D.H. LAWRENCE AND FICTIONAL REPRESENTATIONS OF BLOOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

by

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Abstract

This thesis is the first book length study dedicated to exploring D.H. Lawrence's concept of blood-consciousness primarily alongside his fiction. Blood-consciousness will be identified as Lawrence's individual philosophy of the unconscious which he developed throughout his life.

Chapter One foregrounds what blood-consciousness is, and different aspects of this philosophy in order to establish the basis of the discussions that will follow in relation to Lawrence's fiction. Chapter Two considers how Lawrence creates a new kind of character in *The Rainbow* through a blood-conscious flux which is likened to the theories of Henri Bergson.

Chapter Three focuses upon the crisis of mental-consciousness in *Women in Love*, also incorporating the ideas of F.W.H. Myers. Chapter Four evaluates the portrayal of Mexican blood-consciousness in *The Plumed Serpent.* This involves identifying what the primitive means for Lawrence in a reading of Franz Fanon, and questioning to what extent blood-consciousness is a progressive term in the light of postcolonial studies.

Chapter Five provides a reading of the blood-conscious marriage of 'A Propos' in correspondence with *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Finally, the Conclusion evaluates the difficulties Lawrence faced in envisioning blood-consciousness and putting it into language.

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Abbreviations

1L - The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence - Vol 1(1979)

2L - The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence - Vol 2 (1981)

3L - The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence - Vol 3 (1984)

4L - The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence - Vol 4 (1987)

7L - The Collected Letters of D.H. Lawrence - Vol 7 (1993)

A - Apocalypse (1931)

'A Propos' - 'A Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover'* (1930)

AR - Aaron's Rod (1922)

FU - Fantasia of the Unconscious (1922)

K - Kangaroo (1923)

LCL - Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928)

MM - Mornings in Mexico (1927)

PO - The Prussian Officer and Other Stories (1914)

PS - The Plumed Serpent (1926)

PU - Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (1921)

R - The Rainbow (1915)

SCAL - Studies in Classic American Literature (1923)

SEP - Sketches of Etruscan Places (1932)

SL - Sons and Lovers (1913)

T - Twilight in Italy (1916)

WL - Women in Love (1920)

WRA - The Woman Who Rode Away (1928)

INTRODUCTION

In a letter to Ernest Collings in January 1913, Lawrence wrote 'my great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true ... All I want to answer to is my blood' (*1L*, p.503). This claim for the blood or blood-consciousness as Lawrence calls it elsewhere, is one that he made many times throughout his life in different literary forms. His most in-depth explorations of blood-consciousness arise in his critique of psychoanalysis in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (1921) and his text on child consciousness, *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922). In these works Lawrence urges his readers to recognise blood-consciousness as his own individual philosophy of the unconscious – a philosophy which he saw as confronting the theories of Sigmund Freud.

The basis of Lawrence's critique of Freud is highly significant to how blood-consciousness developed throughout Lawrence's career. By placing impetus on the unconscious as part of the body's spontaneous blood-flow, Lawrence challenged what he felt to be the topographical basis of Freud's unconscious. The notion of the unconscious as a box of repressions locked away 'unconfessed, unadmitted, potent, and usually destructive' (*PU,* p.13) was highly repugnant to Lawrence, who instead identified that blood-consciousness is dependent upon vital centres and planes of the body. In *Fantasia* Lawrence denotes the circuit of energy that characterises blood-consciousness as a bodily-unconscious, rather than one that can be located in the mind. Lawrence describes the presence of:

> the great horizontal division of the egg-cell, resulting in four nuclei… [with] the horizontal division-wall [as] the diaphragm. The two upper nuclei are the two great nerve centres, the cardiac plexus and the thoracic ganglion. We have

> again a sympathetic centre primal in activity and knowledge, and a corresponding voluntary centre. In the centre of the breast, the cardiac plexus acts as the great sympathetic mode of new dynamic activity, new dynamic consciousness. And near the spine, by the wall of the shoulders, the thoracic ganglion acts as the powerful voluntary centre of separateness and power, in the same vertical line as the lumbar ganglion, but horizontally so different. (*FU,* p.81)

Chapter One will pay close attention to Lawrence's articulation of such bodily-centres, stressing that descriptions of the blood-conscious body are always accompanied with references to its psychical energy. In *Fantasia*, Lawrence's emphasis is less upon the biological components of tissue and organs of the body, and more upon his belief in a secret and unknown vitalism of human beings. The chapter entitled 'Plexuses, Planes and So On' (*FU*) suggests that a comprehensive understanding of the different centres is not necessary in order to understand the essential ideas behind blood-consciousness. Rather the central notion to grasp is that by proposing four, then eight mysterious 'great nerve-centres', Lawrence is attempting to convey the ability for **'**life [to] star[t] spontaneously into being' (*FU,* p.152).

This issue of spontaneity is a highly significant aspect of Lawrence's critique of Freud, as Lawrence suggests that unconscious and conscious impulses are split between 'the lower plane the sensual [and] the upper the spiritual' (*FU,* p.88) of human beings. This image of the self being divided between blood-consciousness and the mental-conscious mind, forms the basis of much of Lawrence's thinking on the unconscious. He came to believe that 'instead of living from the spontaneous centres, we live from the head … We grind grind grind in our mental consciousness, till we are beside ourselves' (*FU,* p.115). Lawrence possessed the basis of these ideas long before the publication of *Fantasia* in 1922, a claim supported by his 1913 letter to Collings in which he articulates frustration towards 'the fribbling intervention

of [the] mind' and the fact that human beings have become 'so ridiculously mindful' (*1L,* p.503). Lawrence would go on to express similar convictions in his 1915 letter to Bertrand Russell, this time in a more detailed expression of the nature of blood-consciousness:

> now I am convinced of what I believed when I was about twenty - that there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and the nerve system: there is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental-consciousness, which depends on the eye as its source or connector. There is the blood-consciousness, with the sexual connection, holding the same relation as the eye, in seeing, holds to the mental consciousness. One lives, knows, and has one's being in the blood, without any reference to nerves and brain. This is one half of life, belonging to the darkness. And the tragedy of this our life, and of your life, is that the mental and nerve consciousness exerts a tyranny over the blood-consciousness, and that your will has gone completely over to the mental consciousness, and is engaged in the destruction of your blood-being or blood-consciousness, the final liberating of the one, which is only death in result. (*2L,* p.470)

This highly didactic letter affirms that at this point in his career, Lawrence already believed that the blood is the essential foundation of 'one's being' (*2L,* p.470) leading him to prioritise intuitive life rather than mind-consciousness. Many aspects of this letter foreground Lawrence's later critique of Freudian sexuality as he describes sex as the 'transmission' (*2L,* p.470) between two blood-streams. Later in *Fantasia* Lawrence describes sex in similar terms as 'our deepest form of consciousness ... pure blood-consciousness' (p.185), made possible through the 'electric blood of the male with the polarised electric blood of the female' (*FU,* p.135).

