'objective curiosity' (in an 'advanced' culture). Talking of the 'savage' Lawrence states that 'What we call vision, that he has not.' (F&P p.64), with the implication that the 'savage' possesses a mode of seeing which goes beyond mere circumspection, and is of course different: the 'savage' possesses 'the eye which is not wide open to study, to *learn*, but which powerfully, proudly or cautiously glances, and knows the terror or the pure desirability of *strangeness* in the object it beholds.' (F&P p.64). By extension, argues Lawrence, although this would not be Heidegger's view, this is also true of the animal, fundamentally unlimited by the singular mode of 'objective curiosity'. In distinguishing between the 'savage' and the modern human being Lawrence is asking us to understand world-forming as itself a process characterized by difference. It is a recognition which underpins his thesis on the eye and vision. Because the 'savage' and the 'advanced' individual mean something different by sight, and 'see' differently, each forms and experiences world differently. Vision is not, therefore, simply seeing. Lawrence has already written about 'the ancients' locating consciousness in the heart, and has himself found a way of expressing and describing 'root-vision'.

Regarding Lawrence's formulation of the vision of the 'savage', is knowing the terror or desirability of the *strangeness* of a beheld object the same as curiosity? The word 'curiosity' is awarded a positive meaning in Lawrence when it describes the gaze of the cow, for instance, as different from that of the human being. Lawrence's argument recalls the cattle staring at Gudrun dancing in *Women in Love*: 'The eye of the cow is soft, velvety, receptive. She stands and gazes with the strangest intent curiosity. She goes forth from herself in wonder.' (F&P p.64).⁴⁷ Lawrence seems to be saying that the curiosity of the human being is practical and circumspect, and therefore limited, even whilst the human being's world is less circumscribed than that of the animal. To Lawrence the 'intent curiosity' of the cow is freer and constitutes a different kind of *being present* from that experienced by the 'civilized' human. This underlines the ontological force of Lawrence's conception of the animal as Other (a question addressed in his poetry). Despite appearances, the animal is not Other in simple terms (that is to say, it is not an 'otherness' to which we easily have access). This is because our inevitable tendency to anthropomorphize makes gaining access to the animal's difference impossible. Additionally, when it comes to the particular, each animal embodies its own special and specific 'otherness': the horse differs from the cow, both differ from the bull and so on, but this difference is posited by Lawrence as a difference in the way each sees/knows (F&P pp.64-5), that is, the way each has access to world. The 'sensitive' animals in *Women in Love* embody this positive 'otherness' in contrast to many of the human

beings who, we are asked to assume, are de-sensitized and de-sensualized by their disintegrating culture.

By the same token the 'primitive' and 'sensual' carving in the novel which fixes the gaze of Birkin and, against his will, Gerald Crich, embodies the 'keen quick vision' of the 'savage'. Furthermore, the introduction of these pieces of sculpture and the considerable attention paid to them in the narrative raises the possibility of an additional category of 'seeing': the outward image of the work of art must be 'sighted' in advance, in the soul Lawrence might say, by the craftsman/artist before the product is made. This is a seeing which is not bound to sense-perception: the object cannot be perceived before it is made, but it is imaged (perhaps as a feeling, an impression, a hunch) in the mind of the maker before it has substance. The work of art, therefore, does not have its origins in the realm of the sensible (except that its medium exists as substance): it is not bound to sense-perception. It has an *a priori* 'existence'. It is this existence which Lawrence refers to when, discussing the dependency of art on a 'metaphysic' in the Foreword to *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, as quoted earlier, he talks of the 'vision' which exists 'first as such'.

This emphasis on the metaphor of vision in Lawrence brings the importance placed on presence into clearer focus than before. The Greeks -- and Lawrence's thought is partly a continuation and partly a critique of the traditional debate on the sight metaphor -- understood being, or existence, as presence, that is to say, as something which is *in sight*. Lawrence says 'when I go forth in the wonder of vision to

dwell upon the beloved, or upon the wonder of the world, I go from the centre of the glad breast, through the eyes, and who will may look into the full soft darkness of me, rich with my undiscovered *presence*.' (F&P p.63, my italics). This is in part an articulation of the middle way which Lawrence plots through the body/psyche polarity which in his view limits modern understanding, forcing it into the isolated and circumscribed realms of psychology, biology, philosophy and other singular domains. We cannot say in Lawrence what is purely physical and what is purely unconscious because these extremes are interrelated and partly dissolved in his language and 'metaphysic'. The very interconnectedness of the physical and non-physical dimensions of human existence is articulated by, and in, the radical metaphoricity of these essays.

The discussion of the poverty of human vision, and the inability of the modern human being to penetrate his/her world, is supplemented by other observations on bodily presence and the human being. In the course of the essays on the unconscious Lawrence writes a great deal, for instance, about physical gesture. As the baby strives for its own singularity away from the mother Lawrence describes its physical movements in the act of what Julia Kristeva calls 'abjection', her word for the symbolic rupture of the infant from the mother:⁴⁸ 'The child is screaming itself rid of the old womb, kicking itself into a blind paroxysm into freedom, into separate, negative independence.' (F&P p.222). Having achieved a degree of singularity the baby enters a new stage: 'The warm rosy abdomen, tender with chuckling unison, and the little back strengthening itself. The child kicks away, into

independence. It stiffens its spine in the strength of its own private and separate, inviolable existence.' (F&P p.223).

The references to kicking recall Gerald Crich in 'Diver' (*Women in Love*, chapter IV) kicking against the water, asserting his own singularity. This sense of a vital connection between the individual's physical bearing and emotional life is a theme to which Lawrence returns in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*: 'Above all things encourage a straight backbone and proud shoulders. Above all things despise a slovenly movement, an ugly bearing and displeasing manner.' (F&P p.79). The baby's back, he notes in the first essay, 'has an amazing power once it stiffens itself.' (F&P p.223). A derangement of the internal energies, a starving of the emotions or any emotional disorder results in physical weakness: 'How weary in the back is the nursing mother whose great centre of repudiation is suppressed or weak; how a child droops if only the sympathetic unison is established.' (F&P p.224). A strong back is a sign of the perfect correspondence between self and world according to the terms of Lawrence's vitalistic philosophy.⁴⁹

In *Aaron's Rod*, contemporaneous with *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, psycho-physical explanations for emotional disturbance are also in evidence. Asking how we know of the importance of the solar plexus in this context Lawrence replies 'We feel it, as we feel hunger or love or hate.' (F&P p.219). This recalls Jim Bricknell in 'A Punch in the Wind' (*Aaron's Rod*, chapter VIII). Bricknell is subject to an insatiable hunger and, in response to Lilly's question as to why he eats so much bread, replies that it 'gives the stomach something to

work at, and prevents it grinding on the nerves.' (AR p.77). Unable to feel at the place which Lawrence identifies as the primal and primary centre of consciousness Bricknell tells Lilly 'I'm losing life if I don't [eat]. I tell you I'm losing life. Let me put something inside me.' (AR p.77, my brackets). Unable to love he crams food into his stomach as a substitute, in order to feel some sensation in the region of his solar plexus. Starved of the right kind of feeling he declares that,

"I shall die. I only live when I can fall in love. Otherwise I'm dying by inches. Why, man, you don't know what it was like. I used to get the most grand feelings -- like a great rush of force, or light -- a great rush -- right here, as I've said, at the solar plexus. And it would come any time -- any where -- no matter where I was. And then I was all right."

(*Aaron's Rod*, p.80)

Like Lawrence in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, Bricknell is not merely making a metaphor. The 'light' is not literal, of course, but the force or feeling, the sensation, is real enough. His experience connects the physical with the emotional and unconscious life of the individual (in quite a crude way), distinct from the mechanical aspects of sex. It is Lilly who further recalls the terms of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* with his suggestion to Bricknell that an improvement in his posture might dispel the arrest in feeling which he experiences. 'Body language' is not a phrase used by Lawrence but both 'body' and 'language' are important and related concepts in his mature work. Bricknell's 'body language' communicates an arrest in some 'vital' centre. Lilly says, '"Then you should stiffen your backbone. Its your backbone that matters."' (AR p.81). Finding

Bricknell impossible to walk with -- 'Jim staggered and stumbled like a drunken man: or worse, like a man with locomotor ataxia: as if he had no power in his lower limbs.' (AR p.81) -- Lilly's words eventually engender the violent response which gives the chapter its name. He has told Bricknell that it is '"A maudlin crying to be loved, which makes your knees all go rickety." ... "you stagger and stumble down a road, out of sheer sloppy relaxation of your will"' (AR p.82). In Bricknell Lawrence dramatizes that part of his 'metaphysic' which stresses the essential relation between the body and the mind.

If Darwin and Freud, in identifying love and hunger as primal instincts, shifted the nineteenth-century perspective away from metaphysics to biology, in the character of Bricknell Lawrence implicates love and hunger in the context of a very different 'metaphysic'. In Anne Fernihough's view 'Modernism' in general constitutes an attempt to heal the mind/body division.⁵⁰ Even if this is in general true, it is a perspective which threatens to smooth over the issue of Lawrence's particular importance in offering his own critique of the separation of the psychic and the physical in modern thought. It also understates the importance of Lawrence's unique thinking on the unconscious, in line with contemporary views but also distinct from them, and in particular the sense in his essays of the inseparability of language and the unconscious. Lawrence's thought is not, as Fernihough seems to suggest, unproblematically a response to Freud as a symptom of a society which polarizes mind and body, or body and psyche, and more needs to be done to further an understanding of Lawrence's own 'metaphysic' which approaches the body/psyche polarity

more critically than the movement loosely referred to as Modernism, anyway a highly diverse phenomenon.

In this discussion I have concentrated on the centrality of vision and on Lawrence's sense that vision is 'effluence' (his word). It is a quality of understanding which flows *through* the eyes rather than *from* them: it is not merely the subjective ego which possesses a faculty for sight, but the whole body which 'sees'. The source of this 'flow' is either the breast or the solar plexus. It is a 'flow' which cuts across and through the conventional division between the body and the psyche (the non-physical body), dissolving the distinctions between them. We possess a language for articulating the biological functions, the psychological faculty and its operations. Lawrence, in these essays, strives to find a way of saying what is not said (and therefore entertained) by such scientific and exclusive discourses. To date, the metaphoricity of the essays on the unconscious has been ignored, and yet in that metaphoricity is grounded Lawrence's sense of the unconscious (how we 'know' and 'see' anything, and how we 'feel') articulated as, in part, a 'bodily' facility in an argument which relieves the body of its duller, more mechanical character. Rather than finding the unconscious structured 'like' a language, Lawrence regards it as dependent on a certain level of metaphoricity for its articulation. So whilst I have here concentrated on sight it has been with metaphor consistently in view. I now propose to move from these observations to another way of 'seeing' or visualizing which is rooted in the unconscious: that is to the domain of dream which can itself only be reported in language and metaphor.

2.5 Dream

Dream is, like language, a radically metaphorical form of expression. I suspect that this is the basis of its interest for Lawrence, and the reason why he devotes a good deal of attention to dreams and dreaming in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. I propose to examine the use in Lawrence of dream and non-dream. The connection between these two domains is provided in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* where Lawrence discusses common dream images. However, these images, the raging horses and the bull for instance, occur very effectively in the fiction not as dreams but as actual phenomena, yet charged with psychic meaning. We have to contrast Lawrence's use of dream in fiction with his use of these powerful symbols. The question which therefore underpins the following argument is why is dream, which is not so effectively used in his fiction, such a flat quality for Lawrence?

The Interpretation of Dreams is Freud's definitive work on the aetiology and nature of dreams as manifestations of the unconscious. Lawrence's most extended response to it occurs in the fourteenth chapter of *Fantasia of the Unconscious* called 'Sleep and Dreams'. Although his resistance to Freudian determinism and aetiology is manifest in that chapter the disagreement with Freud is not, as I have stressed throughout, the primary purpose of the argument. The genuine importance of the chapter on dreams -- although Lawrence analyzes hypothetical rather than actual dreams -- is that, in their

'otherness', dreams provide an occasion for Lawrence to think about metaphor as the expression of what cannot otherwise be said.

Lawrence divides dreams into two main categories. The first of these deals with dreams as the result of somatic stimuli while the other is a uniquely Lawrencean category, that of 'true soul-dreams' (F&P p.166). While he pays more than lip service to Freud's main contention that wish-fulfilment is the origin of dreams, Lawrence lends more support to the argument that dreams are chiefly the result of somatic stimuli. Underpinning the disagreement with Freud is Lawrence's rejection of the Freudian unconscious in favour of the body itself, and his own biology of feeling. To emphasize somatic sources for dreams is to reject the Freudian conception:

The image of falling, of flying, of trying to run and not being able to lift the feet, of having to creep through terribly small passages, these are direct transcripts from the physical phenomena of circulation and digestion. It is the directly transcribed image of the heart which, impeded in its action by the gases of indigestion, is switched out of its established circuit of earth-polarity, and is as if suspended over a void, or plunging into a void: step by step, falling downstairs, maybe, according to the strangulation of the heart-beats. The same paralytic inability to lift the feet when one needs to run, in a dream, comes directly from the same impeded action of the heart, which is thrown off its balance by some material obstruction. Now the heart swings left and right in the pure circuit of the earth's polarity. Hinder this swing, force the heart over to the left, by inflation of gas from the stomach or by dead pressure upon the blood and nerves from any obstruction, and you get the sensation of being unable to lift the feet from earth: a gasping sensation.
(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, pp.165-6)

Here physical sensations engender a response which is emotional. Lawrence's is clearly not a scientific account: internal organic

stimuli are important inasmuch as they effect the *heart*, but Lawrence has no intention of extending his discussion to external sensory stimuli, like noise or strong light for example, as prompting dreams. He also ignores internal subjective sensory excitations which might result in hypnagogic visions or hallucinations before the deeper sleep takes over. His interest is in the commerce between body and psyche. 'Most dreams' he argues, 'are stimulated from the blood into the nerves and the nerve-centres. And the heart is the transmission station. For the blood has a unity and a consciousness of its own. It has a deeper, elemental consciousness of the mechanical or material world.' (F&P p.166). Dreams then, are rooted in the blood and 'blood-consciousness' and the heart transmits the signals to the psyche -- 'in sleep the transfer is made through the dream-images which are mechanical phenomena like mirages.' (F&P p.166).

Lawrence's two categories are dreams which affect the soul and dreams which do not. 'Soul dreams' are mechanical up to a point, as those already described; connected to the emotions but not a cipher for them as Freud suggests. Characteristically, Lawrence describes dreams as the product of the exchange and resistance between the centres of feeling in the individual, and the tension between automatism and 'the living, wakeful psyche' which is here conflated with 'the living soul' (F&P p.169). Although Freud is not here named, the following is a direct criticism of psychoanalytical practice: 'We have to be very wary of giving way to dreams. It is really a sin against ourselves to prostitute the living spontaneous soul to the tyranny of dreams, or of chance, or fortune or luck, or any of the

processes of the automatic sphere.' (F&P p.170). Lawrence's interest then is not in the return of the repressed as indirectly represented in the dream-event, but in dreaming as another aspect of vision. To dream is in part to 'em-present' something.

The following passage offers Lawrence's account of the aetiology of dreams:

As we sleep the current sweeps its own way through us, as the streets of the city are swept and flushed at night. It sweeps through our nerves and our blood, sweeping away the ash of our day's spent consciousness towards one form or other of excretion. This earth-current actively sweeping through us is really the death-activity busy in the service of life. It behoves us to know nothing of it. And as it sweeps it stimulates in the primary centres of consciousness vibrations which flash images upon the mind. Usually, in deep sleep, these images pass unrecorded; but as we pass towards the twilight of dawn and wakefulness, we begin to retain some impression, some record of dream-images.
(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, p.163)

In this description dreams are the product of a purging activity which is essential to mental and physical health. His principal interest is not, like Freud's, in the dreaming but in the sleep as his chapter heading testifies. This passage, in keeping with the whole, is highly metaphorical, reminiscent of the novels rather than a discursive essay. Street sweeping as a metaphor for mental and physical purgation predominates here, but the language is also that of the central water image which I discussed earlier. It reminds us how fundamental the concept of the 'flow' is to Lawrence and how it invests all his thought on the psyche. It is the 'flushing' and 'sweeping' current which results in the visual dimension of sleep. It has already been possible to identify a 'sea' of language in Lawrence flowing around

the object. Here it is a deep-lying metaphor in his description of the activity of sleeping. The street sweeping metaphor continues into the next passage, with the repetition of 'sweeping' and variations of tense as Lawrence finds rhymes and alliterative instances to make this a self-conscious point of style. The deliberate repetition of sweep, swept, sweeping, sweeps, in quite a lengthy passage recalls the style of echo and restatement for which Lawrence was criticized in *The Rainbow* and which he himself identifies in the Foreword to *Women in Love* as 'natural' to the writer, but is it here 'frictional'?

The metaphorical language of the passage communicates the force of real experience. Oxymoronic constructions are very much a part of this consciously metaphorical style: we have the watery 'earth-current' and 'death-activity' which is 'busy in the service of life'. As before, the hyphenated constructions acquire a special significance. Considered separately the words 'earth' and 'current', 'death' and 'activity' have no special or particular charge different from their familiar meaning. Yet the 'earth-current'/'death-activity' sweeping through the body and stimulating 'vibrations which flash images upon the mind' looks back to the phosphorescent wave metaphor of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. The sense is once again of some force (language) illuminating/defining the object: language is a trace, like a clot of light on a radar screen, revealing the presence of something hitherto undetected and not directly 'visible'. The word is not the thing, just as the spot of light is not the thing, but it shows that the thing is present. The hyphens galvanize ordinary words into some special relation because, as Lawrence is aware, language is

ordinarily limited. The hyphens are an attempt to mould ordinary language into new forms which institute a new way of knowing (and, here, a new way of 'representing' the creative unconscious). There is also an effect of reification, in which the words, whilst not being the thing, are seeking to form a 'thing'. The same can be said of dream.

As the passage continues Lawrence, writing about dream, manages a discrete critique of mainstream Modernism about which he is so disparaging in 'The Future of the Novel'. The unselective content of the dream serves implicitly as a model for what is to Lawrence bad fiction:

Usually also the images that are accidentally swept into the mind in sleep are as disconnected and as unmeaning as the pieces of paper which the street-cleaners sweep into a bin from the city gutters at night. We should not think of taking all these papers, piecing them together, and making a marvellous book of them, prophetic of the future and pregnant with the past. We should not do so, although every rag of printed paper swept from the gutter would have some connection with the past day's event. But its significance, the significance of the words printed upon it, is so small that we relegate it into the limbo of the accidental and meaningless. There is no vital connection between the many torn bits of paper -- only an accidental connection. Each bit of paper has reference to some actual event: a bus-ticket, an envelope, a tract, a pastry-shop bag, a newspaper, a handbill. But take them all together, bus-ticket, torn envelope, tract, paper-bag, piece of newspaper, and hand-bill, and they have no individual sequence, they belong more to the mechanical arrangements than to the vital consequence of our existence. And the same with most dreams. They are the heterogeneous odds and ends of images swept together accidentally by the besom of the night-current, and it is beneath our dignity to attach any real importance to them.

(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, pp. 163-4)

This expertly constructed central metaphor also speaks volumes about

Lawrence's suspicions that Freud in particular labours in the gutter of human activity, that his interests are gutter-interests. But the passage is most revealing in the bearing it has on Lawrence's use of dream in his fiction.

In the final chapter of *Aaron's Rod*, called 'Words', a considerable amount of the narrative is given over to Aaron's dream. It is too long to quote in full but a summary of its principal elements is adequate for my purposes. Continuity between diverse scenes is provided by the figure of Aaron, here a split subject. In part the dream foreshadows the words of Lilly to follow, on the self, the 'dream-Aaron' having a 'second self', an 'invisible, *conscious* self' (AR p.287); there being a 'flesh-and-blood Aaron' which is 'palpable and visible' (AR p.187), to which the 'second self' is Other. In the dream Aaron is in a strange country from which he passes into a labyrinthine realm of rooms and corridors populated with tin-miners and their wives. With a dreamer's knowledge Aaron knows that they are to eat a man, realized as 'a man's skin stuffed tight with prepared meat' (AR p.286), whom the dreamer sees receding into the distance, down a dream corridor. Then Aaron is in a boat in a scene which has elements of a classical journey in Hades:

The next thing he could recall was, that he was in a boat. And now he was most definitely two people. His invisible, *conscious* self, what we have called his second self, hovered as it were before the prow of the boat, seeing and knowing, but unseen. His other self, the palpable Aaron, sat as a passenger in the boat, which was being rowed by the unknown people of this underworld. They stood up as they thrust the boat along. Other passengers were in the boat too, women as well, but all of them unknown people, and not noticeable. (*Aaron's Rod*, p.287)

The ambivalence of a dream-ego is communicated using the split self: in a dream the dreamer is both present and not present (because there is in reality no spatial dream-world to inhabit); s/he sees and knows things about the dream and dream-world which are not there in the phenomenal world to see and know. The 'corporeal' Aaron fails to notice his naked elbow being struck hard as the boat passes stakes standing erect in the water. The 'invisible' Aaron wills him to notice, and the boatmen cry warnings in a language which neither Aaron understands. This is the second instance of an incomprehensible language in the dream, the first having been spoken by the people of the room-country. The boat reaches a city, 'A lake-city, like Mexico' (the reference is to Mexico City and looks ahead to *The Plumed Serpent*) where the dream Aaron sees a figure of Astarte. At this point the dreamer wakes up. The major elements are a series of alien locations, unknown languages, a chthonic community, a journey over water to a city, a stuffed but animate man (representing Aaron) to be consumed and a Phoenician fertility goddess, with the split self of Aaron presiding. Whilst Aaron 'hears' language he fails to heed warnings, but feels no physical pain: he is 'unfeeling'.

It is quite unexpected of Lawrence to employ dream and the catalogue of dream motifs in this way given his remarks that dream-images are accidental and 'as unmeaning as the pieces of paper which the street-cleaners sweep into a bin from the city gutters at night.' (F&P p.164). In *Aaron's Rod* he does seem to be 'taking all these papers, piecing them together, and making a marvellous book of them,

prophetic of the future and pregnant with the past.' (F&P p.164). Whatever Lawrence's motives, the dream in *Aaron's Rod* is one of the novel's flaws. Whichever way one looks at it, it is an inadequate 'frame' for the novel's serious concerns. It is neither an insightful commentary on the novel nor an extension of Lawrence's consideration of non-verbal modes of understanding, or metaphor. In my view it is an unwieldy narrative within a narrative. It provides one clear instance of a failed frame and consequently points up the skill of Lawrence's interactiveness (whether with Freud, or the Greeks) elsewhere. As a symptom, Aaron's symptom, it accords with Lawrence's views in 'Sleep and Dreams' that only those dreams which are genuinely rooted in the individual's deepest levels of consciousness are significant. Lawrence asserts that:

Only occasionally they [dreams] matter. And this is only when something *threatens* us from the outer mechanical or accidental *death-world*. When anything threatens us from the world of death, then a dream may become so vivid that it arouses the actual soul. And when a dream is so intense that it arouses the soul -- then we must attend to it.
(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, pp.164-5, my brackets).

Aaron's dream occurs in the night following the destruction of his flute. At the end of 'The Broken Rod' (*Aaron's Rod*, chapter XX) Lawrence describes Aaron as 'quite dumbfounded by the night's event: the loss of his flute. Here was a blow he had not expected. And the loss was for him symbolistic. It chimed with something in his soul: the bomb, the smashed flute, the end.' (AR p.285). In this context it is quite fitting that Aaron dreams although Lawrence never quite succeeds in overcoming the artificiality of the dream within his narrative. It fails to throw events into relief in any significant

sense, existing at the edge of the narrative and separate from it. It also fails to raise questions about the framing function of dreams, and is closer to being a narrative than a representation of a dream. Aaron himself wakes from the dream, tries to assign meaning to the fragments he recalls and, failing, dismisses it in order to assess the new phase of his life into which he has been projected by the loss of the flute. In ordinary language and in dreams the words and dream-images respectively are like shadows cast by the essential thing that needs expressing. There is no lasting sense in Aaron's dream that the images are authentic, although the weakness of the dream in *Aaron's Rod* proves Lawrence's point earlier. Aaron's dream-images are too much of a literalized language under a merely notional heading of dream. There are other instances in Lawrence's fiction where this is the case. Ellen March's dreams in *The Fox*, for example, are actually unnecessary. They are surplus to requirements, an act of crude symbolism because the moment March actually sees the 'fox' she is 'unconscious' and, therefore, does not need to dream. Like Aaron's dream these instances are inauthentic as dream-language: at once bad metaphor and weak frame.

So the dream at the end of *Aaron's Rod* is flat, merely two-dimensional, leaving us to confront a meaningful paradox in Lawrence. When he uses dream, as here, the structure which is meant to be meaningful (the dream) actually loses its force. This is in sharp contrast, however, to those scenes in Lawrence which are charged with meaning and, whilst being in important respects dream-like, are not in fact dreams. Instances include the horses at the end of *The Rainbow*

and the bull scenes in *The Plumed Serpent*, which I shall address shortly. We have to consider why these are effective where the description of a dream is not, or is less so, and the answer would seem to be that, in fact, a dream cannot be written down. What is written down as representing or imitating dream is always already interpreted by the writer. It therefore has no authentic latent content. In the 'dream-like' scenes, however, like the horses in *The Rainbow*, there is an Unconscious genuinely at work which is always slippery, always elusive. This is why critics continually feel the need to interpret such scenes, in effect to fix a meaning, and why they can never genuinely succeed. The horse-scene, for instance, like a real dream, is infinite, that is to say, its possible meanings continually unfold and are, therefore, infinite. A text which purports to contain a dream is not rigorously or critically coming to terms with this infinity, which is why Aaron's 'dream' is 'flat', or two-dimensional. It is not coming to terms with a real dream's radical metaphoricity. Lawrence's failure, in the sequence from *Aaron's Rod*, is that, for once, he does not recognize this. The horse scene in *The Rainbow*, however, is uncanny (*unheimlich*) in the way a real dream is uncanny: a transcription of a 'dream' in a fiction, and Lawrence's descriptions in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* of horses and bulls as dream-motifs, are not.⁵¹

In 'Sleep and Dreams' Lawrence makes reference to a number of these possible dream images or motifs. The figure of the mother is one of these, privileged by Lawrence in his description of her as 'the first great emotional image to be introduced in the psyche. The dream-

process mechanically reproduces its stock image the moment the intense sympathy-emotion is aroused.' (F&P p.168). In Kleinian terms this is the 'good' mother; Lawrence's exclusion of the alternative, the 'bad' mother, is interesting and suggests a degree of resistance persisting even as he re-thought his own relation with his mother. Here, crucially, Lawrence is dealing with symbols and his examples are neither grounded in personal experience nor derived, as far as we can tell, from other people's dreams. I propose in the next few pages to consider some of Lawrence's examples and his explanations. First is the 'dream' of raging horses:

For example, a man has a persistent passionate fear-dream about horses. He suddenly finds himself among great, physical horses, which may suddenly go wild. Their great bodies surge madly round him, they rear above him, threatening to destroy him. At any minute he may be trampled down.

Now a psychoanalyst will probably tell you off-hand that this is a father-complex dream. Certain symbols seem to be put into complex catalogues. But it is all too arbitrary.

Examining the emotional reference we find that the feeling is sensual, there is a great impression of the powerful, almost beautiful physical bodies of the horses, the nearness, the rounded haunches, the rearing. Is the dynamic passion in a horse the danger-passion? It is a great sensual reaction at the sacral ganglion, a reaction of intense, sensual, dominant volition. The horse which rears and kicks and neighs madly acts from the intensely powerful sacral ganglion. But this intense activity from the sacral ganglion is male: the sacral ganglion is at its highest intensity in the male. So that the horse-dream refers to some arrest in the deepest sensual activity in the male. The horse is presented as an object of terror, which means that to the man's automatic dream-soul, which loves automatism, the great sensual male activity is the greatest menace. The automatic pseudo-soul, which has got the sensual nature repressed, would like to keep it repressed. Whereas the greatest desire of the living spontaneous soul is that this very male sensual nature, represented as a menace, shall be actually accomplished in life. The spontaneous self is secretly yearning for the liberation and fulfilment of the deepest and most powerful sensual nature. There may be an element of father-complex. The horse may also refer to the powerful sensual being in the father. The dream may be a

love of the dreamer for the sensual male who is his father.
But it has nothing to do with *incest*. The love is probably a
just love.

(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, pp.170-1)

Lawrence's terms, 'danger-passion', 'automatic dream-soul', 'automatic pseudo-soul' and its Other, the 'living spontaneous soul', invariably demand attention. Once again the implicit challenge to Freud, and in particular the Oedipal drama, is linguistic and involves the conscious setting up of quite different terms. Here the unconscious, or what passes in Lawrence for the unconscious, is 'framed' in a new set of metaphors. Where Freud's terms are derived from commonly understood words, Lawrence has developed in his work justification for terms that are positively idiosyncratic and imaginative, and of course metaphorical. The theme in this description is the tension and interplay of the mechanical and automatic with the living spontaneous self; the interplay of death-modes and life-modes in the individual. Lawrence's certainty as to what the horses signify here, a repressed male sexuality, does not alter the ambiguity of the horses that frighten Ursula towards the end of *The Rainbow*. The real point of interest is that the horses do not appear to Ursula in a dream. As one of the strongest 'animal' scenes in the fiction we know that the horses are charged with psychic meaning but the reader has to labour hard to extract that meaning. This is a good strategy on Lawrence's part: a dream would have the effect of closing off the significant substance from the narrative. Indeed, this is conventionally how dreams function in fiction. In making the horses at the end of *The Rainbow* 'real' their significance is pervasive rather than circumscribed. It is always difficult to say exactly what the horses

signify and this is very much the point. If they appeared in a dream the expectation would be the possibility of extracting and attaching to them a specific meaning. This is why the dream as a narrative strategy appears flat to Lawrence, and why it fails in *Aaron's Rod*.

Lawrence himself falls prey to a reductiveness. His interpretation, in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, of the horses as a *dream-image* (not a symbol in a work of fiction) refers only to a male drive and in particular to an 'arrest in the deepest sensual activity in the male'. In this context the horses in *The Rainbow* could be interpreted as representing an arrested male sensual nature which menaces Ursula who has throughout emphasized her fundamental singularity to the point of crisis in her relationship with Skrebensky. But the finality of such an interpretation is prevented by the ambiguous quality of the experience. We can think of 'St. Mawr' particularly as discussed by David Cavitch. His interpretation accords with Lawrence's statement that 'the great sensual male activity is the greatest menace':

Lou's responses to St. Mawr overtly express her unconscious sexual anxieties, and that is why the horse is like a revelation to her. She lives in the thrall of male aggression -- her aversion to what she believes is real sex is the only explanation of the "spell" of "nonentity" over her life -- and St. Mawr expresses symbolically the intense ambivalence of her fear and her anticipation of violation by a man. The horse is not a figure of simple sexual potency but of dangerously overwrought sexual inhibition.⁵²

Furthermore, Cavitch argues, the sexual fear which is thematized in the story is Lawrence's own, and the conclusion is a lie because Lawrence is battling with his own notion of male power: 'The story is inadequate intellectually to its complex materials, because Lawrence

does not rationally understand what his story reveals.' (Cavitch, p. 163). This last assertion represents an attempt to psychoanalyze Lawrence rather than to 'read' him and consequently the real point is lost. If St. Mawr is a symbol, he works better as a 'real' horse than as a dream element, for instance: the story makes us work at understanding his complex significance. If St. Mawr simply appeared in a dream, like the 'dream' at the conclusion of *Aaron's Rod*, the weak dream-frame would transform him into that literalized language and his force would be lost.

The second dream-image which Lawrence isolates in the essay is that of the bull:

The bull-dream is a curious reversal. In the bull the centres of power are in the breast and the shoulders. The horns of the head are symbols of this vast power in the upper self. The woman's fear of the bull is a great terror of the dynamic *upper* centres in man. The bull's horns, instead of being phallic, represent the enormous potency of the upper centres. A woman whose most positive dynamism is in the breast and shoulders is fascinated by the bull. Her dream-fear of the bull and his horns which may run into her may be reversed to a significance of desire for connection, not from the centres of the lower, sensual self, but from the intense physical centres of the upper body: the phallus polarized from the upper centres, and directed towards the great breast centre of the woman. Her wakeful fear is terror of the great breast-and-shoulder, *upper* rage and power of man, which may pierce her defenceless lower self. The terror and the desire are near together -- and go with an admiration of the slender, abstracted bull loins.' (*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, p. 171)

Characteristically, Lawrence decodes a traditional symbol in his own terms rather than showing any real interest in the dream as dream. The breast of the bull is identified elsewhere in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* as the site of a strength which is not only physical: the

'root' of vision is also located there (F&P pp.64-5). In this passage, as in the former, the decoding operation is underpinned by a highly personal formulation of a masculine principle, a masculine sexuality, and the underlying theme is the relation between 'the woman' and this principle. Here, as in *Aaron's Rod*, Lawrence deals with dreams in an unsatisfactory way. In *Fantasia of the Unconscious* he runs the risk of being too defensive and too dogmatic, and in the fiction the delimitation of dream as something separate and symbolic runs against the grain of the 'metaphysic'. The source of Lawrence's dissatisfaction with dream as a narrative mode arguably rests in its literalness and indeed, in his hands, dream becomes once again too much a literalized language.

Bulls and visions come together in *The Plumed Serpent* but not, and this is very much the point, as dream. Towards the end of the novel Kate Leslie watches a bull and a cow being loaded onto a boat. The men and the animals form a 'silhouette frieze' (PS p.431, my italics) against the background of the water, and the entire scene, seen, has a distinctive visual quality which is summed up in the lines 'It was near, yet seemed strange and remote' (PS p.431) and, later, 'All so still and soft and remote' (PS p.433). Indeed, these sentences, and the whole narrative, impose on the 'real' scene the quality of dream. The loading of the cow and bull onto the boat seems to take place at a remove from the world inhabited by Kate who looks on but is *not*, of course, dreaming. If she were the scene would have to bear an extra and specific significance. As it is, the reader responds to it by recognizing that it is forceful and charged with meaning but without

being directed to regard it as significant in a special way. Compared with the long dream in *Aaron's Rod* this scene is not flat, indeed it is beautifully observed in a way the other cannot be: it is both part of the world occupied by Kate and invested with a specialness which, in part, derives from its being 'real' rather than 'imagined'.

In this episode the narrative requires the reader to participate in Kate's attentiveness in a way that dream would not. The significance, then, is not so much in the event itself as in the quality of attention to the paradoxically near but distant scene. This accords, and contrasts, with the first chapter of the novel where bulls are again associated with the idea of 'spectacle': at the bull-fight a bull, here a pathetic victim, is again at the centre of a vision as something watched. The different responses of the Euro-Americans in the audience point up the difference between seeing as a dispassionate, merely optical, function which deludes the watcher that he is having an authentic experience (the 'frantic effort to see -- just to see' (PS p.28)), and 'seeing' as 'knowing' or more accurately as the 'dark feeling' (PS p.7) which alerts Kate to the fact that she would rather not attend the bull-fight any longer.

Just as in the episode where Tom Brangwen's gaze is focused on the framed 'picture' of Lydia Lensky and the baby Anna, so the scene of the cow and bull being loaded onto the boat has implications for us in the way we read Lawrence. The reading process is never a simple standing back from the language as it might be in a more realistic tradition. Neither is it a conscious engagement with a language which

self-consciously makes the point about the reader participating in a text which resists easy consumption, as *Finnegans Wake* does for example. With Lawrence the level of interaction and creativity is more subtle. The reader is both at a remove from the action, as is Kate in the bull scenes, and busy in the creation of its meaning. Much in Lawrence is both 'strange and remote' and yet 'near'. Surely this is also a quality of 'vision' and dream?

Lawrence's discourse on dreams thus cuts across and into his more profound thought on vision and representation. In the first place dreaming is the result of 'flows' of activity in the body; the 'sweeping' current, the 'earth-current' (F&P p.163) referred to above. Lawrence's refusal to 'attach any real importance' (F&P p.164) to dreams highlights his deep-seated resistance to any tendency, including Freud's, to regard dreams as representation. When, in spite of himself, Lawrence does so, the result is the weak narrative of Aaron's dream. It is unthinkable to Lawrence that the vigorous unconscious, should manifest itself in neat fables. As such they invite a hermeneutic exercise which transforms unconscious production into a regulated and therefore limited structure. Such a transformation is in Lawrence's view a repressive act, placing what Deleuze and Guattari regard as the production of desire in harness. This passage underlines the Deleuzian parallel with Lawrence on this topic. It is argued that in current psychoanalytical practice,

The whole of desiring-*production* is crushed, subjected to the requirements of *representation*, and to the dreary games of what is representative and represented in representation. And there is the essential thing: the reproduction of desire gives way to a simple representation, in the process as well

as theory of the cure. The productive unconscious makes way for an unconscious that knows only how to express itself -- express itself in myth, in tragedy, in dream.

But who says that dream, tragedy, and myth are adequate to the formations of the unconscious, even if the work of transformation is taken into account? ... It is as if Freud had drawn back from this world of wild production and explosive desire, wanting at all costs to restore a little order there, an order made classical owing to the ancient Greek theater. (*Anti-Oedipus*, p.54)

This shows exactly why Lawrence responded aggressively to what he perceived as the banality of his critics (and admirers) reading *Sons and Lovers*, for instance, as an ordered representation of his Oedipal sexuality, and why he felt unjustly 'framed'. The question asked in this passage is implicitly asked by Lawrence in his chapter 'Sleep and Dreams'. His way of resisting the classical or mythic framing of the dynamic unconscious is to contrast Freudian 'dream-meaning' (F&P p.167) with his own economy of 'flows'. His emphasis is on the blood: once again we are in a position to ask how literal Lawrence is being when he explains nightmares by referring to 'an arrest of the mechanical flow of the system' (F&P p.165), an arrest which effects the organs, stimulating dreams. There is a literalness, but there is also an ambivalence, one which Deleuze and Guattari, partly accidentally, help to bring into clearer focus. The 'physical flow' and the 'mechanical flow' (F&P pp.165-6) on which Lawrence concentrates are not merely literal: we have to understand 'the friction of the night-flow' (F&P p.167), for instance, metaphorically before we begin to fathom the complexity of Lawrence's interaction with Freud. This return to metaphor, to language, is in Lawrence a way of confronting the ordered unconscious formulated by Freud in terms of classical myth where Oedipus is the principal term.

2.6 Concluding remarks: language and the unconscious

In my introductory chapter I suggested that *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* constitute, not a theory of the unconscious, but the most extended treatment of Lawrence's recognition of the inextricability and interconnectedness of language and the unconscious. This is not anything that Lawrence states as such, but is a recognition which is rooted in the metaphoricity of the essays. However, it is precisely this metaphoricity which enables Lawrence to 'frame' Freud in the sense of his work 'bracketing' Freudian thought and at the same time interacting dialogically with it. Metaphor is the way Lawrence argues with Freud, and institutes his own sense of the inseparability of language and the unconscious. At the root of this is his rejection of the hegemony of Oedipus in Freudian thought, the better to solve the very real problems which have taken hold at the deepest levels of the human unconscious. I have rehearsed the assumption that where Lawrence resists Freudian perspectives he does so because of a subliminal recognition of his own oedipalization, which he prefers to conceal. However, there is also the sense in his essays that oedipalization is itself a repressive enforcement of the 'Law' over desire. Freud is perhaps the ultimate Father wielding the ultimate Law.

As I have argued, Lawrence's metaphoricity embodies the anti-Oedipal direction of his own understanding. Lawrence 'speaks by virtue of the flows of sexuality and the intensities of the unconscious' (*Anti-Oedipus*, p.115). To say so is implicitly to recognize the

importance of Lawrence's metaphorical language as a 'speaking' which dismantles the Oedipal triangle by embodying the 'flow' of the libido across, through and in spite of the limits of this triangle ('the holy family'). This is not in itself a crude negating of Freudian understanding, but it offers a challenge to the rigidity of Freudian formulations. Freud is not abused here, but productively challenged within his own terms. In their book Deleuze and Guattari return to Lawrence's language, referring appropriately to *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* in particular, in order to articulate this libidinal 'flow' against the enclosing 'triangle'. Psychoanalysis, it is argued, restricts this 'flow' and calls it a cure but,

flows ooze, they traverse the triangle, breaking apart its vertices. The Oedipal wall does not absorb these flows, any more than it could seal off a jar of jam or plug a dike. Against the walls of the triangle, toward the outside, flows exert the irresistible pressure of lava or the invincible oozing of water. ... We are all libidos that are too viscous and too fluid -- and not by preference, but wherever we have been carried by the deterritorialized flows. ... Who does not feel in the flows of his desire both the lava and the water? (*Anti-Oedipus*, p.67).

What Deleuze and Guattari do with this, in terms of extending and developing their thesis of schizophrenization as a more accurate formulation of the human psyche, socially constructed, than Freudian oedipalization, is outside the purview of the present study. Of interest and immediate relevance is the way they resort to a highly metaphorical mode and language in order to gain access to this unconscious and the processes of human desire. Clearly they are working within the domain of psychoanalysis but like Lawrence they view Oedipus as a repressive and obfuscating construct, concealing

rather than explaining the problems of the unconscious. Also like Lawrence, they construct a 'biology of feeling' with their 'desiring-machines' and 'the body without organs' which are, like Lawrence's plexuses and upper and lower centres of consciousness, ambivalently present in the individual. As metaphors these are a way of challenging established perceptions about the organization of the psyche. Inasmuch as this metaphorization is a noticeable strategy, in Deleuze and Guattari as well as in Lawrence, it gives us a newly focused sense of our libidinal and psychic economies: the 'stable ego' is reconstructed as an *anoedipal* self of 'flows' and 'tides'. References to such 'flows' and 'tides' continually recur in Lawrence's writing inseparable from the 'flow' of language: I concentrate on this quality of the language in my chapter on *The Rainbow*, focusing on its 'undulating styles'.

The unconscious which Lawrence apprehends in these essays is not, then, the ordered construct posited by Freud. The mode and language of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* are implicated, as I have argued, in dis-empowering what are viewed as the repressive structures of oedipalization and castration. We are now in a position to recognize the real force of the word 'fantasia' in the title of the longer essay: the language and structure of the essay, as spontaneous as it can reasonably be, is invested with desire, is in itself a 'flow' of language breaking across the more formal limitations which its stated subject, the unconscious, would usually demand. Metaphor and 'metaphysic', Lawrence's personal philosophy, have been shown to coincide radically in these essays. I now propose

to move on to a fictional text in which this kind of co-incidence is also central. In *Women in Love*, as in these essays, the philosophical importance of the novel is grounded not so much in referential statement as in its complex and sophisticated metaphoricity. In this novel metaphor moves significantly away from its purely, or merely, rhetorical function. One of the novel's achievements is the extent to which its specific concerns are embodied in its language, and by the same token it represents Lawrence's alertness to the philosophical qualities of language at large.

NOTES.

Chapter Two. Language and the Unconscious: The Radical Metaphoricity of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*

1. See, for instance, 'David Ellis, 'Lawrence and the Biological Psyche', in *D. H. Lawrence: Centenary Essays*, ed. by Mara Kalnins (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 1986), pp.89-109, and James Cowan, *D. H. Lawrence's American Journey: A Study in Literature and Myth* (London: Case Western Reserve University Press, 1970), pp.15-24. Evelyn Hinz, comparing the style and structure of the two essays, argues for the 'scientific' mode of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* in contrast to the 'archetypal' mode of *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. See Evelyn Hinz, 'The Beginning and the End: D. H. Lawrence's *Psychoanalysis and Fantasia*', *The Dalhousie Review*, 52 (1972), 251-65.
2. See Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. by Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 'Passe Partout', pp.1-13.
3. Frederick Hoffman, *Freudianism and the Literary Mind*, 2nd edn (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1957). Further references to this book are given after quotations in the text.
4. The problems which this presented to the translator of Freud is exemplified by Freud's unease with Strachey's rendering of 'Besetzung' as 'Cathexis'. This was perceived as technical discourse in contrast to the German verb 'besetzen' which is widely used in day-to-day speech. See Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* translated from the German under the General Editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, 24 vols (1966-74), III, 63, n.2. See also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, introduction by Daniel Lagache, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith, *The International Psycho-Analytical Library*, ed. by M. Masud R. Khan (1967, London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1973), pp.62-65. Further references to the *Standard Edition* are given after quotations in the text. Hereafter cited as SE.
5. I am aware of disagreements between Kleinians and Freudians.
6. Murray M. Schwartz, 'D. H. Lawrence and Psychoanalysis: An Introduction', *DHLR*, 10, no.3 (Fall 1977), p.215.
7. Malcolm Bowie, 'A message from Kakanian: Freud, Music, Criticism', in *Modernism and the European Unconscious* ed. by Peter Collier and Judy Davies (Cambridge: Polity Press; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p.15.
8. Malcolm Bowie, *Lacan*, Fontana Modern Masters, ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Fontana, 1991), p.84. This, of course, is never Lawrence's

view: he is never willing to reduce the unconscious to the status of sub-text. While Freud's thought, and Lacan's, has a linguistic character therefore, this in itself does not *necessitate* comparison with Lawrence. If it did the focus would be on the theorizing of metaphor which sustains the work of the analyst, particularly Lacan. In the present context a critique of Lacanian thought is not imperative, although there are of course Lacanian readings of Lawrence and approaches which emphasize similarities between Lawrence's thought and Lacan's. Lacan's theorization of metaphor differs from Freud's metaphorical appropriation of certain terms principally in its insistence on the linguistic/verbal character of the unconscious. Language takes Freud to the psyche, whereas structural linguistics returns Lacan to the unconscious. But Lacan is bound to the vertical axis of metaphor and metonymy which Lawrence never can be; and even if Lacan's metaphorical discourse seems to accommodate the 'flow' of desire, the fundamental terms are Freudian, that is to say, unlike Lawrence, he is taking his cue from a specific psychoanalytical tradition. In arguing that the unconscious is language, quite apart from being structured like one, Lacan's own discourse, which is inflected to make the unconscious available to us, is always principally a technical or theoretical language. It is still, therefore, fundamentally conceptual and in this we can see the important contrast with Lawrence's language in his essays on the unconscious. In short, there is no theoretical language of the unconscious which is not already in itself an artificial construct. It is the rigidity of such constructs which Lawrence implicitly challenges in his 'reading' of Freud: the psyche cannot be represented using metaphors (like Oedipus and Narcissus), or in a self-consciously 'conceited' language.

The Lacanian dimension in Lawrence is a subject for debate. Addressing Lawrence's essays on the unconscious Carol Sklenicka writes in passing that 'The diversity and complexity of thought now surrounding psychoanalytic theory, thanks largely to feminist and Lacanian critiques, makes Lawrence's *theory* more easily countenanced.', *D. H. Lawrence and the Child* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1991), p.164 (my italics). See also Ed. Jewinski, 'The Phallus in D. H. Lawrence and Jacques Lacan', *DHLR*, 21, no.1 (Spring 1989), 7-24.

9. Published for the first time in *DHLR* vol.22, no.1 (spring 1990), pp.111-12. MS held in the D. H. Lawrence Collection, University of Nottingham.

10. In Robert Young, ed., *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* (Boston, London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp.225-43. Further references to this essay are given after quotations in the text.

11. Quoted by Barbara Johnson in 'The Frame of Reference: Poe, Lacan, Derrida' in Robert Young ed., *Untying the Text*, p.235.

12. See Rose Marie Burwell, 'A Checklist of Lawrence's Reading' in *A D. H. Lawrence Handbook*, ed. by Keith Sagar (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), pp.59-125. See also Rose Marie Burwell, 'A

Catalogue of D. H. Lawrence's Reading from Early Childhood', *DHLR*, 3, no.3 (Fall 1970), 'D. H. Lawrence's Reading', 193-330.

13. In 'Poetry of the Present' (Introduction to the American Edition of *New Poems* [1918]) Lawrence writes, in relation to *Look! We Have Come Through!*, 'But is it not better to publish a preface long after the book it belongs to has appeared? For then the reader will have had his fair chance with the book, alone.', *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*, collected and edited with an introduction and notes by Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), p.186. The relation of the essays on the unconscious to *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow*, but particularly the former, could be viewed in this light, although by the same token their value is considerably more than an assessment of the themes and 'metaphysic' of the novels. *The Complete Poems* hereafter cited as CP.

14. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press), p.29. Further references to this book are given after quotations in the text.

15. Jeffrey Mehlman, 'Trimethylamin: Notes on Freud's Specimen Dream', in *Untying the Text*, ed. by Robert Young, pp. 177-88.

16. See Robert Young's introduction to Mehlman's essay in *Untying the Text*, p.178.

17. Alfred Booth Kuttner, 'A Freudian Appreciation', *Psychoanalytic Review* (1916), reprinted in *D. H. Lawrence: Sons and Lovers*, ed. by Gāmini Salgādo, Casebook Series, General Editor, A. E. Dyson (London: Macmillan, 1988), pp.69-94. Further references to this article are given after quotations in the text.

18. Mabel Dodge Luhan, *Lorenzo in Taos* (London: Martin Secker, 1933), p.49

19. *Letters* I, p.538, p.549, p.551, p.553.

20. See Sigmund Freud, *Art and Literature: Jensen's 'Gradiva', Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*, trans. by James Strachey, ed. by Albert Dickson, The Pelican Freud Library, General Editors, Angela Richards, Albert Dickson, 15 vols (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973-), XIV (1985; repr. 1990).

21. See the publisher's comment in *Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), p.10. Cited throughout as F&P.

22. These essays have been seen as announcing the principal themes of *Women in Love* 'after the fact': F. R. Leavis, wrongly in my opinion, described them as collectively comprising an 'expository treatise' on these themes. See F.R. Leavis, *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist*, p.179.

23. The OED cites Freud's usage of 'unconscious' in 1912: 'The term *unconscious*, which was used in the purely descriptive sense before,

now comes to imply something more. It designates not only latent ideas in general, but especially ideas with a certain dynamic character, ideas keeping apart from consciousness in spite of their intensity and activity.' (*Proc. Soc. Psychical Res.* XXVI, LVI, 315). The distinction is also made: 'The system revealed by the sign that the single acts forming part of it are unconscious we designate by the name 'The Unconscious', for want of a better and less ambiguous term.' (*ibid.*, 318). See also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, pp. 474-6. Earlier references to *das Unbewusste* are cited in M. Pattison, *Mem.* (1885), VII, 329, 330: 'By whatever name you call it, the Unconscious is found controlling each man's destiny without, or in defiance of, his will.' (330). Earliest usage is cited in 1712, Blackmore, *Creation* III, 266: 'Unconscious causes only still impart Their utmost skill, their utmost power exert.' In 1890 W. James describes sleep, fainting, coma and epilepsy as 'unconscious' conditions, *Princ. Psych.* I, 199. The earliest usage, therefore, designates either an unknown and therefore mysterious power, related to the will, or a pathological condition.

24. In her preface to Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1967, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), xxi-xxxviii, Spivak outlines the relation of Nietzsche and Derrida, for instance, as 'inescapable', citing Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger and Husserl as Derrida's 'precursors'. See also Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, introduction by Stefano Agosti, trans. by Barbara Harlow, drawings by François Loubrieu (1978, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

25. Gerald Doherty, in 'White Mythologies: D. H. Lawrence and the Deconstructive Turn' *Criticism*, vol. 29, no. 4 (Fall 1987), 477-96, p. 477

26. Important studies of the similarities between Lawrence and Nietzsche include Patrick Bridgwater, *Nietzsche in Anglo-saxony: A Study of Nietzsche's Impact on English and American Literature* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1972), which looks at Nietzsche in his English context, and Colin Milton, *Lawrence and Nietzsche: A Study in Influence* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987). Daniel Slater is currently writing a doctoral thesis on the doctrinal similarities between Lawrence and Nietzsche, concentrating on Lawrence's first five novels (University of Cambridge). Michael Bell is the first Lawrence scholar seriously to make explicit the similarities between Lawrence and Heidegger.

27. *Of Grammatology*, xxi.

28. Jacques Derrida, 'Freud and the Scene of Writing', in *Writing and Difference*, trans. with an introduction and additional notes, by Alan Bass (1967, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 196-231, p. 211.

29. Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. with an introduction and additional notes, by Barbara Johnson (1972, London: The Athlone Press, 1981), x.

30. See the first part of *The Truth in Painting* entitled 'Parergon' where Derrida punctuates his text with literally blank spaces, the boundaries of which are suggested by corners drawn in by the author, *The Truth in Painting*, pp.15-147.

31. See Johnson's introduction to *Dissemination*, lxiii.

32. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, a new translation by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, ed. with a commentary by Walter Kaufmann, with facsimiles of the original manuscript (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p.283.

33. I am grateful to Michael Bell for drawing my attention to this frequently overlooked passage. Michael Bell has himself noted the '"independent" intelligence' of the hand in this passage (*D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*, p.90). Patricia L. Hagen, discussing the same passage, talks about the 'guiding intelligence' which is 'inherent in the organism' as opposed to the machine. She underlines Lawrence's refusal to consider this 'intelligence' as distinct from the body or any other part of human functioning. See Patricia L. Hagen, 'The Metaphoric Foundations of Lawrence's "Dark Knowledge"', *TSLL*, 29 (Spring 1987-Winter 1987), 365-76 (p.369). T. H. Adamowski argues that Lawrence 'begins with a body that *finds itself conscious*'. See T. H. Adamowski, 'Self/Body/Other: Orality and Ontology in Lawrence', *DHLR*, 13, no.3 (Fall 1980), 193-208 (p.197). Barbara Hardy, also citing the 'writing hand' passage, calls it one of Lawrence's 'apparently casual but intense pieces of critical self-consciousness.' See Barbara Hardy, 'D. H. Lawrence's Self-Consciousness', in *D. H. Lawrence in the Modern World*, ed. by Peter Preston and Peter Hoare (London: Macmillan, 1989), pp.27-46 (p.37). Further, it is interesting to note that in the seventeenth century the muscles of the lower arm and hand were believed to be the seat of divinity in man, as the hand creates.

34. *usage, usury* -- it is a well known convention among philosophers to combine linguistic and economic metaphors in this context: Derrida analyzes the numismatic metaphor at length in the first part of 'White Mythology' called 'On the Obverse', *NLH*, 6, no.1 (Autumn 1974), pp.6-17.

35. Jean-Jacques Lecercle, referring to Heidegger's style, is also drawn to this metaphor describing Heidegger's language as 'a *journey* through the remainder' in *The Violence of Language* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p.111 (my italics). However, Lecercle must be seen as occupying the Aristotelian position as he regards metaphor as being, not the whole of language, but 'outside' it. This domain of 'free' or uninhibited language is called the 'remainder', a category which is also taken to include poetry.

36. I particularly like the pun on 'jouissance' noted in the introduction to Julia Kristeva's *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by Leon S. Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), p.16, as 'j'ouïs sens' meaning 'I heard meaning'.

37. Daniel Albright, *Personality & Impersonality: Lawrence, Woolf and Mann* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p.24

38. Martin Heidegger, *Being & Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962, reprinted 1973), p.187.

39. Keith Alldritt, *The Visual Imagination of D.H. Lawrence* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), p.130. Further references to this study follow quotations in the text.

40. Alldritt may have meant to write 'defer' rather than 'refer'.

41. Some critics insist on the derivative nature of Lawrence's conception. Christopher Heywood, for instance, argues that Lawrence was influenced by nineteenth-century studies in physiology, particularly by the work of Marie-François Xavier Bichat and Marshall Hall. See Christopher Heywood, '"Blood-Consciousness" and the Pioneers of the Reflex and Ganglionic Systems', in *D. H. Lawrence: New Studies* ed. by Christopher Heywood (London: Macmillan, 1987), pp.104-23.

42. We know that Lawrence received a medical text book from Edith Eder in 1918. Lawrence, 'I wanted of course a book of physiology rather than medicine. But it managed.' (*Letters*, III, p.245)

43. Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophical Sketches* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p.46. Further references are given after quotations in the text.

44. See Heidegger, §52 of *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, translated by W. McNeill and N. Walker (forthcoming). Heidegger wonders whether we have eyes because we have an innate ability to see or to understand/apprehend.

45. *ibid.*

46. See §46 of Heidegger's *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* translated by W. McNeill and N. Walker (forthcoming). It must be added that Heidegger rejects the hierarchical proposition suggested by 'poorer ... than' by insisting on the incommensurability of the 'worlds' of a stone, a lizard, and a human being, rather than attempting to assess each in terms of their having different values.

47. Lawrence's use of the word 'curiosity' is interesting. Heidegger addresses the question of sight, how it is given priority in Western thought, in the section of *Being and Time* called 'Curiosity', I.5 §36, pp.214-17. 'Curiosity', writes Heidegger, 'concerns itself with a kind of knowing, but just in order to have known.' pp.216-17.

48. See Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: an essay on abjection*, trans. by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

49. The emphasis in the essays on the unconscious on posture and bearing, and the implicit relation between mood and the physical body, recalls other philosophies which insist on the interaction of body and mind for total mental and physical well being. For instance, the psycho-physical programme developed by F. M. Alexander, which attracted interest in the 1930s (see Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods employed for their Realization* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1937), p.223, p.326) introduces the concept of 'use', which refers to good posture and muscle control leading to good physical and mental health. Few of the ideas behind this and related philosophies which emphasize the mind-body dualism would have sounded strange to Lawrence had he been aware of them. Regarding the levels of physical communication between the mother and baby, one of the leading exponents of the Alexander Principle in Britain has written that,

From the moment of birth the helpless child is dependent on the handling and the ideas of its mother. It is picked up jerkily or smoothly, crossly or kindly: its head and back are supported carefully or ignorantly. It lies face down or face up, according to fashion. It is allowed to yell or it is picked up on demand. It connects with the mother, on breast or bottle, and as it suckles, it likes to gaze long and deep into the mother's eyes, with a unified visual connection which it may never know again. But in the main, its connection is kinaesthetic, through muscles and movement, and it is quick to pick up feelings of tension, timidity or rejection from the bodily rather than the visual contact: and especially from the mother's hands, since another person's hands are a most powerful stimulus towards good or bad USE. (W. Barlow, *The Alexander Principle*, p.161)

The reference to the infant's gaze, which it is suggested s/he will grow out of, relates to the 'lost' human vision (lost in Lawrence's view) discussed above. The baby is 'pre-visual'. Whilst Alexander worked as a therapist with individuals and placed considerable emphasis on the physical and emotional uniqueness of each subject, it is clear that the Alexander Principle describes a programme. Whilst such intentionalism does not apply to Lawrence it is worth underlining the fact that significant similarities persist in their thinking inasmuch as in his essays on the unconscious Lawrence pays a great deal of attention to the physical body operating in hostile as well as pleasing environments. Kinaesthesia, for example, is also central to Lawrence's thinking on the child. Lawrence:

For a child's bottom is made occasionally to be spanked. The vibration of the spanking acts directly upon the spinal nerve-system, there is a direct reciprocity and reaction, the spanker transfers his wrath to the great will-centres in

the child, and these will-centres react intensely, are vivified and educated.

(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, p.50)

Less controversially, there is the recognition in the essays on the unconscious that bad posture reveals something about the individual's sense of self:

So, weak-chested, round-shouldered, we stoop hollowly forward on ourselves. It is the result of the all-famous love and charity ideal, an ideal now quite dead in its sympathetic activity, but still fixed and determined in its voluntary action.

(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, F&P, p.53)

Without transforming Lawrence into a therapist, these examples emphasize a context in which Lawrence's views are meaningful, without suggesting that those views constitute a programme.

50. Anne Fernihough, 'The Tyranny of the Text: Lawrence, Freud and the Modernist Aesthetic', in *Modernism and the European Unconscious* ed. by Peter Collier and Judy Davies (Cambridge: Polity Press; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p.50

51. See 'The "Uncanny"' in Sigmund Freud, *Art and Literature*, ed. Albert Dickson, The Pelican Freud Library, vol. 14 (Penguin, 1985), pp.335-76.

52. David Cavitch, *D. H. Lawrence and the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p.156. Further references to this study are given after quotations in the text.

CHAPTER THREE
THE OXYMORONIC MODE OF *WOMEN IN LOVE*

If *Women in Love* did not exist the general view of Lawrence's language would be very different. If either of the major novels existed in isolation, if we had *The Rainbow* without *Women in Love*, or vice versa, we would have a very different sense of Lawrence's language. In fact it cannot be presupposed that the novels share even an identical mode of language. The conceptions of language which each novel embodies are radically different. It is crucial to realize that Lawrence does not have a fixed or prescriptive view of language which characterizes his oeuvre. The critical emphasis should be placed on positive difference rather than continuity.

In holding this view I differ from Michael Ragussis for whom *Women in Love* is unequivocally the representative text: in his reading of Lawrence no reference is made to the other novels, with *The Rainbow* conspicuously absent. The reasons for this are not difficult to divine. Not only is *Women in Love* one of the two major novels but it has the advantage, from Ragussis's point of view, of being about language and the difficulties of expression. The way in which language is given thematic status there is very alluring and it would seem that Ragussis has been seduced by what language is, and what it does, in *Women in Love*, so that he does not at any stage question its representativeness.¹ However, the emphasis need not be so much on what

is stated, but on what is evident on the subliminal, sub-textual levels.

In fact *Women in Love* is representative but it is not *typical*, a distinction to which Ragussis is not sensitive, or which his study does not enable him to make. It is a novel which exemplifies Lawrence's major habitual preoccupations and tendencies: his exploration of personal relations, his critique of Western culture, the development of his 'metaphysic' and his highly metaphorical style. In the present chapter I propose to concentrate on this metaphoricity (which is not separable from the other tendencies) because it is here and in other matters of language that the atypicality of *Women in Love* resides. Why, for instance, does Lawrence engender such a radically metaphorical language in *Women in Love*? Is it because he is continually trying to get a complex and difficult conception of otherness into his sights? If so, language is the only medium in which this is even a possibility. The chapter to follow is long and has several threads because there is no easy or direct route to an answer to these questions.

I begin by addressing the simultaneity and 'friction' of styles which characterizes *Women in Love* and contrasts it with *The Rainbow* which is the subject of the next chapter. Simultaneity will emerge as an important concept for Lawrence in this novel because it helps him break down certain oppositions like internal/external (subjective value is understood *within* the 'external' in Lawrence), and visual/anti-visual. Otherness is usually perceived in terms of such

binary oppositions, I/you, for example, but as we shall see Lawrence is after a more radical conception of the Other: his sense of it is not of the merely 'objective', what the camera, for instance, records. Hence, from a consideration of its styles the chapter moves into an examination of the visual in the novel, and what I shall call the anti-visual (where what is described is not strictly visualizable), because vision, of all the human senses, is the principal metaphor in Western thought for knowing: sight 'makes us know and bring to light many differences between things' (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 980a, 25). It is a dictum which is implicitly at work in much of Lawrence's highly metaphorical, and occasionally anti-visual, writing: both the metaphorical and the anti-visual, which interact in the narratives, constitute what Ricoeur calls a 'thinking more' (RM p. 303).² Much of this 'thinking more' occurs at subliminal levels in Lawrence: a great deal of effort and sophistication went into Heidegger's saying of some of the same things but his discourse, although it is radically metaphorical, is more 'conscious' than Lawrence's. 'Sight' in Aristotle's thought is not mere sensory perception. It is only a sign of our desire for knowledge in some higher sense. The play of visual and anti-visual language in Lawrence in part constitutes a critique of the merely optical and in doing so provides him with a means of 'seeing further' and 'thinking more'. The 'visual' in Lawrence, of course, is really linguistic. We must therefore recognize the visual and anti-visual strains of his narrative as most truly a part of his non-conceptual 'thinking' language; as fundamentally metaphorical.

Lawrence also contrasts the 'visual' with the 'physical' as in the novella *The Fox* which I briefly discuss because it focuses quite tightly some of the issues which are more extensively but less explicitly dealt with in *Women in Love*. There is a kind of physicality, Lawrence argues, which is distinct from the everyday sensual physicality. 'Love' is the focus for this argument because of its physical dimension and the fact that it inevitably has a physical object. I then examine how Lawrence's critique of 'love' in *Women in Love* takes him to the deep, unconscious levels of metaphor at work in human understanding. In *Women in Love* Lawrence has begun to bring together the threads of his critique of, and involvement in, 'romantic' love in his earlier works. I shall argue that in doing so he pulls away from the traditionally oxymoronic *rhetoric* of love, which externalizes the emotion, and institutes a new conception of the love-relation, the oxymoronic nature of which is much more radically a part of the general quality both of the language and of the experience. These constitute the themes and levels of thought contained in the following chapter. I propose now to turn to the first of these, the simultaneity of styles in the narrative language of the novel.

3.1 The simultaneity of styles in *Women in Love*

Simultaneity is a word which in general terms describes the mode of *Women in Love* and in this respect the novel can be contrasted with *The Rainbow*. The difference between them is principally a question of language. Great variations of language occur in *The Rainbow* but these

variations are part of the vast sweep, or 'wave', of language which is that novel. Its distinctive monumental metaphoricity is the subject of my next chapter. I propose here to rehearse briefly a few familiar points of style in *The Rainbow* in order to underline a particular and philosophical difference between its mode of language and that of *Women in Love*.

In *The Rainbow* the reader typically recognizes moments, or episodes, as being particularly important where the style reaches a certain pitch of intensity. There are many instances of this. One example is provided in 'Childhood of Anna Lensky' (*The Rainbow*, chapter III) where the emotional connection between Tom Brangwen and Lydia Lensky is properly forged after two years of married life. A contributory factor is Tom's visit to his brother's mistress, his consequent reflections on his own existence and, later, Lydia's words and touch which he initially resists. The language moves from a description of Tom's visit to Wirksworth, to his quiet domestic evening in his own house and finally to the genuine emotional intensity of non-verbal communication with Lydia, described as a 'transfiguration' (R p.91). An important feature is the difference in the language at the moment of intensest feeling from the kind of language which preceded it: 'Blind and destroyed, he pressed forward, nearer, nearer, to receive the consummation of himself, be received within the darkness which should swallow him and yield him up to himself.' ... 'It was the entry into another circle of existence, it was the baptism to another life, it was the complete confirmation.' (R p.90). The intensely metaphorical tone is the 'foreign language'

Lawrence felt he was using in writing the novel (*Letters I*, p.544; 'another language', *Letters II*, p.132). Indeed this metaphor of foreignness is evoked both in this scene and earlier in the novel to designate the emotional distance between the alien and different Lydia and her new surroundings in which she must learn to be 'at home'. In what sense is Tom 'blind' and 'destroyed'? As the result of this union is ultimately enriching and, from his (and Lawrence's) point of view, positive, the 'destruction' is oxymoronic in a very familiar Lawrencean sense, in the commingling, at the crucial moment, of positive and negative terms which by their interaction succeed in reaching out to the experience. The metaphorical language does not visualize what is really happening to Tom: this is the physicality in Lawrence which is not merely sensual. The experience as it is given to us is principally linguistic and non-visual. The camera's objectivity, argues Lawrence, is inappropriate for the authentic experience taking place. This suggestion of a non-visualizing mode will gain particular significance in *Women in Love*.

Another example is the scene where Will and Anna put up the sheaves in the corn field. This episode is too long to quote in full but it is characterized by the following language in which a distinctive rhythm builds:

There was only the moving to and fro in the moonlight,
engrossed, the swinging in the silence, that was marked only
by the splash of sheaves, and silence, and a splash of
sheaves. And ever the splash of his sheaves broke swifter,
beating up to hers, and ever the splash of her sheaves
recurred monotonously, unchanging, and ever the splash of
his sheaves beat nearer.
(*The Rainbow*, p.115)

The Rainbow is full of such examples. Variations of language occur, of course, in *Women in Love* but there is something very distinctive, and different, in their *simultaneity* in that novel. Hence *Women in Love* is a much more elusive medium than *The Rainbow*, which points to its not being typical, as I said at the outset. In *The Rainbow* the reader recognizes moments of special significance because at these moments, as in the passages highlighted, the language palpably differs from the rest of the language around it. The reader has reached an especially significant place, signalled as such by the language. The narrative moves into these moments seamlessly, giving the book its distinctive 'voice' and 'rhythm'. In fact the novel progresses by the movements into and out of these moments of heightened feeling.

In *Women in Love*, by contrast, the reader is presented with co-incident styles. Significantly with this novel it is very difficult to isolate one kind of language from the rest of the text effectively because of the extent of this co-incidence, or simultaneity. The following dialogue between Ursula and Birkin, however, provides some idea of the effect:

He looked up at her. He saw her face strangely enkindled, as if suffused from within by a powerful sweet fire. His soul was arrested in wonder. She was enkindled in her own living fire. Arrested in wonder and in pure, perfect attraction, he moved towards her. She sat like a strange queen, almost supernatural in her glowing smiling richness.

"The point about love," he said, *his consciousness quickly adjusting itself*, "is that we hate the word because we have vulgarised it. It ought to be proscribed, tabooed from utterance, for many years, till we get a new, better idea."

There was a beam of understanding between them.

"But it always means the same thing," she said.

"Ah God, no, let it not mean that any more," he cried.

"Let the old meanings go."
 (*Women in Love*, p. 130, my italics)

The places which I have emphasized in this passage indicate a different order or variety of language from that which surrounds them. These lines describe the non-verbal and non-physical (or ambivalently physical) experience of each in the 'presence' of the other. The passage starts with typically 'Lawrencean' reference to an impersonal quality of Being which characterizes Ursula at that moment to Birkin: he 'perceives' it. Describing her, Lawrence's metaphors are physical. The sentences emphasized describe a level of consciousness other than that of their dialogue as each subliminally recognizes the 'otherness' of the other person. Leo Bersani has called the 'sudden shifts of language' in this novel 'disorienting' and argues that they

show Lawrence's attempt to pull away from the 'old stable ego' and to show every individual as 'nonindividualized', an 'a-psychological, mass of life and death energies'.³ Bersani, whose theme is desire, focuses on some extreme examples of narrative language which indicate personal crises in the lives of the characters, when they 'lapse out' for instance. My emphasis, in contrast, is on the subtle shifts, like those outlined in the long quotation above, which characterize the whole narrative, and not just moments of extremity in feeling. These subtle shifts are surely the 'frictionality' to which Lawrence refers in the Foreword to the novel, which I shall come to presently. In this passage Birkin's self-adjusting consciousness is recalled, by way of contrast, later on in 'Snow' (*Women in Love*, chapter XXX) where Gudrun, absorbed in, and by, her vision of the mountainous landscape, and recoiling from Gerald, stands on the

threshold between two worlds: 'She closed her eyes, closed away the monotonous level of dead wonder, and opened them again to the everyday world. / "Yes," she said briefly, *regaining her will with a click.*' (WL p.402, my italics). If we are reminded of Birkin here we also notice the contrast between his subtly shifting modes of consciousness and Gudrun's: Birkin's consciousness is self-adjusting where with Gudrun the change is obviously a matter of a more relentless will, derived from her ego, acting upon her mood. Whatever Birkin is saying, at some deeper level he is responding positively and instinctively to Ursula. This contrasts with Gudrun's machine-like change: 'click' is a word which evokes a mechanism. So, when these descriptions recall each other they do so by way of both similarity *and* contrast.

In 'Water-Party' (*Women in Love*, chapter XIV) this sense of there being different kinds of language is underscored by Ursula's choice of song to which Gudrun does eurythmics.: '"Sing anything you like, and I'll take the rhythm from it." / But Ursula could not for her life think of anything to sing. However, she suddenly began, in a laughing, teasing voice: / "My love -- is a high-born lady -- "' (WL p.166). This precedes the recognizably 'Lawrencean' description of Gudrun dancing:

Gudrun, looking as if some invisible chain weighed on her hands and feet, began slowly to dance in the eurythmic manner, pulsing and fluttering rhythmically with her feet, making slower, regular gestures with her hands and arms, now spreading her arms wide, now raising them above her head, now flinging them softly apart, and lifting her face, her feet all the time beating and running to the measure of the song, as if it were some strange incantation, her white, rapt form drifting here and there in a strange impulsive rhapsody, seeming to be lifted on a breeze of incantation, shuddering with strange little runs. Ursula sat on the

grass, her mouth open in her singing, her eyes laughing as if she thought it was a great joke, but a yellow light flashing up in them, as she caught some of the unconscious ritualistic suggestion of the complex shuddering and waving and drifting of her sister's white form, that was clutched in pure, mindless, tossing rhythm, and a will set powerful in a kind of hypnotic influence.
(*Women in Love*, p. 166)

In introducing this passage I have written 'Lawrencean' in inverted commas because generally speaking this kind of repetitive and metaphorical language is recognizably and uniquely of Lawrence, with its distinctive sentence structure and verbal rhythm. Lawrence is aware that the reader will have no difficulty in visualizing a woman dancing, but our gaze might well be the uncomprehending gaze of the nearby cattle. In fact our tendency to provide an image for what is written is challenged once more by the non-visual, or more properly anti-visual, language. Gudrun is de-personalized, communicated to us kinaesthetically as movement, or by a catalogue of de-personalizing metaphors: 'fluttering', 'waving', 'drifting', she is a 'white form'. The level of metaphoricity employed prevents the description from delineating the merely physical dimension of Gudrun. Neither are we 'seeing' her with our eyes at this point, but with some other vision within us which responds to the language. It is difficult to say what this passage is about -- it is not just about Gudrun dancing. But it highlights many of the levels of the novel which the present chapter addresses: in particular the metaphorical language works against expectations of a description which visualizes the scene. Lawrence draws attention to Ursula's eyes. These do not in themselves do the seeing; Ursula does that *through* them and perceives an 'unconscious' suggestion for which the language is the vehicle. She cannot say that

she perceives it: she is truly 'unconscious'. And only the metaphorical density of the passage communicates an unconscious suggestion to the reader: referential language, an unproblematically realistic or visual description of the dance, could not do it so effectively *and* bring the focus back to language.

Gudrun's two dances in 'Water-Party' are details, in the painterly sense, rather than the explicit focus of the chapter: in fact an unfocusedness characterizes *Women in Love*. Here is a fundamental difference from *The Rainbow* where such intensity of language frequently indicates intensity of personal feeling. Regarding the water-metaphors here, there is a fundamental difference between Gudrun's figure 'waving' and 'drifting' over the ground and Tom Brangwen's experience in the passage referred to at the beginning, whose 'blood beat up in waves of desire' (R p.90). Tom's blood, his feelings, his very self are much more a part of the whole linguistic background of the novel than Gudrun who, as here, is 'suspended', at a remove from her immediate environment, or scene. The 'metaphysic' of *The Rainbow* stresses the inseparability of individual from scene, whereas in *Women in Love* a gulf has opened up between them.