As Chapter Five will demonstrate, sex is a highly significant issue when evaluating Lawrence's belief in blood-consciousness, and it was also influential in his rejection of psychoanalysis. Lawrence believed that when man and woman unite their blood-streams in the act of sex, both parties are revitalised and experience a significant change in being. In his letter to Russell, Lawrence evokes these ideas, writing that:

> when I take a woman, then the blood-percept is supreme, my blood-knowing is overwhelming. There is a transmission, I don't know of what, between her blood and mine, in the act of connection. So that afterwards, even if she goes away, the blood-consciousness persists between us, when the mental consciousness is suspended; and I am formed then by my blood-consciousness, not by my mind or nerves at all. (*2L,* p.470)

The 'transmission' that Lawrence refers to is not simply the transfer of semen; rather he denotes a mystical basis to the 'transmission' (*2L,* p.470). Lawrence's belief in the harmony of blood-conscious sex provides a clear contrast to the principles behind Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905). The Freudian Oedipal complex led Lawrence to believe that psychoanalysis had reduced sex to a set of shameful sexual fantasies that must be repressed in the mind. Lawrence sought to counteract Freudian theory by insisting that during sex the mind and 'mental-consciousness [are] suspended' (*2L,* p.470), and that although sex is a vital experience, 'a sexual motive [should not] be attributed to all human activity' (*FU,* p.66).

Lawrence's quarrel with Freud should be recognised as part of his overriding concerns for 'science' (*2L,* p.471) and what he would later describe in *Fantasia* as its 'wretched … treatment of the human body as a sort of complex mechanism made up of numerous little machines' (*FU,* p.95). At times Lawrence used the term 'science' (*2L,* p.471) in a very general way to suggest the inclination to theorise or conceptualise rationally, or to hint towards what David Ellis (1986) describes as 'the "scientific" laws of cause-and-effect' (p.97). But this connection between science and mechanisation is also made throughout his writing over a prolonged period, and is often at the heart of his thinking about Freud, whom Lawrence thought had mechanised the unconscious.

Today Freud's psychoanalysis by no means constitutes a 'branch of medical science' (*2L*, p.218), but Lawrence was not alone in considering it so at the time

(indeed Freud himself was keen to emphasise the scientific aspects of his work). In his reading of Lawrence and Freud's relationship, James Cowan (1990) articulates that Lawrence reacted strongly against the 'fixed laws' and 'closed systems' (p.17) of science, which he associated with 'Freudianism' (*2L,* p.218). This led him to place greater weight upon a 'dynamic equilibrium of life' that is characterised by 'fluidity' (Cowan, 1990, p.15) rather than fixity, a notion that clearly resonates in Lawrence's writing on blood-consciousness.

The basis of Lawrence's rejection of Freud is a fitting way to introduce the central topic of this thesis which is Lawrence's philosophy of blood-consciousness. Freud undoubtedly had a great influence upon Lawrence's thinking and has been recognised as such. The relationship between these two thinkers is now a well-established subject within Lawrentian criticism that has been re-evaluated a number of times over many years (Weiss, 1962) (Hinz, 1972) (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983) (Cowan, 1990, 2002) (Seelow, 2005). Subsequently, this thesis will make two significant bids for originality of which Freudian readings do not have a pivotal role. The first is that the following chapters will present a comprehensive study into what blood-consciousness is and how it features in Lawrence's writing. In doing so, I will argue that much insight can be gained into his blood-philosophy by recognising the shared ideas that he possessed with other major thinkers apart from Freud. This will involve exploring the intellectual landscape that gave rise to Lawrence's belief in blood-consciousness, by paying attention to the theories of Carl Jung, Henri Bergson, F.W.H. Myers, and Franz Fanon.

One does not have to look far to see the relevance of these thinkers in relation to Lawrence's metaphysics, as Jung, Bergson, and Myers were all in dialogue with each other and were crucial in shaping theories of the unconscious

which Lawrence was very much interested in. In Chapters One and Four it will be shown that Lawrence's philosophy of blood-consciousness is partly indebted to Jungian psychology, a notion backed-up by continued references to Jungian theory throughout his life. In a letter from 1913, Lawrence refers to a "complexe" (*1L,* p.543) (a distinct Jungian term at the time), showing that he was affiliated with the basic terms of Jungian psychology from the early stages of his career. Then in 1918 Lawrence makes comments in relation to 'the Jung book' (*3L,* p.301), which seems most likely to be *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1916), the title that would be modified for Lawrence's 'attack on Freud' (Kinkead-Weekes, 1996, p.542) in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. The presence of further references to Jung in 1924 (*4L,* p.585) and Lawrence's belief in '*blood-image*[s]' (*2L,* p.470, emphasis in original), imply that although Lawrence did not always agree with Jungian principles, he was intrigued by his psychology and in particular Jung's archetypal images.

Although his research was in a different discipline to Jung, Bergson's philosophy also appealed to Lawrence due to his more spiritual account of the nature of being. Both Lawrence and Bergson possessed scepticism towards Cartesian dualism, and 'mechanistic and materialistic theories' (Chiari, 1992, p.246). Bergson's appeal was far-reaching as, like Lawrence, numerous other artists and writers of the period felt that 'the darkness of feelings, of dreams, of aspirations and enthusiasms which constitute the reality of the human heart cannot be parcelled up into concepts' (Chiari, 1992, p.252). In 1913, Lawrence expressed a certain indifference towards Bergson's work stating that 'the Bergson book was very dull. Bergson bores me. He feels a bit thin' (*1L*, p.544). Yet, Jane Costin (2014) has recently stressed that:

> Bergson's influence was more widespread and long lasting than writers and critics have been willing to admit in the light of his later unpopularity. This was certainly true of some of Bergson's inner circle and could also be true of Lawrence, who was also, characteristically, unwilling to admit to outside

> influences. Therefore, I am not convinced that this brief reference to Bergson in Lawrence's letters gives a full account. So, encouraged by Lawrence's entreaties to trust the tale not the teller let us examine the story.
>
> I think it is most unlikely that Lawrence's reading of Bergson in 1913 was the first time he had encountered his ideas because Bergson's popularity would have made it very difficult for Lawrence not to be aware of his work; many articles about Bergson were published in journals that we know Lawrence read, such as *The New Age* and *The English Review*.
>
> Furthermore, Lawrence was surrounded by people who, at least for a while, were openly enthusiastic about Bergson's ideas – it is striking how many people in both the inner and outer circles of Bergsonian influence had connections to Lawrence. (pp.4-5)

Lawrence may not have acknowledged the impact that Bergson's philosophy had upon his own beliefs. However, as Chapter Two will explain, there is genuine reason to believe that it was partly by questioning human beings relation to time, space, and consciousness, that Lawrence was able to develop a new kind of character in *The Rainbow.*

Myers offers a path through the web of Lawrence's dialogue with Freud, Jung, and Bergson, as instead of identifying an unconscious within the mind, he was concerned with investigating:

> occult phenomena ... trance states, clairvoyance, and telepathy; into such psychological issues as hypnotism, dreams, and mental pathology; into such occult movements as Theosophy; and into such historically spiritual matters as supernatural events recorded in the Bible and in the lives of the saints and the history of the Church. (Keeley, 2001, p.767)

The reasons for linking Myers' research with blood-consciousness are subtle in comparison with the more obvious influence that Jung and Bergson had upon Lawrence. This is partly because there is no definite record that Lawrence had read Myers' work for the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) which he helped to found in 1882, although Roger Luckhurst (2002, p.259) claims a direct borrowing from Myers in one of Lawrence's letters. This will be discussed further in Chapter Three, but even if Lawrence had not read Myers, his reading of Helena Blavatsky and James Pryse means there can be no doubt that he was interested in mystical

explanations for the human psyche and the cosmos. In his writing on blood-consciousness and its correspondence to the cosmos, Lawrence was experimenting with the idea of an immortal soul that continues to live in the outer universe. As well as this, the *Fantasia* chapter 'Cosmological', suggests that Lawrence was aware of studies into telepathy and the possibility of spirit being able to outlive the body. These were all areas of investigation that the SPR were responsible for bringing into the public domain, and to the attention of Lawrence.

Out of all of the major thinkers that this thesis will encompass, Fanon is the only one that Lawrence could not have been aware of during his lifetime. Therefore, their connection is not be one of direct influence; instead, as Chapter Four will demonstrate, Fanon's relevance to blood-consciousness is related to his post-Freudian position. Fanon's research into the unconscious, race, and difference, resonates with Lawrence's own concerns in his travel writing of the 1920s. By reading blood-consciousness with Fanon, one is able to recognise that Lawrence was ahead of his time in his effort to break down colonial stereotypes of the primitive-other. Thus, in comparison to his contemporaries Freud and Jung, Lawrence's beliefs relating to other races and cultures show him to possess a more forward-thinking approach to the unconscious than he is often credited with.

In the following chapters, this thesis will assert blood-consciousness as a serious topic which requires scholarly attention. Theories regarding being and the unconscious in the nineteenth and twentieth century must be recognised as influential to how Lawrence envisaged blood-consciousness. The second bid that this thesis makes for originality is that it will stress the importance of blood-consciousness being evaluated in relation to Lawrence's fiction. The rationale for

doing so is plainly clear when attending to the Foreword of *Fantasia* as Lawrence stresses that:

> this pseudo-philosophy of mine - pollyanalytics, as the respected gentleman might say - is deduced from the novels and poems, not the reverse. The novels and poems come unwatched out of one's pen. And then the absolute need which one has for some sort of satisfactory mental attitude towards oneself and things in general makes one try to abstract some definite conclusions from one's experiences as a writer and as a man. (*FU,* p.65)

Lawrence's slightly defensive term 'pseudo-philosophy' goes against claims he makes elsewhere about the urgency and validity of his philosophy. Yet, this phrase also highlights that Lawrence considered himself primarily a novelist. Mark Kinkead-Weekes' (1998) asks whether '[it is] true that Lawrence's "ideas" came out of his imaginative writing and not the reverse? Did the psychology books, in particular, arise primarily out of fictions and poems, rather than from thinking about Freud and Jung?' (p.153). Like Kinkead-Weekes, this thesis will emphasise the integrative element of Lawrence's different literary ventures, stressing that when considering an aspect of Lawrence's philosophy it is also necessary to think about his fiction and vice versa. Kinkead-Weekes (1998) encourages the reader to approach blood-consciousness as part of an ambitious 'exploration' of ideas that contributed to the development of his fiction and philosophy, explaining that as the years went by, he was able to engage more consciously and confidently in the kinds of themes, metaphors, and 'imagery' (p.154) he was creating.

Crucial critics that have informed this thesis are Fiona Becket (1997), Masashi Asai (2007), Andrew Skinner (2007), and Jane Costin (2011) as all of their works focus upon the specific importance of Lawrence's belief in blood-consciousness as his own personal set of beliefs regarding the unconscious. As will be discussed, Asai's (2007) conference paper and Skinner's (2007) article are highly thought provoking and insightful, but they only refer to very specific aspects of Lawrence's

blood-philosophy. Both Becket (1997) and Costin (2011) have Lawrence's fiction at the heart of their book-length studies, although in Becket's case her attention is not primarily on blood-consciousness. Costin (2011) is specifically focused upon blood-consciousness, although her attention centres on the importance of Lawrence's experience of Cornwall and biographical details of his life.

Other connections have been made between blood-consciousness and Lawrence's fiction by critics such as Leigh Travis (1968) and Gregory Tague (2005). However, this thesis will provide a much more in-depth study than any that has been carried out to date. The following chapters will not only present new readings of blood-consciousness, they will also avoid misrepresenting Lawrence's novels as just vehicles for his philosophy. This is a downfall of Travis's (1968) reading, as he fittingly defines Lawrence as "The Blood Conscious Artist", but highlights the same 'rite of passage' (p.167) occurring in a number of short stories, where characters are portrayed as possessing either blood or mental-conscious tendencies. Travis unfairly depicts Lawrence's fiction as a 'testing ground' (p.188) for his philosophy, making simplistic associations between his metaphysic of blood-consciousness and the construction of his characters.

Similarly, Tague (2005) identifies many important aspects of blood-consciousness but suggests the presence of 'the integral compound character' (p.1); a concept of 'permanent' (p.3) character which contradicts Lawrence's rejection of a stable representation of selfhood. Tague's most insightful comments are when he identifies the importance of the blood as 'a metaphorical symbol [that] is real, warm, alive, moving ... the essence of the organism ... blood is the seat of everything' (2005, p.218). He also explains the pivotal role of the blood in sex, which will continue to be a significant point of discussion throughout this thesis, outlining that:

> while bloods confront, they never completely mingle or meld. Each is held separate, but each in its separation is, nevertheless, paradoxically part of a larger whole ... Blood is simultaneously elemental (a physical product) and metaphysical (potential producer). Blood becomes the seat of polar duality: the real and essential, connecting life here and mind elsewhere. (Tague, 2005, p.189)

Despite the insight of Tague's comments, he does not detail the specifics of blood-consciousness, nor does he consider the implications of blood being both a 'physical product' and a 'metaphysical' entity. These extremely significant issues will be explored in order to explain what blood-consciousness is and how it enters Lawrence's novels through character portrayals as well as through the language, metaphors, and symbols he adopts.

From Chapter Two onwards specific aspects of blood-consciousness will be considered alongside their fictional representation. The validity of this approach is re-enforced by Lawrence's essay 'The Future of the Novel [Surgery for the Novel - or a Bomb]' (1923) as he regrets the splitting of philosophy and fiction, feeling that 'the novel went sloppy, and philosophy went abstract-dry. The two should come together again, in the novel' (p.154). Given that Lawrence was re-thinking the modern novel and the unconscious at around the same time, it is unsurprising that his novels and his writing on blood-consciousness address many of the same concerns. Lawrence expressed that the novel must 'present us with new, really new feelings, a whole new line of emotion, which will get us out of the emotional rut' ('The Future of the Novel', p.155). In light of the recurring references to, and representations of, the blood in Lawrence's literary works, it is reasonable to suggest that blood-consciousness was a central aspect of his attempt to unite fiction and philosophy.