This example is part of the expanding context where Lawrence draws attention to what he calls in 'Introduction to these Paintings' 'intuitional awareness' (*Phoenix*, p.558) as an aspect of *physical* being. The complex nature of the interaction between purely sensual physicality, physicality which is not just sensual and intuitional awareness is what the narrative labours to express by its simultaneity

of styles: in the swift but subtle changes from 'plain' metaphor in some (unproblematic) passages to a more difficult, sometimes more opaque, metaphoricity as in the examples given. In *Women in Love*, uniquely, these inflectional changes are rapid and challenge the reader to 'think more'. If in *The Rainbow* the reader knows by the narrative tone that a significant episode has been reached, in *Women in Love* the language acts as less of a guide: the complex metaphoricity of the narrative is scattered over a large area, and this makes it difficult to assess. In a critique of *The Rainbow* fairly substantial passages can be isolated to make a point about its language. But with *Women in Love* the metaphorical levels are more elusively distributed: single phrases signal a subliminal level of thought at work across the entire narrative and interacting with further levels -- the difficulty lies in isolating such phrases from the whole and retaining their significance.

The constantly changing levels of significance in the narrative can be seen in the way the 'physical' frequently and surprisingly contrasts with the 'visual'. The novel has the characters continually participating in primarily physical activities: there are many instances of dancing and swimming; there is physical conflict ('Gladiatorial', 'Breadalby', 'Snowed Up'); there are the sexual encounters; the 'ecstasy of physical motion' described in 'Snow' (WL p.421). These do not simply 'happen' but are given a special status by the language which describes them. None of these activities is merely physical: as experiences they demonstrate the mind/body relation so central to Lawrence. For example, in 'Class-room' (*Women in Love*,

chapter III) Birkin is watched by Ursula: 'She seemed to be standing aside in arrested silence, watching him move in another, concentrated world. His presence was so quiet, almost like a vacancy in the corporate air.' (WL p.36). 'Corporate air' sounds like a contradiction in terms, one of the oxymorons which are so fundamental in articulating the metaphysical specificity of this novel. A pertinent play on *body* resonates from 'corporate' and as a metaphor it is exactly right. The invisible 'incorporeal' air has a physical structure which cannot normally be 'seen' but is nevertheless present. The physicality of air is known inasmuch as it is breathed or felt. Birkin is not a ghost, but he is not simply flesh either. The *continual* interaction of the physical and non-physical, the visualizable and the non-visualizable (for how is 'presence' in Lawrence's sense visualized?), is common in Lawrence. That this interaction has a special significance in *Women in Love* helps to focus the subtle relation in Lawrence between the general (the body of language and thought identified with Lawrence) and the particular (the force of language in this novel distinct from the rest).

If simultaneity of styles is one distinctive characteristic of *Women in Love*, the 'friction' of styles is another, related, feature. In this novel, again in contrast with *The Rainbow*, words operate 'frictionally', having a 'frictional' relation to each other and to the immediate context. This is the word which Lawrence uses to describe the style of *Women in Love* in the Foreword to that novel. He writes:

In point of style, fault is often found with the continual, slightly modified repetition. The only answer is that it is natural to the author: and that every natural crisis in emotion or passion or understanding comes from this pulsing, frictional to-and-fro, which works up to culmination.

(Foreword to *Women in Love*, p.486)

In this context 'frictional' is obviously sexual but here it is linked, crucially, to a broader sense of *language* which is what Lawrence is actually talking about. The sexual metaphor, as long as it sustains Lawrence's point about language, is highly appropriate. Word and context in *Women in Love* are as two bodies moving not together but against each other in active contact. It is an abrasive, chafing movement. The emphasis is not, as it could be, on the phallic pen as a means of combining literary creation and (male) sexuality. Lawrence's emphasis is not on the functional metaphor of emission as ink and language come from the pen of the writer, but on the movement of relative elements (bodies). After all, ink is only drawn from the pen because of the friction between nib and paper. This frictional relation of word and context is at the heart of meaning in *Women in Love*. The metaphor is of course a sexual one and as such it is useful in underlining a specific problem to do with how Lawrence is read: what happens constantly in Lawrence studies is that a subject, and here it is sex, *distracts* from what in a work of fiction is actually the deeper, or real, subject, namely language. The present thesis is preoccupied with precisely this problem, and with a reading of Lawrence which depends on this recognition.

The contrasts with *The Rainbow* which I have alluded to in the course of this reading of the language of *Women in Love* will be developed further in the next chapter. For the time being I propose to concentrate on the dialectical relation of the visual and the anti-visual which I have begun to address in the preceding discussion. Keith Alldritt's study, *The Visual Imagination of D. H. Lawrence*, is still the most thorough examination of Lawrence's ability to visualize in language. He tends to see the differences between the novels in evolutionary terms which justifies in Lawrence the search for a new form, and articulates this search with particular reference to the development of Lawrence's visual, as well as verbal, consciousness. My own approach is to address the visual more as a feature of the subliminal dimension of Lawrence's creativity and less as a theme in the novels. I will be raising the question whether to confine comments to Lawrence's visual imagination is in fact to relegate some key passages to the margins: important though his study is, especially in his critique of *Women in Love*, Alldritt could have made more positive use of the fact that certain aspects of Lawrence's language cannot be accommodated to his theory of the visual in Lawrence.

3.2 The anti-visual imagination of D. H. Lawrence

When this study was at its earliest stage the visual question in Lawrence, particularly as it is posed in *Women in Love*, presented itself as an important route to the ultimately more interesting question of his language. While it was always evident that the visual

and language had an important relation in Lawrence the exact nature of that relation had not been fully examined.

Vision, the visual and the visible are important themes in my previous chapter which in part addresses Lawrence's 'Heideggerean' sense of there being different kinds of vision. In the course of that discussion 'root-vision' was singled out for special attention as one way Lawrence chooses to express a mode of understanding which is quite distinct from retinal seeing, that is to say, from vision which is 'merely optical' (*Phoenix*, p.560). His thought can also be compared to Kant's important distinction between phenomenon and noumenon, and in particular to Kant's opinion that things-in-themselves cannot be *known* by the human mind. Lawrence, like Kant, comprehends that there are things which have their own character even though they are not intuited by us as phenomena, things which are apprehended through our *understanding* as distinct from *sense*. Lawrencean 'root-vision' is, as I have suggested, about understanding rather than sense (narrowly understood): it indicates an order of relationship which is distinct from those concepts like time and space which, as Kant recognizes, help us to impose some sort of order on nature, on the world. Indeed, there is an implicit play on 'noumen' (Kant's term) and 'numen', primitive energy, to be exploited in Lawrence's work. These observations come to the fore in *Women in Love* which we may usefully think of as Lawrence's principal anti-visual novel, if only because it adopts
/ a position which returns the critical gaze to language.

It is evident that Lawrence is generally regarded as a highly visual writer in the tradition of Thomas Hardy. One sign of this is the comparative frequency with which his novels, like Hardy's, are made into films. These include *The Rocking Horse Winner*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *Sons and Lovers*, *The Fox*, *Women in Love* and *The Virgin and the Gypsy*.⁴ *Kangaroo*, *The Rainbow* and a remake of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* can be added to the list, whilst *Sons and Lovers* and *The Rainbow* have been serialized on British television. To commit Lawrence to such a visual medium is in part to encourage assumptions about the fiction which are at best wide of the mark. The point that there is nothing 'visual' present when there is only language has been resisted by those who make films of the 'stories' who are confusing the visual with the pictorial, and ignoring the special relation in Lawrence between vision and 'knowing' which deserves attention.

There are highly visual scenes in *Women in Love*, the stoning of the pond in 'Moony' (*Women in Love*, chapter XIX) for instance, but there are also those scenes which, importantly, resist visualization altogether. In these instances such resistance is the business of language. To say so is to return to the position that Lawrence has something special to say, something which springs from a deeply personal source, and that he must use language to say it. So language is at once a deeply conscious and deeply unconscious medium: Lawrence consciously produces events using language, and less consciously spells out his philosophical preoccupations in the metaphorical configuration of the work. To produce an event is in part to visualize something; but the creative will is also absorbed in the enduring philosophical

themes of Lawrence's work, principally the relation of language and understanding. In asking how we 'know', Lawrence is also asking how we 'see'. In order to think about this kind of 'vision', which is a metaphor for a higher order of knowing than the conceptual kind, an anti-visual mode of discourse develops (in those scenes which, as I will show, are fundamentally non-visualizable). This profoundly personal way of thinking in language means that Lawrence's work cannot be seen just in terms of a literary tradition or school. The general description of 'realism', for example, which can be applied too uncritically to Lawrence and which would imply a distinctly visual narrative, is an inadequate description of the novels because it threatens to efface the intrinsic and specific qualities of his narrative language.

I would prefer to shift the emphasis to Lawrence's active dialogue with earlier writers. To a great extent his works can be seen as unaffected by the anxieties reflected in Virginia Woolf's essays and novels, for instance, about the predicament, as she sees it, of modern literature. Whilst her gaze, and that of Joyce, Eliot and the important Modernists, is on history and tradition Lawrence uniquely passes these through the 'lens' of his own 'metaphysic'. Woolf's metaphors for the modern writer's condition at the beginning of 'Modern Fiction' (1919) bear witness ^{not only} to her anxieties/about authority but also about the judgement that history will make about modern writing:

We do not come to write better; all that we can be said to do is to keep moving, now a little in this direction, now in that, but with a circular tendency . . . we look back with

envy to those happier warriors, whose battle is won and whose achievements wear so serene an air of accomplishment that we can scarcely refrain from whispering that the fight was not so fierce for them as for us. It is for the historian of literature to decide; for him to say if we are now beginning or ending or standing in the middle of a great period of prose fiction, for down in the plain little is visible. ('Modern Fiction', in *The Common Reader*, p.146)

The 'materialists', Galsworthy, Bennett and Wells, are to be superseded by the 'anti-materialists' (these are Woolf's terms) like Joyce who overtly challenges the authority of tradition in order to make language the medium of a new vision: 'he disregards with complete courage whatever seems to him adventitious, whether it be probability, or coherence, or any other of these signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader.' (*The Common Reader*, p.151) It is significant that Woolf did not perceive an intelligent resistance to the novel's weaknesses in Lawrence.

In this passage, as in her novels, Woolf is articulating the Modernist anxiety about the assumptions of fiction, and giving change a historical character. If Lawrence, a central but not programmatic Modernist, is not affected by this anxiety it is because of the uniquely individual depth of his 'metaphysic' underpinned by his position, famously articulated in *Studies in Classic American Literature*, that whatever the artist wills of the novel, the novel has its own 'morality' in spite of the novelist. Lawrence's anxieties are not, therefore, about representation and the language (languages) of representation, but about the way the novelist fails the novel. Success or failure is achieved precisely where the struggle occurs, at the level of language. That is why there are no programmes as such in

Lawrence to 'visualize' differently as a result of anxieties about traditional forms of representation.

The sense that we get from Paul Ricoeur that the special power of language is its capacity to free us from the visibility and limitations of situations, thereby opening up new dimensions of being in the world, helps us to understand why language is such a crucial issue for Lawrence. In particular I would like to suggest that the limitations of language encompass physical visibility. In Lawrence, as I have already hinted, 'seeing' is evidently not solely a question of external vision: the world of *Women in Love* is not consistently visualized. There is a wonderfully effective dialectic in this novel in particular between highly visual scenes, and scenes which resist visualization. For the most part in *Women in Love* the reader 'sees' the world through the eyes of the characters. It is partly because of this visualization through a variety of characters that visualization itself is so flexible. To say this is to say something more than there are as many worlds in the novel as there are important characters (although this is the case). The Lawrencean figures 'visualize' differently: the same scene -- Gerald swimming; Gerald riding the Arab mare; the Tyrolean landscape -- is different in the eyes and minds of the different characters. However, this is not to impose a 'Cubist' aesthetic on Lawrence: the principal interest is not the same object viewed simultaneously from different sides, but the nature and significance of different kinds of vision.

I propose to set my following remarks in relation to some of Keith Alldritt's observations. His book, as I say, provides the most extensive commentary both on the visual traditions with which Lawrence was familiar and the visual references in the novels: 'visual art is a subject of these novels, but it is also, more importantly, a key influence upon their style.' (Alldritt, viii). Throughout his study Alldritt's focus is most often on Western painterly traditions and the visual arts. He rightly refers to Lawrence's interest in these, and in doing so highlights Lawrence's own leanings towards paint as a medium. However, there is a very *literal* approach to the visual in this book which, in my view, results in the non-visual or anti-visual dimensions of the novel's language being evaded. This part of my study in a sense begins where Alldritt leaves off, because in taking the visual so literally he by-passes some of the more philosophical aspects of Lawrence's style.

Discussions of the visual in Lawrence are often preceded by recourse to references in the novels to named visual traditions such as Renaissance and Victorian painting. Reproductions of Carpaccio's 'The Dream of St. Ursula', Fra Angelico's 'Last Judgement' and Mark Gertler's powerful 'The Merry-Go-Round' are accordingly incorporated into the text of Alldritt's study where they become powerful icons attached to Lawrence's narratives. Lawrence's critique of Modernist concepts like Significant Form, associated in Britain with Bloomsbury critics Clive Bell and Roger Fry, is also summarized, hence the visual is principally meaningful inasmuch as it signifies specific traditions. It is interchangeable, in this context, with the painterly

or representational. In his appraisal of the early novels, chiefly *The White Peacock*, Alldritt considers characters' assessments of other characters according to their physical resemblance to pictorial types, to Burne-Jones's female figures, for example, which is an appropriate response to the novel and underlines Lawrence's early tendency to express sentiment through art. In the mature novels, in contrast, a style becomes significant because of the epistemological mode it communicates. The African fetishes and Chinese drawing in *Women in Love* function in this way. In the early novels reference is commonly made to an actual person -- in *The White Peacock* to Burne-Jones, Rossetti, and Griffenhagen, in *The Rainbow*, the first 'mature novel', to Fra Angelico and so on -- whereas in *Women in Love* different ontologies (*African* fetish, *Chinese* goose drawing) are more significant. References to named artists, like the reference to the Picasso reproductions introduced by Gudrun, do not have nearly the same force in *Women in Love* that they have in the earlier novels.

The visual question will to some extent slide into the question of metaphor wherever references to styles and works of art are seen as having a metaphorical function in the novels. Alldritt regards Lawrence as essentially a Realist writer writing in the tradition of Hardy, but one whose innate sense of the visual and whose familiarity with the history of art provided him with a series of powerful metaphors in his description of the emotional life of men and women. The development of the visual into the pictorial is seen as being in line with this tradition, and Alldritt, especially with reference to *The Rainbow*, highlights passages which form 'tableaux' or 'icons' and

which themselves provide a powerful image of an essential relationship before, or in the absence of, dialogue. I have already referred to his assessment of Tom Brangwen's vision of Lydia and Anna through the vicarage window on the evening of the proposal where the mother-and-child image stands for the stillness which will counter Brangwen's 'sometimes terrifying freedom' (Alldritt, p.134). It also points up the moral authority of woman for the early Brangwen men, and captures both the mystery, distance and paradoxically the nearness of Lydia for Tom: 'Thus in utilising the madonna theme Lawrence is employing a motif which, besides alluding to a familiar item in the general western tradition of feeling, also has a special significance in Brangwen experience.' (Alldritt, p.134).

Hence, for the most part the emphasis is on both the scene or the physical backdrop for events, and the *seen*, what the character sees (and by the same token what the reader visualizes). Hitherto the principal frame of reference has been the pictorial. In what follows I propose to show some of the difficulties which arise when the non-pictorial in Lawrence is evaded. In the course of his discussion of *The Rainbow* Alldritt does briefly transfer his attention to the anti-visual without recognizing it as 'anti-visual' as such. In this context he refers to Lawrence's 'physical metaphors', hinting at the profound connection between the psyche and the body but without drawing out the full implications of this. His comments are restricted to a single paragraph from which the following observations are isolated:

Another feature of the writing which is difficult to illustrate with quotations (and which, incidentally, critics have sometimes found unacceptable) is the description of feeling in terms of physical metaphors. For example, in his description of the Brangwens moving into their new house in Beldover Lawrence writes: "There the hard rush floor-covering made the ground light, reflecting light upon the bottom of their hearts;..." And on one occasion during the searing conflict between Will and Anna we are told that "All the blood in his body went black and powerful and corrosive as he heard her." And on another, "His heart was scalded, his brain hurt in his head, he went away, out of the house." In isolation these sentences may seem, word for word, to be strained and excessive. But in the actual text this physical representation of an emotion is what lends authenticity and intelligibility to the dense complexes of feeling which it is one of the prime purposes of Lawrence's art to elucidate. Indeed, this mode of suggesting non-cerebral states of consciousness may even be regarded as one of the innovating achievements of this novel in representing the reality of human experience. (Alldritt, p.125)

A certain uneasiness with this theme is betrayed by the rather evasive comments in parentheses. Which critics have difficulty with Lawrence's physical metaphors? For what reasons are these expressions of a certain kind of experience problematic? However, the positive sense towards the end of the passage about this mode being the only one available to Lawrence to express certain kinds of emotion seems exactly right. If it is not developed, it is perhaps because the critic has attuned himself too strongly to the pictorial in Lawrence to be able to accommodate effectively the anti-visual. He concedes that in isolating examples from the rest of the language one has the sense of having lost something crucial. This is underscored by the reference to a feature which is 'difficult to illustrate with quotations'. Although the text in question is *The Rainbow* I would suggest that this difficulty applies more especially to *Women in Love*

and thereby underlines something very distinctive about the language of that novel.

Regarding *Women in Love* Alldritt remarks that 'as in none of the earlier novels, there is a striking sense of the imperfect coincidence of the visual and the optical'. The 'traditional linearity' of *The Rainbow* is contrasted with the fragmented scenes of *Women in Love* which represent the 'uncertainty' which underpins the book (Alldritt, p.204). The description in 'Gladiatorial' (*Women in Love*, chapter XX) where Birkin is described as 'more a presence than a visible object', and where Gerald is 'aware of him completely, but not really visually' (WL p.269) is for Alldritt an example of the breakdown between the visual and the optical which, although he does not use the word, the 'metaphysic' of *Women in Love* necessitates, but the consequences of this are not pursued, at least not with regard to the *language* of the whole. In my view, this is a passage in the novel where the reader is forced to consider what 'presence' is if it is not visual, and why Birkin has more 'presence' than Gerald who is described as 'concrete and noticeable, a piece of pure final substance'. Both are literally present, of course. But Birkin's 'presence' is felt by Gerald as the two combine in the 'slippery' act of jiu-jitsu. It is revealed to Gerald, 'aware of him [Birkin] completely', by the physical contact between them (which is not purely sensual) where ordinary ocular perception has failed to reveal it. The interaction between Gerald and Birkin here is analogous to the phosphorescent wave breaking over the ship: only the physical interaction makes 'knowing' possible. The language is anti-visual in this scene, I would argue, because were

Gerald simply to visualize Birkin his friend's 'presence' would elude him. It is this 'vision' which Lawrence can write about only in a consciously anti-visual mode because it is a mode which re-routes critical attention back to language, and back to the metaphorical nature of understanding.

The interaction between the visual and non-visual language changes the significance of the 'visual', or apparently 'visual', parts of the novel. Whilst they are 'visual' in a very straightforward sense, the dialectic with the non-visual, or the anti-visual, challenges the notion of there being a scale or spectrum at one end of which is the visual, which the novels either tend towards or pull away from. The dialectic, the extent of interaction, is the means by which Lawrence explores certain modes of knowledge and feeling, certain recognitions, which his language is after. The critical challenge is not to be distracted by the crudely 'visual' as such from the real subject, which is presence.

Gerald Crich, who is 'carbon' in this description and not the 'stable ego' of orthodox narratives, is experiencing 'root-vision', which underlines the question of there being different kinds of vision. I have argued here that considerations of the visual in Lawrence ultimately relate to philosophical, or 'metaphysical', and linguistic questions. This indicates how radically Lawrence turns things on their head in dissolving the boundaries between the physical and non-physical, visual and non-visual. These domains must interact in the narrative language if they are to be meaningful. The 'merely

optical', for instance, is barely of interest, and the passage describing Birkin and Gerald wrestling represents as literally as anything can the importance of the positive contrast in Lawrence of the visual and anti-visual. Questions of the 'visual' and the 'physical' underlined here are also explored, more centrally, in the novella *The Fox*, written in 1918 and expanded in 1921. There the 'visual' and the 'physical' are brought into a specific relation: Lawrence manages to write about both without reducing his theme to the merely ocular or to mere sensual physicality. It will, therefore, be helpful to pursue the question more generally as it is formulated in *The Fox* before continuing the discussion of *Women in Love*.

3.3 *The Fox*

Written shortly after *Women in Love*, *The Fox* deals explicitly with 'internal vision', or more specifically the relation in Lawrence between vision and 'knowing', focusing on the fact that it is not appropriate in Lawrence to think of the visual as simply something external but as a deeper form of 'knowing'. The many references in the story to the eyes of Ellen March, 'big and wide and dark' (F p.8), underline her significance as one who experiences the world visually, but vision will come to signify more than optical perception in her encounter with the fox, both 'real' and in the form of Henry Grenfel. In March the division between optical vision and internal knowing is explicit but until she 'sees' the fox close at hand her 'inner mind' is unstimulated, neither seeing nor knowing. This partial wakefulness

is her usual condition:

One evening March was standing with her back to the sunset, her gun under her arm, her hair pushed under her cap. She was half watching, half musing. It was her constant state. Her eyes were keen and observant, but her inner mind took no notice of what she saw. She was always lapsing into this odd, rapt state, her mouth rather screwed up. It was a question, whether she was there, actually consciously present, or not.

(*The Fox*, p. 10)

Her capacity for efficient optical vision is emphasized but equally her internal stasis becomes a matter of not being 'consciously present', as if the connection between the external world and her inner mind is not yet made. In the confrontation with the fox it is the fox who makes eye contact and in the event something about March is given away to him. As in the following example the verb 'to know' takes the place of 'to see':

She lowered her eyes, and suddenly saw the fox. He was looking up at her. His chin was pressed down, and his eyes were looking up. They met her eyes. And he knew her. She was spell-bound. She knew he knew her. So he looked into her eyes, and her soul failed her. He knew her, he was not daunted.

(*The Fox*, p. 10)

In this passage the fox is both animal and not-animal. This suggestion that the animal is never purely so, but also something which is less readily knowable than the bestial object, also characterizes Lawrence's poetry, so much of which is about animals. Lawrence is also raising the question about animals being able to 'see' in the way the human being 'sees', that is, 'knows' something. The fox 'knew' March and this knowledge both moves her and robs her of autonomy. It can

know her in this way because it is not simply a fox: its otherness is eventually the otherness (and humanness) of Henry Grenfel.

'Spell-bound' occurs repeatedly in the following paragraphs, differentiated from March's mechanical vision and 'automatic intelligence' (F p. 11). The fox continues to elude her in their hunter/hunted relationship, but her 'inner mind' is entirely full of him and the obviously sexual power which he exerts. In this passage the connection between vision and 'knowing', Lawrence's 'root-vision', is developed along with the animality of the fox, embodied in a word like 'muzzle':

She took her gun again and went to look for the fox. For he had lifted his eyes upon her, and his knowing look seemed to have entered her brain. She did not so much think of him: she was possessed by him. She saw his dark, shrewd, unabashed eye looking into her, knowing her. She felt him invisibly master her spirit. She knew the way he lowered his chin as he looked up, she knew his muzzle, the golden brown, and the greyish white. And again, she saw him glance over his shoulder at her, half inviting, half contemptuous and cunning. So she went, with her great startled eyes glowing, her gun under her arm, along the wood edge.
(*The Fox*, p. 11)

Here the eye becomes the mind. Seeing becomes knowing, or consciousness, but distinct from the kind of consciousness which simply reveals the world of phenomena as present-at-hand. The eye has developed beyond its purely optical use. The language in these passages is clearly about vision *and* it is also sexual, about male sexual power, underscoring the relationship between Henry Grenfel and March. In the passages quoted the language deliberately gives the visual and the physical a specific relation. Sight continues to be a

metaphor for 'knowing' but also for masculine desire as the intense sexuality of each barely sexual encounter between March and the fox (Grenfel) is expressed in the language of eyes and vision. The fox 'holds' March with his eyes and penetrates her with his vision. Lawrence's achievement here, and this is really the point, is to recover physicality without resorting to the mere everyday physicality. This is also true of 'Excuse' (*Women in Love*, chapter XXIII) where the description of the sexual union of Ursula and Birkin is expressed in a language which is not simply in the service of the ordinarily physical or carnal experience. In both *The Fox* and *Women in Love* 'love' focuses this question (which is in the first place a question of language) because it has a 'physical' object. Indeed, in *Women in Love* Lawrence provides a penetrating critique of 'love' and eventually brings it radically back to the linguistic.

3.4 'Love'

It is useful for Lawrence that 'love' is a familiar word and an apparently simple and traditional one. In his book *Rational Love* Warren Shibles' view is that 'The word "love" is very familiar. This is unfortunate. It suggests that we know more about love than we really do.'⁵ Lawrence would not agree that the familiarity of the word is so unfortunate, indeed on one level its simplicity makes it a highly suitable word for him to address. The etymology of 'love' does not reveal a very different sense from its current meaning (the meaning we think we have grasped, and which is culturally determined).

In some contexts the traditional meaning would not pose a problem for Lawrence at all but in *Women in Love* it is addressed as a problematic term precisely because it is simultaneously an ancient and 'natural' word and one with a distinctively modern and sublimative inflection. For this reason, for his alertness to this co-existence of the ancient and modern in the word, Lawrence's novel should be included in any thorough bibliography of works on 'love'. It offers a rigorous and philosophical critique of the Western conception of 'love' in the English novel. The following discussion will build on this claim and develop the point further. ^{Indeed,} 'love' is a word Lawrence must 'get behind' in the course of his literary career and his consciousness of the word's literary-historical past is the first step on the way.

Rupert Birkin is the character in the novel whose radicalism lies in his interrogation of a tradition of European loving which has its roots in a *literary* form, and it is Lawrence's consciousness of this literary representation of love which I propose to begin with. In his early novels he consciously and actively resists the Wagnerian ethic derived from the courtly love tradition and commonly thought of as 'natural' in the West insofar as it defines orthodox relations with the other sex. This is the substance of Lawrence's critique of 'romance' which he worked out in its essentials in his early career. In the early novels he demolishes, or sets out to demolish, the historical tradition with varying degrees of success. In a work like *The Trespasser*, for instance, he is himself both inside and outside the Wagnerian tradition. It is not until *The Rainbow* that he has pulled away from that ethic altogether, as he finds a language which

can better articulate his own 'metaphysic'. The treatment of love in *Women in Love* in particular has an important relation to its treatment in much of Lawrence's discursive writing on sexuality from the Renaissance to the modern day, and with his critique of the sentimental novel and ethics. This sense of an implicit historical synopsis working in the term 'love' is central to what follows.

Lawrence's position, uniquely, is his dissolution of the received conceptions and expectations which conventionally delimit heterosexual love and which he describes in 'Morality and the Novel' as the principal human relationship (STHOE p.175). He is not, of course, the first writer to offer a critique of the Western conception of love. Without wishing to rehearse ideas which are by now widely familiar I want to draw attention to the two most celebrated books on this theme in order to signal the broad scholarly context against which Lawrence's critique may be measured, and more crucially to throw Lawrence's thought into relief. These are Denis de Rougemont's *Passion and Society* ⁶ and C. S. Lewis's *The Allegory of Love* ⁷ which between them summarize the tradition.

Lawrence's 'metaphysic', as it emerged, accorded a central place to love in the light of his critique of the legacy of the courtly love ethic as Lewis describes it, with 'love' taken over by courtly love, and the continental 'romantic love' myth described by de Rougemont, given that these are at the heart of what is generally considered 'natural' (a highly problematic conception) in heterosexual relations, and given that to Lawrence's mind the cast of contemporary human

relations is fundamentally false. One of Lawrence's major concerns, therefore, is his interrogation of what Lewis calls 'the erotic tradition of modern Europe' ^{which has} /become familiar enough to be central to 'our ethics, our imagination, or our daily life.' (Lewis, pp.3-4). Rupert Birkin's insistence on suspending the old meanings of the word 'love', and his conception of 'star-equilibrium' (WL p.319) which occupies a central place in Lawrence's 'metaphysic', can and should be seen against this background. Lawrence's love ethic has its origins in his critique of the love-religion or system of ethics represented in the conventions of courtly love and viewed as the origin of contemporary love-values. Any discussion which Lawrence institutes on love, including that in *Women in Love*, contains this critique implicitly and dramatically.

Whilst an inquiry into the origins of this tradition is not the subject of *Women in Love* an inquiry into its effects as an ethic is central to this novel and to the novel as a genre. The novel supersedes poetry as the important vehicle for these cultural structures, with significant differences evolving between European and English fiction. Lewis cites Chrétien de Troyes as one of the originators of 'the novel of sentiment' (Lewis, p.29) implying that in psychological terms the novel's debt to the northern European romance tradition is considerable. There are grounds for arguing that in mainland Europe the anti-matrimonial cast of chivalry that Lewis describes is maintained at a very deep, one could say unconscious, level in the novel. This is in contrast to the English novel where erotic unorthodoxy has become marriage. Marriages (chiefly among the ruling

class), argues Lewis, were business contracts where love was not a consideration. Gudrun Brangwen echoes this sentiment: '"Marriage is a social arrangement, I take it, and has nothing to do with the question of love."' (WL p.289), and in *Aaron's Rod* marriage is rejected altogether as Lawrence explores the metaphysics of separateness in contrast to the metaphysics of 'stable equilibrium' (WL p.150), achievable between two individuals, which is analyzed in *Women in Love*. Lewis adds, 'Any idealization of sexual love, in a society where marriage is purely utilitarian, must begin by being an idealization of adultery', (Lewis, p.13) and this extends oxymoronically into marriage itself as in medieval theory sexual feelings for a spouse (ie. for a wife, this being a purely masculinist theory) were judged to be sinful. Lewis cites the early church fathers Hugo of St. Victor, Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas on this theme, and quotes from Peter Lombard '*omnis ardentior amator propriae uxoris adulter est*, passionate love of a man's own wife is adultery.' (Lewis, p.15). Feudal marriage as it is here described and the views authorized by the medieval church, it is argued, contributed much to the development of the erotic 'religion' of courtly love in literature.

In the tradition the lover, who is distinguished by nobility of behaviour rather than by personal wealth is also distinguished by his piety and 'worships' the lady as he worships at the altar of *Amor*. The object of such devotion is conventionally a married woman. As Lewis reminds us, husbands commonly play a minor role and are frequently absent: the lover's rival is not the husband but another lover. Denis de Rougement places a different emphasis on the husband stressing the

necessity of this figure as an obstruction. Discussing the story of Tristan he argues that 'But for the existence of a husband, the lovers would have had to get married; and it is unbelievable that Tristan should ever be in a position to marry Iseult.' (de Rougement, pp.44-5). In the tradition husband-figures expect obedience from a wife and so conventionally in the husband-wife relationship the roles are reversed, because in courtship the man is servile. Iseult notably offers a challenge to that perception. Both Lewis and de Rougement make the point that the rules of love are opposed to marriage and that courtly love ultimately results in an adulterous myth of feeling.

Lawrence is determined to pull away from an ethic with an artificial basis. The contemporary conception of love has developed from this literary model even if it has developed different emphases in the European and English novel respectively. His criticism of the treatment of love in the novel derives from his sense that this ethic or system of values and relations barely conceals what he calls a pornographic tendency in literature. Like Lewis and de Rougement Lawrence's initial interest is on love as a cultural construct and one that is constructed in language. The problem for Lawrence is the problem identified by Lewis in his critique of courtly love that the expression, the rhetoric of courtly love, over an undefined period of time comes to be seen as genuinely representing the emotion when in fact it is rather *creating* that emotion. The feeling imitates the invention, which is Lewis's point, and which in large measure accounts for the contemporary conception of love. Lewis's position is partly that, in recognizing this, we can reach a better understanding of the

present. For Lawrence, however, the gulf which persists between the genuine feeling, which is not easily defined, and its literary-historical representation begs to be closed. If the rhetoric of courtly love maintains that gulf, Lawrence's purpose is to bring a different conception of love back to language.

A split has opened up between the 'natural' emotion 'love' which has to do with the arousal of specific and immediate feelings in people, and the artificial language of love in literature, particularly that derived from medieval tradition. The cultural construct becomes naturalized, is taken to be the thing itself, and 'love' as 'natural', existing prior to language, is to all intents and purposes effaced. It is lost to, and because of, a highly artificial language which persists in making the same assertions. Lawrence's critique of 'romance' is grounded in his sensitivity to this artifice. Much of the point is that courtly love is expressed in a rhetoric of oxymoron, that is to say in a language of contradiction and opposition: the courtly lover suffers in love and experiences love most often as pain and denial. It is a love characterized by servility and prostration. So the love-ethic which is seen as 'natural' in the West is an oxymoronic conception and in Lawrence's view negatively so. In his own love-ethic, as I shall argue, the oxymoronic is given a more positive significance. Traditionally, the *rhetoric* of oxymoron, which is so overt in the poetry, creates and sustains the rupture between language and love, the thing itself.

Love is therefore culturally constructed as a problem and one founded on a multiplicity of oppositions and contradictions. In the tradition outlined the loved object is fundamentally and forever unattainable and paradoxically much of her mystique depends on this. The attraction felt between the lover and his object in the courtly love tradition can never result in a union like the official contracting of husband and wife. The two people in the potentially adulterous relationship are restrained from coming together physically in any legitimate sense. In the first place the distribution of attraction is unequal inasmuch as the love originates typically in a man (the lover is male), whose object is conventionally one of the few women in the feudal court who as Lewis describes is responsible for 'whatever "courtesy" is in the place' (Lewis, p.12). Marriage is not a possibility because of the disjunction of marriage and love in medieval theory. In which case courtly love can be construed as an essentially self-defeating male fantasy which sets in place the distinction between wives and mistresses in the European consciousness. Birkin and Ursula frivolously refer to this distinction in 'Flitting' (WL p.371) although their sense of Gudrun as a 'natural' mistress, anyway an unsound conception, is not the same as the virtuous object of desire in courtly love. Courtly love is easily recognizable as a masculine construct predicated on male desire. Oxymoronically expressed from the male point of view it unfairly attributes to women a 'cruel kindness'.

Lawrence's (Birkin's) ethic is a response and an alternative to this fundamentally unequal conception of love and desire in the

tradition, now 'naturalized'. I propose to show how his alertness to the rhetoric of oxymoron and its implications motivates in his own thought a rather different oxymoronic consciousness. As in all things in Lawrence, the problem of 'love' must be brought back to language. Birkin is the central mouthpiece for this. The relation of woman and man which described metaphorically as 'star-equilibrium' is obviously the pivotal conception in Lawrence's critique of 'romance' properly developed in *Women in Love*. In 'star-equilibrium' Lawrence has returned to the hyphenated construction with which we are already familiar (in 'root-vision', 'blood-consciousness', 'sap-consciousness' and so on), but in this context the construction has a unique and striking force. The reader responds to it as a description of relations between lovers and as a particular instance of 'Lawrencean' language, but in this example the metaphor and the idea it embodies radically co-incide. In 'star-equilibrium' two normally unrelated verbal elements are brought into a specific relationship which is concretized by the graphic presence of the hyphen. However, in bringing these elements into mutual proximity the hyphen also simultaneously holds them apart, an event in which the structure of oxymoron is unconsciously imitated. There is consequently a profound homology between the structure of oxymoron and the structure of 'star-equilibrium'. This makes 'star-equilibrium' a linguistic structure which resembles the central 'metaphysical' idea which it describes as Birkin tries to represent it to Ursula. As I will now argue this hyphenated construction represents the centrality of oxymoron in Lawrence's view of 'love' without itself being, strictly, an oxymoron. It does so by bringing two (verbal) elements into the relation

described and simultaneously holding them apart so that each retains a separateness in relation to the other. This is crucially a linguistic equivalent to Birkin's ideal of male/female relationships.

The astral metaphor predominates wherever Birkin makes a serious attempt to cast this ethic or 'metaphysic' into words. These are the strongest terms in which love's traditional rhetoric of oxymoron is implicitly challenged. Birkin: "'What I want is a strange conjunction with you -- " he said quietly: " -- not meeting and mingling; -- you are quite right:-- but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings:-- as the stars balance each other.'" (WL p.148). What is being rejected is the oxymoronic language of a love-lorn lover experiencing the desirable pain of love, as well as the loss of independence of either party in the course of the relationship. The kind of love which has the effect of consuming both bodies, making them inseparable, relieving them of their singularity, has no place in Birkin's conception. The same terms he uses here describe the, as Ursula sees it, bullying relationship between the tom-cat Mino and the she-cat. Birkin argues that "'with the Mino, it is the desire to bring this female cat into a pure stable equilibrium, a transcendent and abiding *rapport* with the single male. -- Whereas without him, as you see, she is a mere stray, a fluffy sporadic bit of chaos.'" (WL p.150). Ursula's appropriation of the negative term 'satellite' (WL p.150) points up the possibility of a misogynist sub-text in his description, which arguably identifies a genuine flaw in the conception. Birkin is anthropomorphising as he regards the unquestionably male superiority over the 'fluffy' she-cat. However, Ursula's response also underlines

the usual reception of Lawrence's more radical ideas, typically misunderstood. It could, after all, be argued that Lawrence's critique of 'romantic' love does not result in a misogynist ethic, as Ursula suspects, inasmuch as he is challenging the particularly masculinist conception of courtly love, and given that in the thesis of 'star-equilibrium' the mutual separateness of each individual 'in love' rather than the gendered superiority of one over the other is foregrounded.

Birkin continues to re-state the ethic using the same metaphor as before: '"No," he said, "it is a law of creation. One is committed. One must commit oneself to a conjunction with the other -- forever. But it is not self-less -- it is a maintaining of the self in mystic balance and integrity -- like a star balanced with another star."' (WL p.152). This commitment is not necessarily that of marriage or 'pseudo-marriage' and, as the closing argument of the novel makes clear, Birkin perceives that many such conjunctions can be achieved and can thrive simultaneously in the course of a single life. Ursula is ironically perceived as subscribing uncritically to the masculinist conception of 'natural' love: the word 'love' is never as problematic to her as it is to Birkin. He articulates the kind of love he associates with her desires and which Lawrence regards as the contemporary view. Birkin: '"I tell you, you want love to administer to your egotism, to subserve you. Love is a process of subservience with you -- and with everybody. I hate it."' (WL p.153). Grounded in his philosophy is Lawrence's recognition of the reductive hegemony of the ego in Western society. Just as he is anti-oedipal Lawrence/Birkin

is also anti-ego. In 'Man to Man' (*Women in Love*, chapter XVI) Birkin is to articulate the egoism of love as "'a lust for possession, a greed of self-importance in love. She [Ursula] wanted to have, to own, to control, to be dominant.'" (WL p.200). This consciousness is written into the other remarks in the novel about love as 'a dance of opposites' (WL p.153) which is how Birkin describes Ursula's conception, also calling her relation with Will 'a love of opposition' (WL p.367). Within this scheme opposition and equilibrium are clearly very different conceptions.

The theme of polarisation and relation, central too in the description of family relations in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, is then more explicitly introduced. The notion of separateness is qualified by a new emphasis on difference and interaction. Although Birkin is always in danger of sounding tedious and monologic the 'metaphysic' which he articulates has a fundamentally dialogic basis. Using terms which rehearse and recall the language and conceptions of the discursive essays, particularly *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Lawrence argues that men and women are not simply different in order to couple 'naturally' but are 'fulfilled in difference' (WL p.201). Woman is not-man and man is not-woman and in this they are 'perfectly polarised' (WL p.201). Interaction between the poles rather than dependence on the part of either in relation to the other avoids the 'self-abnegation of love' (WL p.201). As de Rougement suggests, romantic love, which Birkin is criticising, is projected from a lover onto an object so that the object's own truth is masked. At its best Birkin's ethic challenges the erasure of the woman's identity in

'love', even if concern about his own male identity motivates his critique. This enduring theme of self-abnegation is derived from Lawrence's awareness of the literary-historical origins of the modern conception of love. Birkin's complaint concerns the cultural re-invention of love and the consequent loss, as he sees it, of 'separate being' (WL p.201), that is of intrinsic difference, for both men and women in love.

By making 'love' the subject of metaphysical speculation Lawrence is consciously destabilizing the word. Earlier I argued that the 'visual' was inescapably linguistic in Lawrence and one effect of this is the destabilization of 'world' in the narrative. There is no 'world' in the novel, argues Lawrence, there is only language as a profoundly philosophical medium. It is a medium where the conscious creative will produces events, world, but there is also a level below the narrative idiom where 'language thinks'. In 'star-equilibrium' the conventional conception of 'love' is radically destabilized. Lawrence/Birkin has effectively deconstructed 'love' by uncovering new words which reveal the standard conception as purely artificial and even politically motivated. I want now to underline the suggested relationship between love and language which Lawrence recognizes. To do so is to point up the newly realized relation of metaphor and 'metaphysic'.

Whilst 'love' is not a metaphor in conventional terms, love and metaphor share certain characteristics. Like metaphor, love always has an object. It requires two terms or entities, better to say two

'bodies', in order to work at all. Narcissism might be construed as an exception because of desire directed towards the self, but in the myth the self is confronted literally as the other because of the subject's reflection in the pool, and in any case Echo is available in the myth as a second term. Prior to Lawrence the physical aspect of love is effaced in language. It is never linguistic, but merely written about or spoken of. Lawrence's uniqueness is to make the physical dimension of love a linguistic matter: this is implicit in Birkin's language although Birkin never realizes it consciously. This explains the centrality of oxymoron in Lawrence, a metaphor predicated on two bodies in close proximity. The suggestion is that in Lawrence the relation between two elements, whether they are individuals like Ursula and Birkin or words like 'star' and 'equilibrium', 'stable' and 'equilibrium', is oxymoronic. Birkin's language covertly attests to this. Importantly, the subliminality of this effect in Lawrence's prose contrasts with the deliberately oxymoronic *rhetoric* of traditional love poetry.

The rhetoric of oxymoron in courtly love, for instance, keeps the language at a considerable distance from 'love', the thing itself. Lawrence, by destabilizing such apparently unshakeable conceptions like 'love', is removing the sense of rhetorical oxymoron in the literary tradition and pushing the oxymoronic quality back into the nature of the thing itself. The relation of two lovers, Lawrence argues, must ultimately be oxymoronic in order to escape the disintegrative consequences of a state which is conventionally only expressed or conceptualized as oxymoron. Lawrence's conception is

therefore of separate entities in a dialogic relation. In heterosexual relations, jealousies and (marital) discord stem from a resistance to this dialogism and betray an unconscious cleaving to the traditional conception.

The oxymoronic narrative of *Women in Love*, in the very grain of its language, represents the sense that we can never get 'outside' love because it is a cultural construction. A problem which Birkin never confronts, nor Lawrence, is that 'star-equilibrium' is also a construction, as much as the courtly love-religion. The problem is one of casting something which is non-linguistic (i.e. love, like vision) into language. As Birkin identifies in his references to an age where love was conceived differently -- he might as well say in different cultures rather than inventing a mythical past -- love was nevertheless present. This would be a difficult assertion to contradict. All that can be said is that in cultures different to this one our conception of 'love' does not exist but people still love. As it is, our conception of love surrounds and envelops us too closely and completely, perhaps 'naturally', for us ever to be genuinely outside or beyond it, just as we are never outside or beyond language. This is of course recognized by Lewis and de Rougemont but they point us to a tradition and a language, a discourse, which sustains the rupture between the feeling and the language which Lawrence dislikes so much and to a considerable degree writes against. We still 'feel', but the language forces us to construe feeling in a determined way, one that Lawrence argues is erroneous. The rupture between love as a feeling and 'love' as a construction is something which Lawrence draws

attention to, so that, like Birkin, he can attempt a critique of the conception.

Ursula's insistence at the end of the novel on Birkin's not being able to achieve the relationships he desires because of 'perversity' (WL p.481), in other words, unnaturalness, reinforces our sense of the very real difficulties of challenging any conception which has entered the collective consciousness as 'natural'. To be conventionally 'in love' is to reappropriate for oneself an artificial mode of being. To be in 'star-equilibrium' or 'stable equilibrium' with an Other is equally an artificial construct but it does, at least, destabilize the legitimate and official conception which is why Birkin's positive subversiveness is underlined as the novel closes.

It could be argued that Lawrence has simply returned 'love' to oxymoron rather than destabilizing the familiar conception. Is he in fact only re-stating the traditional view that 'love' is oxymoronic and, therefore, only bringing us back to the standard cliché about 'love'? The answer to this rests in Lawrence's own subliminally oxymoronic language. In contrast to the tradition where the rhetoric of oxymoron is overt and easily available to the reader, the oxymoronic nature of Lawrence's conception is covert, latent within his narrative. The homology between the conception (and structure) of 'star-equilibrium' and oxymoron, for instance, which I have argued is central, is far from explicit in *Women in Love* but this does not rob it of its significance. On the contrary, Lawrence's point is partly that the explicit has a distancing function which his own language

resists, although in phrasing it in this way I am not arguing that the effect of his language is altogether conscious. To sum up, the oxymoronic is veiled and subliminal within the narrative *and at the same time* is the central structuring element of the whole. Once again metaphor and 'metaphysic' are demonstrably not separable.

There is another level where love and metaphor have a distinctive relation. This is where 'love' becomes difficult to define except by metonymy, synecdoche or synonym. The popular if commercialized formula 'love is ...' followed by a word intended to represent the familiar experience has a certain symptomatic value representing the general need to say what 'love' is (it becomes a fixed notion) in terms of collective recognition. This formula is, of course, only words, and never extends to say what love is not when the romantic myth, popularly sustained by the commercialized form, fades. Where a definition is sought 'love' is commonly defined in relation to something else. In *Rational Love* Warren Shibles, offering a general 'truth', says 'any definition given of love is only a metaphor which is expanded and so should not be taken literally.' (Shibles, p.20). The 'only' in his statement is too negative and he consequently throws out too much. Part of the interest of 'love', as the preceding discussion shows, is that we can only approach an understanding of it because of metaphor. As I have said, 'love' is no more of a metaphor than any other word but metaphor is profoundly implicated in its meaning for us.

In his interrogation of 'love' Birkin is asking the question asked by Nietzsche; the question continually and implicitly addressed by Lawrence: 'Is language the adequate expression of all realities?' (PT p.81). For Birkin 'love' has become a 'herd' word and his response is to see it in moral terms. To use the word 'love' with its old meanings intact reminds him that to use language at all is 'to lie according to a fixed convention' (PT p.84). The use of the word 'intact' here underlines the relentless appropriateness of metaphor. Like Lawrence's use of 'frictional' in the Foreword to *Women in Love*, 'intact' resonates with sexual and physical meaning. In the present instance it is a metaphor which emerged unconsciously given the immediate context, but it underlines some of the seminal points of the larger argument.

Does the value of 'love' therefore change? This critique should force us to look again at those places in the novel where the word 'love' previously seemed innocuous enough. The title becomes more problematic than it at first seemed. Ragussis rightly draws attention to its ambiguity: 'It is only in the course of reading the novel that he [the reader] begins to realize he did not understand the title at all.' (Ragussis, p.191). Reading the novel it is soon apparent that the principal emphasis is not unequivocally on the intransitive construction 'in love' in the sense in which it has been a traditional preoccupation of poets and novelists. The title seems in the first place as descriptive as *Sons and Lovers* or *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, for instance, titles which refer to personal relations.² Although on the face of it the title does refer to the relationships of Ursula and

Gudrun Brangwen, the talk which characterizes these relationships brings the word 'love' sharply into focus as problematic.

The phrase 'women in love' begins to resonate like the phrases 'women in work' or 'women in politics', signifying the female 'trespass' into predominantly masculine domains. Courtly love represents the male point of view: love/desire traditionally originates in the perceiving male while the woman is the object and that she enjoys being the object is part of the male myth. Casting 'women in love' in the light of these other phrases has the effect of pushing 'love' further from the 'romantic' ideal. 'Love' in this novel is combative in the first place. Ursula and Gudrun conduct their relationships with Birkin and Gerald fairly egoistically. In both *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* Ursula is represented as independent and, therefore, modern: she is a woman who desires to be 'in work'. In love she is prepared to participate only in a relationship that leaves her with her own sense of self, which Birkin interprets as egoism, but at the same time subscribes to a received conception of 'love' believing it to be 'natural'. She challenges any idea of love as a construct and therefore questions the notion of an alternative to the emotion she 'feels'. Ursula: '"You can't have two kinds of love. Why should you!"' (WL p. 481). She can only make sense of the emotion in terms of the myth. Given the way she fights her corner, however, it is evident that in her public and personal lives her horizons are political, more truly so than are Gudrun's who, as an artist, situates herself outside the common boundaries. Ursula is, in this sense, an extension of *The Rainbow's* Winifred Inger although this earlier model of the

independent, self-sufficient woman pays for her politics by being cast first as a lesbian and subsequently as a fitting mate for Ursula's Uncle Tom. Winifred Inger is as significant as Skrebensky in Ursula's development but her response to the break with Ursula is barely considered. She is kept marginal by Lawrence which makes him vulnerable to accusations of homophobia. However, Winifred's sexual orientation is deeply related to the questions of 'otherness' and 'polarity' which have been raised here. In general, Lawrence's treatment of homosexuality should be seen in these broader, philosophical terms. The point of interest with Lawrence is the quality (arguably the anti-egoistical quality) of the human relationship and not just its sexual configuration. This, at least, seems to be Birkin's point. Once again the real subject is not simply sex. In the *particular* instance of Winifred Inger and Ursula a cosmic metaphor serves to define the relation between them: not that of positive polarity which is intrinsically part of the 'metaphysic' of the later novel, but of a sun and its 'satellite', the word with which Ursula will berate Birkin. Regarding her and Winifred, 'the girl sat as within the rays of some enriching sun' (R p.312). The relation between them is not the unity of two bodies posited in the relation of Tom and Lydia, or the balanced singleness desired by Birkin, but a wavering and uneven relation which shifts between unity and separation: this is represented in the swimming scene where 'the bodies of the two women touched, heaved against each other for a moment, then were separate.' (R p.314).

When Ursula herself enters the world of work as a school-teacher in the chapter of *The Rainbow* pointedly entitled 'The Man's World' (*The Rainbow*, chapter XIII), the problem of her female status in a predominantly male preserve (although educated women traditionally became school-teachers), is accentuated in the narrative: 'She tried to approach him [the headmaster] as a young bright girl usually approaches a man, expecting a little chivalrous courtesy. But the fact that she was a girl, a woman, was ignored or used as a matter for contempt against her.' (R p.351). Lawrence treats the subject of Ursula's employment ironically, and not only to underline her naivety. She wants her pupils to 'love' her: 'She dreamed how she would make the little, ugly children love her. She would be so *personal*. Teachers were always so hard and impersonal. There was no vivid relationship.' (R p.341). In the dialogues of *Women in Love* the mature Ursula apprehends love differently of course and those dialogues in which she participates so fiercely throw the love-experiences of *The Rainbow* into relief. 'Star-equilibrium' is only achieved with Birkin who forces them both into a consciousness of the politics of love and language. Lawrence is explicit about the resulting relationship in 'Excuse': 'She was next to him, and hung in a pure rest, as a star is hung, balanced unthinkably ... he too waited in the magical steadfastness of suspense' (WL p.319). By the end of *Women in Love* 'love' is not reduced to a manageable quantity, an unproblematic marriage or a separation, but is distinguished by the contradictions, oppositions and mobility which it has helped to focus throughout the novel.

Warren Shibles argues that "'I love you," may become "I understand you," in order to distinguish the term love from related terms and to gain insight into the word "love.'" (Shibles, pp.20-1) but simple substitutions like this do not engender the profound critique which Lawrence finds necessary. In part Shibles' problem is the one the characters are struggling with as they endeavour to define the word, or define themselves in relation to the conception they carry about with them in their heads. In the following pages I propose to isolate some passages from the novel in which a single meaning is resisted.

In 'Flitting' (*Women in Love*, chapter XXVII) Ursula wants exaggerated verbal declaration, 'overstatement' (WL p.369), from Birkin. Even so the words she hears 'sounded like lies' (WL p.369):

Even when he said, whispering with truth, "I love you, I love you," it was not the real truth. It was something beyond love, such a gladness of having surpassed oneself, of having transcended the old existence. How could he say 'I', when he was something new and unknown, not himself at all? This I, this old formula of the ego, was a dead letter. (*Women in Love*, p.369)

This is Birkin as anti-ego achieving 'star-equilibrium' although ironically Ursula is less certain than he about this relationship. Lawrence writes here of a 'new One' which is a 'paradisaal unit regained from the duality' of Ursula and Birkin (WL p.369). This 'One' is not the reductive 'angel' that Tom Brangwen talks about at the wedding of Anna and Will (R pp.128-9), but comprises, oxymoronically, the 'separate parts' of Ursula and Birkin in a relationship which transcends the push and pull of egoism. The phrase 'I love you' sounds like a lie because within it the elements 'I' and 'you' are not in a

balanced relation. 'I', always capitalized, is the privileged term, the first term in the binary opposition I/you where 'you' is always secondary and by implication female.

This moment occurs towards the end of the principal conflict between Ursula and Birkin. After this they will continue to argue but in the knowledge that some basic understanding has been reached. In 'Mino' Birkin has already struggled to articulate that which is 'beyond love', that is beyond the received view, and has engendered the usual contest. He is thrown into considerable confusion. A man who hates his own metaphors, 'love', or the conception he prefers to 'love', resides for him in a place beyond the lexicon. He is aware that we are enveloped by love, that in fact there is no 'beyond', but his desire for silence is recognition that language, the available rhetoric of love, is inadequate: 'And it is, there I would want to meet you -- not in the emotional loving plane -- but there beyond, where there is no speech and no terms of agreement.' (WL p.146). His words suggest his philosophical profundity: what he cannot speak of he must consign to silence.⁹ He is in need of a different language for his different conception of love, but the point is that love is still, on an important level, linguistic. Birkin has conceived of a transcendental condition but, perhaps because he is not a poet, it seems to him that it resists being contained by discursive forms.

The debate on love is taken up again in the conflict between Gerald and Gudrun. One of Birkin's themes, as he deconstructs the word, has been that what 'love' really means is 'hate'. Gerald and Gudrun

operate within this opposition. For them 'love' and 'death' are also associated terms, a further binary opposition. Appropriately enough 'Death and Love' (*Women in Love*, chapter XXIV) is the title of the chapter in which Gerald makes his way to Gudrun's bedroom, a trespasser in the familial home. Gerald, who is cast in an heroic mould even if he is to represent the destructive impersonal forces of an industrialized society, sets out on his journey to Gudrun (the legendary Guthrune is a husband-slayer) on a quest for renewal at a time paradoxically both of loss (of the father) and gain (of the family business). Although 'death' in Lawrence's chapter heading is prophetic inasmuch as Gerald eventually perishes and inasmuch as the relationship with Gudrun is one of decay and corruption, in the immediate context it refers to the dead father. In calling his chapter 'Death and Love' Lawrence associates two terms which are very closely associated, again oxymoronically, in the European psyche. Romantic tradition is stocked with characters who literally and metaphorically 'die' for love. The irony of the chapter depends to some extent on this association. Unhappy love-affairs have a distinct place in European literature, as elsewhere. As de Rougement notes with reference to the European tradition, 'happy love has no history' (de Rougement, p.15). Lawrence's early novels subscribe to this while the mature works turn to the developing critique of 'love'.

In the mountains Gudrun and Gerald act out the final stages of their conflict. Gudrun, now become 'elemental' (WL p.441) and 'diabolic' (WL p.442) taxes Gerald with the concept 'love'. As before, the question becomes ostensibly one of semantics:

GUUDRUN: "You know you never *have* loved me, don't you?"
 GERALD: "I don't know what you mean by the word 'love'."
 (*Women in Love*, p. 442)

Gerald's appeal to the question of meaning here is defensive. In the course of this exchange the word 'love' is used repeatedly and by denying knowledge of the word as Gudrun uses it Gerald attempts to protect himself both from the force of the emotion and from the consequences of ever having loved, or of ever having gone through the motions of loving Gudrun at all. He never displays with her the unconscious sympathy which he displays in his involuntary clutching of Birkin's hand in 'Gladiatorial'. Gudrun, cast as an agent of destruction, or as one critic puts it 'modernist villain' (Pinkney, p. 93), demonstrates her power by forcing a declaration of love from Gerald:

"Say you love me," she pleaded. "Say you will love me for ever -- won't you -- won't you?"
 But it was her voice only that coaxed him. Her senses were entirely apart from him, cold and destructive of him. It was her overbearing *will* that insisted.
 "Won't you say you'll love me always?" she coaxed. "Say it, even if it isn't true -- say it Gerald, do."
 "I will love you always," he repeated, in real agony, forcing the words out.
 She gave him a quick kiss.
 "Fancy your actually having said it," she said, with a touch of raillery.
 He stood as if he had been beaten.
 (*Women in Love*, p. 443)

Gerald's declaration of love while he is 'in real agony' provides an ironic slant on the courtly lover's oxymoronic rhetoric, he who suffers in a bittersweet love. This scene highlights the relation between speech, lies and power which is given a high profile in the

novel. Formerly it is Birkin who wants to prevent the utterance of 'love' until the old meaning has gone from it, while Gudrun enjoys hearing the old meaning evoked within the framework of mutual antagonism which characterizes her relation with Gerald. Here silence and speech in league with an oppressively traditional conception of 'love' alternately become repressive instruments of the will.

The modern lovers are Gerald and Gudrun and alternately Gerald and Pussum, Loerke and Leitner, and Gudrun and Loerke, 'modern' because of the insistent egoism of each participant in contrast to the anti-egoistic 'star-equilibrium' which is potentially Birkin's and Ursula's. Only in that relationship is romantic idealism even remotely dismantled in order to achieve a recognition of a 'truer' otherness, at a remove from the view which sees the Other merely as 'not I'. The old rhetoric of oxymoron in courtly love acquires a new meaning as a result of Lawrence's critique: it is now no longer an external rhetoric but the implicit nature of the experience. Love is revealed by Lawrence to have an oxymoronic structure which arises from the generally oxymoronic quality of the language in *Women in Love*, and the 'metaphysic'. The oxymoronic conception of love replaces the idealistic, romantic conception which had engendered the oxymoronic rhetoric.

3.5 Oxymoron

If there is a difficulty in saying that with Lawrence metaphor expands to include the whole of language, that difficulty resides in distinguishing what is generally true of language from that which is specific to Lawrence. Lawrence, like Nietzsche, is recognizably an individual stylist but in him the question of metaphor goes beyond bare style. My next point goes some way to illustrating this assertion. In my last chapter oxymoron was identified as the most dynamic, most potent, form of metaphor for Lawrence, in large part because it makes something positive out of difference and opposition, rather than resemblance. The tension between two unrelated terms brought suddenly into proximity is there described as 'frictional', a word which in Lawrence has sexual overtones but which more properly refers to language. In an oxymoron 'friction' is 'generated' (or tension and therefore meaning is created) by the semantic difference between the two terms brought together. It is a type of metaphor which does not invent relations so much as rely on our knowledge of semantics. Yet the emphasis does not fall entirely on this principle of opposition. Structurally oxymoron comprises two single contradictory elements in a new relation to each other. As I have argued, it is this structure which resonates with significance because of its resemblance to the structure of the central metaphysical image of the novel, Birkin's description of 'star-equilibrium'. The critical focus has been sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly on the homology between the structure of oxymoron and this central image of *Women in Love* in order to underline the fact that the metaphysic of

this conception is being expressed at a very deep structural level within the book's language.

Michael Bell contrasts the image of star-equilibrium with the rainbow and arch imagery of *The Rainbow* rightly arguing that the 'architectural' stability of the latter represents an intrinsic solidity which is absent from the idea of the star with its 'openness on all sides' (Bell, p.98). I propose to build on this perception by emphasizing the *two*-star or *two*-body structure of star-equilibrium in the light of what has been said about the oxymoronic mode of this novel, and Lawrence's oxymoronic spirit generally. Star-equilibrium represents Birkin's desire to be *simultaneously* single and exist meaningfully in relation to an Other. Two stars describe two beings, or souls, as separate elements high above the earth. The image does contrast, as Michael Bell says, with the more architectural rainbow image of the 'sister' novel with its stable arch and two ends rooted firmly in the earth, and the stars are, in contrast, unattached both from each other and from the ground. However, and this is what I would wish to add, they are not entirely free floating bodies: a tension keeps them in place, that is to say, both in their orbits and in relation to each other. Obviously without this force or tension the cosmos would either collapse into itself or its elements would simply drift apart. The structure of oxymoron and the structure of star-equilibrium therefore have in common the notion of two separate elements held apart (and together) by tension, as well as being in a balanced relation. If both elements were to come together without this tension they would be meaningless. It is in this way that a *linguistic*

structure importantly and *unconsciously* echoes the novel's principal metaphysical image.

The metaphysic of impersonal duality which Birkin/Lawrence struggles to make conscious in his encounters with Ursula is therefore represented at a deeper subliminal and linguistic level than might be expected. The structure of oxymoron reproduces the fundamental metaphysical principle which Birkin struggles to articulate through his cosmic metaphor, which is extended throughout the novel. In resorting to metaphor Birkin is endeavouring to make something conscious by using language as a descriptive medium -- he has a comparison view of metaphor¹⁰ which means that the relation he wants with Ursula is expressed almost as a simile in that they must become *like* two stars -- whereas the 'metaphysic' actually gets expressed at a much deeper structural level. Consequently the relation between the language and 'metaphysic' of the novel is unequivocally established, but not by Birkin, at least not directly. The habitually separate levels of metaphor and 'metaphysic' merge as the structures of language mediate the philosophy.

Lawrence has not consciously laboured to achieve this homology, and that is very largely the point, so at an unconscious level the linguistic structure of the book is identical to its philosophical, or metaphysical, premises. As Ricoeur says, 'Things that until that moment [of being brought together] were 'far apart' suddenly appear as 'closely related'.' (RM p.194, my brackets). The emphasis here is not on 'local' effects of the language: I will go on to show that what I

have already shown can *only* grow out of a pervasive quality of the book's language. Occasionally in *Women in Love* two characters achieve a momentary equilibrium but on the whole this state is elusive and the individuals remain for the most part locked into their singleness. In 'Death and Love', for instance, Gudrun and Gerald are 'such *strangers* -- and yet they were so frightfully, unthinkably *near*.' (WL p.330, my italics). In 'A Chair' (*Women in Love*, chapter XXVI) the young man's 'slinking singleness' (WL p.359) is represented, projecting him as a potential Aaron. In 'Flitting', thinking about marriage as a social institution, Gudrun sees herself as 'free' (WL p.374) and as 'one of the drifting lives that have no root' (WL p.376), that is to say without the impersonal connection desired by Birkin. Birkin's trajectory as he leaves Britain with Ursula is represented as positive, in contrast to the Futuristic descent of Gerald and Gudrun following a different trajectory on the toboggan in 'Snow' (*Women in Love*, chapter XXX). There the star metaphor is given an ironic meaning: their movement is described as 'a fall to earth, in a diminishing motion' (WL p.420).

The suggestion is not that Lawrence has singled out oxymoron for particular attention: to insist on this goes against the whole grain of the argument. It is difficult to say how consciously achieved the oxymoronic suggestion of phrases like 'star-equilibrium' and 'root-vision' is, for instance. In orthodox terms, of course, they are not oxymorons but both enjoy the creative conjunction of the two composite words, both being metaphorical expressions of quite complex levels. Consciously or unconsciously, Lawrence is evidently sensitive to what

Ricoeur calls 'the complex expression at play in oxymoron' (RM p.194). The point is that somehow these forms have been arrived at, that they are incongruous and yet distinctive, and special to Lawrence. For Lawrence, language is instrumental rather than problematic. Put crudely he has something to say and his linguistic sensitivity is vital to the saying of it. This is the origin of constructions like 'star-equilibrium', 'root-vision' and 'blood-consciousness'. At the same time these 'Lawrencean metaphors' effectively concretize Lawrence's mode (or modes) of thought in a way that makes this available to examination.

Oxymoron, then, participates in the collapse of the boundary between metaphor and 'metaphysic' because Lawrence's language and philosophy are ultimately not separable. This collapse is of particular importance in *Women in Love* whose mode of language this is. To Ricoeur, who despite his own argument still tends to regard metaphors as isolated occurrences within a narrative, the tension, or explicit contradiction in oxymoron, is significant only inasmuch as it points to a metaphorical meaning which solves, that is brings to an end, the problem of contradiction itself. His rather prescriptive view is that 'The metaphorical meaning as such is not the semantic clash but the new pertinence that answers its challenge.' (RM p.194). But the artist, particularly one with Lawrence's subtle relation to language, need not dispense with metaphorical structures so finally. A metaphor is not an isolated occurrence and a fleeting thing, just as language is never a thing apart from the reader, writer or speaker. Lawrence's unconscious use of the oxymoronic in this novel is a sign

of his deep-lying linguistic response to his own 'metaphysic' as he writes from *within* language. It is an indication of the extent to which he is 'at home' in language, to recall the Heideggerean metaphor. It remains to distinguish between oxymoron and the *oxymoronic* in Lawrence which, as I have implied, is distinct from 'oxymoron' as a conventional, separable, figure of speech. There is no need in Lawrence to attempt to uncover a metaphorical meaning which solves the problem of contradiction when the fact of oxymoronic contradiction, or more specifically the friction between the composite elements, is what is important and positive, as well as the notion of these elements in a balanced relation.

Whilst it is the structure of oxymoron, rather than instances of the actual metaphorical expression, which is at the 'heart' of *Women in Love*, I propose to examine the first instance in the novel, in 'Sisters' (*Women in Love*, chapter I), of an oxymoronic statement, and to draw out its significance within the text as a whole, before discussing parts of the 'Diver' chapter (*Women in Love*, chapter IV), which is particularly rich in oxymoronic expressions. There is a subliminal message in the first few pages of the novel which alerts us to the possibility of Lawrence innovating with a tension theory of metaphor: I take it that oxymoron, with its structure of anti-thesis, and the usually unreconcilable distance between opposites being suppressed, best illustrates a tension theory of metaphor.¹¹ In plain terms oxymoron is a metaphorical expression which demonstrates a tension theory, being predicated on two unlike concepts brought into each other's neighbourhood in a semantic challenge. Two of the

commonest examples in day-to-day speech are 'a living death' and 'bittersweet' which Ricoeur, for instance, cites alongside 'obscure clarity' (RM p.194). Poetic examples include Milton's 'darkness visible' and the oxymoronic density of Keat's 'unconfined / Restraint, imprisoned liberty' (*Endymion* I, lines 455-56). Sense depends on the differences between what the terms signify being reconciled. As Ricoeur explains, the solution of the enigma or riddle (which is a reference to Aristotle's dictum, 'for metaphors imply riddles' (*Rhetoric*, III, 1405b, 5)) therefore depends on a new semantic proximity being established between the unlike terms. Whilst this is how oxymoron functions conventionally at the level of discourse, it is essentially structurally that this trope has a special status in Lawrence. Having now set out the general argument I propose to conclude the discussion with some specific readings of 'language and metaphysic' in selected passages from *Women in Love*.

3.6 'Purple twigs were darkly luminous': oxymoron in 'Sisters' and 'Diver'

Early on in the novel, in the context of the sisters' conversation on marriage, Gudrun's physical response to Ursula's words is ambiguous:

"You wouldn't consider a good offer?" asked Gudrun.
 "I think I've rejected several," said Ursula.
 "Really!" Gudrun *flushed dark*.
 (*Women in Love*, pp.7-8, final emphases added)

The description of Gudrun shows that in physical terms she has

experienced a sensation akin to a *frisson*. The phrase 'flushed dark' is oxymoronic: the semantics of 'flushed' with its luminous, glowing, reddish connotations evidently challenge the semantics of 'dark' although 'dark' also belongs to that special group of words which have meaning in the context of the 'psychic' life as in the phrase 'the dark sun' often unproblematically viewed as the exemplar of Lawrencean oxymoron. Had Lawrence written of Gudrun that she 'flushed deeply' the sense would have been different. Gudrun's response is to all intents and purposes generated from the centres of feeling described in the essays on the unconscious. It is entirely appropriate that in the narrative she should 'flush' -- a physical sign -- 'dark', something which is not so evidently physical, but related more (in Lawrence's lexicon) to the psyche and the emotions. The same formula occurs in *The Rainbow* the young Baroness Skrebensky has the effect of making Will Brangwen 'flush darkly by assuming a biting, subtle class-superiority.' (R p.185). Here it is a formula which has not yet acquired the structural and symbolic significance that it has in *Women in Love*, but it is nevertheless deeply embedded in Lawrence's unconscious: evidently he is a writer who is drawn to oxymoron, and the other novels furnish us with examples, but in *Women in Love* the homology outlined between metaphor and 'metaphysic' underlines the particular significance of the oxymoronic in that novel. Unlike oxymoron in an ordinary language context the enigma in 'flushed dark' cannot be easily solved, at least not without recourse to what we already know about Lawrence's language.

There is a related moment in 'Snow' as the characters pass through the wintry landscape on their way to the lodge: 'Up and up, gradually, they went, through the cold *shadow-radiance* of the afternoon, silenced by the imminence of the mountains, the luminous, dazing sides of snow that rose above them and fell away beneath.' (WL p.400, emphasis added).¹² 'Shadow-radiance' functions like 'flushed darkly'. Hyphenated, it recalls constructions like 'root-vision' and 'blood-consciousness' but, where these are metaphors for a state of being and knowing, 'shadow-radiance' communicates the numinous scene. Visualizing what Lawrence means is difficult although the terms which are offered relate to an *a priori* understanding of a mountain scene ('seen'). Like 'flushed darkly', 'shadow-radiance' can be compared and contrasted with an expression like 'bittersweet' in everyday linguistic exchange. 'Shadow-radiance' does not communicate commonly felt experience as effectively, and universally, as the more everyday example. This is not simply because 'bittersweet' is more familiar, or more concrete, but because Lawrence's term, uniquely, throws its own elements into question. His is a construction which questions the 'kodak-objectivity' discussed at length by Lawrence in his essays on art and wherever he interrogates the merely optical as a sense. 'Flushed darkly' and 'shadow-radiance', like the 'cold-burning mud' of the Chinese goose drawing (WL p.89), are therefore oxymorons which articulate the anti-visual, but they also have a relation to other aspects of oxymoron which sustain the homology with 'star-equilibrium'.¹³

The landscape of 'Snow' is characterized by 'imminence'; the snow is 'luminous' and 'dazing'. The mountain lodge is at once the centre of a snowy expanse and metaphorically an open rose. The paragraph rendering the scene is dense with similes: the lodge, the only man-made landmark is 'like a dream'. I take it that this reference is strategic: 'like a dream' goes a long way to explaining the special nature of the language and also alludes to the relation of visual and anti-visual in *Women in Love*. Furthermore, it is a repeated note in the novel: in 'Mino' Ursula, travelling in a tram-car on her way to see Birkin, 'seemed to have passed into a kind of dream world, absolved from the conditions of actuality' (WL p.144). This contrasts with the more literal understanding of dream as a framing device as in *Aaron's Rod* for instance. Ursula's 'dream world' is a temporary absolution from work-a-day limitations. The implicit division is between the social world and the private world of the Self. Worlds, however, are constructed in the mind of the viewer and in language: in a chapter like 'Snow' the language does seem to describe a dream-landscape, a world which is fundamentally different from that of Beldover; one where Gudrun can become a crystal and 'pass altogether into the whiteness of the snow' (WL p.420). As in a dream the 'real' world is present only as a 'shadow-world' (WL p.410). Journeying to the same landscape Ursula 'visualizes' her childhood and life and consigns it to a past for which she has no further use. Generally speaking, therefore, the language of the novel is dream-like in the dimensions it imagines. It delimits an elusive world which is both alien and familiar, a far cry from incorporating an 'actual' dream into the plot on grounds of symbolic continuity.

As in a dream the scene in 'Snow' is *simultaneously* many things. They are, for instance, 'in the *heart* of the mountains' (WL p.398, emphasis added), which is unambiguous in itself as a metaphor from popular parlance. However, we know from *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* how much the heart is implicated in Lawrence's thought about metaphor, or if this sounds too conscious, in his thinking metaphorically. Lawrence is not simply being anthropomorphic but is investing the 'real' mountains with a special uncanny significance. The drama of feeling ends here. The silence in the mountains has the effect of 'surrounding the heart with frozen air' (WL p.399); the peaks become 'the heart petals of an open rose' (WL p.400), literally a 'muscular' image. The repetition of 'heart' is in keeping with the 'hair' and 'navel' imagery and the description of the station platform and lodge interior as 'naked'. This language recalls the 'heart of the world' passage in *The Trespasser* (T pp.79-80) where Helena, listening to the actual heart-beats of Siegmund, contemplates the possibility of an unconscious impersonal force in the world.

Oxymoron demands that several meanings be apprehended simultaneously. Continuing the examination of instances of the metaphorical expression I propose here to consider the oxymoronic structures which occur in a cluster in the opening paragraph of the 'Diver' episode because of what they communicate about the subliminal levels at work in the passage. In an ordinary language context oxymoron does not generally take care to conceal itself being a clever and pertinent formula for expressing a felt condition, like a 'living death'. We are usually conscious of it in the communicative act

because opposites are not normally combined meaningfully, and where they occur appositely they have a special power. The following passage would most likely be read as both 'naturalistic' and typically Lawrencean. Whilst the language here is highly oxymoronic it most usually passes unremarked:

The atmosphere was grey and translucent, the birds sang sharply on the young twigs, the earth would be quickening and hastening in growth. The two girls walked swiftly, gladly, because of the soft, subtle rush of morning that filled the wet haze. By the road the blackthorn was in blossom, white and wet, its tiny amber grains burning faintly in the white smoke of blossom. Purple twigs were darkly luminous in the grey air, high hedges glowed like living shadows, hovering nearer, coming into creation. The morning was full of a new creation.
(*Women in Love*, p. 46) ¹⁴

Here the use of oxymoron is not overt but at the same time the *oxymoronic* is an important characteristic of the language, in the repeated formula of 'wet ... burning', for example. The paradox is that these are not strictly oxymorons but they do partake of the oxymoronic in quite an obvious way, in the bringing together of opposing terms and ideas. The first sense of an oxymoronic tension which raises questions about resemblance, or verisimilitude, occurs with the reference to the blackthorn in blossom. Naturalistically the blossom is 'wet' while the pollen is metaphorically 'burning' in the 'white smoke' of blossom. The metaphor of the blossom as 'smoke' puts the literalistic 'wet' on the defensive. If noticed, the struggle between the naturalistic and the metaphorical language can raise the reader's consciousness about ways of naming. If it passes unnoticed it may be meaningful at some other subliminal level (whence it came). The struggle is resolved in the interaction of the two expressions:

Lawrence succeeds in expressing the physical quality of the blackthorn *and* its vital spirit or inner life rather than sacrificing one for the other in the narrative, the 'kind of marriage between ideas and experience' to which Ragussis refers (Ragussis, p.180). Lawrence returns to the idea of a 'burning' landscape a little later on, using Hermione as a mouthpiece: 'Isn't the young green beautiful? So beautiful -- quite burning.' (WL p.50), and again the association of the fresh spring growth and 'burning', given the principally watery environs of the novel, is oxymoronic.