One way that Lawrence sought to induce 'new feelings' ('The Future of the Novel', p.155) through his novels, was by developing characters that are in an ongoing struggle to make sense of the modern world. *The White Peacock* (1911),

Sons and Lovers (1913), and *The Rainbow* (1915) are early 'works of fiction [where] rural life, nature and agriculture evoke what Lawrence calls the "blood-intimacy" of an organic community' (Stevens, 2007, p.147). In these texts 'the impact of modern technologies on provincial communities' (Stevens, 2007, p.142) is a central theme, and one that he goes on to evaluate with increasing urgency in his literary criticism and philosophy of later years. Lawrence's fiction and his belief in blood-consciousness both denote anxieties towards social and cultural changes that were taking place in England and Europe in the early twentieth century.

The increasing modernisation of England led Lawrence to argue vehemently that life was becoming increasingly characterised by mental-conscious "knowing" rather than blood-conscious "being" (Asai, 2007, p.1). In much of Lawrence's writing there is serious concern that the:

> innate core of being [or] the "naïve core," [can] over time [be] cumulatively covered, and eventually dominated, by man's later attainment of intellect, and this phenomenon has overturned the original balance that man once had: hence the present human ailment of self-consciousness and the loss of spontaneity. What we need to do, then, is to recover this balance. (Asai, 2007, p.1)

This threat to the balance of blood and mental-consciousness is expressed by Lawrence's 'investment in the visceral, the instinctual, and the organic in the face of the perceived cultural dominance of the intellectual, the rational, and the mechanical' (Gordon, 2007, p.82). In Lawrence's essay 'Democracy' (1919), he stresses the idea that modern man has become subject to 'desire[s]' and 'impulse[s]' that result in the 'fall from spontaneous reality into dead or material reality' (p.79). Lawrence urges his readers to recognise the spiritual emptiness that can derive from modernisation, leading to:

> the inclination to set up some fixed centre, in the mind, and make the whole soul turn upon this centre … Instead of the will fixing upon some sensational activity, it fixes upon some aspirational activity, and pivots this

> activity upon an idea or an ideal. The whole soul streams in the energy of aspiration and turns automatically, like a machine, upon the ideal …
>
> The whole soul of man must *never* be subjected to one motion or emotion, the life-activity must never be degraded into a fixed activity, there must be *no fixed direction.* (‘Democracy’, p.79, emphasis in original)

The subject of ‘will’ and human beings resembling ‘machines’ are central ideas in a number of Lawrence’s fictional works, and will be a prominent topic for discussion in Chapter Three in relation to *Women in Love* (1920). In this text, and many other Lawrentian novels, I will suggest that blood-consciousness and the threat of mental-consciousness are prominent themes.

Lawrence’s fiction is not simply mimicking the modern world, rather when he draws attention to the ‘fixed activity’ of the modern ‘mind’ (‘Democracy’, p.79), he is directly challenging it, encouraging his readers to consider their own state of being. The desire to create a new kind of fiction that could express the changes which were happening around him means that Lawrence contributed towards modernist literature through his own ‘self-conscious break with tradition’ (Eysteinsson, 1990, p.52). As Astradur Eysteinsson (1990) states, modernism is ‘now a kind of tradition of its own’, but at the time of writing, Lawrence was intent upon opening his readers’ minds to new ways of thinking about art and literature. He was also at the heart of modernism’s literary circles through his links with the Imagists and his friendships with Lady Ottoline Morrell and Mabel Dodge Luhan, who were both significant patrons of the literary world. However, his contribution to the evolution of the modernist novel can be overlooked, because formally his writing was less obviously experimental than writers such as Virginia Woolf or James Joyce.

Lawrence’s ongoing dialogue with theories of the unconscious in the early twentieth century and his certainty that the novel should be both ‘socially and politically challenging’ (Goldman, 2004, p.65) are key reasons to realise his

important role in the history of literary modernism in England. Despite this, Lawrence did not associate with many of the now most popular modernist authors - as Hugh Stevens (2007) explains, instead he 'believe[d] his critique of industrial modernity put him at odds with the literary and artistic movements of modernism' (p.144). Michael Bell (2001) has identified the 'cultural and artistic concerns' Lawrence shared with writers such as Joyce, Lewis, and Woolf, and that he offers 'one of the most significant critiques of modernism arising from the same historical context and concerns' (p.179). Yet, Lawrence felt that Woolf's *The Voyage Out* (1915) 'was interesting, but not *very* good – nothing much behind it' (*2L,* p.291, emphasis in original). Later, in reference to Joyce, Lawrence wrote that:

> I am sorry, but I am one of the people who can't read *Ulysses.* Only bits. But I am glad I have seen the book, since in Europe they usually mention us together - James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence - and I feel I ought to know in what company I creep to immortality. I guess Joyce would look as much askance on me as I on him. (*4L,* p.340)

What is most surprising and striking about these comments is not the fact that Lawrence is critical of Woolf and Joyce, rather it is the kind of indifference and disinterestedness that is evoked. Lawrence's flippancy towards some modernist literature can be put down to his belief that many authors were products of their 'superficial educations' in the modern world (Avery and Brantlinger, 2003, p.246). Lawrence's dismissive attitude to the work of Woolf and Joyce is partly because he deemed that their fiction lacked the philosophy that he called for in 'Future of the Novel'. His view that Woolf's novel had 'nothing much behind it' (*2L,* p.291) echoes in the narrative of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) which states that Clifford Chatterley's 'first-class literature' also has 'nothing in it!' (*LCL,* p.63). Chapters Three and Five include a more detailed assessment of Lawrence's criticisms of the mental-conscious middle classes in his fiction, as he emphasises that the bourgeois

possess ‘too much self-consciousness’ and have ‘los[t] touch with their unconscious vitality and sexuality’ (Avery and Brantlinger, 2003, p.246).

The distinction Asai (2007) makes between “knowing” and “being” (p.1) in Lawrence’s thinking is recalled again here in relation to *Women in Love,* as the narrative’s mocking of Halliday and the bohemian circle, is linked to discussions regarding the impact of education upon blood-conscious being. In the chapter ‘Breadalby’, Hermione celebrates ‘the joy and beauty of knowledge’ stating that “nothing has meant so much to me in all life, as certain knowledge” (*WL,* p.85). As will be shown in Chapter Three, Hermione is representative of the educated middle class that Lawrence found repugnant in modernist literati circles. Hermione stresses her desire ‘*to know*’ but Birkin highlights her subsequent inability ‘*to be’* (*WL,* p.86, emphasis in original). Hermione is construed in this way because Lawrence believed that:

> the children of the middle classes are so vitally impoverished, that the miracle is they continue to exist at all. The children of the lower classes do better, because they escape into the streets. But even the children of the proletariat are now infected. (*FU,* p.123)

There can be no doubt that in Lawrence’s fiction the ability for characters to be in tune with the positive flow of blood-consciousness is largely dependent upon their education and class. So this thesis will demonstrate that much can be learnt about blood-consciousness and how Lawrence envisaged it by paying close attention to which characters are described through metaphors and imagery of the blood.

Lawrence denotes a certain fondness and admiration for working-class men in his fiction, which obviously has links to his own upbringing in a mining community of Eastwood. The short story ‘A Sick Collier’ (1914) describes that the young collier Willy is ‘compact with life’ and possesses ‘a sort of physical brightness’ (*PO,* p.165). This characterisation of the young healthy blood-conscious male resonates most

famously in the construction of Walter Morel of *Sons and Lovers* whose vitality is emphasised through the 'glamour of his movement' (p.18) and the fact that he 'laughed so often and so heartily' (*SL,* p.17). Lawrence often writes favourably about working-class characters such as the early Brangwens of *The Rainbow,* and as Chapter Four will reveal, the Mexican peasants that he came into contact with, and that helped to create characters and scenes in *The Plumed Serpent* (1926).
Yet, it is also important to note that Lawrence could be highly critical and cruel towards the working class, depicting them as inarticulate, slow, and incapable of controlling their aggression. This is why the characters that Lawrence created in the image of himself, such as Paul Morel of *Sons and Lovers,* Rupert Birkin of *Women in Love*, and Aaron Sissons of *Aaron's Rod* (1922), all achieve social elevation rather than being brought up as middle class.

Lawrence's own working-class upbringing had a definite impact upon his belief in blood-consciousness and his feelings towards the modernist novel. Yet, his elevation into elitist artistic and literary circles also left him with anxieties towards his class status. Even after establishing himself as a successful author and poet, as a middle-aged man Lawrence wrote:

> So the ghost of my mother, in my sister's garden. I see it each time I am there, bending over the violas, or looking up at the almond tree. Actually an almond tree! And I always ask, of the grey-haired, good little ghost: "Well what of it, my dear? What is the verdict?"
>
> But she never answers, though I press her:
>
> "Do look at the house, my dear! Do look at the tiled hall, and the rug from Mexico, and the brass from Venice, seen through the open doors, beyond the lilies and the carnations of the lawn beds! And do look at me, and see if I'm not a gentleman! Do say that I'm almost upper class!" ('[Return to Bestwood]', p.19)

The essay '[Return to Bestwood]' (1926) reveals Lawrence's desire for acceptance into the bourgeois literary world whilst presenting the irony that he was also striving to disassociate himself and his writing from it. Similarly, Lawrence sought to convey

the inner experience of characters through blood-consciousness, which he believed was more true-to-life than other modernists' depiction of character. Yet, his aesthetic form would at times also resemble the stream-of-consciousness narrative style that characterised much of Virginia Woolf's writing, a style that he very much wanted to disassociate himself from.

Like the metaphor of the blood, the stream denotes 'the unbroken flow of words on the page' (p.67). Like some of his modernist contemporaries that he criticised, Lawrence would use the image of a stream to conduct 'excessive and finely nuanced psychological analysis' (Fernihough, 2007, p.69) of his characters. Yet, as Chapter Two will explain, there are specific reasons why blood-consciousness was also a highly individual philosophy that shaped Lawrence's fiction. In contrast to the stream which was adapted by his fellow authors, Lawrence was less interested in the '*chaos* of the inner life, and the raw, unfinished quality of our thoughts' (p.66, emphasis in original) which Anne Fernihough (2007) associates with Joyce. Instead, Lawrence adopted narratives of 'repetition with variation ... [creating] a pulsing, incantatory rhythm suggestive of the breathing and the heartbeat of the human body' (Fernihough, 2007, p.76). Lawrence had reservations about the 'stream of hell' partly because he associated it with Freud and a stream of the 'brain, in at one ear and out of the other' (*PU,* p.8). Instead, blood-consciousness emerges in Lawrence's fiction when he strives to explain his characters through their unconscious states, allowing him to stress the fluid, bodily, and also mystical essence of being.

It is important to recognise that blood-consciousness as a set of beliefs was developed with the state of England and its literature very much in mind. Yet, this thesis will build on the research of Skinner (2007) and Costin (2011) who highlight

the significance that Lawrence's travelling had upon blood-consciousness. In the different continents and countries Lawrence visited, his travel writing always presents him as a keen and interested observer, wanting to understand the unique feeling that results from being open to new experiences in new places. In *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923) Lawrence would explain this by suggesting that:

> Every continent has its own great spirit of place. Every people is polarised in some particular locality, which is home, the homeland. Different places on the face of the earth have different vital effluence, different vibration, different chemical exhalation, different polarity with different stars: call it what you like. But the spirit of place is a great reality. (p.17)

This notion of a 'spirit of place' is one of Lawrence's most important comments, as it reveals his hope that not all countries and continents will go down the same path as England and Europe. Yet, the 'spirit of place' should not be understood as simply escapism from England, as Lawrence believed that psychical change does not occur from simply being in another place, rather:

> Men are free when they are in a living homeland, not when they are straying and breaking away. Men are free when they are obeying some deep, inward voice of religious belief … Men are free when they belong to a living, organic, *believing* community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealised purpose. (*SCAL,* p.17, emphasis in original)

This ability to be truly 'free' is no easy feat, but in his years travelling; Lawrence was searching for this essence of spiritual freedom that he felt could be achieved in other places around the world that remained untouched and unscathed by the First World War.

Although Lawrence firmly believed in the individual 'spirit of place' (*SCAL,* p.17), in his journeys back and forth from different continents in the 1920s, there are common themes running throughout his various writings on different cultures and nationalities. In his serious disillusion with England and its mental-consciousness and materialism, Lawrence looked forward to his time is Australia, hoping that it

would provide an exciting new life for him and Frieda. Yet, there are many instances in his Australian novels *Kangaroo* (1923) and *The Boy in the Bush* (1924) when Lawrence's characters are shown to possess great ambivalence as to if the 'spirit of place' (*SCAL,* p.17) in Australia is positive overall. In *Kangaroo* the vast bush and the lack of history in Australia leads a native called Jaz to urge Somers to:

> "Go into the middle of Australia and see how empty it is. You can't face emptiness long. You have to come back and do something to keep from being frightened at your own emptiness, and everything else's emptiness. It may be empty. But it's wicked, and it'll kill you if it can." (*K,* p.204)

The intonation is that a spiritually-empty place will leave its inhabitants soulless, so that as suggested by the early 'blood-intimacy' (p.10) of the Brangwens in *The Rainbow,* the land has a direct impact upon blood-consciousness and the soul. Yet, it is notable that his writing on different cultures, Lawrence rarely offers a fixed viewpoint, instead he grants his characters mixed feelings towards their new surroundings.