Two more oxymoronic constructions follow on almost immediately from the reference to the blackthorn: 'Purple twigs were *darkly luminous* in the grey air, high hedges *glowed* like *living shadows*' (emphasis added). The first of these corresponds to the negative imagery of Lawrence's poem 'Bavarian Gentians' (CP p.697, p.960) which represents the more typically, and more available, oxymoronic spirit of Lawrence's language. At the opening of this discussion attention was drawn to the force of 'dark/darkly' to Lawrence in the context of Gudrun's experience. It is a word which is recognized as having a high value in Lawrence's personal lexicon, along with words like 'quick' and 'motionless'. Bringing 'darkly' and 'luminous' (from *lumen*, light, which functions in opposition to the theme of 'darkness', and, as I argue in the context of 'Snow', relates to larger questions of the visual and seeing in Lawrence) into one neighbourhood is highly effective. It could be argued that the purpleness of the twigs introduces a naturalistic quality which effaces the efficacy of the oxymoronic, at the least forcing the status of the oxymoron into

question. My sense of it, however, is that the oxymoronic mode dominates, and that Lawrence's language is not simply evoking a rural scene visually.

The terms used to relate to twigs, blossom and hedges have a physicality but they are primarily important because of the way they highlight the play of the noumenal and the numinous in Lawrence. Their very physicality contrasts with the landscape in 'Snow', for instance, where the 'physical' resists the 'visual' as much as possible. Principally through metaphor and metaphorical expressions like those examined here, Lawrence reaches beyond the conditioned reality of empirical observation determined by time and space, to the world of noumena, of things-in-themselves: the sea of language flows around the object. It is in this context that metaphor in Lawrence relates to large ontological questions, which plain language is not accustomed to do. The numinous, in contrast to the noumenal, is represented as the vital generative force suggested by Lawrence's description which cannot ultimately be rendered naturalistically.

The second instance of oxymoronic language in this passage is related to the first. The hedges 'glowed' like 'shadows', a description which functions in a similar way to 'darkly luminous'. Glow signifies light, brilliance and heat, words which have a positive force suggesting 'life' and 'presence'. 'Living shadows' is more ambiguous. In the first place the phrase is part of a simile wherein 'high hedges glowed like living shadows', but to have something 'glowing' like 'shadow' is again naturalistically problematic. It is

more difficult, given the *sui generis* nature of these expressions, to apply Ricoeur's understanding of a metaphorical meaning making sense of the enigma caused by the relation of the two nominally dissimilar terms, more difficult, that is to say, than it would be in a plain language context. Like the purpleness of the twigs, the greyness of the air and the rush of the morning, 'living shadows' contributes effectively to the physical sense of the time and place. Shadows are by definition immaterial, non-physical. Their mobility in response to the sun's shifting signifies the movement of time. The 'life' (inescapable metaphor) of a shadow depends upon the presence of a physical object, just as the rainbow's luminescence depends upon the conjunction of light and water.

It is an image to which Lawrence returns in 'Breadalby' (*Women in Love*, chapter VIII). Hermione and some of her guests take a swim in one of Hermione's terraced ponds, and Gerald is described in the following terms: 'Gerald wavered and flickered, a white natural shadow.' (WL p.101). It is very difficult to decide, in the immediate context at least, whether this is a positive or a negative image: Lawrence may indeed be playing with the idea of positive and negative images in the photographic sense, as an extension of his thought on seeing as knowing, as opposed to photographic viewing. In these descriptions Lawrence is again playing on scene/seen. Clearly his language is highly visual, even if the oxymorons (should the reader become conscious of them) make visualizing the scene problematic. The point is, the language accommodates both the 'seen' in the sense of the past tense of 'to see', given that the characters are 'seeing',

and the 'scene' which is the author's vision, as well as the noumenal dimension which is not optically 'seen' so much as known 'insightfully'.

A brief comparison can be sustained with the opening paragraphs of Hardy's *The Return of the Native* where the emphasis is essentially on the 'scene'. This is confirmed by the wording of the second chapter-heading, 'Humanity Appears upon the *Scene*, Hand in Hand with Trouble' (emphasis added). Only in that chapter is attention drawn to the characters and what they see principally across vast distances: the officer straining to see Diggory Venn in the distance; their meeting and the officer's departure so that he too becomes a speck in the distance; the 'traveller's eye' view of Eustacia Vye on the barrow and her displacement by the rustics (RN pp.37-42). Hardy also talks about 'The scene *before* the reddleman's eyes...' (RN p.40, my italics) that is to say, not a projection from Diggory Venn, but something which is on the outside, and which he contemplates as external to himself.

The solitary furze-cutter of the first chapter who, like the Brangwen men, looks down towards the soil, is significant principally as an element in the overall composition. This feature alone underlines an important distinction between Lawrence and Hardy. With Hardy we are aware of the authority of Hardy himself delineating the scene very expressively. He describes the 'stage' upon which his characters act out their destinies. His furze-cutter, therefore, is placed in a setting. The Brangwens, in contrast, are already creating their own surroundings in the act of looking, and Lawrence's prose

adopts their vision. The Brangwens are transforming the scene for us as well as for themselves, something which Hardy's characters are powerless to do. Lawrence is not, therefore, present as an authority in the sense that Hardy is. For Lawrence, the boundary between the scene and the 'seen' which is explicit in Hardy itself disintegrates. It has been noted many times how significant Lawrence's re-reading of Hardy was in the sharpening of his own thought. Indeed, the comparison with Hardy rather than other nineteenth-century writers is far from arbitrary principally because Lawrence took the term 'metaphysic' from Abercrombie's study of the writer.¹⁵ The point is Lawrence's response to the notion of 'metaphysic' and what he did with his recognition that Hardy had for the most part concealed the authentic 'metaphysic' of his novels beneath another external 'metaphysic', not his own. Reading Abercrombie and re-reading Hardy, Lawrence was able to internalize *as language* what for Hardy was external.

So it is that the oxymoronic quality of some of Lawrence's constructions, quite apart from their structural significance, also relates to the visual/anti-visual question and helps to bring the novel's mode of language and consciousness to light. In an ordinary language context we are invited to establish a degree of semantic proximity which will bring the distant terms of the oxymoron close together in a meaningful way. Looking at 'Diver' the fundamental difference between the oxymoron in an ordinary language context and the oxymoronic in Lawrence is obvious. Both generate meaning by bringing unlike terms together but Lawrence's expressions are context-specific as well as being what creates the context. Because of this

characteristic the metaphorical expressions here in 'Diver', unlike 'a living death' from the store-house of ordinary language expressions, would lose their force away from this context. This reinforces my point that metaphor, these immediate phrases, are *inseparable* from the 'metaphysic', the overall philosophical context. Not only are the examples from 'Diver' poetic, and expressive, they are specifically features of the radical grammar of *Women in Love*.

These are among the apictorial features of 'Diver'. They vividly recreate because, paradoxically, they do not 'resemble' the object. The reader's reception of the opening scene is largely unconscious. It is not imperative for the reader to isolate these stylistic features, even though to do so is to raise linguistic consciousness. This is not a *conscious* rhetoric on Lawrence's part. But the related question of resemblance is important. The language which introduces Gerald to the scene swimming in the 'uncreated' water of the lake indicates that pictoriality is not Lawrence's primary concern. There are several anti-visual passages running close upon each other which serve to dramatise the noumenal life within the landscape. These include the 'uncreated water' (WL p.46), and 'the grey, moist, *full space* of the water' (WL p.46-7, emphasis added) with the oxymoronic suggestiveness of the emphasized phrase. The description of the lake as 'all grey and visionary' (WL p.46) is significant: 'visionary' is an unusual word in this context giving the lake a 'presence' which is not altogether physical. The hedges are described as '*hovering* nearer, *coming into creation*' (WL p.46, emphasis added).

This style of 'rendering' the world of experience is more exaggerated in the descriptions of Gerald whose human frame, and by inference his humanity, is shed for something more abstract. He is depersonalized from the outset, 'a white figure' (WL p.46), identified in motion: 'frightening in *its* swift sharp *transit*' (WL p.46, emphases added). To describe Gerald diving as 'a white arc' is to continue the process of his alienation. It is also a compelling image, a featureless version of the rainbow. Whereas the infinitely coloured rainbow has a primordial charge associated as it is with first things in its Biblical context, the white arc is a stark Modernist construction of pure form. Rather than polarising the naturalistic and the abstract, Lawrence has them interacting, thereby stressing their relationality. Neither is evoked for its own sake. It is worth adding that Gerald swimming is also an element, but a single one, in a state of *equilibrium*. Strictly speaking, neither Gerald nor his environment are 'created' here. This is appropriate in as much as we see the episode through the eyes of Gudrun and Ursula who as yet can only regard Gerald as being outside their immediate world. This separation is emphasized in the narrative: 'He waved again, with a strange movement of recognition *across the difference*' (WL p.47, my italics). Elsewhere the lake is 'his separate element' (WL p.47). Gerald feels his 'possession of a world to himself' (WL p.47), and 'exalted in his isolation in the new element, unquestioned and unconditioned ... without bond or connection anywhere, just himself in the watery world.' (WL p.47). The word 'unconditioned' continues the signification of a noumenal world which characterizes these 'naturalistic' descriptions. The significance of 'separate', and the

fact of Gerald's lack of connection with the scene despite being ostensibly a part of it, will be examined in greater detail in my next chapter where the differences between the 'metaphysic' of *Women in Love* and of *The Rainbow* are made explicit, and where the human figure swimming again becomes an important image.

The opposition of 'motion/motionless' points up the elemental differences at this stage between Gerald, de-personalized, and Gudrun whose individuality has been emphasized from the beginning of the novel, externally with regard to her distinctive clothing, and internally in her responses to her environment. Gerald is motion, a word which in Lawrence's lexicon signifies a male principle: 'among the smooth ripples a swimmer was making out to space, in a centre of faintly heaving motion' (WL p.46); 'The sisters stood watching the swimmer move further into the grey, moist, full space of the water, pulsing with his own small, invading motion' (WL pp.46-7); 'she stood watching the motion on the bosom of the water' (WL p.47); 'In the faint wash of motion, they could see his ruddy face' (WL p.47); 'He loved his own vigorous, thrusting motion' (WL p.47). The word is repeated five times in a relatively short space and each repetition reinforces the idea of life as a fluid interplay of elements rather than static and, in Gudrun's words, 'final'. Gerald is perceived as little more than movement, fundamentally a thing apart from his environment. In contrast to Gerald, Gudrun is 'motionless' a word which communicates both her physical stasis as she becomes absorbed in her subject, and the psychic profile of their future relationship, suggested linguistically by the opposition of motion/motionless. We

are not given to expect anything like 'star-equilibrium' between them because the language does not suggest it. Her absorption is of the kind which is implied in 'Sisters' when on seeing Gerald for the first time she conceives of the 'arctic light that envelopes *only us two*' (WL p.15, emphasis added). At its best, as Birkin insists, the 'metaphysic' of 'star-equilibrium' accommodates a plurality of relations, not simply and narrowly I/you as it is traditionally understood.

Although the word is not Lawrence's, at least not here, Gudrun's heart is indeed 'contracted' to Gerald, something which is evident from 'Sisters' and which is finalized in 'Sketchbook': 'The bond was established between them, in that look, in her tone. In her tone, she made the understanding clear -- they were of the same kind, he and she, a sort of diabolic freemasonry subsisted between them.' (WL p.122). This bond is the alternative to the social arrangement of marriage which Gudrun later disparages (the contract into which Ursula and Birkin enter, having first 'read the terms' (WL p.148)): it bears a sense of the two being 'contracted', a word which also recalls the physical movement of the heart, traditionally the seat (another metaphor) of the emotions, especially love; it also, by extension, bears the sense of 'shrinking', of physical recoil from something ('shrink' and 'recoil' are both repeatedly used by Lawrence in other contexts where the individual withdraws from the Other). In the light of what we know of the 'metaphysic' of *Women in Love* we can see that Lawrence is punning on the word 'singled': 'Am I *really* singled out for him in some way'. 'Singled' resonates in the popular sense as

Gudrun uses it, not in the context of two single bodies in a relation of mutual balance.

Punning is conventionally regarded as having more to do with the superimposition of linguistic levels than with oxymoron with its dependence on the pertinent juxtaposition of meanings. Its general significance is communicated succinctly by Jonathan Culler in the context of his assessment of Raymond Roussel's *Locus Solus*: the pun 'displays the infinite play of differences by which a word sends us off to other words instead of linking directly with a world.'¹⁶ This is pertinent to *Women in Love* given the extent to which the central quartet of Ursula, Gudrun, Birkin and Gerald, debate meanings, although language mediates something specific in Lawrence as well as being about 'language' at large as Culler suggests in the case of Roussel. However, Lawrence may also be suggesting that the dynamic of meaning, even in a single word (like 'love' for example), is oxymoronic rather than either centripetal (tending towards other meanings as with puns) or centrifugal (tending towards a world). Out of these thoughts emerges the question whether pun is in fact in a profound sense related to oxymoron? Certainly a punning consciousness characterizes Lawrence's language, although that language is not identical from work to work.¹⁷ After all, a pun is effective because it aligns two separate meanings, and as soon as this is said a rhetorical similarity with oxymoron emerges. Both tropes are predicated on difference, although in the case of oxymoron difference is of course opposition, which it is not necessarily in pun. Without wishing to push their similarities too far, the fact of their kinship,

in the context of *Lawrence's* language in particular, suggests that important contiguity of language and thought already alluded to.

Gudrun's yearning, as she watches Gerald, is also the artist's yearning in her for some abstraction, some conceptual grasp of experience pared of temporal human concerns. In Lawrence's terminology Gudrun seems to be yearning not for Gerald, of course, but for an Absolute: 'Gudrun envied him almost painfully. Even this momentary possession of pure isolation and fluidity seemed to her so terribly desirable, that she felt herself as if damned, out there on the high-road.' (WL p.47). The pure artist in Gudrun wants this abstraction and her relationship with Gerald who is too much 'man' -- '"God, what it is to be a man!" she cried.' (WL p.47) -- in comparison with Loerke represents the conflict between the human and the inhuman in their relationship. In 'Diver' it is Ursula who, in contrast to the general tone of the episode, falls back on conventional forms of naming giving the scene in front of her its 'worldly', workaday, meaning -- '"It is Gerald Crich"' (WL p.47). Her reference to Gerald as a Nibelung is not so everyday, but all the water-scenes in this novel involve attempts to understand what is seen in metaphorical terms like this. In 'Breadalby' Ursula sees Gerald as Dionysus 'because his hair was really yellow' (WL p.101), Gudrun perceives the swimmers at Breadalby as 'saurian', and so on. These metaphors represent in the first instance the point of view of the sisters as they translate the 'seen' into 'known' terms.

Two similes stand alongside each other in 'Diver' underpinning the dialogue between Ursula and Gudrun which is occasioned by the chance meeting with Hermione and Laura Crich: 'The two sisters were like a pair of scissors, snipping off everything that came athwart them: or like a knife and a whetstone, the one sharpened against the other.' (WL p.51). These images with their high definition occur unexpectedly, interrupting the dialogue, and differ in kind from the more subliminal level of metaphor earlier in the chapter. It is most likely that the reader will be for the most part unconscious of the oxymoronic in 'Diver' but these similes force themselves into the reader's consciousness: they make conscious something which exists at a subliminal level. It is a fact that Lawrence uses certain words and certain combinations of words in an unusual way. This is not only confined to the oxymoronic. Also writing about the opening of 'Diver', Michael Bell remarks on the unusual context of certain words and underlines the reader's unconscious absorption of the real point:

His [Lawrence's] language hovers in near oxymoron at times so as to bring out this constant play of energies rather than the conventional fixities of named objects. But it only hovers; we respond to the object rather than to a stylistic device. Hence when we are told that the two girls "drifted swiftly along" we are not likely to notice consciously the oddity of this as a way of walking. The acquiescent unconsciousness of "drifted" and the purposiveness of "swiftly" make immediate sense as the sisters' implied responsiveness to the world as described. For this "world" indeed exists in their response. (Bell, p.111, my brackets)

Arguably more force can be given to the 'stylistic device' (as a medium): whether or not the reader consciously responds to them, the metaphorical levels within the narrative contain the thought. Michael Bell is here referring to a *local* effect of the style. My point, in

contrast, is that the oxymoronic in Lawrence is pervasive, representing a distinctive level of thought (about language and how language refers to anything) within the language. My response is therefore to emphasize the profoundly oxymoronic temper of the language of this novel, rather than stay with 'near' oxymoron in a particular passage. Understanding any of the terms used in 'Diver', or in the novel generally, and this is also true of the oxymoronic expressions highlighted in the course of this discussion, lies between the poles of their transparency and their ambivalence. In comparison the scissor and knife imagery of the similes is less ambivalent. On one level it underlines the nature of the sisters' critical exercise. As images they could be regarded as Futuristic with their hard lines and unsentimental ruthless Modernism. In this they contrast with the concluding simile of the chapter which refers to Ursula and which is more typically 'Lawrencean', recalling the individual who must break through the 'integuments' into self-hood: 'Her spirit was active, her life was like a shoot that is growing steadily, but which has not yet come above ground.' (WL p.52). These similes, the latter organic and the former mechanistic, do not lose anything by their proximity. On the contrary they advertise what I have underlined all along, the positive inter-dependency and *simultaneity* of styles in *Women in Love*, a mode which distinguishes the language and manner of this novel from its predecessor *The Rainbow*, a feature to which attention was drawn at the beginning of this chapter.

This chapter has traced a route through specific themes in Lawrence's novel and has arrived, inevitably, back at language. The

principal focus has been on Lawrence's ability to close the distance between language and what it describes. His subtle critique of 'love' most ably demonstrates this, but it is equally apparent in the way Lawrence recovers a special kind of seeing from ordinary optical seeing, and a special kind of physical being from the purely physical. In this sense *Women in Love* is Lawrence's most authentically philosophical novel, in contrast to the highly 'novelistic' *The Rainbow*: within its own narrative language, philosophically and structurally, *Women in Love* deals in the most penetrating fashion with the central problems of language and rhetoric. This is not to say the 'metaphysic' is any less achieved in *The Rainbow* but there are important differences, and these are the subject of my next chapter.

NOTES

Chapter Three. The Oxymoronic Mode of *Women in Love*.

1. I have already underlined Ragussis' value in the ongoing debate about Lawrence's language (see Ch.1., n.1). Jack F. Stewart has recently turned his attention to Lawrence's language and in particular to the play of opposites in *Women in Love*. See Jack F. Stewart, 'Dialectics of Knowing in *Women in Love*', *Twentieth Century Literature*, 37, no.1 (Spring 1991), 59-75. However, he follows a tendency in Lawrence criticism to insist on the synthesis and fusion, the resolution, of opposites. As I show in this chapter there is no basis in Lawrence's language for this assumption: the oxymoronic mode of *Women in Love* especially is not about *synthesis* but tension, 'equilibrium' and 'polarity'.

2. In *The Rule of Metaphor* Ricoeur argues that *living* metaphor -- a distinction which Lawrence implicitly questions -- guides conceptual discourse to 'think more', p.303: I shall return to the advantages and disadvantages of this position in my fifth chapter.

3. Leo Bersani, 'Lawrentian Stillness', in *A Future for Astyanax: Character and Desire in Literature* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown, 1976), pp.164-67.

4. David Gerard, 'Films and sound recordings relating to Lawrence' in *A D. H. Lawrence Handbook*, ed. by Keith Sagar (Manchester: Manchester University Press; New York: Barnes and Noble, 1982), pp. 449-54, p.450.

5. Warren Shibles, *Rational Love* (Whitewater, Wisconsin: Language Press, 1978), p.19. Further references to this study are given after quotations in the text.

6. Also published as *Love in the Western World*, trans. by Montgomery Belgion, revised and augmented edition including new postscript (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1983). Further references to *Passion and Society*, trans. by Montgomery Belgion revised and augmented edition (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), are given after quotations in the text.

7. C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936; repr. 1979). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

8. See Tony Pinkney, *D. H. Lawrence* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), pp.27-8 on titles. Also David Lodge in *Modernism*, ed. by Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976; repr. 1986), p.484. Further references to these books will be given after quotations in the text.

9. See *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. The German Text of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung*, with a new

translation by D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness, and with an introduction by Bertrand Russell F.R.S. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul; New York: The Humanities Press, 1961), p. 151.

10. See Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy*, pp. 35-37.

11. For more on this see Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor* pp. 194-5: 'A first point at least has been made: namely, that tension, contradiction, and controversion are nothing but the opposite side of the reconciliation in which metaphor "makes sense"' (p. 195).

12. In association with 'luminous', 'dazing' is arguably a curious choice of word. One can speculate whether Lawrence meant to write 'dazzling' which, with 'luminous', underlines the *visual* experience of the *radiant* landscape, and returns the emphasis to the eye and sense of sight as a deeper means of knowing than purely biological seeing.

13. Colin Clarke, referring to *The Rainbow*, calls 'Cold ... and burning' a common oxymoron 'wherever Lawrence is concerned with the reductive processes', *River of Dissolution: D. H. Lawrence and English Romanticism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 54. Later, regarding *Women in Love*, he rightly points out that the language in 'Moony' 'has the force of oxymoron', p. 86. My point is that the pervasive *oxymoronic* levels within *Women in Love* in particular have a significance quite apart from what an instance of oxymoron might suggest or signify 'locally'.

14. Attention was first drawn to the fact and significance of oxymoron in 'Diver' and in particular in this passage in Fiona Becket, 'Expressionism in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*' (unpublished MA paper, University of Warwick, 1986)

15. Lascelles Abercrombie, *Thomas Hardy: A Critical Study* (London: Martin Secker, 1912).

16. Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (London, Melbourne and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 107.

17. Michael Bell, for instance, draws attention to the difference between the 'sexual suggestiveness' of *The Rainbow* and the 'punning spirit' of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*, p. 214, pp. 222-3.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDULATING STYLES: *THE RAINBOW*

In this chapter I propose to examine *The Rainbow's* very different mode of language from that of *Women in Love*, keeping the focus on the power of metaphor and its different levels within the single work. The unconscious modality of *Women in Love* has been thrown into relief by the conscious metaphoricity of Lawrence's essays on the unconscious. The way its thought is embodied in its narrative language, particularly the way it partakes of the oxymoronic, and its critique of the merely rhetorical has made it the appropriate starting place for a consideration of Lawrence thinking metaphorically in the context of a major work of fiction. Whilst *Women in Love* is about themes and issues which continually preoccupy Lawrence in his writings, its *sui generis* manner helps us to grasp the profound role of metaphor in his work. My reading of *The Rainbow*, or more specifically my concentration on the metaphorical levels of language within it, will build on this recognition. Central as it is, *Women in Love* is far from covering all the stylistic possibilities available to Lawrence. It is not the work in which we are presented with Lawrence's final word on language, but a stage in his thinking about it -- like the other novels it came, in a significant measure, 'unwatched'. As I have argued, whilst it is most explicitly concerned with language as a theme, compared to the other works, it does not represent a theory of language, or a theory of meaning, which is rehearsed and reproduced elsewhere. To say so is to highlight the fact that in Lawrence we are aware of different modes

of language rather than being presented with a monolithic concept of 'Language', and yet through these radically dissimilar works an understanding of language-in-general emerges. This chapter, like the last, is concerned with recognizing the work's particular tone, which exists within the general domain of language, through attention to metaphor which as I have begun to show is no simply *rhetorical* figure in Lawrence.

Evidently the wealth of critical writing on Lawrence, and in particular on his mature fiction, means that the main ideas are continually laid down and augmented. Lawrence's style almost always, rightly, receives critical attention. Traditionally the emphasis has been on the narrative technique of particular texts in the context of scholarly liberal humanism. However, the explosion of interest in language since the emergence of French post-structuralism has resulted in studies exemplified by those of Doherty and Bonds which I signalled earlier. That there are right ways and wrong ways of approaching Lawrence's language is something which is implicitly taken up in this study. Before embarking on my own examination of *The Rainbow's* metaphoricity I propose to review some recent critical approaches to its language, the better to establish my own position.

Allan Ingram's book *The Language of D. H. Lawrence* is a modern introduction to the language of the fiction, with a brief excursion into the poetry. Ingram appropriates the theme of articulacy in his assessment of the mature novels and in particular *The Rainbow* which is in his view the text which best focuses the language theme. In this he

differs from Michael Ragussis and those critics who find *Women in Love* the text which principally centres on questions of language, whether from the perspective of the difficulties of expression which it addresses, or the subtlety of metaphorical thinking which it embodies, and for which I argue.

Ingram's interest is largely in Lawrence's handling of prose language principally with a view to grammatical and rhetorical structures. He traces the movement from the pre-linguistic condition of the Ur-Brangwens, through the difficult and limited speech of the generations leading up to Ursula, to her return to the pre-linguistic through knowledge and experience in the novel's final, non-verbal, moments. He explains his concentration on *The Rainbow* saying that it is 'itself about language, about the relations that are possible between articulacy and inarticulacy, between expression and the inexpressible, between speech and silence, and is therefore peculiarly appropriate for special treatment in a discussion of Lawrence's language.' (Ingram, p.119). By 'language' he really means 'speech' and his strategy is the familiar one of concentrating on the verbal development of the characters as a means of identifying their psychological and emotional wholeness, or conversely their paucity. The narrative meta-language is read as largely expressive and enactive. At times the critic seems to be arguing for a structural equivalent of the 'metaphysical' condition of character in relation to world, but the implications of this as a quality of the metaphor are not examined. Ingram's concluding remarks to his chapter entitled 'The Language of Prose' are an adumbration of Michael Bell's theme of

Lawrence's need 'to develop a new language for the feelings' (Ingram, p.72), and Michael Ragussis's notion of a new vocabulary or 'new grammar' (Ingram, p.72), although Ragussis's conception refers specifically to *Women in Love*. Essentially Ingram identifies a typically 'novelistic' sense of language as opposed to a philosophical one, or more properly an amalgam of the two.

Diane Bonds on the other hand suggests that the Brangwen existence is structured like a (Derridean) conception of language. Working from the novel's 'prologue' where the men 'defer' to the women and where the 'external' world of society, commerce and development is represented to the Brangwen women as 'epic', she argues that

If the men locate their meaning or significance in the woman, and the woman locates her meaning or significance in the world beyond, and the world beyond is presented as a system of signs, then the relations of the Brangwens to each other and to the world constitute a system of deferral and substitution that resembles the structure of language conceived as a system of differences or differential relations among signifiers. (Bonds, p.56)

This really is to impose an external model of language onto Lawrence thereby obstructing the way to his own sense of it. Relations between Brangwen men and women are taken to 'mirror two alternate theories of the linguistic sign', that is, 'the symbolic conception of the sign' where signifier and signified are 'united', and 'the differential conception of the sign' where the relation of signifiers to each other is posited on their semantic difference (Bonds, p.56). In short, Bonds transforms a post-structuralist theory of language into a metaphor for the specific male/female relations described. The men 'empty their

moral significance into "the woman". Thus she becomes truly a symbol.' (Bonds, p.55). But at the same time the woman '*refers* herself to' the world outside the farm, a world signified by plurivocity, an act which '*displaces* her own significance' as a symbol (Bonds, p.56). The intention is to show Lawrence's '*metaphysic*' as principally deconstructive, but it could be argued that a theory of language alien to Lawrence is a weak source of analogy given the novel's available '*metaphysic*'. Lawrence's language is alluring in this regard, but the appropriateness of the comparison needs to be argued very strongly. Concluding her critique, and the metaphor of deconstruction, Bonds argues that the Brangwen relationships which are articulated in terms of achieving an '*Absolute*' or the '*infinite*' are grounded in a '*denial of difference and absence*' (Bonds, p.75). Sexual and marital union is achieved as desired but at this cost. Only Ursula resists the union achieved by Tom and Lydia, Will and Anna, in which each individual is perceived to have lost something intrinsic to their own sense of self, and is thereby saved.

Regarding metaphor, Bonds traces a process of literalization: the '*Futuristic*' imagery of blades and swords, and the animal imagery which pervades some of the encounters between Ursula and Skrebensky, becomes for her literalized in '*the actual, animalistic conflict between the lovers (that is symbolic action)*' (Bonds, p.60). This literalizing of the metaphorical is interpreted as '*a logocentric impulse, a reaching toward some actuality to which words refer.*' (Bonds, p.60). But in the first place Bonds has not questioned the literal/metaphorical opposition which I believe Lawrence's language

invites her to do. She maintains what could be called a 'Ricoeurian' distance from metaphor, ignoring the Nietzschean understanding which Lawrence's language embodies. 'Literalization' is also the theme of one of her two chapters on *Women in Love* (Bonds, pp.77-92).

Michael Bell's examination of the ontological specificity of *The Rainbow*'s narrative language (Bell, pp.51-96) is characterized by an alertness to Lawrence's language in contrast to Bonds whose project is also to engage with 'the ontological and metalinguistic implications of the texts' language' (Bonds, p.5). It is in the context of his concentration on the ontological dimension of language that Michael Bell has recourse to Heidegger, and via him to a pre-Socratic conception of the unity of subject and world rather than the dualistic conception which determines modern consciousness and obscures Being. Michael Bell shows language in the book being put under a specifically Lawrencean pressure as the narrative language renders 'feeling' rather than 'ideas about feeling' (Bell, p.53). The appropriate response to Lawrence is perceived as a 'feeling' one rather than an analytical one. This quality of responsiveness is seen as essential inasmuch as it answers the shortcomings of language which the *The Rainbow* particularly thematizes especially through Tom and the early Brangwens, but also in relation to Will and Anna whose relationship becomes one of sensual experience rather than speech. Michael Bell's argument is based on the premise that 'the indirection of language is a necessary condition for the emotionally supple and ontologically sophisticated meanings which are to be imparted.' (Bell, p.57). An *oeuvre* based study of the fiction, this book examines the language

theme in Lawrence as a way the writer can explore and come to terms with his medium as a mode and agency of feeling, and ultimately of Being.

My concentration on metaphor both challenges and builds on the various responses to language summarized here. Lawrence is, of course, recognized as a highly metaphorical writer; one whose narratives are suffused with metaphors and metaphorical chains. Inasmuch as language and 'metaphysic' are not separable in Lawrence, and inasmuch as he is thinking metaphorically and doing something with language, his mature work is *about* language (and the experience to which it 'refers'), that is to say about the necessarily metaphorical nature of understanding. This 'thinking metaphorically' in order to think further is Lawrence's principal theme which inhabits conscious and subliminal levels in his work. Therefore, I would be reluctant to say that *The Rainbow* is 'about' language, as Ingram does for instance, anymore than *Women in Love* or the essays on the unconscious are 'about' language, or 'about' metaphor. What I hope to focus here is the centrality not of metaphor as merely textual play, but once again as the proper vehicle for the 'metaphysic' of the book, which is not another 'metaphysic' different from that of *Women in Love* or the essays on the unconscious, for example, but a specific inflection of Lawrence's 'metaphysic' in general. To make a metaphor is not the same as 'thinking metaphorically' which is what Lawrence does: *The Rainbow* embodies its own mode of thinking metaphorically which, I shall argue, communicates what it is really 'about'. This discussion opens with a concentration on something which is on the face of it quite 'local', that is to say

on the wave imagery of the novel as representing a tangible body of metaphor within the work. This is with a view to focusing on the question of how an instance of metaphor within a narrative can also come to be seen as the language of the whole novel. Essentially it will emerge that without the 'wave' in *The Rainbow* there is no novel. So that even at this point it is possible and appropriate to talk about *The Rainbow's* 'engulfing' medium.

There is nothing in the first paragraph of *The Rainbow* to suggest the radical view of language which will emerge in the course of the novel. It unproblematically sets the scene after a traditional model, and the debt to Hardy has often been noted. However, the contrast between this language and the language (incorporating the view of language which will emerge) of the novel which grows out of it reveals Lawrence's awareness of the distance between himself and the traditions of the past, a distance which he can strategically develop.

The second paragraph, and successive relatively short paragraphs leading into this distinctive 'prologue', begin to suggest that the narrative language itself will have a specifically Lawrencean ontological bearing. The 'wave which cannot halt' (R p.9) has been set in motion. It refers to a structure of repetition just as evident in the narrative language as in terms of the action. The characteristic rhythm and repetition of words and sounds represented in the often quoted sequence 'the pulse of the blood of the teats of the cows beat into the pulse of the hands of the men' (R p.10) is a kinaesthetic language which signals the wave-like quality of the entire narrative:

the continuous ever-changing nuances of the language imitate, as far as language can, a wave form, rhythmic, repetitive, with a suggestion of motion.

The immediate emphasis here is on the *undulating* quality of the language rather than the 'frictional' which is to underline something very distinctive about *The Rainbow*. The kind of repetition indicated here contrasts sharply with the 'continual, slightly modified repetition' described in the Foreword to *Women in Love* (WL pp.485-6). I have already drawn attention to this passage where the emphasis is more sexual perhaps because more personal: 'every natural crisis in emotion of passion or understanding comes from this pulsing, frictional to-and-fro, which works up to a culmination.' (WL p.486). As I said earlier, the 'physical' is really linguistic in Lawrence, exemplified in the thoughtful application of 'frictional' in his writing as in his alertness to the oxymoronic as a medium for ideas. The word 'frictional' implies the resistance of one body to another in the context of a sexual heat; it describes a momentary, local, resistance between two 'bodies', and as I have suggested, recalls the relation of the elements in oxymoron. It is a word which Lawrence used again and again, exploiting the different levels of meaning in the word as they appeared to him. Towards the end of *The Plumed Serpent*, for instance, the word is given purely negative connotations. As in the Foreword to *Women in Love* it refers to the sexual, but here sex and speech are seen in the first place as being too conscious and too sensational:

He [Cipriano] was aware of things that she herself was hardly conscious of. Chiefly, of the curious irritant quality of talk. And this he avoided. Curious as it may seem, he made her aware of her own old desire for frictional, irritant sensation. She realized how all her old love had been frictional, charged with the fire of irritation and the spasms of frictional voluptuousness. (*The Plumed Serpent*, p. 421, my brackets)

This passage is charged with a sexual language signifying a sexuality, or a sex-consciousness, that no character could voice in *The Rainbow*. Variations on 'friction' and 'frictionality' announce a concept of female sexuality for which Lawrence has been famously criticized.¹ The language, of the Foreword to *Women in Love* at least, represents a mode of consciousness which contrasts, therefore, with that of the *The Rainbow* represented here in the description of the Brangwens 'feeling the pulse and the body of the soil, that opened to their furrow for the grain, and became smooth and supple after their ploughing, and clung to their feet with a weight that pulled like desire' (R p. 10). In this passage the sexual is less personal: it exists at a much deeper, prolonged, sustained and more unconscious level. In this we are referred to the subterranean sweep of *The Rainbow*, to language and consciousness as process. The 'slightly modified repetition' of *Women in Love*, in contrast, effectively focuses that novel's preoccupation with problems of expression where what Lawrence sees as the problem of being so 'conscious' is seen as inseparable from the problem of being verbal. It is the problem which the main characters, in their different ways, discuss. In *The Rainbow*, in crude terms, language essentially rolls on, unconscious, impersonal, undulant.

There is an ebb and flow between the paragraphs of the first pages of this novel which helps to establish the point about undulating styles. Taking the first section of the book as a prologue, it is likely that the reader is drawn in by the language: not only does it define a certain mode of being-in-the-world, it does so seductively. Whether this state is claustrophobic or suffocating for the Brangwens, seemingly saturated by their environment, is not the initial point. The point is the reader's awareness of the language having a special quality. Ontological difference at this early stage is largely the difference between Brangwen-male and Brangwen-female. The language describing the existence of the Brangwen male is distinctive and different from the tone which describes the yearning outwards of the women who are in comparison more 'conscious' (which is what Bonds responds to). Once again it is the general rather than the individual terms which are an important part of the difference: there are no named individuals at this stage, only male and female. Difference is implied in the minute changes of style (the inflectional changes) even within a relatively small space. The reader is encouraged to be sensitive to subtle modulations in the narrative language exemplified in the difference between the paragraphs quoted below. The paragraph break is the moment of change, of the subtlest transition:

It was enough for the men, that the earth heaved and opened its furrow to them, that the wind blew to dry the wet wheat, and set the young ears of corn wheeling freshly round about; it was enough that they helped the cow in labour, or ferreted the rats from under the barn, or broke the back of a rabbit with a sharp knock of the hand. So much warmth and generating and pain and death did they know in their blood, earth and sky and beast and green plants, so much exchange and interchange they had with these, that they lived full and surcharged, their senses full fed, their faces always turned to the heat of the blood, staring into the sun, dazed

with looking towards the source of generation, unable to turn round.