In *Kangaroo*, Somers 'longed for Europe with hungry longing … he felt he would have given anything on earth to be in England' (*K,* p.19). Similarly, in *The Boy in the Bush,* Jack Grant 'was afraid of the thicket of life in which he found himself like a solitary, strange animal … he was in a strange bush, and by himself (p.83). Whereas Somers and Harriet move to Australia by choice, Jack is sent there as a young man for his poor behaviour, but throughout both novels, the characters all convey uncertainty towards their new land and find themselves changed by the close of the novel. *Kangaroo*'s closing chapter 'Adieu Australia' is fitting as Lawrence also ended up gladly saying to goodbye to Australia. However, his visit to the United States would only lead to further feelings of ambivalence, as after many years of anticipation, his initial optimism for life in America ended in disappointment, and Lawrence's belief felt that 'the real American day hasn't begun yet' (*SCAL*, p.18).

As the chronological sequence of the novels through the chapters of this thesis will show, much can be learnt about the development of blood-consciousness through Lawrence's career. It is not an idea that is imagined early in his youth and then repeated in his writing. Instead, this thesis will identify the changing nature of Lawrence's philosophy, as his beliefs were continually being shaped by the new experiences he had. Chapter Four in particular will stress that Lawrence felt certain peoples and places to be more in tune with the values of blood-conscious being. Although the time Lawrence spent in Australia and America was crucial in terms of the inspiration it gave him as an author, it was Mexico that Lawrence would grow to love the most.

Boehmer's *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (2005) highlights that modernist writers such as Conrad and Lawrence sought to 'search through the symbolic systems of other cultures to find alternative aesthetic potential' (p.173). Lawrence's attempt to explore the blood-consciousness of other countries, peoples, and races involved him making an essential comparison between Western and Non-Western peoples. Thus, in line with colonial texts such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), Rider Haggard's *She* (1887) and E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* (1924), *The Plumed Serpent* is characterized by the central character's 'expressions of estrangement' which involves being 'removed from source' (Boehmer, 2005, p.122). In the latter part of his career, Lawrence became part of a literary movement written by, and interested in, exiles, who had abandoned their native country as a place of meaning, finding themselves equally, if not more, adrift in other countries (Boehmer, 2005). In doing so, Lawrence found himself contemplating issues of racial difference and otherness in a way that was 'unusually non-judgemental for his time' (Boehmer, 2005, p.142). Yet, he and other modernist authors struggled to offer a

consistent set of ideas regarding “otherness”, so that multiple attitudes can be found in their writing.

From all of these discussions, it becomes clear that blood-consciousness is part of a carefully considered and thought-out set of beliefs, but that it was also shaped by a number of different experiences, people, and texts. This thesis will address misinterpretations of blood-consciousness, in light of a lack of critical consensus as to how it should be defined, or within what discipline it should be regarded. For instance, there is a fundamental lack of agreement as to how to categorise texts such as *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* in the first place. Daniel Schneider (1984) suggests that Lawrence creates his own psychology, whereas David Ellis (1986) prefers to adopt Lawrence’s own ‘terminology’ (p.89) entitling his chapter ‘Lawrence and the Biological Psyche’. Cowan (1990) chooses to refer to ‘Lawrence’s psychoanalytic theory of the unconscious’ (p.13), a label which seems to pull Lawrence back towards disciplines which he was striving to get away from. To counteract this, the following chapters will adopt the term philosophy when referring to blood-consciousness, as this was the term that Lawrence used throughout his life to convey the central concerns that steered his fiction and non-fiction.

The inability for critics to categorise blood-consciousness is noteworthy because it demonstrates that despite the number of times it recurs in Lawrence’s writing, this belief in the blood is difficult to pin down. Michael Bell (1992) suggests that this challenging element to Lawrence’s metaphysic is due to the fact that his different texts are all involved in a kind of “working out” which can be the result of his own ‘self-conscious investigation … or an intrinsic logic which is simply taking its course’ (p.4). Lawrence’s attempt to put the values of blood-consciousness into words and to communicate them through different forms of literature, undoubtedly

involved a huge challenge. As Bell (1992) and Becket (1997) both suggest, in order to gain a closer understanding of Lawrence's philosophy one must pay attention to the language that Lawrence used to describe it. For Jascha Kessler (1964) texts such as *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* and the language Lawrence uses in them, involves a 'blind leap into misplaced concreteness, in the very opposite of the thick warmth of Hot fluid life, the expression of which has won him such admiration' (p.488). Kessler adopts this position because although blood-consciousness lacks a rigorous definition and the consistent depiction of a theory anywhere in his writing, in order to convey his beliefs regarding the existence of blood-consciousness, Lawrence had to somehow explain it.

While Lawrence often writes with great clarity about blood-consciousness, it is also true to say that, there are instances when his writing on the topic is vague, contradictory, and elusive. This is most evident in texts such as *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* due to his lack of first hand, in-depth knowledge of other theories of the unconscious. In *Fantasia* Lawrence describes himself as 'an amateur of amateurs' (*FU,* p.62), conveying the fact that most of his knowledge of psychoanalysis was acquired through word-of-mouth rather than the study of texts. Lawrence's wife Frieda had at least some knowledge of psychoanalytic concepts through her previous affair with Otto Gross, an Austrian psychiatrist and analyst as well as a radical spokesman for sexual liberation who also had links with Freud and Jung. Lawrence and Frieda also moved in intellectual circles where discussion of Freud was inevitable, especially given Lawrence's correspondence with psychoanalysts David Eder, Barbara Low and Ernest Jones (Kinkead-Weekes, 1996). Taking this into account, it is unsurprising that Lawrence's criticisms of Freud can be, at times, simplistic and, in fact, only really confront the early theories as explicated in 'The

Unconscious' (1915). For these reasons, Cowan (1990) has described Lawrence's understanding of Freud and psychoanalysis as 'limited' and 'erroneous' (p.256), and such a position backs up Kessler's (1964) claim that Lawrence lost his way in his writings on the unconscious.

This thesis will not idealise blood-consciousness and state that it is completely unproblematic. Instead, Chapter One will outline some of its seeming inconsistencies and contradictions in order to shed light on them, and in some cases, help resolve them. So rather than identify Lawrence as an author that was out of his depth when creating his own philosophy, my approach to blood-consciousness aligns with Becket (1997) when she stresses that:

> Lawrence's unease with contemporary attempts to conceptualize the unconscious, to reduce it to a number of fixed metaphors, makes him more genuinely post-Freudian in his perceptions than many of the British writers of the time. (p.50)

Comments such as these outline that blood-consciousness is extremely valuable precisely because Lawrence wanted to avoid locking it down into a systemised portrayal of human life. As Bell's (1992) discussion identifies, 'instead of [Lawrence] struggling to communicate a truth we have rather a man consciously problematizing his vision' (p.2). Yet, it is also notable that Freud was not so systematic and mechanical as Lawrence thought him to be. Although they were writing from different disciplines, like Lawrence, Freud also incorporated many analogies, metaphors, and myths into his doctrine, so that as Jan Campbell (2006) suggests, the 'science and poetry of psychoanalysis are inseparable' (p.4). Freud envisioned himself as a man of science but he was also an artist (Campbell, 2006), in the same way that Lawrence was primarily an author, though his 'fiction is inescapably philosophical' (Bell, 1992, p.2) and philosophical works such as '*Fantasia* [are] recognizably the work of a literary artist' (Ellis, 1988, p.84).

As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1983) have emphasised, Lawrence was ahead of his time in many of his criticisms of psychoanalysis. Even so, it is important to recognise that blood-consciousness does not need to right the wrongs of psychoanalysis in order to have validity as a set of beliefs. Instead given the 'radical difference of approach' (Ellis, 1986, p.89) that separates Lawrence and Freud, the real significance of Freud's ideas as with the other thinkers of this thesis is that they reveal specific aspects of blood-consciousness which establish it as a subject worthy of serious critical attention. However, before embarking upon readings of Lawrence's novels and evaluating connections between blood-consciousness and the theories of Jung, Bergson, Myers, and Fanon, it is first of all necessary to elucidate certain aspects of Lawrence's philosophy.

As such, Chapter One will foreground the different ways that Lawrence envisaged blood-consciousness, and a number of the metaphors, symbols, and images that he used to convey his beliefs. The first sub-section will explore 'The Birth of Blood-Consciousness' in two ways. Firstly, I will consider what inspired this philosophy early in Lawrence's career, and secondly, I will pay close attention to how he describes the development of blood-being in the self from the moment of conception (Becket, 1998). The second sub-section entitled 'Blood-consciousness and the Biological Psyche: Psychical or Physical' will then focus on specific details of how Lawrence imagines and describes blood-consciousness, evaluating to what extent he is describing the actual blood of the body, and to what extent his philosophy is based on metaphor.

The third section of Chapter One is centred upon the importance of the 'Non-Human Cosmos' in Lawrence's writing, and it will stress that the human body and being itself are vitally connected to the forces of the universe. The presence of the

sun and moon in Lawrence's fiction and non-fiction will be identified as part of a cosmology that bears similarities with the psychology of Jung. Finally, the fourth section considers why 'The Natural World and Organicism' are significant features of how Lawrence imagines blood-consciousness as a natural life force. This prepares the reader for the connection between the blood and the earth in Chapter Two, as well as in Chapter Four, where the problematic aspects of references to the blood and nature will be brought to light. All of these sections will provide a foundation to this thesis, so that when blood-consciousness emerges as a subject in Lawrence's fiction in the later chapters, it is much more evident.

Chapter Two focuses upon *The Rainbow* and Lawrence's disregard for the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183), which he felt Victorian realists such as Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy relied upon to create their characters. I will propose that by attempting to reveal the inner blood-conscious life of the Brangwens, Lawrence was able to create a new form of character that contrasted with the Morels of his autobiographical novel *Sons and Lovers.* The second section will then identify significant similarities between blood-consciousness as a kind of inner-time, and Bergson's philosophy of duration that Lawrence was familiar with. In doing so, I will identify that Lawrence owes a great deal to Bergson for many of the principles that shaped *The Rainbow* and his philosophy.

The final focus of this chapter is upon the fact that, by the time the third generations of the Brangwens are born, England has become noticeably more modernised. As the early generations of blood-conscious Brangwens seem reluctant to be a part of this new world, I will question whether blood-consciousness is still a positive, life-affirming, mode of living, or if it actually limits characters to what Mary Ann Melfi (2001) describes as 'circles of confinement' (p.360). These ideas will be

considered by paying particular attention to Ursula Brangwen who possesses the vital blood of her ancestors, but is able to break away from her restricting family home in order to develop and make a new life for herself.

Chapter Three exemplifies the contrast between *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, as the latter novel is associated with a darker and more dangerous presentation of human consciousness. The demise of England through the First World War, and Lawrence's own increasing feeling of alienation and disenchantment with the country that was once his home, undoubtedly had a significant impact upon *Women in Love.* The first part of Chapter Three will identify that the sense of 'crisis' ('Foreword to *WL*', 1919, p.486) that is so prominent in the novel is partly down to Lawrence's perceived crisis of mental-consciousness. Thus, examples of mental-consciousness will be presented in relation to characters such as Gerald Crich and Hermione Roddice in order to identify how Lawrence's disregard for mental-knowledge, and the prioritisation of blood-consciousness are central themes in his fiction.

This chapter is focused around Birkin's reference to England as 'a dying body' (*WL,* p.396) - a phrase which references the many deaths which take place throughout the course of the novel, but that also exudes the idea that mental-consciousness represents the death of the blood-conscious body. Thus, the second part of this chapter will focus upon instances when characters question occult beliefs such as the possibility of the spirit living-on beyond death. This interest in spiritual and cosmological matters brings Lawrence's writing into dialogue with Myers and the SPR. As such, I will evaluate whether *Women in Love* conveys that a blood-conscious connection between self and the universe can enable a form of

immortality, and a way for Birkin and Ursula to escape from the crisis of mental-consciousness in England.

Chapter Four communicates how Lawrence's years of travelling and writing about other countries and cultures enabled him to conceive of a way forward. By immersing himself in new experiences in new places, Lawrence thought he had found a way of bringing about a revitalisation of the psyche and the body. The first section will consider if Lawrence's depiction of Mexico as a land of blood-consciousness is a positive claim, or if, as critics such as Marianna Torgovnick (1990, 1997) have suggested, he is guilty of depicting derogatory stereotypes of the savage, or an idealised sexual fantasy of the primitive in his work. This will involve evaluating how discussions of mixed-blood can complicate the basis of difference in the novel, as at times references to the blood appear to denote racial-difference as the basis of blood-consciousness.

Whilst recognising the limitations and derogatory elements of Lawrence's representation of Mexico and its people, section two of Chapter Four will identify the most insightful aspects of Mexican blood-consciousness through a reading of Jan Campbell's *Arguing the Phallus* (2000) and the 'bodily imaginary', alongside Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). This meeting between blood-consciousness and the bodily imaginary will show that when Kate states that '*the blood is one blood'* (*PS,* p.416, emphasis in original) this is an attempt to partly break down the notion of racial difference and the other. The third section does not shy away from recognising why *The Plumed Serpent* is not a postcolonial novel, but it will draw attention to how Lawrence posits the Mexican people as neglected political subjects, and that people of different races and cultures interpret the world and their own bodily-unconscious differently. This chapter emphasises that Lawrence sought

to understand life in Mexico, and he grew to believe that its people still possessed a vital connection with blood-consciousness that England and Europe had lost or surrendered through the First World War.

The final chapter of this thesis will look towards Lawrence's most notorious novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* which involves a fictional return to England. The first section will evaluate the dynamics of the blood-conscious marriage that Lawrence writes so passionately about in 'A Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*' (1930), and consider Connie's need for such a union in the novel. This will involve focusing upon her marriage with Clifford and the affair she has with her gamekeeper Mellors. Given the positive descriptions of the transformation that takes place in Connie, the narrative invites the reader to believe that a blood-conscious marriage is evolving and that it is an extremely positive thing.