But the woman wanted another form of life than this, something that was not blood-intimacy. Her house faced out from the farm-buildings and fields, looked out to the road and the village with church and Hall and the world beyond. She stood to see the far-off world of cities and governments and the active scope of man.
(*The Rainbow*, pp.10-11)

A quality of repetition persists where the woman is the focus but it is appropriately of a different order. Such tonal difference is pronounced by the obvious contrast to the more 'ordinary' language of a line which is often quoted by critics to signal a decisive change in narrative interest: 'About 1840, a canal was constructed across the meadows of the Marsh Farm ...' (R p.13), in the simple past tense of completed action, which offers the most obvious contrast stylistically with either of these earlier modulations and is itself part of the 'wave' of language 'which cannot halt'. The shift can be compared to the adjustment from one key to another in a piece of music.

It is generally recognized that these linguistic modulations signal to the reader when a particularly significant moment of feeling or experience is about to be entered upon. *The Rainbow* is indeed characterized by 'memorable' passages which might serve to typify the book to the wide community of its readers. These episodes include the novel's opening; Tom Brangwen and the infant Anna feeding the cattle on the night of Lydia's confinement; Anna and Will putting up sheaves; Ursula's 'epiphanic' moment on looking into her college microscope; her encounter with the horses. The placing of these episodes within the narrative results in their being on the crest of a structural

wave, being in some senses of the nature of a crescendo, an increasing of verbal and rhythmic force. The point is not the fact alone of heightened language, but the strategic function of this heightened language.

Having examined the novel's opening in this light, in the pages to follow I have isolated some episodes where the Lawrencean ontology continues to be most distinctively felt in the grain of the metaphor. The description of Will Brangwen in the cathedral provides a case in point:

Here the stone leapt up from the plain of earth, leapt up in a manifold, clustered desire each time, up, away from the horizontal earth, through twilight and dusk and the whole range of desire, through the swerving, the declination, ah, to the ecstasy, the touch, to the meeting and the consummation, the meeting, the clasp, the close embrace, the neutrality, the perfect, swooning consummation, the timeless ecstasy. There his soul remained, at the apex of the arch, clinched in the timeless ecstasy, consummated.

And there was no time nor life nor death, but only this, this timeless consummation, where the thrust from earth met the thrust from earth and the arch was locked on the keystone of ecstasy. This was all, this was everything. Till he came to himself in the world below. Then again he gathered himself together, in transit, every jet of him strained and leaped, leaped clear in to the darkness above, to the fecundity and the unique mystery, to the touch, the clasp, the consummation, the climax of eternity, the apex of the arch.

(*The Rainbow*, pp. 187-88)

To some readers this sort of writing loses much of its credence because the double meanings are too clumsily spelled out and sexual inference dominates at the expense of the text's more serious project. But this is the linguistic climax to a relatively long passage. The 'wave' of language can be heard building up as Will and Anna approach

the cathedral and as they enter. The context is, therefore, extremely important inasmuch as it will ultimately offer the best explanation both of the passage and of Will's experience. Anna too is revealed to us through her experience of the cathedral, and through her judgement of what it means to Will.

Not surprisingly, in view of my argument that water (and waves) as a metaphor in Lawrence is a far from arbitrary 'choice' on the writer's part, the context, when it offers an explanation of Will's emotional commitment to the cathedral, does so in the following terms:

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, and
passion *surging its way in great waves to the altar,*
recurrence of ecstasy.

(*The Rainbow*, p.188, emphasis added)

There are three distinct levels of language here. First, the supplementary association of 'waves of feeling' can have the effect of transmitting Will's experience into cliché, which is not necessarily inappropriate: feeling for Will is always mediated by some external object, usually a work of art or architecture, and he struggles hopelessly for something original, which cannot be counterfeited, in his own artistic projects. Being aware of Will's cliché leads into a more particular awareness of the fact that Lawrence is here making creative use of a body of already existing, or 'dead', metaphor in common usage. So the second level is the use of deep-lying metaphor already in language, quite apart from cliché. And yet cliché can have the effect of reviving a tired, even a dead, metaphor if the ground is

prepared. Often a pun, for instance, is the means to this revival. In this passage the language is inflected towards both, that is to say towards cliché and towards a 'deep' level of common metaphor *in* the language. These discriminations are very interesting for Lawrence.

The third, more difficult, level is Lawrence's overall view of language, which is implicit and emergent. A 'thinking about' and a 'listening to' language is only possible from within language itself, rather than from a place 'beyond' it: one of the questions Lawrence implicitly poses is 'Is there a place 'beyond' language?' It is only the concentrated metaphoricity in Lawrence (as in the passage describing Will's 'ecstasy') which helps us to think this through. In this passage the wave is also a model for a kind of sentiment. Waves have now become a common figure for the course of feeling represented by contact with the cathedral. The syntax in this short passage has an impressionistic function, imitating as closely as possible wave-repetition and wave-rhythm. Anna's resistance is articulated in related terms: 'She was not to be flung forward on the lift and lift of passionate flights, to be cast at last upon the altar steps as upon the shore of the unknown.' (R p.188). These are the terms for Anna's determination to maintain her own selfhood, her own sense of where she is. But as a description it also contains an element of *readerly* resistance bearing in mind the common experience of some of Lawrence's readers who feel that he is evidently saying something of importance although it is often difficult to pinpoint his meaning.

This language culminates in the longer passage which is given over wholly to Anna's desire to go against the 'current' she perceives in Will:

So that she caught at little things, which saved her from being swept forward headlong in the tide of passion that leaps on into the Infinite in a great mass, triumphant and flinging its own course. She wanted to get out of this fixed, leaping, forward-travelling movement, to rise from it as a bird rises with wet, limp feet from the sea, to lift herself as a bird lifts its breast and thrusts its body from the pulse and heave of a sea that bears it forward to an unwilling conclusion, tear herself away like a bird on wings, and in the open space where there is clarity, rise up above the fixed, surcharged motion, a separate speck that hangs suspended, moves this way and that, seeing and answering before it sinks again, having chosen or found the direction in which it shall be carried forward.
(*The Rainbow*, p. 189)

The 'fixed, surcharged motion' and the 'fixed, leaping, forward-travelling movement' describe the mode of *The Rainbow* itself with its great wave of language: 'fixed' refers to the complex movement of the wave as perpetually mobile and yet eternally running along the same course. Anna imagines herself temporarily detached from the enveloping wave of experience, the Brangwen experience which characterizes the novel's opening, but ultimately recognizes that she will be carried forward as part of it, even in the end creating it as child follows child. It is inappropriate, and impossible, for her to imagine the 'isolation unbearable' which Gudrun feels in 'Water-Party', as the direct result of being separate (WL p. 182). However, whilst Anna is content to return to a condition in which she will again be 'carried forward', the 'separate speck that hangs suspended' which she momentarily desires to be recalls both the moon, a principal image in both *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, and the star which floats without

connection. In this light Anna can be seen to anticipate the 'metaphysic' of *Women in Love*, as will Ursula as she becomes increasingly more individuated, but it is here a fleeting projection.

Even where water is more literal in the text, moving the action of the novel on, the same and related issues are thrown into relief. The death of Tom Brangwen is a case in point. The passage is lengthy but worth quoting in full:

He hung up the shafts and took the gig-lamp. As he came out of the familiar jumble of shafts and wheels in the shed, the water, in little waves, came washing strongly against his legs. He staggered and almost fell.

"Well what the deuce!" he said, staring round at the running water in the black, watery night.

He went to meet the running flood, sinking deeper and deeper. His soul was full of great astonishment. He *had* to go and look where it came from, though the ground was going from under his feet. He went on, down towards the pond, shakily. He rather enjoyed it. He was now knee deep, and the water was pulling heavily. He stumbled, reeled sickeningly.

Fear took hold of him. Gripping tightly to the lamp, he reeled, and looked round. The water was carrying his feet away, he was dizzy. He did not know which way to turn. The water was whirling, whirling, the whole black night was swooping in rings. He swayed uncertainly at the centre of all the attack, reeling in dismay. In his soul, he knew he would fall.

As he staggered, something in the water struck his legs, and he fell. Instantly he was in the turmoil of suffocation. He fought in a black horror of suffocation, fighting, wrestling, but always borne down, borne inevitably down. Still he wrestled and fought to get himself free, in the unutterable struggle of suffocation, but he always fell again deeper. Something struck his head, a great wonder of anguish went over him, then the darkness covered him entirely.

In the utter darkness, the unconscious, drowning body was rolled along, the waters pouring, washing, filling in the place. The cattle woke up and rose to their feet, the dog began to yelp. And the unconscious, drowning body was washed along in the black, swirling darkness, passively.
(*The Rainbow*, pp.228-9)

In the first place this passage communicates the physical force of the element, and Tom's vulnerability in its presence. Part of the initial fascination which the sight holds for Tom is the strangeness of there being water in the place where usually there is none. He is compelled to meet the 'running flood'. In drowning he becomes barely distinguishable from the whole: he becomes part of the continually moving flood and part of the darkness outside. In his final moments of consciousness his struggle is to 'get himself free' (which was momentarily Anna's impulse). His failure to do so marks his ultimate unity with the whole. The manner of his death reinforces our sense, nourished at the novel's opening, of the inseparability of the Brangwens from their environment, their phenomenological world. In death Tom is merged with the external world, with which he nevertheless had an instinctive connection as a Brangwen: the 'freedom' evinced by the 'wave' is the freedom to be a part of the whole, within the larger milieu. The individual and the background become one, which is the mode, the specifically linguistic mode, of *The Rainbow*.

In all the passages identified so far there is always the hand that writes the tale. In none of the passages outlined above is the character's consciousness simply or ingenuously represented. The consciousness of individuals -- first the unspecified Brangwens differentiated principally by gender, then specific characters -- is communicated but not because they speak. The speaking voice, which is Lawrence, is speaking in a way which is beyond the consciousness of the characters involved whilst their presence in the physical scene

makes that scene and language possible. The narrative language comes in waves as the music does at Fred Brangwen's wedding, so that it is possible to talk about 'the deep underwater' (R p.295) of the *novel*. The description of the 'one great flood heaving slowly backwards to the verge of oblivion, slowly forward to the other verge, the heart sweeping along each time, and tightening with anguish as the limit was reached, and the movement, at crisis, turned and swept back' (R pp.295-96), can be applied to the narrative as much as to the dance and dancers. The 'flood' of language in *The Rainbow*, heaving between the great tide of oblivion and the individual wake of heightened consciousness describes how the novel itself progresses. In the longer passage relating to Anna Brangwen quoted above it is the 'forward-travelling movement' which she has to escape. This movement is inherent in the structure of generation and succession of *The Rainbow*. It is in the simultaneity of styles in *Women in Love* that this 'wave' is eventually halted.

'Undulating' as a description of the stylistic structure of *The Rainbow* refers to waves as distinct from other water metaphors such as the rainbow. The rainbow, formed by light reflecting from minute droplets of water, is also a far from arbitrary image for Lawrence and of course it is one of the novel's central images. Two poems, 'The Rainbow' and 'Rainbow', (CP p.692, pp.818-20) give the double significance to Lawrence of the rainbow as a phenomenon. The latter relates more to *Women in Love* in its emphasis on the essential separateness of man and woman, and to the condition of Tom and Lydia as married, separate but meeting 'to the span of the heavens' (R

p.91). The former relates more closely to the implied connection between water and consciousness:

Even the rainbow has a body
made of the drizzling rain
and is an architecture of glistening atoms
built up, built up
yet you can't lay your hand on it,
nay, nor even your mind.
(*The Complete Poems*, p. 692)

In the poem the complex quality of the rainbow's presence is paramount. The rainbow is manifested because of the light which reveals it (it is light, but it needs water too, to have any existence) just as the unconscious unconceals itself to the dreamer, for instance, as a metaphorical chain. But the rainbow is more than light: that is to say both concepts 'rainbow' and 'light' are difficult to get hold of as Ideas. Another question persistently asked by Lawrence, and underlined here, is how to understand what a rainbow is rather than simply its cause, which is easy to comprehend. It is the Idea itself, rather than cause and effect, which is elusive. Not only that, but the idea of 'rainbow' depends on the idea of 'light', and who, asks Lawrence, can explain the Idea of light? Only metaphor can further thought along these lines: like the phosphorescent wave, metaphor flows around Idea, revealing, in some part, its form. And this is how metaphor in Lawrence addresses the problem of how to understand the Idea of anything. Metaphor translates Idea into something for the mind to understand. The poem describes the elusiveness of Idea, for which the rainbow becomes a metaphor.

To return to the rainbow, it is paradoxically both present and not present, certainly not in the sense that Will's cathedral is three-dimensionally present. The elusive quality of the rainbow's presence can be inferred where the phenomenon occurs in the novel as 'actual', as event, and it is useful to start with this sense of water as actual in the novel. Beyond that, the recognition must be of 'water and wave' as inseparable yet as being unconscious and conscious: like Tom Brangwen one can be conscious of water, yet unconscious of the 'wave'. This recognition is the linguistic achievement of *The Rainbow*.

Up to this point I have intentionally highlighted the wave imagery as representing a specific and extensive body of metaphor within the text. This is to establish *The Rainbow's* terms. The wave imagery relates to the sense in Lawrence of language as a sea of the conceivable flowing around reality which is knowable but not conceivable. The phosphorescent wave reveals the presence of some form: it is the closest language can be to revealing that form. In *The Rainbow* the language is like the wave which pulls back revealing the stable rock: the rock would not glisten with its real presence if the water had not first been there to reveal it.

The focus has returned and will continually return to the function of metaphor in these works, and specifically to the view of language to be inferred from it. The wave metaphor comes now to be seen as a meta-level of narrative consciousness within the novel, the true focus and interest of which is language. It is a 'subterranean' and fluid level within the work which essentially speaks about the work and

about language, in particular (as it applies to *The Rainbow*) and in general. My next step will be to break down the notion of metaphor further, by arguing that the language of the novel functions like the metaphors it contains.

4.1 Language as Metaphor

It will now be evident that the use of water as a stylistic analogy is a far from arbitrary choice on my part: as the examples cited show, the image is itself derived from Lawrence. In 'A Propos of "Lady Chatterley's Lover"' (1930), the image of water combines with Lawrence's 'belief in the blood' as the most appropriate way of restating some basic principles of the 'metaphysic':

Two rivers of blood, are man and wife, two distinct eternal streams, that have the power of touching and communing and so renewing, making new one another, without any breaking of the subtle confines, any confusing or commingling. And the phallus is the connecting-link between the two rivers, that establishes the two streams in a oneness, and gives out of their duality a single current, forever.

(*Phoenix II*, p. 506)

He also juxtaposes notions of 'the great dark *blood-stream* of humanity' (*Phoenix II*, p. 506, emphasis added), the 'streaming of the sun and the flowing of the stars' (*Phoenix II*, p. 506), and to this can be added Lawrence's more general comments on the novel in the ninth chapter of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*:

And here lies the vast importance of the novel, properly handled. It can inform and lead into new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness, and it can lead our sympathy

away in recoil from things gone dead. Therefore, the novel, properly handled, can reveal the most secret places of life: for it is in the *passional* secret places of life, above all, that the tide of sensitive awareness needs to ebb and flow, cleansing and freshening.

(*Lady Chatterley's Lover*, p. 92)

The explicit image of 'cleansing' / ^{can be related to the} function of language in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* ^{and it} is an idea which is more subliminally, but importantly, written in to the language of the earlier novels. Language is the appropriate medium if the intention is to 'clean out' ingrained conceptions of what is 'normal', 'natural' and 'right' in human relations and attitudes. One of Lawrence's goals is not just to question such conceptions analytically but to modify or transform them by a continual, gradual, barely recognizable process, as with the word 'love'.

Quite apart from this explicit image of cleansing, water is an image of psychic activity, as in the earlier reference to dream process, and this is particularly true in *The Rainbow*. The choice of water is not an arbitrary one: the Jamesian concept of 'stream of consciousness', for example, so significant to Symbolist and Modernist novelists, is entirely familiar as a psychologist's metaphor but one which grows out of a collective sense of the continuousness of thought. But in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* Lawrence was ironic about this particular conception, linking it with Freud and the Freudian conceptualization of the 'unknown' (F&P pp. 202-3). In 'Introduction to Pictures' (*Phoenix*, pp. 765-71) he returns the concept to the physical but conscious body and to the 'flow' which, as Deleuze and Guattari recognize, cuts across the psychologists' model:

The nerves and brain are the apparatus by which we signal and *register* consciousness. Consciousness, however, does not take rise in the nerves and brain. It takes rise elsewhere: in the blood, in the corpuscles, somewhere very primitive and pre-nerve and pre-brain. ... All the cells of our body are conscious. And all the time, they give off a stream of consciousness which flows along the nerves and keeps us spontaneously alive. While the flow streams through us, from the blood to the heart, the bowels [*sic*], the viscera, then along the sympathetic system of nerves into our spontaneous minds, making us breathe, and see, and move, and be aware, and *do* things spontaneously, while this flow streams as a flame streams ceaselessly, we are lit up, we glow, we live. ('Introduction to Pictures', *Phoenix*, p. 767)

The metaphorical language of streams and flows serves Lawrence's 'metaphysic' of presence, the special kind of experience to which the language refers: we recall the meditation on the writing hand.

By the same token, water in Lawrence is an effective image of consciousness and language because of its special qualities as a changeable, pervasive, ever-present and sustaining medium. It is distinct from the Modernist 'stream' which is usually individual and typically describes a steady flow moving in a single direction. It is not the engulfing image of *The Rainbow* where 'water and wave' jointly become an image of the evolving psyche, although the point about the wave is that it has to be seen in relation to the whole 'body' of which it is a part. The opening of the novel depicts Ursula's forebears in psychological terms (Brangwen-consciousness), and the often rehearsed movement throughout the book towards individuation (completed in Ursula herself) is sustained principally by the water and wave imagery. It would be inappropriate for Lawrence to incorporate an external model of consciousness as influential as the

Jamesian 'stream' into his novel as to do so would seriously undermine his own sense of psychic evolution, a central theme in *The Rainbow*, and run counter to his own consciousness of language.

In short, Lawrence's own implicit view of language makes any external theory irrelevant. The wave imagery in *The Rainbow* does not mechanically reproduce or represent a linguistic consciousness, which is Lawrence's view of the Modernist 'stream'. The significance of the wave metaphor in his novel is precisely this: Lawrence is thinking *metaphorically* about language as a medium rather than conceptually and consciously. His 'thinking' is implicit rather than explicit, as suits the nature of the subject. It is a 'thinking' which is at home in the language of the novel, as an embodiment of Lawrence's intelligence, rather than being a linguistic representation of any current, and inevitably quite general, theory of consciousness.

In this lies the significant contrast between Lawrence, a central but not a programmatic Modernist, and his contemporaries in the British modernist tradition who are most usually associated with the 'stream of consciousness' conception. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, for instance, despite their intrinsic differences, represent a more conscious approach to language and consciousness than Lawrence, and one which is more evidently related to Symbolist innovations. The central text in this regard is *Ulysses* with its decisive influence on the European and American novel, at least. The 'stream of consciousness' technique completed the move of 'consciousness' as a novelistic preoccupation to a centre-stage position in the Euro-

American tradition. With Joyce in mind, Virginia Woolf, in her essay 'Modern Fiction' (1919), famously considered the 'show' and 'shape' of thoughts in 'an ordinary mind on an ordinary day', and added that 'For the moderns . . . , the point of interest, lies very likely in the dark places of psychology' ('Modern Fiction', p.151, p.150, p.152 respectively).

It is generally agreed that the subject, in both Woolf and Joyce, is recognizable by his or her linguistic contours. In both, subjectivity does indeed lie behind the eyes: characters see and thoughts are formed. In this way language becomes a legitimate subject of their novels as each writer consciously pulls away from that which Woolf designates a 'materialist' mode of fiction, at least in the English novel ('Modern Fiction' p.147). Lawrence uses the term 'materialism' in a related context in 'The Individual V. Social Consciousness', and echoes Woolf's comments on Galsworthy's uncritical apprehension of 'reality'. Lawrence: 'in all his [Galsworthy's] books I have not been able to discover one real individual -- nothing but social individuals.' (*Phoenix*, p.763). Whilst it could be debated whether or not Woolf herself actually uses 'stream of consciousness' at all, she has for the most part shifted the emphasis in her novels away from the body to the mind and language of the individual, but Joyce is the more representative of the two. Given his celebrated style it is useful to shift the critical gaze momentarily from the considered use of 'stream of consciousness' to his use of metaphor.

In *Ulysses* the relation of Homer's *Odyssey* to Joyce's fiction is metaphorical given the extent of substitution and transposition (Bloom/Odysseus). By the same token it is the *Odyssey*'s externality which is both significant and inescapable as the external structure, the 'framework', upon and around which Joyce's text is constructed. There can be no expectation of an equivalent framework in Lawrence where the central metaphor of a work, as in *The Rainbow*, arises from a *sense* of language and is not separable from the language of the whole. Were Lawrence to take up the *Odyssey*, as he sometimes takes up the story of Christ, he would reinvest it with meaning according to his personal 'metaphysic'. It would not be a re-writing or a re-application in self-consciously modern terms precisely because for Lawrence as a poet-philosopher language is more than simply a tool or a technique. In his view a purely structural and thematic use of such a culturally significant text is never more than a matter of making mechanical equivalents, and 'mechanical' is a word which he would use to describe the Modernist grasp of 'consciousness'.

Joyce and Woolf are to a significant extent responding to, and contributing to, a specific historical moment. Their work brings into relief the relation between a tradition and a counter-tradition, if this is indeed the appropriate way to refer to the difference between a Realist tradition and Symbolism/Modernism. Because Lawrence's language-consciousness is not so consciously informed by the response which their work manifests, in him the focus must inevitably and uniquely be on an emergent and highly personal view of language which can only be inferred and derived from the metaphorical levels in his

texts. Whilst he is aware of the distance between his own language and 'metaphysic' and a distinct literary tradition, he does not make that distance a principal and conscious preoccupation in his own work. This is clearly one of the reasons for allying Lawrence on one level with figures like Freud and Nietzsche rather than Joyce and Woolf, because of the recognition among the former pair of metaphorical discourse as the necessary vehicle of thought. It is now a commonplace to say that neither consciousness nor language can be discussed non-metaphorically. Lawrence is a writer who most subtly exemplifies the reasons why this should be the case. Nietzsche is more analytical about the whole question of metaphor, his point of view being that the language we use gives us various models of reality, which is the case in an individual context as well as a cultural one. The highly metaphorical language of Lawrence's nominally 'discursive' essays where the reader might expect a barely metaphorical style underlines this point.

Water as a metaphor for consciousness is not simply illustrative in an *ad hoc* way, therefore, but arises intrinsically from Lawrence's sense of language. It is worth briefly considering, in the light of this statement, some fundamental attributes of water.

Naturalistically, water has properties which distinguish it from the other elements. Water falls as rain, for example, and is present on the earth as such. Nevertheless, the rain which has fallen dries up leaving no immediately identifiable trace to suggest that it has been there at all (apart from in memory). This transitory quality of water can lead us to question, therefore, whether it is in fact part of the

world at all or whether it simply lies for a time on the surface, to disappear: if rain evaporates simply to fall again, it is nevertheless possible for lakes and rivers to be full but to dry up completely. Water occurs underground, lying at subterranean levels, or it can be invisible, present on, under and above the earth in different forms.

Even if we do not move beyond the crudest of analogies, these features help to attend to the nature of language with its multiple levels of meaning, including subliminal levels, and the fact that language itself is only ever ambivalently 'present' (at least in speech). References in *The Rainbow* reveal clearly enough that, up to a point, Lawrence had thought about this linguistic analogy, and that the pertinence of the metaphor is not accidental.² It came to him 'unwatched' because at some deep level he was conscious of it. In 'The Marsh and the Flood' (*The Rainbow*, chapter IX) Tom Brangwen meditates aloud on the changeable quality of water:

Th' rain tumbles down just to mount up in clouds again. So they say. There's no more water on the earth than there was in the year naught. That's the story, my boy, if you understand it. There's no more today than there was a thousand years ago -- nor no less either. You can't wear water out. No, my boy: it'll give you the go-by. Try to wear it out, and it takes its hook into vapour, it has its fingers at its nose to you. It turns into cloud and falleth as rain on the just and unjust.
(*The Rainbow*, p.227)

This is not simply Tom rambling. In the first place his words recall the Creation, with the world created from the separation of the waters (water draws back and reveals presence: this is a recurring idea in Lawrence). On another level, its being in a continually changing state

makes water extremely interesting and appropriate for Lawrence who will throughout *The Rainbow* use water to talk about something else. Paul Ricoeur's reference to the 'living event of actual speech' (RM p.62) underlines its transient non-fixed quality, like Tom's/Lawrence's sense of water. Speech could be said metaphorically to 'evaporate' on being uttered, leaving no physical traces. What has been heard is lodged (temporarily) only in the mind and thoughts of the listener. It is hardly a coincidence that 'dry up' is a vulgar euphemism for 'don't say anything more', something which indicates that the homology between water and speech is lodged in collective consciousness. This recalls my earlier remarks on 'dead' metaphor, my references to an existing body of metaphor which as Lawrence reminds us is increasingly pertinent. 'Dry up' is part of the common stock of metaphors but it is entirely apposite for Lawrence's view of language here.

It can be asked of both speech and water, 'Where does it come from?', a single point of origin, a neutral state, being difficult to isolate in each. But speech and water are fundamentally physical: Nietzsche, for instance, refers to the *physical* event of speech, i.e. of making metaphors (PT p.82). The suggestion is not that Lawrence formulated this correspondence consciously. On the contrary, his recognition of the homologous characteristics of language and water springs from a very deep source (to employ a watery metaphor) in one whose perception of the nature of language is acute. We have in Lawrence a subconscious alertness to the inventiveness and appropriateness of a certain level of metaphor in a 'philosophical'

context and to philosophical ends. The reader must recognize that the water/speech equivalence is serviceable up to a point. What it does not do is take account of the view of language in terms of particular categories, of language as a political construct for example, of language as discourse, but this is because the emphasis is on the 'wholeness', the whole 'body', of language rather than its particular configurations which cannot in the end be regarded as separate from the whole.

I hope by this to show that Lawrence's use of water imagery is not in any sense arbitrary and that its implications are far reaching not least in the context of *The Rainbow*. In my second chapter the idea of the 'phosphorescent wave', from a passage in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, was developed as a metaphor for language in a general sense, underlining the radar effect of a phosphorescent wave which reveals the presence of an object in its entirety without necessarily dwelling on the details of the object. A phosphorescent wave is a luminous *moment* set apart from the more familiar repetitive character of waves. Its importance as an image of consciousness and language is that it reveals the presence of something in an instant, which makes it appropriate in the context of *Women in Love*. The contrast with *The Rainbow* has a great deal to do with juxtaposing this sense of immediacy and simultaneity with the kind of repetition which characterizes the language of *The Rainbow*, and the gradual build up within the narrative language to passages of heightened significance, which my earlier examples illustrated. This is to underline the principal difference in styles between the two novels, given that

'style' itself is a set of principles which characterize a text, and to go some way to explaining why the styles of *The Rainbow* can be called 'undulating'.

So far the emphasis has been explicitly on language as a medium. No formal 'abstract' view of language has been proposed by Lawrence, and yet his language-consciousness is evident. The emphasis, then, must be on a pervasive consciousness of language emerging through the text's central metaphor, a view which is implied by that metaphor. It has been stressed how far what is expressed here is a view of language which is derived from the text rather than from an external source which is in part Lawrence's strength. The real significance of the novel then is in the language and in its action, the two being inseparable. With this in mind I propose to examine 'water and wave' further, gradually moving towards an understanding of the Lawrencean individual in *The Rainbow* who must inevitably be seen in the context of this vast metaphor.

Crucially, the surface of the wave and the structure of the wave beneath the surface are meaningful to Lawrence as allotropes of water, to recall an earlier occasion where Lawrence famously states what is special in his novels:

You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognisable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover are states of the same single radically-unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond -- but I say 'diamond, what! This is carbon.' And my diamond

might be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.)
(*Letters*, II, p.183)

A wave looks on the surface as though it is moving and breaking at a point which lies at some distance from its beginning. The surface of the water, like the space of water observed by Ursula in 'The Bitterness of Ecstasy' (*The Rainbow*, chapter XV), appears to be mobile, a kinaesthetic form. The undulating, repetitive, surface has its own rhythm. Beneath the surface of the wave, however, a different condition exists. According to the laws of physics wave formation is due to a force defined as an energy-carrying disturbance, spreading through a medium, here water, and causing a local displacement of the medium. Water particles oscillate up and down in response to the disturbance, and the up and down motion makes the wave visible on the surface as areas of water rise above and return to the general level. The pattern is of swells and troughs alternating. Therefore, on the surface the effect is of a mobile body of water moving to the shore in response to a natural phenomenon like the wind, for example, but beneath the surface water particles are being displaced *up-and-down* and are not moving laterally very far at all. So, in macro and micro terms, whilst there is a sense of continual movement on the surface, there is also always the *node*, the point of zero, or minimal, movement below.

This sense of there being two forms, of something being one thing on the surface and another thing beneath the surface, is how waves refer to allotropic states, so significant for Lawrence in the description of the relation, for instance, of diamond and coal to

carbon. Despite its various forms water is the 'radically-unchanged element', as is carbon in the famous example. This supplements the fact that a wave is composed of countless water particles, and cannot be what it is without these particles, which makes it a good image of the Lawrencean individual in *The Rainbow*. As the great and sweeping wave is comprised of minute particles indistinguishable from the whole, so the individual in *The Rainbow* is a part of the greater life, an element at home in the external world. The individual consciousness is submerged in the novel's language, which also sustains it.

The 'wave' metaphor also refers to the life of the single word in the novel and is, as is evident by now, deeply implicated in the differences between *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. It is useful to begin by imagining a human figure treading water in the sea. A wave builds up and lifts the figure in its swell so that the figure is raised, in the area of water s/he inhabits, above the general level. As the wave 'passes', the figure is let down (in a trough) to that same general level until the next wave when the action is repeated. The figure has not in fact been carried forward by or on the wave, but is rising and falling with the water level and is consequently staying in roughly the same place. The wave therefore passes *around* the figure, that is to say it passes in spite of the figure. Inasmuch as the force which causes the wave might be felt by the individual it could be said to pass *through*, and not just around the figure, although literally of course the water does pass around and underneath the physical body. This constitutes a very literal representation of an engulfing medium. In *Women in Love*, in contrast, as I have implied,

the distance between the individual and the background is more explicit. At some point a gulf has opened up between them so that the Lawrencean individuals do not 'belong' in that novel as they do in *The Rainbow*. The drama of this split, this rupture, is contained in the double meanings of the word 'cleave' in *Women in Love*, which simultaneously (and oxymoronicallly) designates a splitting away from something *and* an adhering. In the dance of the three women at Breadalby, for instance, Gudrun's 'cleaving' is mentioned repeatedly (WL pp.91-92), and for the most part it is the condition of the individual in that novel to be apart without achieving positive singleness.

Women in Love memorably offers its own image of a human figure in water in the form of Gerald Crich swimming in the lake in 'Diver', an image which usefully contrasts with my own. In my hypothetical example the wave passes around the figure which is essentially a part of the whole, it being displaced with the whole body of water as the wave passes. Gerald Crich, in contrast, pushes himself through the water of the lake. Physically in the water, he is isolated from it, a foreign body in the midst of a medium which is in Lawrence's words 'uncreated', wilfully following his own trajectory. He does not have an effortless unity with the watery medium, or the larger scene, but is fundamentally (as well as literally, of course) 'separate' from it; this represents the disjunctive relationship of Lawrencean character to world which characterizes *Women in Love*, quite different from *The Rainbow's* 'belonging'. It is a world which is different from the world of *The Rainbow* which is always richly, and sometimes suffocatingly,

'present'. In swimming, Gerald agitates the water of the lake in a way which the figure in my example does not: Gerald's relation to the water is 'frictional'. The condition of the individual is once again thrown into relief, but so too is the condition of the word in the novel.

How does this point up the difference between the mode of language in *Women in Love* compared to *The Rainbow*? I have established that metaphor in these texts does not have a merely rhetorical function, but sustains the thought. At the same time, the metaphorical quality of the language of the one novel is strikingly different from that of the other. Hence, despite a common basis in Lawrence's thought, the novels do not share an identical 'metaphysic'. I have suggested that there is a subtle correlation between the condition of the individual in each novel and the condition of the word. My model of the figure in water, not Gerald Crich, also describes the condition of specific single words, key words for Lawrence, in *The Rainbow*. Like the figure in my example who is a part of the continuous flood, accommodated by it as the wave passes around and under him, these key words (central to the thought) are unproblematically part of the narrative while meaning, and often *opposing* meanings, passes through them. No difficulty is experienced in understanding what these particular words mean where they occur in *The Rainbow* because their context makes 'sense' of them. Context in *The Rainbow*, therefore, has an explanatory function. In *Women in Love*, however, whilst the same vocabulary remains important, the context fails to provide a stable meaning and, against expectation, often forces plain meaning into question. The

importance of context is discussed briefly by Paul Ricoeur who makes a useful distinction in pointing out that words 'acquire an actual meaning only in a sentence'. In other words the meaning of a word depends entirely on its context. Words listed in a dictionary, he adds, are only 'lexical entities' having 'merely potential meanings'. Indeed, metaphor is a 'contextual change of meaning' and not a lexical one (HHS pp.169-70). Ricoeur is talking about metaphor at a rhetorical level, about living metaphor in the sentence, in his view the smallest unit of proper sense. However, his words apply obliquely in the present context as *The Rainbow* dramatizes his point, at least with regard to Lawrence's key words: 'presence' and 'reality', it is generally recognized, change their meaning within the narrative according to context. In *Women in Love*, on the other hand, actual meanings are in crisis. Like Gerald swimming, and not merging with the scene, in *Women in Love* it is the word which 'pushes through' the language around it, and this is the 'frictional' quality of the language. Instead of the word seeming fixed and having language (sense) passing through it (the sweeping wave of *The Rainbow*), it is more active: it interrogates by 'disturbing' and as I argued earlier, destabilizing, its surroundings.

It is difficult not to talk about the language of Lawrence's fiction without eventually arriving at the problem, or otherwise, of these key words. They are distributed evenly and overtly throughout the important (philosophical) narratives, comprising the Lawrencean lexicon which includes the words 'presence' and 'reality'. 'Knowledge' is another, but I need not linger on that word here because its

importance has been addressed in my second chapter on the conception of language being thought in Lawrence's essays on the unconscious. Different thinkers on Lawrence's language have subjected these words to different pressures. Michael Bell calls them 'verbal motifs' which constitute a 'speculative discourse' (Bell, p.73) within the narrative of *The Rainbow*: they are words which Lawrence deploys so that, at appropriate moments, they take on a psychological and ontological weight which they do not ordinarily possess. Once again context is crucial. So like Ragussis, and to a lesser extent John Worthen,³ Michael Bell has focused on a philosophical vocabulary within the narrative of a particular novel. Regarding 'presence', 'reality' and 'knowledge' he rightly draws attention to the fact that in *The Rainbow*,

Lawrence constantly uses these terms in contradictory clusters so that their normal meaning is challenged, modified or *reversed*. Or else he uses the word singly but with an odd inflection that leads us to construct its significance anew in context. The effect of this is progressively to impart a constitutively psychological factor into the existential claims of these terms. (Bell, p.73, my italics.)

That is to say, as motifs, they represent a special mode of Brangwen subjectivity. As before, Michael Bell is identifying certain local effects within the narrative and in doing so is highlighting particular ontological structures within Lawrence's language. I would add that there is also a more general quality of language being indicated here inasmuch as this quality of a reversal of meaning, a semantic challenge, sustained in the same word deployed more than once in a given context is significant because it enables the oxymoronic

consciousness which permeates Lawrence's narratives to come, once again, into view. In my last chapter I suggested that the oxymoronic in Lawrence, and particularly in *Women in Love*, deserves greater attention than it has received because it invests Lawrence's language, in its very grain, with a philosophical specificity. That is to say, there is more at stake in Lawrence's oxymoronic consciousness than simply rhetoric. Regarding these key words we must once again confront the oxymoronic at a level which is below rhetoric but not below language.

If words like 'reality' are characterized in Lawrence's narratives chiefly by the opposing meanings they are sometimes made to bear, it is a sign of the oxymoronic functioning at even deeper levels in the text than we previously suspected, as in the word 'love' for example. Where the reader encounters a reversal of meaning in a single word which is used repeatedly, s/he is justified in identifying an oxymoronic movement of meaning within that word. Indeed, this is one of the effects of deploying the same word more than once in a relatively brief passage: consciously or unconsciously, the reader responds to a new suggestion, a different meaning, especially within a relatively narrow context. Such a deployment of words is typically 'Lawrencean'. The day-to-day meaning of the word is still accessible, and in play, but interacting with the 'Lawrencean' inflection. Indeed, we respond to the Lawrencean sense largely because of our familiarity with the everyday 'proper' sense. The example of Lydia passing Tom on the road, and his response, is frequently cited in the debate on these key words in Lawrence ⁴ and I shall use it again, but this time to

point up the *oxymoronic* force of 'reality' juxtaposed with 'reality'. As Lydia passes, Tom feels himself inhabiting 'a far world, the fragile reality' which is different from the 'reality' which his new world is 'beyond' several lines later (R p.29). The novel contains many such examples. In the first instance, placing the word 'reality' next to itself in a context like this where each time it signifies differently is oxymoronic, and by the same token, an oxymoronic dynamic is being identified in the single word, as it was in 'love'. Lawrence's point is that the *single* word 'reality' potentially contains both its 'proper' meaning, and its reverse. My suggestion is that the deployment of these words in the manner described is oxymoronic, not because two *different* elements are brought together in unusual proximity (which is how we usually understand oxymoron) but because the same word is repeated in a context where its meaning is reversed, i.e. placing the same words together creates the oxymoron. By extension, in using the word singly, its oxymoronic quality is implicitly present as a possibility. The oxymoronic dynamic is thus the play of opposing meanings in the key word. The real significance of this is what it communicates of Lawrence's sense of language *in general*: once again the suggestion is that meaning has an *oxymoronic* tendency, rather than a centripetal or centrifugal one, which are the usual models of meaning on offer. This recognition which underpins, indeed is, the 'metaphysic' of *Women in Love*, is *potentially* present in *The Rainbow*.

Whether the critical enterprise is to point up, as Michael Bell does, the ontological pressure which Lawrence exerts on single words,

or whether it is to target their metaphorical (oxymoronic) significance, these particular words continue to attract the attention of critics. They are words which are ideally placed to focus the questions of Self, Being, World and Language which increasingly preoccupy Lawrence's readers. Some brief examples are sufficient to demonstrate their importance.

In 'The Cathedral' (*The Rainbow*, chapter VII) the word 'reality' occurs repeatedly in a context which expressly underlines the fact that it does not signify the phenomenological world but Will Brangwen's 'reality' as it is embodied by the church building. It is a word which does not enter the narrative until Anna's remarks have interfered with his illusions about the cathedral's 'absolute' value for him, and when it does it refers, not to the empirical world but, apparently paradoxically, to those illusions. We have Will's 'beloved realities' and the 'mysterious world of reality' (R p.190), the 'reality' which is an 'order' or system for him, within the church where 'all reality gathered' (R p.191): in plain terms 'reality' is the wrong word except that it is appropriate for Will, being his projection, his interpretation of a milieu which is graphically, even 'concretely', apart from the 'chaos' (R p.191). Anna's experience, the language used to describe her sense of things as they are, underlines the contradictions in play in the word: in the *reality* of child-birth and child-rearing she puts off 'all adventure into *unknown realities*' (R p.191, emphasis added). The phrase emphasized is profoundly oxymoronic, and points up the contradictory play of meaning which pervades the book but without bearing the 'metaphysic' as it will do

in *Women in Love*. Each character, in short, occupies different realities, and subjectivity is understood as this difference, and the continual generation of different perspectives. Although the reader can deduce the meaning of the word in context the whole question of definition is far from conscious in *The Rainbow*. The characters do not struggle with definitions because, as has often been pointed out, they do not live verbally. This is a further significant point of contrast with *Women in Love* and is the force of Ragussis's comments on contextuality in *Women in Love* that 'The words seem to define themselves through context, through their associations with other words' (Ragussis, p.183). This might, however, be a better description of the mode of *The Rainbow* in *Women in Love* what a word means is less to do with its immediate context than with the larger problem of 'Language' and how it delimits 'reality'.

An example from *Women in Love* serves to show how extremely the function of these key words has changed in that novel. Once again the word which I have singled out for consideration is 'reality'. The broad context is 'Excuse' (*Women in Love*, chapter XXIII):

Even as he [Birkin] went into the lighted, public place he remained dark and magic, the living silence seemed the body of reality in him, subtle, potent, undiscoverable. There he was! In a strange uplift of elation she saw him, the being never to be revealed, awful in its potency, mystic and real. This dark, subtle reality of him, never to be translated, liberated her into perfection, her own perfected being. She too was dark and fulfilled in silence.
(*Women in Love*, p.319)

The emphasis on undiscoverability and untranslatableability in relation to the word 'reality' is very important here. Where 'reality' occurs

for a second time it is very difficult to decide whether it is the word or the experience which is 'never to be translated'. The meaning of this passage is palpably more difficult to grasp than that in the passages above from *The Rainbow*. The word 'indiscoverable' and the phrase 'never to be translated', far from explaining the meaning of 'reality', highlight its inexpressibility. Ultimately the reader is left to question, rather than decide, what it is that they refer to. That the language is apparently begging questions, that it is in relation to *The Rainbow* more problematic, is not a weakness of style in *Women in Love*, but points to Lawrence's preoccupation in that novel with his sense of the limitations of language, anyway a central theme. *Women in Love* is making the whole question of meaning more conscious, which is, I take it, Ragussis's point. Yet in the context of any discussion on language, language itself is not overtly the subject: the subject is what Lawrence's sense of language both is *and* what it points to.

The emphasis in the passage just quoted is on Birkin's 'presence'; on a quality which is unconcealed but still mysterious. There follow two passages from *The Rainbow* where the word 'presence' is repeated. The first describes Lydia Lensky becoming more conscious of her Yorkshire surroundings:

Walking down, she found the bluebells around her glowing like a *presence*, among the trees.

Summer came, the moors were tangled with harebells like water in the ruts of the roads, the heather came rosy under the skies, setting the whole world awake. And she was uneasy. She went past the gorse bushes shrinking from their *presence*, she stepped into the heather as into a quickening bath that almost hurt.

(*The Rainbow*, p.51, emphasis added)

while the second highlights Will Brangwen's relation with the infant Ursula:

He left the shed door on the latch. And when, with his second sense of another *presence*, he knew she was coming, he was satisfied, he was at rest. When he was alone with her, he did not want to take notice, to talk. He wanted to live unthinking, with her *presence* flickering upon him.
(*The Rainbow*, p.201, emphasis added)

The reader is not arrested by a sense that the words highlighted in each passage are especially challenging. In both examples the context prevents the word 'presence' from being difficult to understand. In each instance the sense of the word can be grasped although its meaning changes from passage to passage, and in some cases from instance to instance. Although the word signifies differently from passage to passage, each time it occurs the relevant meaning is secured by the context. This underlines our general sense that meaning does not, therefore, belong solely to the individual word, but is provided by its surroundings. A signified is not cemented to a signifier in some inevitable and inflexible sense, rather, meaning is constituted as part of the sentence which is itself constituted as part of a broader context. The focus here is on emergent meanings rather than lexical or 'proper' meaning. In the first passage the context makes it possible for the reader to recognize both the noumenal and the numinous in Lydia's surroundings. In the second, 'presence' refers explicitly to the young Ursula about to enter and, from his point of view, enrich, Will's world. In the first passage the

presence of the environment is felt in a physical sense like pain; in the second 'presence' refers more to Will's consciousness of Ursula.

Different critics of course approach these key words differently and in the end their viewpoints are likely to have an accumulative value. To sum up my position, in the passages from *The Rainbow* where the key words are explained by their context, this is not the same as the word acquiring a fixed meaning, and an emergent oxymoronic dynamic can be identified as continually present in the life of the word. Like the figure in the water in my example, as opposed to the figure of Gerald Crich in 'Diver', language is in place in this novel with meaning passing around, or beneath, the word. It is as if the word is transparent and the reader sees the relevant meaning (explained by context) pass 'under' it: sense is constructed relatively unproblematically. In contrast, in the example from *Women in Love* potent words like 'reality' seem to move through the text, as Gerald Crich pushes through the water of the lake. ^{The meanings of} these words are not fixed,

having a more exploratory or experimental, a more conscious, function. In *Women in Love*, as the example about Birkin above shows, the reader cannot unproblematically alight on a meaning and pass on, because it is not here the function of the sentence, or the larger context, to provide such easy access to meaning. In examining these differences between the two novels it has been useful to cite examples which deal with the individual, like the moment of Gerald swimming, and the moment of Tom's seeing Lydia on the road. I propose next to consider further the profound relation of language and the individual,

principally in *The Rainbow*, which is something my examination has been working towards.

4.2 Language and the Individual

The question of individuality furthers the fundamental point about 'belonging' and 'disjunction' made by my analysis of the condition of the word in each novel. The water images in both *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow* underline the different treatment of individuality and 'belonging' in the books. A passage from 'The Novel' underscores the significance of the concept of 'belonging' to Lawrence. Constructing his argument he turns to consider the furniture in the room where he sits and writes:

That silly iron stove somehow *belongs*. Whereas this thin-shanked table doesn't belong. It is a mere disconnected lump, like a cut-off finger.
(*'The Novel'*, in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, p.183)

This indirectly describes the condition of the individual in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* respectively: the Brangwens *belong* in the same way Lawrence's stove belongs in its immediate milieu. In *Women in Love* belonging is more problematic, with the Lawrencean figures only too conscious of their lack of meaningful connection with their 'world', but the Lawrencean figures in *The Rainbow* experience a more complex kind of freedom than those in *Women in Love*. They are 'free' within an enveloping milieu. Their consciousness is not separable from that whole environment. So they are not existentially 'free' as the

'astral' figures of *Women in Love* may be, but in that novel such 'freedom' itself is shown to be problematic, if not illusory.

This problem of freedom is most thoroughly identified in Ursula seen first in the context of her family before the narrative shifts to the details of her personal experience. The wave image continues to operate remaining a prominent feature of the novel's 'actual' landscape. Away with her family, Ursula watches a wave at sea. The description communicates the familiar reality of a 'real' wave, present in the fictional world, and Ursula's sense of it as symbolizing her condition:

Then came a time when the sea was rough. She watched the water travelling in to the coast, she watched a big wave running unnoticed, to burst in a shock of foam against a rock, enveloping all in a great white beauty, to pour away again, leaving the rock emerged black and teeming. Oh, and if, when the wave burst into whiteness, it were only set free!

(*The Rainbow*, p. 402)

Ursula's response is to a deep, sweeping, eternal life which the wave represents to her and which is central to *The Rainbow*. But it is also a commonplace that in Ursula Lawrence represents the move towards individuation which distinguishes the end of the novel from its beginning. The image of the wave pulling away from the rock, and the fact that the rock is left singular and distinct from the 'enveloping' water, foregrounds the violent separateness which I underlined in *Women in Love*. At the beginning of 'Moony', for instance, Ursula's metaphysical state is described in the same language: 'One was a tiny little rock with the tide of nothingness rising higher and higher. She

herself was real, and only herself -- just like a rock in a wash of flood-water. The rest was all nothingness. She was hard and indifferent, isolated in herself.' (WL p.244).

It is worth highlighting one more example from Ursula's experience. I propose to consider the force of the water and wave imagery in the episode which describes Ursula's encounter with the horses in the final chapter of the novel. Ursula leaves the house in an attempt to dispel the 'tumult' within her while she waits to hear from Skrebensky, 'that her *course* should be resolved' (R p.450, emphasis added). It is not accidental that she is placed in 'the chaos of rain' (R p.450) and Lawrence goes to some lengths to establish her watery context: she sees Willey water at a distance through low *cloud*, 'the hawthorn trees *streamed* like hair on the wind' (R p.450, emphasis added). At this point she feels *inside* the rain. Her frame of vision, which is to become filled with the oppressively close flanks and hooves of the horses, is taken up momentarily with the 'visionary' colliery before 'the veils closed again. She was glad of the rain's privacy and intimacy' (R p.450). At this point she is enclosed, 'encircled' (R p.450), by and within the environment but there is a strong sense in the language of her resistance to this enveloping milieu:

She turned under the shelter of the common, seeing the great veils of rain swinging with slow, floating waves across the landscape. She was very wet and a long way from home, far enveloped in the rain and the waving landscape. She must beat her way back through all this fluctuation, back to stability and security.
(*The Rainbow*, p. 451)

The final sentence looks ahead to other Lawrencean figures who beat their way through a watery environment, notably Gerald Crich. Consequently it is another statement which anticipates Ursula's individuation in *Women in Love*, in terms of her separation from the engulfing world of *The Rainbow*. In the next line she is 'a solitary thing' herself going 'through the wash of hollow space' (R p.451). It is significant that it is here the individual who presses on and goes 'through' the world, and this in itself identifies Ursula's fundamental difference from the other Brangwens of *The Rainbow*: if Ursula is now a conscious and 'solitary thing' pushing through her world, the early Brangwens especially were people through whom consciousness, language, that is to say life itself, passed. By this stage Ursula propels herself along her own trajectory: 'She would go straight on, and on, and be gone by.' (R p.451). Any sense of anything passing through Ursula now, in this encounter, is equated with pain and resistance. For a moment the 'wave' is transformed into the horses:

But the horses had burst before her. In a sort of lightning of knowledge *their movement travelled through her*, the quiver and strain and thrust of their powerful flanks, as they burst before her and drew on, beyond.
(*The Rainbow*, p.452, emphasis added)

The horses are now *part* of the water whilst she is separate. They are also a mid-term between the driving rain (as pervasive) and Ursula herself (as becoming singular). Like water, they crash down upon her 'thunderously about her, enclosing her' in a 'burst transport' (R p.453). After this Ursula herself is 'dissolved like water' with 'limbs like water' (R p.453), before her individuation is articulated

finally as a separation from the 'wave' of experience:

As she sat there, spent, time and the flux of change passed away from her, she lay as if unconscious upon the bed of the stream, like a stone, unconscious, unchanging, unchangeable, whilst everything rolled by in transience, leaving her there, a stone at rest on the bed of the stream, inalterable and passive, sunk to the bottom of all change. (*The Rainbow*, p. 454)

So it is that the individuation of Ursula is completed in terms of the 'wave' and, ultimately, her being separate from it. The significance of the horses is not purely what they might represent in Ursula, which is the usual critical assumption, but lies, at least equally, in their relation to the water.

The water images in *Women in Love* provide a different perspective on the same theme, stressing the individual's isolation. In 'Water-Party' water is a boundary, a surface, a dividing line between two worlds, as in 'Moony' it is a mirror. The human figures are 'on the water' (WL p. 178, emphasis added). The *under* water of the lake is a hostile and mysterious world: diving in it for the bodies of his sister and her potential rescuer Gerald, far from being a part of the scene, is 'gone' (WL p. 181), he is absent. The extent of the isolation of the human figures in *Women in Love*, of their separation from the larger scene, or sweep, of life, is summed up in Gudrun's experience as she waits for Gerald to surface for the second time:

She was so alone, with the level, unliving field of the water stretching beneath her. It was not a good isolation, it was a terrible, cold separation of suspense. She was suspended upon the surface of the insidious reality until such time as she should disappear beneath it. (*Women in Love*, p. 182)

'Reality' here is not the whole, but a subtle and treacherous world with which she has a troubled connection: far from implying 'belonging', the word 'insidious' (*insidere*, to sit in) signifies a being 'in' something, like captivity, rather than *The Rainbow's* 'being a part of' something. Alienation, loss and separation are the central ideas rather than integration with the broader natural world which we perceive even at the moment of Tom Brangwen's death. What follows is not a statement of integration but of suffocation, deprivation and ultimately, bereavement: 'everything was drowned within it [the water of the lake], drowned and lost' (WL p.185). The flood which kills Tom and the drowning in 'Water-Party' are significant as events but they are also subtle metaphors for 'belonging' and alienation respectively. The different perspectives which they represent on individuality and 'belonging' underline the fundamental differences between *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow*. The 'reality' which occupies Gudrun's thoughts in the passage above seems to be a fragment or part of the whole, but it resists definition or contextualization. The best that can be said is that the whole world is now conceived of as fragmented: the 'reality' under the lake's surface; the 'reality' above it; the 'reality' experienced by the highly conscious Lawrencean characters as individuals; even the underworld of the mines; and the abstract cosmology of Birkin's 'star-equilibrium'.

It is now possible to see fully how the water image in each book is linked to the style of each. The 'wave' of *The Rainbow* incorporates the whole, and all the Lawrencean figures fit into the broader scheme.

In *Women in Love* the human figures are 'suspended', a key word in the novel which in its literal sense reinforces their lack of connection with a background. *The Rainbow* on the other hand presents, in its language and action, a complex image of freedom within an engulfing but sustaining medium. This is to underline Lawrence's sense of a 'living continuum' which is so apposite for *The Rainbow*

Paradoxical as it may sound, the individual is only truly himself when he is unconscious of his own individuality, when he is unaware of his own isolation, when he is not split into subjective and objective, when there is no *me* or *you*, no *me* or *it* in his consciousness, but the *me* and *you*, the *me* and *it* is a living *continuum*, as if all were connected by a living membrane.
 ('The Individual Consciousness V. The Social Consciousness' in *Phoenix*, p. 761)

NOTES

Chapter Four. Undulating Styles: *The Rainbow*

1. See Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (London: Virago, 1977, reprinted, 1985), pp.237-93, p.240. See also Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. by H. M. Parshley (1949, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972, reprinted, 1975), pp.245-54. Lawrence and the feminist debate continues: see, for instance, Anne Smith, ed., *Lawrence and Women* (London: Vision, 1978); Carol Dix, *D. H. Lawrence and Women* (London: Macmillan, 1980); Hilary Simpson, *D. H. Lawrence and Feminism* (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1982); Sheila MacLeod, *Lawrence's Men and Women* (London: Paladin, 1987); David Holbrook, *D. H. Lawrence was Wrong about Women* (Louisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1992). Carol Siegel's *Lawrence among the Women: Wavering Boundaries in Women's Literary Traditions*, Feminist Issues: Practice, Politics, and Theory, eds. Kathleen M. Balutansky and Alison Booth (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1991) considers Lawrence's female precursors, Lawrence as 'feminine', his influence on women writers considered as his 'inheritors'.
2. The 'wave' metaphor, for instance, occurs in other contexts, in the fiction and discursive essays, notably *Study of Thomas Hardy* and 'The Crown'. However, it is only in *The Rainbow* that it bears consistently on questions of language and 'metaphysic'.
3. John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence and the Idea of the Novel* (London: Macmillan, 1979), p.61.
4. See for example Michael Bell, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*, p.73, and Diane S. Bonds, *Language and the Self in D. H. Lawrence*, p.66.

CHAPTER FIVE
LAWRENCE AND LANGUAGE

I am now in a position to consider Lawrence's view of language in a broader, more analytical context. Towards the end of 'On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense' Nietzsche makes a statement which anticipates a Modernist idea of language. It also contains a directive for the real philosopher:

The free intellect copies human life, but it considers this life to be something good and seems to be quite satisfied with it. That immense framework and planking of concepts to which the needy man clings his whole life long in order to preserve himself is nothing but a scaffolding and toy for the most audacious feats of the liberated intellect. And when it smashes this framework to pieces, throws it into confusion, and puts it back together in an ironic fashion, pairing the most alien things and separating the closest, it is demonstrating that it has no need of these makeshifts of indigence and that it will now be guided by intuitions rather than by concepts. There is no regular path which leads from these intuitions into the land of ghostly schemata, the land of abstractions. There exists no word for these intuitions; when man sees them he grows dumb, or else he speaks only in forbidden metaphors and in unheard-of combinations of concepts. He does this so that by shattering and mocking the old conceptual barriers he may at least correspond creatively to the impression of the powerful present intuition. (PT p.90)

It is the iconoclasm of this passage, combined with the positive effects of restructuring the 'framework' intuitively and in the 'ironic' way described, which anticipates a Modernist view of language, particularly in the last sentence. It is the liberated intellect, no longer governed by concepts, which must break down and recreate differently the 'framework'. The entire essay (which is

barely more than a creative sketch where Nietzsche can lay down some first terms), is a dialectic between rational man and intuitive man, and towards the end it seems to be approaching a sense of art and philosophy as interacting more than they have done traditionally.

The passage may be compared with Heidegger's lecture on 'The Nature of Language', partly because of this concentration on the interconnectedness of art and philosophy, and because the starting point for Nietzsche's reflections is language. The discourses with which Heidegger concerns himself are poetry and thought, attributing a different language to each. Obviously poetry and thought do not function alone in a culture, and many other modes of language exist, but the languages of poetry and thought have already in part been privileged in the culture because their respective traits are most prominent and distinctive. Hence, Heidegger like Nietzsche ascribes a sort of initiative to thought and to poetry, but not the same initiative in both. These thinkers suggest that human understanding does not occur through deduction but that understanding (as opposed to explanation) is necessarily ^{about the neglected possibilities of metaphor as a mode of understanding} metaphorical. This argument / underpins the present chapter and by extension my entire thesis. At a relatively early point in his lecture Heidegger draws attention to a fundamental distinction between the language of poetry and the language of thought, and in so doing describes the situation in which philosophers, as thinkers, find themselves:

Poetry and thought, each needs the other in its neighborhood, each in its fashion, when it comes to ultimates. In what region the neighborhood itself has its

domain, each of them, thought and poetry, will define differently, but always so that they will find themselves within the same domain. But because we are caught in the prejudice nurtured through centuries that thinking is a matter of ratiocination, that is, of calculation in the widest sense, the mere talk of a neighborhood of thinking to poetry is suspect. (OWL p.70)

Heidegger's position here is very close to Nietzsche's in 'On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense'. Philosophers have for centuries, for the whole history of philosophy, been used to, and have used, a ratiocinative (as Heidegger says, a calculating and deliberate) language. We are reminded here of Nietzsche's distinction between rational man and intuitive man (the artist and 'real' philosopher). It is Heidegger's belief, and Nietzsche's, that poetic language is in itself a 'thinking about' which is free from the limits of ratiocination (poetry is a different kind of questioning from that which is the principal mode of Western philosophizing). As if to emphasize his radical apprehension of poetry and thought sharing a 'neighbourhood', Heidegger adds metaphorically that 'Thinking is not a means to gain knowledge. Thinking cuts furrows into the soil of Being.' (OWL p.70).

He himself institutes a demonstrative play with words in this lecture, punning on the word 'Aufriß'.² This play -- and Heidegger can be seen 'playing with seriousness', to recall Nietzsche's formulation (PT p.91), to serious ends -- shows how radically Heidegger has moved from regarding thinking as a matter of ratiocination, making it more evidently a matter of language 'speaking'. The play of actual and potential meanings which he institutes signals the 'speaking' of

language and returns us to the final paragraph of the essay called 'Language' where he says 'It is not a matter here of stating a new view of language. What is important is learning to live in the speaking of language.' (PLT p.210). As we expect, he is not about to theorise metaphor. Bringing 'living' and 'speaking' into proximity, the reference is to the subject's 'dwelling in' language: a formulation which reduces the gulf between language and speaker or language and auditor. The metaphors of 'neighbourhood' and of language as the 'house of Being' underscore this point.

The artist, and Lawrence is exemplary, is already at some deep level attuned to the 'Heideggerian' recognition. These domestic metaphors of being 'at home in' language have been developed more recently by theorists like Derrida and Gadamer, influenced by Heideggerean perceptions. In 'White Mythology', his essay on 'dead' metaphor, Derrida rehearses the idea that because we use metaphor to communicate the concept of metaphor (as Heidegger does) then we are anyway already 'at home in' metaphor, which is, I take it, a Heideggerean recognition. This raises the question, how conscious are we of being 'at home in' language? Do we know we are at home there? Because consciousness is linguistic we are immersed in language and, therefore, never at a remove from it. Some language we can be conscious of, but the rest we simply inhabit unconsciously. This understanding, and this is really the point, is very strongly written into Lawrence's work. Heidegger's position, in punning, is that if we can hear the difference between the language of thought and the language of poetry, then we are hearing the 'saying' of language. His

own play with words -- and 'Aufriß' becomes 'his' word in 'The Nature of Language' -- must be seen in this context. Heidegger foregrounds his own word play (which is naturally more obvious in the German text than in the English), to turn us back into the language from which his key words are first generated. By extension, all metaphor turns us back to language and language to metaphor.

In the course of his lecture -- which like all of Heidegger is extremely metaphorical, which is part of the point -- the following meanings are implied. The principal meaning of 'Aufriß' is 'design' or 'sketch'. However, we can also 'hear', to recall Heidegger's sense of the auditor, 'aufreißen' meaning 'to tear open' and 'to cut open' which refers to his phrase that thinking 'cuts furrows into the soil of Being'. In the same vein there is 'ausreißen' meaning 'To tear up', 'to tear out' as in 'to uproot'. There is also 'aufritzen' meaning 'to slit open'. We also have 'ausreisen' with its sense of 'leaving a country', which recalls Heidegger's metaphor of the 'neighbourhood', 'domain' and 'clearing'. All these meanings can affect the hearer as Heidegger insists that we must let ourselves be reached by the hidden richness of words. The artist (intuitive man) of course already knows this. The philosopher can be seen coming to this understanding. Consequently, and Heidegger's texts assert this point, there is no sense of being able to control the proliferation of language: the individual cannot pretend to legislate when he speaks from within language.

Anyone who is not Nietzsche's

'intuitive man', might encounter difficulties when reading or hearing Heidegger because of the unfamiliarity of the language; and surely it is partly Heidegger's aim to defamiliarize. After all, his language does not seem to occupy a known, or clearly demarcated, intellectual register. Hence the special urgency of the question as to whether Heidegger can actually be 'translated', with all the complexities which the word implies, into another discourse without anything being lost. The answer would conceivably focus on the apparent arbitrariness with which Heidegger proceeds. To what extent could the play on 'aufriß' be expressed non-metaphorically or be substituted by another metaphor? Would such a substitution be possible or, when one gets close to the heart of the problematic, is 'aufriß' in fact the only possibility? The implicit distinction here is between metaphor and metaphoricity. The proliferation of meanings can be traced in a work *ad infinitum*, but the value of the exercise will not be on the fact of dissemination but on understanding-as-metaphorical, which word-play like Heidegger's signals.

If by this stage the differences between the language of poetry and the language of thought have become in any way polarized, even in the process of considering their interconnectedness, or alternatively have begun to seem indistinguishable, Heidegger provides the following account:

We must discard the view that the neighborhood of poetry and thinking is nothing more than a garrulous cloudy mixture of two kinds of saying in which each makes clumsy borrowings from the other. Here and there it may seem that way. But in truth, poetry and thinking are in virtue of their nature

held apart by a delicate yet luminous difference, each held in its own darkness: two parallels, in Greek *para allelo*, by one another, against one another, transcending, surpassing one another each in its fashion. Poetry and thinking are not separated if separation is to mean cut off into a relational void. The parallels intersect in the infinite. There they intersect with a section that they themselves do not make. By this section, they are first cut, engraved into the design of their neighboring nature. That cut assigns poetry and thinking to their nearness to one another. The neighborhood of poetry and thinking is not the result of a process by which poetry and thinking -- no one knows from where -- first draw to each other and thus establish a nearness, a neighborhood. The nearness that draws them near is itself the occurrence of appropriation by which poetry and thinking are directed into their proper nature.
(OWL p. 90)

So poetry and thinking are parallel uses of language and yet they intersect: they pass through and across each other in Heidegger's concept of 'nearness'. The verbal play here is on the meaning of cut, of cutting through, cutting a 'furrow'. It is on intersection and incision, cut and inscription. Art and philosophy achieve nearness in the 'cut'. That which Heidegger calls the 'luminous difference' between them is a positive quality. The nearness itself depends on the difference of the two 'neighbourhoods'. The sense here is of a productive fusion of these neighbourhoods but a fusion which pays attention to their fundamental differences. As a quite abstract description it is another way of drawing attention to the important relation (in Lawrence, for instance) between generality and particularity.

These passages help to establish the important interconnectedness of poetry and thinking as recognized in Heidegger's own thought, and by extension in Lawrence's. They show a philosopher attempting to cast

off the burden of ratiocinative questioning, so that the philosopher's consciousness of language emerges as the text, with its multiple levels, unfolds. One more passage, because of its significance to the artist writing literature, also helps us to reflect on the closeness of Heidegger and Lawrence: it confirms our sense of the importance of the 'at home' metaphor for both, and the necessity of the intersection of the two domains, or neighbourhoods, under discussion. Heidegger's 'we' refers, I take it, to the body of philosophers:

We speak of language, but constantly seem to be speaking merely *about* language, while in fact we are already letting language, *from within* language, speak to us, in language, of itself, saying its nature. This is why we must not prematurely break off the dialogue we have begun with the poetic experience we have heard, for fear that thinking would not allow poetry to find its own words any longer, but would force everything into the way of thinking. (OWL p.85)

Poetry is the place where language does not hold back. The *Dasein* of the human being is fundamentally and especially in poetry. In day-to-day negotiations between people 'language' has to hold back: if it intervened in our day-to-day speaking the effect would be too disruptive. But poetry is understanding finding 'its own words'.

The distinction made in this passage between speaking about language and speaking from within, or in, language, is a useful one when the focus is shifted to Lawrence. As I have continually suggested, Lawrence's language demonstrates his consciousness of being 'in' language rather than simply writing 'about' it. Heidegger seems to be a little surprised (although this surprise is probably a strategy) at the sense of the concealed richness of language which he

initially gets from poetry. But his own language, his own meaning, depends precisely on this richness. As a philosopher he is writing, not about language -- he says that linguists, philologists, psychologists and analytic philosophers have done this practically to saturation point -- but, in what is more than simply a poetic gesture, he is giving language the space to reveal its sense of itself as *sense*. He repeats that his experience with language must be a thinking one. If Heidegger as a philosopher is responding to the need to slough off an acculturated ratiocinative mode of thinking because he perceives it to evade the real issue of language, then the artist is in a similar position when s/he recognizes the need to shatter and mock 'the old conceptual barriers' (PT p.90). The specifically Modernist consciousness of language is something to do with this recognition.

So there is in Lawrence's language (and in the particular inflections of the works examined in this study, for instance), precisely such a neighbourly nearness, to use Heidegger's terms, between poetry and thought which characterizes language at large ('Language'). The Heideggerean recognition in Lawrence distinguishes him from the mainstream Modernists where radical practice is not so much a philosophical question of language, but a question of technique. There is in Joyce, Woolf, Richardson, H. D., for example (as producers of some of the Modernist 'master narratives'), that kind of Modernist consciousness which might actually impede the real 'neighbouring'. We cannot help but be aware, particularly in his mature writing, of the *sense* of language and the metaphoricity of

understanding in Lawrence. The actions and events described in the novels are inseparable from the language, indeed as was stated at the outset, the only event is language. Paul Ricoeur restates what seems to be an obvious assumption here and in doing so highlights its force: 'In written language, the reference is no longer ostensive [as it is in spoken language, 'ostensive' designating the immediate reality which is the situation of the interlocutors]: poems, essays, works of fiction speak of things, events, states of affairs and characters which are evoked but which are not there. And yet literary texts are about something. About what? I do not hesitate to say: about a world, which is the world of the work.' (HHS p.177). Ricoeur's literary criticism is something I will come to presently. This observation includes all works, but in Lawrence we really are bringing into focus a different level of attention to language than the broad one implied here. In Lawrence we have access to a language which is in itself a thinking about language from within language. This thesis has been after precisely this sense of it in Lawrence. Language does not simply mediate emotions, events, and personal philosophies (theories), it is itself a 'thinking'. It is in itself a sense.

Given this understanding a principal difference between Lawrence and Heidegger is that Heidegger must in the end say something about language, which Lawrence is not constrained, explicitly, to do. Heidegger's thinking about language notably returns to the single word 'Being': the act of thought (a linguistic act) determines what it means to Be. In his essays poetry is the essence of language because it is the best example of the 'saying of language' in part because of

its verbal play, its plurality of meanings, but crucially because of its potentiality, its metaphorical *presence*. The word in Heidegger is a 'giver' (just as authentic seeing in Lawrence is a 'going forth'):

If our thinking does justice to the matter, then we may never say of the word that it is, but rather that it gives -- not in the sense that words are given by an "it," but that the word itself gives. The word itself is the giver. What does it give? To go by the poetic experience and by the most ancient tradition of thinking, the word gives Being. (OWL p.88)

Being is not a word which the philosopher arrives at in a dramatic way, like 'Aufriß', in the context of verbal play and richness: it is the single monolithic word towards which the whole movement of meaning in Heidegger tends. Recent philosophical thought about language in a climate of deconstructive procedures has discounted the relevance of searching for the one word 'Being' and yet the relation of Being and language persists even in texts which deny that relation. The important thing about Lawrence, whatever can be said 'locally' about his handling of language, use of metaphor and so on, is that language itself is the legitimate subject of his texts in a Heideggerean sense because the 'neighbouring' about which Heidegger speaks is not obstructed by a concern with modes which are in the end merely, or reductively, self-reflexive.

The strategic value of the ludic dimension of 'The Nature of Language', and of Heidegger's work in general, is that in challenging traditional ratiocinative modes of proceeding he institutes a radical way of coming at the elusive quantity, Being, in language. The particular ontological focus of his language makes Heidegger a

'Modern' and the way in which he is so is partly what he has in common with Lawrence. If the focus of this thesis was more explicitly on the ontological character of language there would be scope to consider in greater detail Lawrence's and Heidegger's awareness of Being as continuously present, and their awareness of its inexpressibility. It is something which is available to our intelligence inasmuch as the individual both is, and is aware of Being. Thought, that is to say consciousness, presupposes language, making Being, or thinking about Being, in some senses a 'writerly' preoccupation. Consequently both Lawrence and Heidegger proceed in a way which demonstrates the inseparability of language and Being.³ The use of metaphor is at the heart of this understanding: in both writers it is central to the play of language, where 'play' implies a highly serious goal and becomes in both of them a serious mode of arguing. To philosophize in a given language -- Heidegger privileging German as the language of philosophy -- is in part to make use of the concealed semantic wealth of words.

In taking this position I have not sought to justify Lawrence to Heidegger, or to use Heidegger to make Lawrence seem philosophically legitimate. Heidegger's value for present purposes lies, as both Michael Bell and Michael Black have argued, in his ontologically attuned awareness of the richness of language. Lawrence's recognition is that language is at the heart of human experience. To talk of the Heideggerian dimension of Lawrence is simply to underscore this fundamental recognition. The 'philosopher', since Nietzsche, seems to be reaching, or reaching for, a consciousness of language which the major creative writer intuitively possesses.

The way in which Heidegger uses language in 'The Nature of Language' recalls Lawrence's consciously explorative use of pun and metaphor in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. This is an essay where Lawrence is consciously bringing something particular about language to notice. As I have argued, a non-metaphorical (or scarcely metaphorical) style simply is not conscious enough for his purposes. We can recall one of the central puns of *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, an essay where Lawrence exploits all the meanings of the word 'solar'. The solar plexus acquired its name because of the resemblance between the radial network of abdominal nerves and the sun's rays 'radiating' from its centre. Lawrence brings the life-giving force of the sun to bear on his assessment of the solar plexus as 'where you are. It is your first and greatest and deepest centre of consciousness' (F&P p.28). He is also making a play on 'sympathetic'. The autonomic nervous system, controlling the voluntary actions of certain organs including the heart, is organized according to sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. The solar plexus constitutes, as Lawrence says, part of the network of sympathetic nerves with certain specialized anatomical functions. Aware of this, Lawrence also plays on 'sympathetic' as characterizing the feelings. Both meanings are brought to bear on his statement that the solar plexus is a 'sympathetic centre' (F&P p.28) as he seeks to close the gap between the physical and the emotional.

A play on the notion of a blood tie between child and parent is also instituted, turning on the idea of emotional and physical connections. The navel is unproblematically a sign of physical

connection with, and rupture from, the mother but Lawrence is insistent on the 'tie of blood' (F&P p.29) with the father as having a special quality, in some sense balancing the significance of the corporeal thread which connects the mother and child in the womb. The reality of a life-giving blood flow from the mother to the child is given its Other in the concept of non-physical 'unknowable communications' (F&P p.33) between the child and father:

On the contrary, the true male instinct is to avoid physical contact with a baby. It may not even need actual presence. But, present or absent, there should be between the baby and the father that strange, intangible communication, that strange pull and circuit such as the magnetic pole exercises upon a needle, a vitalistic pull and flow which lays all the life-plasm of the baby into a line of vital quickening, strength, knowing. And any lack of this vital circuit, this vital interchange between father and child, man and child, means an inevitable impoverishment to the infant.

The child exists in the interplay of two great life-waves, the womanly and the male.

(*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, in F&P p.33)

The passage is dense with metaphors and double meanings, not least the reference to 'life-waves' which underlines the importance of the water/wave imagery in Lawrence's thought in a context which is not fiction, and which points up the mutually supplementary nature of fiction and discursive writing in Lawrence, both chiefly distinguishable by their metaphoricity. Blood and sustaining milk are the more literal waves of life on which the infant depends. Between the father and child the 'vitalistic pull and flow' is a non-literal (or ambivalently literal) equivalent of the flow of maternal milk from breast to infant. It is the 'flow' which Deleuze and Guattari rightly, in my view, recognize as anti-Oedipal: it is a subversive 'flow' of response which cuts across and through the rigid Oedipus metaphor

which Lawrence is so clearly deconstructing here. It is evident from the end of 'The Holy Family' (*Fantasia of the Unconscious*, chapter 2), from which this passage comes, that 'the womanly and the male' stand principally for the parent figures, and as such recall Tom Brangwen and Lydia 'bestriding', as it were, the child Anna in 'Childhood of Anna Lensky' (*The Rainbow*, chapter III). It should be noted, however, that the 'natural' 'Oedipal' father, Lensky, is dead.

The metaphoricity of this passage is precisely because there are no non-metaphorical equivalents in which the same could be said: obviously the metaphorical language is not ornamental but bears the weight of knowing or understanding the meaning of something. Lawrence is not, after all, simply writing on child development. He, and we, would not expect his book to answer the general need for textbooks on that and related subjects. The point is that metaphor is the condition of finding something out: it is the medium of knowledge. The barely, or routinely, metaphorical (there is no language which is non-metaphorical), fails to 'think', being limited to a more blandly descriptive function.

In fact Lawrence can be more exploratory with metaphor in a text like *Fantasia of the Unconscious* because there he is free from the demands and exigencies of fiction. Writing 'discursively' Lawrence takes advantage of the absence of a certain type of narrative in order to focus more explicitly on metaphor, and to be more experimental with it (or within it) as a way of getting to the bottom of a problem, as well as addressing the related problem of how to say anything in

language. This is how language comes into view, in the essays on the unconscious, as the legitimate subject of Lawrence's writing. As I have stressed this is also true of the fiction but there, the exigencies of fiction being different from those of the 'discursive' text, the question of language is subtilized and assimilated to other narrative purposes. My purpose in beginning my extended discussion of Lawrence's language with an examination of the question of metaphor in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* and *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* was in order to underline precisely this difference, but this is not to argue that the language in each of these texts is either one thing or the other: the need to avoid such absolutes has already shown itself. The immediate point is that where the question of language is conscious in the essays on the unconscious, in the fiction it is both conscious and yet subliminal.

So far the emphasis has been on the view of language which Lawrence and Heidegger share. Contrast with a different kind of philosophical thought can further throw Lawrence's position into relief. Paul Ricoeur has methodically examined the relation between text and metaphor, representing metaphor as in some senses a 'work in miniature' (HHS p.167) and a work, specifically a literary work, as a metaphor writ large. The critical practice of examining a metaphor itself becomes a metaphor for the larger hermeneutical exercise of interpreting a work. But rather than addressing understanding as fundamentally metaphorical (pace Heidegger and Lawrence), Ricoeur sees metaphor as motivating thought rather than being thought (a mode of thinking) itself. So it is that Ricoeur treads what Jonathan Culler

calls the *via rhetorica* ⁴ with metaphor only ever a stage on the way to understanding. Ricoeur says that we focus on metaphor to understand something, not that metaphor is already a sign of understanding reached. This is the point at which Lawrence's sense of being 'at home in' metaphor pulls away from Ricoeur's theorizing of it. I propose to examine exactly why their ways part by first underlining Ricoeur's reservations about Heidegger: these reservations apply obliquely to Lawrence.

Ricoeur is insistent that, although Heidegger's language is radical, and is indeed the means by which he attempts to step out of the circle of Western thought, he is in fact *continuing a tradition of* speculative philosophy and that his value does not lie in constituting a break with that tradition but in contributing to 'the continuous and unceasing problematic of thinking and of being' (RM p.312). Reinforcing his point about placing Heidegger firmly in this tradition Ricoeur embarks upon what is for him a distinctively and self-consciously rhetorical passage in which a series of questions rather defensively put Heidegger in his place, and attempts to ground his work within the context of Western thought rather than outside it. In doing so Ricoeur underscores a number of Heidegger's central metaphors, and consequently universalizes them perhaps more than Heidegger intends:

What philosopher worthy of the name prior to Heidegger has not meditated on the metaphor of the way and considered himself to be the first to embark on a path that is language itself addressing him? Who among them has not sought the 'ground' and the 'foundation,' the 'dwelling' and the 'clearing'? Who has not believed that truth was 'near' and yet difficult to perceive and even more difficult to say,

that it was hidden and yet manifest, open and yet veiled? Who has not, in one way or another, linked the forward movement of thought to its ability to 'regress,' to take a step 'backward'? Who has not attempted to distinguish the 'beginning of thinking' from any chronological starting point? Who has not conceptualized his own task essentially as a labour of thought directed toward itself and against itself? Who has not believed that to continue one must make a break and 'leap' outside the circle of accepted ideas? Who has not opposed thinking based on a horizon to knowledge based on objects, opposed meditating thought to representative thought? Who has not known that ultimately the 'way' and the 'place' are the same, and 'method' and 'thing' identical? Who has not seen that the relation between thinking and being is not a relation in the logical sense of the word, that this relation presupposes no terms preceding it but, in one way or another, constitutes the belonging-together of thinking and being? Finally, what philosopher before Heidegger has not attempted to think identity other than as tautology, on the basis of this belonging-together of thinking and being? (RM pp. 311-12)

Ricoeur's aim is not to be iconoclastic for the sake of it, but to challenge any sense from Heidegger that his ontology constitutes an authentic alternative with its implicit renunciation of the kind of thinking which precedes it. Ricoeur insists that, 'it [Heidegger's ontology] cannot assume the privilege of opposing all other ontologies by confining them inside the bounds of 'the' metaphysical. Its unacceptable claim is that it puts an end to the history of being, as if "being disappeared in *Ereignis*.'" (RM p. 312, my brackets).

Heidegger's language provides the focus for Ricoeur's criticism. The later works, Ricoeur argues, are ambiguous because they are 'divided between the logic of their continuity with speculative thought and the logic of their break with metaphysics' (RM p. 312). Far from seeing this tension resolved by, or in, Heidegger's language, Ricoeur is actually extremely critical of it, seeing it, and therefore

the thought behind it, as in some sense in crisis:

The second logic [that Heidegger's later works have broken with Western thought (metaphysics)] leads to a series of erasures and repeals that cast thought into the void, reducing it to hermeticism and affectedness, carrying etymological games back to the mystification of 'primitive sense.' Above all, this second logic invites us to sever discourse from its propositional character, forgetting Hegel's lesson in regard to speculative propositions, which do not cease to be propositions. This philosophy gives new life in this way to the seductions of the unarticulated and the unexpressed, even to a kind of despair of language resembling that found in the next to last proposition in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. (RM p.313, my brackets)

This parting shot invites us to question whether in fact Ricoeur is misreading Wittgenstein too. Ricoeur, in the course of his book, will oppose the self-reflexivity of a certain kind of philosophical discourse with the reflective capacity of (implicitly) his own speculative discourse. He concludes by praising Heidegger's affirmation of the dialectical relation of thinking and poetry as modes of discourse, and *The Rule of Metaphor* closes with a statement from Heidegger about the distance between poetry and speculative thought as an important theme in Heidegger's later lectures and essays on language. However, quite apart from what he finds positive in Heidegger, the criticisms to which attention has here been drawn can be turned back onto Ricoeur by way of assessing his own language and, therefore, his own relation to metaphor.

Towards the close of *The Rule of Metaphor* Ricoeur begins to flesh out his reasons for insisting on the fundamental difference between speculative (philosophic) discourse and metaphoric discourse. The latter, like the work of literature, is transformed by acts of

interpretation into something other than itself. It is *acted upon* by speculative discourse which is characterized by 'univocity' (RM p.302). 'Metaphorical utterances', says Ricoeur, demand 'elucidation', being in themselves difficult and obscure (RM pp.295-6). Having established a hierarchy, with speculative discourse as the principal term, Ricoeur proceeds to articulate the relation between these discourses. He is then in a position to describe the dynamics of interpretation, but is constrained by the necessarily metaphorical character of language. He has no choice but to admit that speculative discourse, 'the conceptual order', cannot *eliminate* the 'metaphorical order' (RM p.302). In order to make his point about the metaphorical as a catalyst for the speculative his argument is given, briefly, a consciously metaphorical inflection. His theme is the relation of the two discourses. The representation here of a dialectical interchange between them is undercut and weakened by his tendency to hierarchize later:

My inclination is to see the universe of discourse as a universe kept in motion by an interplay of attractions and repulsions that ceaselessly promote the interaction and intersection of domains whose organizing nuclei are off-centred in relation to one another; and still this interplay never comes to rest in an absolute knowledge that would subsume the tensions. (RM p.302)

Ricoeur seems to be labouring with metaphor to make a quite general point, in a passage which is consciously, but uncomfortably, 'metaphorical': 'applied' rather than 'emergent' metaphor. The 'interplay' is halted in his eventual insistence that the value of the metaphorical is to provoke and stimulate the speculative to begin the process of *conceptual* thinking, of interpretation. Interpretation is

described as 'the work of concepts. It cannot help but be a work of elucidation, in the Husserlian sense of the word, and consequently a struggle for univocity.' (RM p.302). As we shall see, Ricoeur's literary criticism exemplifies this desire to rein in plurivocity, and to circumscribe the text.

It is when Ricoeur addresses reductive interpretations, where 'rationalization culminates in clearing away the symbolic base' (RM p.302), that he has to deal conclusively with the metaphorical. Because the abolition of the metaphorical is unthinkable

he must rethink the immediate problem and proposes 'a hermeneutic style where interpretation would conform both to the notion of concept and to that of the constitutive intention of the experience seeking to be expressed in the metaphorical mode.' (RM 303). We are now in a position to see how Ricoeur will insert the metaphorical into the dynamic of interpretation, but still manage to keep the speculative as the principal term. The 'dialectic' is summarized in this way:

Interpretation is then a mode of discourse that functions at the intersection of two domains, metaphorical and speculative. It is a composite discourse, therefore, and as such cannot but feel the opposite pull of two rival demands. On one side, interpretation seeks the clarity of the concept; on the other, it hopes to preserve the dynamism of meaning that the concept holds and pins down. (RM p.303)

Via Kant, however, the metaphorical is conflated with 'imagination' and, operating with 'understanding', the two of them push back the boundaries of ignorance: 'where the understanding fails, imagination still has the power of "presenting" (*Darstellung*) the Idea. It is this

"presentation" of the Idea by the imagination that induces conceptual thought to *think more*.' (RM p.303), a view which effectively leaches metaphoricality of its own significance: its relation in this theory of creativity is unequivocally one of servitude to the speculative. On the other hand, and this is very much the point, without the metaphorical, the speculative or conceptual order is severely restricted. In which case what is the status, ultimately, of 'living metaphor' in Ricoeur's work?

Metaphor is living not only to the extent that it vivifies a constituted language. Metaphor is living by virtue of the fact that it introduces the spark of imagination into a 'thinking more' at the conceptual level. This struggle to 'think more,' guided by the 'vivifying principle,' is the 'soul' of interpretation.' (RM p.303)

In the way he asserts the necessity of metaphor in 'thinking more' it is evident that Ricoeur sees the Heideggerean point about metaphor in the abstract, but actually fails really to see it because of a deep-lying resistance to it. In short, metaphor is only the vehicle of thought if it functions as the stimulus to the conceptual. Interpretation is essentially a part of the conceptual order.

Ricoeur thus presents us with a theory of interpretation which is fundamentally uncomfortable with the metaphorical. His own discourse provides one point of focus for this discomfort: its lack of metaphorical richness enacts his suspicion, which is also stated, of the penetrating metaphoric language of Heidegger and Derrida, the two theorists he makes a point of challenging. This is more of an undercurrent in Ricoeur than a crisis. If he is nostalgic for a

speculative mode that he perceives Heidegger particularly as problematizing, then this nostalgia does not disrupt the overall argument which turns on the redescriptive power of metaphor, or, as he puts it in the preface to *Time and Narrative*, which is the logical sequel to *The Rule of Metaphor*, the 'power of the metaphorical utterance to redescribe a reality inaccessible to direct description.' (TN I, xi).

So it is that, on the back of metaphor, speculative discourse is raised to the highest level, its singleness asserted in the midst of numerous other discourses. In the introduction to *The Rule of Metaphor* Ricoeur talks about a discourse which will 'recover the ontology implicit in the metaphorical statement' (RM p.7). I take it that speculative discourse is the one that will be seen to function as the principal recoverer. This is what leads Ricoeur critically to Heidegger -- 'the final stages of his philosophy attempt to make speculative thought resonate with the poet's utterance.' (RM p.309) -- and to a statement about what is acceptable in Heidegger and what is inadmissible. Ricoeur's comments obliquely illuminate his own practice:

Heidegger's philosophy steps forth as intermingled and inescapable attempt and temptation. It is an attempt from which we must draw inspiration whenever it manifestly contributes to clarifying speculative thought in accordance with the semantic aim that animated Aristotle's investigation into the multiple meanings of being; and it is a temptation we must shun when the difference between speculative and poetic threatens once again to disappear. (RM p. 309)

That Ricoeur is withholding his final judgement on Heidegger for the

time being is evident,⁵ but these remarks explain Ricoeur's style. Yet in the final stages of his study praise is reserved for the sense of difference which Heidegger, in his later work, maintains between the poetic and the speculative, allowing the dialectic between them to flourish. His brief critique of Heidegger's 'The Thinker as Poet'⁶ communicates Ricoeur's appreciation when he believes that the philosopher has sustained this central dialectic:

Does this mean that once again speculative discourse threatens to merge with poetry? Not at all. Even if *Ereignis* is called a metaphor, it is a philosopher's metaphor, in the sense in which the analogy of being can, strictly speaking, be termed a metaphor, but one which always remains distinct from a poet's metaphor. The very way in which Heidegger juxtaposes poetic discourse and philosophical discourse without confusing them, as in *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*, confirms that the gulf cannot be bridged between the Same that is to be thought and poetic resemblance. What is remarkable, in this short text, is that the poem does not serve as an ornament to the philosophical aphorism, and that the latter does not constitute the poem's translation. Poem and aphorism are in a mutual accord of resonance that respects their difference. To the imaginative power of thought-full poetry, the poet replies with the speculative power of poeticizing thought. (RM p.310)

Ricoeur's exercise here is still taxonomic; his focus is on resemblance, translation and difference (meaning disparity, dissimilarity and divergence: there is no intended reference to *différance* which might bridge the 'gulf'). 'Mutual accord' is very far from Heideggerian 'intersection'. It is with the emphasis on 'the speculative power of poeticizing thought' that the focus can be set more powerfully on Lawrence. Any suggestion of a Heideggerian dimension in Lawrence would have to be underpinned by a sense of the poetic and the 'thought-full' being contained in the whole language, and inseparable from it.

These passages give some sense of Ricoeur's position relevant to the current study. For my purposes the major weakness in Ricoeur is that he can treat metaphor in such a localized way as he does in *The Rule of Metaphor*. His book does not properly account for the fact, so crucial to his own argument, that the 'local' question of metaphor cannot be understood separately from the whole body of language in which it occurs. The same can be said about such general concepts as word, sentence and discourse, which constitute Ricoeur's central criteria. Ultimately there are strong reasons for arguing that Ricoeur has anatomized language too much, and, in pursuing its 'smaller' elements as in some way self-contained has postponed considering the different levels of language.

Regarding

Lawrence it would have to be said of word, sentence, discourse, metaphor, action, that none of these could be accounted for effectively in a way which localized them or separated them from the whole. Ricoeur's insistence on such rigid categories reveals his limitation to the extent that it can be asked whether he is in fact reaching towards a consciousness of language at all. Lawrence's strength, on the other hand, is his recognition that all actual uses of language transcend the theory of them, a crucial point which Ricoeur's account of metaphor neglects. In fact, because the critical debate on metaphor has focused for the most part on rhetoric, resemblance, substitution and so on, this observation has been wholly ignored. Ricoeur's biggest limitation (in common with theorists I. A. Richards, Monroe Beardsley, Max Black, admired by Ricoeur) is his critical distance from language itself. It can be confidently stated that Ricoeur takes a route through language whilst Heidegger and

Lawrence dwell in it; Lawrence, Nietzsche's 'intuitive man', is also, crucially, doing something with it.

A recent commentator has justly called Ricoeur's style in *The Rule of Metaphor* 'unashamedly academic, at times laboriously precise and reiterative, with no charismatic aspirations', whilst praising the book for the 'wit and elegance in many of its argumentative manoeuvres'.⁷ These remarks underscore the fact that Ricoeur's relationship to language is traditional rather than radical: as I have argued his own style evinces a suspicion of a radically and consciously explorative language; a suspicion which works against his subject, metaphor. Consequently Ricoeur himself can be characterized as being on the outside looking in at language. There is no sense in his writing of a view of language *emerging*, as it does, and as Ricoeur recognizes it does, in Heidegger, for example, and certainly as it does in Lawrence. My interest here is in the actual handling of language because it is in the handling that Lawrence's consciousness of language, for example, emerges from distinctive texts, and is principally responsible for their distinctiveness, their particularity, within the 'metaphysic'.

With Heidegger, Lawrence and Ricoeur defining the parameters of the approaches to language represented in this study, the issue unproblematically breaks down into two basic approaches. These are 'creativity' (Lawrence and Heidegger) and 'interpretation' (Ricoeur). It is evident from his argument in *The Rule of Metaphor* that Ricoeur is not, like Heidegger and Lawrence, working from the mystery of

creation. It is Ricoeur who shifts from this to the comparative hygiene of *interpretation*, a switch exemplified in the 'sequel' study *Time and Narrative* where his readings of Woolf, Proust and Mann are startlingly and revealingly banal. If *The Rule of Metaphor* is marked by the scarcity of reference to literature, *Time and Narrative* is disappointing in its superficial treatment of the same. Here interpretation is indeed fundamentally elucidation and reduction. I propose to develop these observations by briefly reviewing Ricoeur's readings and comparing his literary criticism with Lawrence's, exemplified by *Studies in Classic American Literature*. The point could similarly be made by a comparison with Heidegger's apprehension of poetry.

Ricoeur chooses three texts which in different ways address time. They are Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Thomas Mann's *Der Zauberberg* and Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*. These are intended to illustrate his theoretical position. His readings are contained in a chapter called 'The Fictive Experience of Time' (TN II, pp.100-52) where the intention is to consider the imaginative refiguring of time as distinct from phenomenological or 'clock' time, or 'monumental time' as he calls it. The reading begins with the observation that:

Literature . . . proceeds by way of imaginative variations. Each of the three works under consideration, freeing itself in this way from the most linear aspects of time, can, in return, explore the hierarchical levels that form the depth of temporal experience. Fictional narrative thus detects temporalities that are more or less extended, offering in each instance a different figure of recollection, of eternity in or out of time, and, I will add, of the secret relation between eternity and death. (TN II, p.101)

He proceeds to give a description of the events, first of all in *Mrs. Dalloway*, underlining particular narrative techniques like the 'progressive accumulation' of viewpoints (TN II, p.103). The contrast with the official time of Big Ben striking, the narrator's ability to switch from one consciousness to another, and so on, are noted methodically. Indeed, it may be this insistence on method which first alerts us to the 'flatness' of the analysis. The problem is that the fictional narrative serves purely as a *model*. It is a secondary thing, a collection of techniques, and this must be the reason for the palpable chasm which opens up between Ricoeur, reading, and the literary text. The text is viewed *principally* as rule-governed, an invention, a collection of heterogeneous tropes and figures; a narrative is a variation of a stable form. At best his observations are competent but, compared to the insights about language and creativity shared by Lawrence and Heidegger in their literary criticism, fundamentally superficial. With Ricoeur, there is always this theoretical distance from the text, and therefore from language, and this distance, also a feature of *The Rule of Metaphor*, weakens his critique. In itself it constitutes a, perhaps unconscious, resistance to the 'dwelling in' and therefore 'thinking in' language which we expect in Heidegger and Lawrence. Indeed there is no sense of the metaphorical provoking the speculative into 'thinking more' as we might expect. The character of the interpretation makes Ricoeur a questionable arbiter of language, a serious thing in one who writes with such authority on metaphor. The ultimate result is that having chosen 'interpretation' over 'creation' language itself is out of Ricoeur's reach, indeed it is barely an issue for him, in spite of

Heidegger's assertion, of which he is well aware, that 'We encounter language everywhere' (PLT p.189). And the argument that Ricoeur's theme in *Time and Narrative* is time, not language, is particularly weak given the writers that he chooses, that is to say given the crucial importance of 'style' in each of them.

By way of contrast, Lawrence's critical astuteness is famously represented in *Studies in Classic American Literature*. Here Lawrence is reading to 'get somewhere' but without the reductiveness of Ricoeur. In contrast to the critical ideals of his day Lawrence's aim is never closure. Furthermore, the fact that Lawrence's best literary criticism is psychoanalytical testifies, in my view, to his *parergonal* relation with Freud's thought.⁸ Lawrence's starting point is his sense of language as a profoundly mysterious medium and the *psychoanalytical* recognitions grow out of this understanding. We confront Lawrence's intelligent creativity in reading the American writers as well as being alert to his analytical astuteness. *Studies in Classic American Literature* is the text where Lawrence famously articulates his dictum that art-speech is the only truth, and where he characterizes art as subterfuge and identifies the artist's moral as different from the tale's. However, the study's lasting significance lies in the fact that Lawrence does work from the mystery of creation rather than from a desire merely to *interpret* the text in hand and, typically, his interpretations expand rather than reduce.

Lawrence's 'metaphysic', his own philosophy, is also inescapably a factor in his reading of the Americans. For him the text cannot be

construed simply as a model, as it can for Ricoeur, whose approach stifles the particular 'metaphysic' of the text/language under consideration. Lawrence reads by way of his own metaphors/'metaphysic', brought to these texts. His 'metaphysic' interacts with the metaphysic he apprehends in the text as part of that text's specificity. There are many examples but the comments on 'blood-knowledge' and 'mind-knowledge', 'blood-consciousness' versus 'mind-consciousness' in the chapter 'Nathaniel Hawthorne' are a case in point (SCAL pp.90-91). Finding these concepts appropriate is not the same as imposing them. Like Heidegger in his readings of German poetry, Lawrence's response is the result of 'inhabiting' the text. His critique does not have to be about language in order for him to write from 'in' language: 'in' as in being 'at home' in. At the beginning of *Studies in Classic American Literature* the (Heideggerean as well as Lawrencean) metaphor of 'listening' to language complements the Heideggerian notion of language 'speaking' or 'saying' itself. Lawrence puts this complex recognition quite informally: 'It is hard to hear a new voice, as hard as it is to listen to an unknown language. We just don't listen. There is a new voice in the old American classics. The world has declined to hear it, and has babbled about children's stories.' (SCAL p.7).

The notion of listening to an unknown language is one formulation of reading creatively. Comments in 'The Spirit of Place' (*Studies in Classic American Literature*, chapter 1) underline his recognition that what is needed is to touch whatever resides at the unconscious level of expression in the essays. This is called variously the 'deepest

self' and the capitalized 'IT' (SCAL p.13), which represents the 'deepest self', or, sometimes, 'soul'. The capitalization awards 'it' a special significance: 'IT' is what Lawrence reads in the American novels, in the language, but his readings also represent Lawrence's own relation to that language:

American consciousness has so far been a false dawn. The negative ideal of democracy. But underneath, and contrary to this open ideal, the first hints and revelations of IT. IT, the American whole soul.

You have got to pull the democratic and idealistic clothes off American utterance, and see what you can of the dusky body of IT underneath.

(*Studies in Classic American Literature*, p.14, my italics)

These metaphors of uncovering and revealing, of inside and outside, in this context may owe something to Freud and are certainly given a special meaning because of our, and Lawrence's, familiarity with him. These are conventionally the metaphors which present themselves when we are after a 'concealed' or subliminal level of human experience. But it is this division between inside and outside which Lawrence's actual reading dismantles. In my view Lawrence reads the American writers dialectically, or *parergonally*, having a dialectical relation with the unconscious level of creativity in their expression, and it is precisely this dialectical or *parergonal* relation which is absent from a Ricoeurian reading. Lawrence is not simply interpreting the texts in any crude diagnostic sense: he lets the narratives 'give' of their own 'metaphysic' yet in reading Lawrence himself is also being constructed. One of his comments on the Melville of *Moby Dick* (*Studies in Classic American Literature*, chapter 11) sounds, towards the end, like a description of Lawrence whilst at the same time remaining true

to Melville.

In his 'human' self, Melville is almost dead. That is, he hardly reacts to human contacts any more; or only ideally; or just for a moment. His human-emotional self is almost played out. He is abstract, self-analytical and abstracted. And he is more spell-bound by the strange slidings and collidings of Matter than by the things men do. In this he is like Dana. It is the material elements he really has to do with. His drama is with them. He was a futurist long before futurism found paint. The sheer naked slidings of the elements. And the human soul experiencing it all. So often, it is almost over the border: psychiatry. Almost spurious. Yet so great.
(SCAL p.154)

The actual writers, in Lawrence's readings, are by turns irresponsible (in relation to their art), hypocritical, naive, or, like Benjamin Franklin, the writer is a 'recreant European' (SCAL p.26) battling with an 'old' and persistent mode of consciousness. When they succeed in the battle they do so by loosening their conscious grip on their material, by writing from a less conscious level, giving Lawrence a glimpse or sense of 'IT'.

In focusing on an unconscious level within the language, Lawrence is also focusing on creativity. The studies represent Lawrence's own relation to this unconscious, or half-conscious, level. Not only does he 'uncover' it, he 'frames' himself (in a positive sense) in relation to it. In 'Benjamin Franklin' (*Studies in Classic American Literature*, chapter 2) he articulates his own 'creed' by way of criticising Benjamin's moral and educational programme (SCAL p.22), using the language and imagery of *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. He concludes that 'only America and old Benjamin have at last goaded me into trying to formulate it [this 'creed']' (SCAL p.24, my brackets). In short,

Lawrence the reader of the American texts is not simply outside them, but is creating himself in reading them, and expanding their significance for us as he does so. This is a truly dialectical process showing us how to read Lawrence as he reads the Americans.

This chapter makes explicit my sense that while Lawrence is a writer who engages on several levels with metaphoricity -- in the act of writing rather than self-consciously addressing the distinctive nature of a trope -- he is ahead of most recent commentators on metaphor, not least Paul Ricoeur whose distance from language contrasts with Lawrence's immersion in it. Ricoeur, as I come to argue ultimately *avoids* language. He does so by maintaining a theoretical distance from it, something which is particularly apparent, as I have shown, when he undertakes literary criticism as well as in his own style. In contrast, Lawrence's recognition about language, his sense of it, has to do with our, and his, relation to its totality. The fact is, as Lawrence recognizes, language is not an object at a remove from the individual: it is not anywhere else, separable from the reader because it is on a page. It is quite clearly all around, and the individual is at home in it, and so there is no virtue in a Ricoeurean distance which implicitly denies its all pervasiveness. Whilst Lawrence is not in a position, of course, to criticize Ricoeur, Ricoeur's 'distance' typifies a universal relation to language which Lawrence's work subtly and intelligently challenges. It is Lawrence's work which shows that we do not have to rely on living metaphor to stimulate language into thought. The reason for calling this chapter 'Lawrence and Language' should be clear by now. I have examined

precisely how Lawrence's own language is the proper medium for his 'metaphysic', but this study has lead to 'Language' because Lawrence's language is a particular instance of how language works at large. Indeed, his philosophical importance rests on this quality of his writing. The argument is not that this is Lawrence's conscious aim: this study has dealt not with Lawrence's aims but with his alertness to language, which is variously conscious and subliminal. The consciously metaphorical language of the essays on the unconscious has lead, through the major fiction, to a recognition of Lawrence's sensitivity to metaphor as *the* principle mode of understanding. If we looked for this in Lawrence, that is to say if we looked for equivalences between his style and a theory of 'Language', we might miss it. And arguably we would miss it because his language on the face of it seems unphilosophical. A determination to find in his language a theory of language might mean a concentration on the rhetorical which, I have shown, would be to misconstrue the real weight of metaphoricity in his work.

NOTES

Chapter Five. Lawrence and Language.

1. Martin Heidegger, 'The Nature of Language', in *On the Way to Language* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), pp.57-108. Further references to this book follow quotations in the text. Hereafter cited as OWL.
2. Christopher Fynsk of the State University of New York drew attention to this word-play in a lecture given at the University of Warwick in Autumn 1991.
3. This is Michael Bell's theme in *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*.
4. See Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), p.204.
5. See *The Rule of Metaphor*, p.364 n91: 'I am postponing taking a firm position in regard to Heideggerian thought as a whole until such time as my own analysis has reached a more advanced critical state, namely, when it is no longer possible to evoke the "early" Heidegger without forming an opinion in regard to "late" Heidegger.'.
6. Martin Heidegger in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. and introduction by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp.1-14. Further references to this book follow quotations in the text. Hereafter cited as PLT.
7. S. H. Clark, *Paul Ricoeur* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p.120.
8. Elizabeth Wright discusses Lawrence's psychoanalytical reading of the Americans in *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice*, New Accents, General Editor, Terence Hawkes (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp.49-55. She concludes that 'The value of Lawrence's reading is bound up with the effect the text has had upon him.' p.55.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This study has focused on metaphor as the indispensable vehicle of Lawrence's 'metaphysic', his personal philosophy. In the course of reading the texts which form the basis of this examination the concept of 'metaphor' has expanded in a necessarily philosophical direction away from any merely rhetorical status. Indeed, the constant, implicit interrogation of the merely rhetorical is intrinsic to Lawrence's thought. In arguing that Lawrence is supremely a poetic thinker I have consistently argued against the seductive view that he has a systematic theory of language, or poetry, or even that he has a *programme* of questioning language, although language is his true subject. After all, which of the major creative writers among Lawrence's contemporaries did not question language? But Lawrence never explicitly *tells* us anything. If Lawrence is outstanding as one who poetically thinks, it is because of his unique metaphoricity as a medium for thought. That is why, concentrating on Lawrence's successes rather than otherwise, I have also resisted aligning myself with those critics of Lawrence who stress the limitations of language, and in particular Lawrence's own struggle with these limitations.

The recurrent water and wave imagery, the 'flows' and 'vibrations', the (linguistic) journey, are implicitly and subtly metaphorical rather than plainly or overtly so. They pervade Lawrence's language and thought rather than existing as isolated structures and,

therefore, static metaphors to be self-consciously employed at an appropriate moment in the narrative. Lawrence's metaphors are never simply substitutes, neither are they directionless. They constitute a mode of thinking which is not oppressed by a sense of language as a medium of fixed structures which are in place and as such prevent a truly free capacity for creativity. The swift movement of metaphor in Lawrence is the movement of thought. We do not have to visualize the 'flow', the 'flood', the 'wave', the oxymoronic dynamic: these collectively constitute a subliminal poetic thinking which is special to Lawrence. This is language at a deeper level than rhetoric.

So it is that this thesis has argued that a proper response to Lawrence is to his language as much as to his 'thought', whilst being aware that his thought is frequently not taken seriously because of the way it is expressed. The language is typically viewed as sometimes too informal, too polemical, too 'purple'. In short, much of what is important in Lawrence is overlooked or dismissed because his language is not conceptual enough. The result is an insensitivity to Lawrence's repudiation of the conceptual because of his view that in the end a conceptual language circumscribes, delimits and represses:

Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* in particular are candidates for dismissal in this context. Their extensive and intense metaphoricity, if it has been noticed at all, has been regarded as a weakness rather than a strength. Daniel Albright's response to them, for instance, is a case in point. The fault hardly lies with Lawrence who must think metaphorically.

This thesis began with the unexpected metaphoricity of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* because this was a context where the reader might anticipate a discursive, barely metaphorical, conceptual language. But purely conceptual discourses represent a theoretical distance from the matter in hand, for instance 'presence', which Lawrence cannot tolerate: part of his skill, therefore, lies in dealing with sophisticated ideas in a non-speculative medium. This recognition leads us to metaphor but not as the substitution of one word for another in the cause of resemblance. Metaphor is not even one of Lawrence's conscious themes unlike the visual, presence, and the difference between knowing and conceiving, for instance, but it is the medium for these more overt and apparently more central preoccupations. And none of these can be communicated non-metaphorically because metaphorical levels, which are deeper than the structures of rhetoric, constitute a thinking further. This is not simply a re-stating of the Nietzschean view that there is no non-metaphorical place from which to speak. It is what Lawrence half-consciously does with this recognition, and his sense that what is most naive is a belief in the literal.

The concentration on the 'discursive' essays at the start of this thesis makes it possible to focus a different level of attention to language when it comes to rereading *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow* than would otherwise have been the case. By standing back from the fiction I have been able to focus critically on the larger question of language and metaphor (both in Lawrence and in general), before addressing *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow*. In my third and fourth

chapters I have shown how metaphor functions differently in both novels, and considered how the metaphorical bears the 'metaphysic' in each work. In my analysis of these novels the focus has been on the deep-lying levels of metaphor in each: on the 'frictionality' and oxymoronic mode of *Women in Love* in contrast to the ceaseless 'flow' of language in *The Rainbow*. These differences are not, as I have argued, the result of a conscious strategy in Lawrence to match metaphor with 'metaphysic'.

This approach to the novels, or to a particular level of language within them, also makes it possible to shift the view away from Lawrence, briefly, towards what is intrinsic both to Lawrence and to language in general. *There is a clear sense, and this is the value of* Nietzsche and Heidegger in this study, that Lawrence's language is an instance of more general potentialities of language. What Heidegger and Nietzsche can explain conceptually, Lawrence knows in practice. Whilst it is necessary for Heidegger to try to say something about language, the 'nature' of language, Lawrence *does* it. There is no need for Lawrence to write on or about language in the same way. This is really my point when I come, in the fifth chapter of this thesis, to consider 'Lawrence and Language'. My position is that Lawrence's highly individual sense of language evinces ^{certain given} qualities of language.

If we want to understand the nature of language therefore, we can do worse than go to Lawrence. He has distanced himself from the usual empty paradoxes of language, chief among them the sense that although language is a principal realm of creative freedom, a medium where consciousness is most liberated, it is also a

highly structured and determined medium. The radical and often subversive 'flow' of Lawrence's language disempowers this paradox.

Yet in understanding the language of any writer the focus must still be on the relation of the particular to the general. There is always that collective body of language within which the individual labours: a study of any writer is fundamentally a study of the relation of the language of the individual to this collective body. Once again this is not a relation which can be satisfactorily described in terms of an inside/outside dichotomy. The problem focused in the present study is that there is language in general, and 'within' that body there is also Lawrence's language (the individual case), just as his novels are further levels of individuation within Lawrencean language. This general-individual relation is extremely difficult to articulate. The question which we are ultimately always left asking, which Lawrence asks, and which I ask again now, is, given that we for the most part unconsciously inhabit it, 'how do we talk about language?'. In a very important sense it is not a question which can be settled. There is no standing back from language because a remove from it is not possible, or when it is achieved, it is falsifying. Lawrence's critics often find that, in starting to talk about language, they invariably end up talking about something else. That is why I have attempted to stay *with* language in this thesis, reading Lawrence on his own terms, negotiating a way through the layers of metaphor in these works, attending to his words on metaphor where they occur as in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. It cannot be said that there are rigid distinctions between language in general

and Lawrence's language because of the inevitable interaction between them, and yet we have a strong sense of something particular about Lawrence and, furthermore, of the particularity of individual texts within his body of work. And yet who can say, any more than very generally, what is 'Lawrencean'?

The texts which form the basis of this study are not even generalizable in Lawrence's *oeuvre*. There is always the particular existing within the general which is the case whatever text we examine: there is not only the particularity of the fiction but, as I have shown, of the non-fiction as well. But I am now in a position to say that the texts on which this study is grounded have a *parergonal* relation to Lawrence's other works. They are not separate from them since they are a part of Lawrence's substantial output and they indeed constitute the philosophical core of his work. Their *parergonal* relation to the *corpus* can be represented in these terms: they do not exist apart from that body of writing but within it, and yet the sense of language which constitutes the grain of their own narratives 'encloses' Lawrence's life's work. They have been isolated in the present study in order to stand back from the *oeuvre* to understand better Lawrence's 'sense' (in all its meanings) of language. There is scope to consider the other novels, particularly the earlier works, in the light of this thesis, which could form the basis of another study.

Finally, the 'frame' metaphor with which I began can now return as a means of describing the reader's relationship with Lawrence's language. As before, 'frame' does not mean the same thing as

'framework' which either sustains or contains something and which is more literally a supporting structure. Throughout it has been argued that 'models' and 'frameworks' should not be imposed on the writer. The 'frame', the *parergon*, has on the contrary a supplementary relation to a body of work, as I explained in my second chapter. I have read Lawrence *parergonally*, letting his view of language appear by addressing the conscious and unconscious levels of metaphor in his language. This contrasts with the general practice of the language critics outlined in this thesis, notably Bonds, Doherty, Ingram and Ragussis, although they have dealt with language often with a view to Lawrence's metaphors. These critics, in their different ways, demonstrate very well the problem of speaking about language which this thesis addresses. Indeed, they represent a range of critical approaches to Lawrence's language. Bonds can be located at one end of the scale. Doherty is her immediate neighbour, and then Ingram, with Ragussis occupying the end furthest from Bonds. This distribution is explained by their approaches to Lawrence's language. Bonds never really gets to the problem of language as a 'domain' which we all already inhabit and does not examine Lawrence's relation to it, which is crucial. Doherty has, in my view at least, a greater sense of language than Bonds but paradoxically overlooks Lawrence. Ingram, on the other hand, situates himself within Lawrence's narrative language and responds to the literary text, but confines himself to a certain level, focusing quite specifically on the grammatical texture of the language in hand. Lawrence is seen as going beyond 'conventional language' (Ingram, p.118), beyond 'conventional writing in English' (Ingram, p.68), but to say so is to impose a spatial metaphor which

still puts a distance between Lawrence and language. Ragussis, at the other end of the scale from Bonds, has a more speculative philosophical approach, writing more than the others from within Lawrence. Between them they represent the current tendencies in the reading of Lawrence's language. My own view is that in the act of reading Lawrence there is not finally an inside (the text) and an outside (the reader): there is principally the interaction between these two domains. Without the phosphorescent wave we do not see the ship, without the ship we remain unaware of the nature of the wave: understanding comes from the interaction of the two. If Lawrence is right, the reader is not detached and separate from the language Lawrence uses, but has a profound internal relation with it.

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