Yet, as the second section of Chapter Five will show, *Lady Chatterley* has received criticism which argues that the relationship that develops between Connie and Mellors suggests that Lawrence possesses a philosophy of penis worship. The late twentieth century saw a growing view of Lawrence (much of which was inspired by Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1970)) as failing to represent the sexual experience of women in either a positive or accurate way. Thus, by incorporating the criticism of Linda Ruth Williams (1993) and Masami Nakabayashi (2011), section two will explore the phallic element of blood-consciousness, confronting the idea that *Lady Chatterley* and 'A Propos' outline the misogynist and male-dominated aspects of Lawrence's philosophy.

Finally, this thesis comes to a close by emphasising that *Lady Chatterley* is deeply concerned with the subject of the spoken and written word, and the value of literature (Bell, 1992). Clifford is described as 'a first class modern writer' (p.21), but

his books do ‘not exist’ and have ‘nothing in them’ (*LCL,* p.20); comments that evoke the hollowness with which Lawrence regarded many of his modernist contemporaries. In contrast, Mellors is supposedly the primitive man of the woods, but he is found to possess a large pile of books in his home, and the novel ends with his letter to Connie, so that he and Clifford are united by the reading and writing that takes place in the novel. In a wider sense, *Lady Chatterley* mirrors the struggle that Lawrence had throughout his career communicating ideas which could be extremely complex and controversial (Bell, 1992). With this in mind, attention will now turn to the manifold ways in which Lawrence expressed his philosophy, and the varied and sometimes even seemingly conflicting forms that blood-consciousness takes in his different literary ventures.

CHAPTER ONE

DEFINING BLOOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

Before considering representations of blood-consciousness in Lawrence's fiction it is first of all essential to gain further insight into what it means as a philosophical term. As such, this chapter will begin by exploring 'The Birth of Blood-Consciousness', which is the title of the first sub-heading. In doing so, I will outline the first signs of this metaphysic emerging in Lawrence's writing and focus upon how he describes the actual birth of blood-consciousness in human beings. From here, attention will turn to whether this crucial term is envisaged as a 'Psychical or Physical' entity, looking at how Lawrence often blurs descriptions between the two rather than definitively distinguishing between them. This chapter will then emphasise that blood-consciousness is not just an unconscious of the human body but that it is in a significant relationship with 'The Non-Human Cosmos' and 'The Natural World'.

Breaking blood-consciousness down into these sections allows a more thorough and concise investigation into the principal ideas which underpin it. With every section there will be an element of overlap and a cross-fertilisation of beliefs: crucially the sections do not act as a way of locking blood-consciousness down into a fixed definition that can be searched for in Lawrence's fiction. As Lawrence writes in 'Morality and the Novel' (1925), 'if you try to nail anything down, in the novel, either it kills the novel, or the novel gets up and walks away with the nail' (p.172). By embarking upon the origins of blood-consciousness, I will now begin to evaluate the most prominent and striking elements of this term in order to pave the way for the later chapters.

THE BIRTH OF BLOOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

Identifying the emergence or birth of blood-consciousness as an idea within a particular period of time is a difficult task, as much of Lawrence's detailed writing on matters relating to his philosophy did not occur until he embarked upon *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* in 1920 and 1921. 'The Birth of Blood-Consciousness' is adapted from the *Fantasia* chapter 'The Birth of Consciousness' but in no way suggests that Lawrence's belief in the blood was only coming into being in the early 1920s. If Lawrence's 1915 letter to Russell is accurate, then the initial birth of blood-consciousness as the foundation for a philosophy came into being around 1905, when he was 'twenty' (*2L,* p.470) years old. However, Skinner (2007) suggests that it was not until Lawrence's walk 'Through the Tyrol' in 1912 that Lawrence's ideas regarding blood and mental-consciousness really began to take form. Skinner (2007) claims that the 'transition from the cold Gothic North towards the warm Italian South was not only physical, but also spiritual and psychological' (p.60) for Lawrence. 'The "blood" bespattered crucifixes in Tyrol' (Skinner, 2007, p.62) would provide Lawrence with a biblical image of the split between blood and mental-consciousness that he would revisit throughout his career.

Years later in *Studies in American Literature,* the symbol of the cross resurfaces as Lawrence envisages the separate forces of the self, writing that:

> We are divided against ourselves.
> For instance, the blood *hates* being KNOWN by the mind. It feels itself destroyed when it is KNOWN. Hence the profound instinct of privacy …
> You can't get away from this.
> Blood-consciousness overwhelms, obliterates, and annuls mind-consciousness.
> Mind-consciousness extinguishes blood-consciousness, and consumes the blood.
> We are all of us conscious in both ways. And the two ways are antagonistic in us
> They will always remain so.
> That is our cross. (*SCAL,* p.83, emphasis in original)

The fundamental conflict between these separate forms of self-knowledge is denoted, as the ‘sensual … flood’ (*SCAL,* p.83) of blood-consciousness is at odds with mankind’s desire to consciously-know. The imagery of the cross evokes a meeting point between two lines, and thus the possibility of achieving harmony between these differing urges in human beings. However, as Skinner (2007) rightly states, the sense of ‘opposition’ that Lawrence saw ‘between spirit, mental will and mental knowledge … and body, instinct, blood and self’ (pp.62-63) would find its way into *Women in Love* and some of his more pessimistic post-War writing.

The development of blood-consciousness into a central principle of Lawrence’s thinking cannot be attributed to only one experience or his reading of any one particular thinker or text. For it is also highly significant that Lawrence’s letter to Russell (as discussed in the Introduction) was written after he had read James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* (1980-1915) and *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910). Frazer’s ‘anthropological and “occult” studies’ had a clear impact upon blood-consciousness as, like many of ‘the great modernist writers [Lawrence] found the war profoundly traumatic’ (Marcus, 1990, p.232) and was looking for hope in alternative belief systems. So as the Introduction states, there were a number of factors that influenced Lawrence’s belief in the blood. But given the close proximity between Lawrence’s experiences in the Tyrol in 1912 (Skinner, 2007) and his first signs of a philosophy in the foreword to *Sons and Lovers* written after the novel in 1913, there can be no doubt that the Tyrol had a profound impact upon Lawrence’s thinking.

As Michael Black (1991) states, the term foreword is really an unsuitable name for this piece of writing, as aside from the final paragraphs which allude to the mother and son relationship and the family home, it does not really introduce the

novel at all. Instead, Lawrence spends most of his efforts reversing the phrase from John's Gospel that "The Word was made Flesh" ('Foreword to *SL*', p.467). Black (1991) writes that:

> only persons can utter words, so the Word cannot be the origin. Unindividuated life, protoplasm, the origin, must therefore be Flesh. So the order in John (first Word, then Flesh) must be inverted, the old scheme turned on its head. (p.125)

Although this foreword does not refer to blood-consciousness specifically, it articulates how Lawrence interpreted the relationship between the body and the mind. The unification of blood and consciousness to make blood-consciousness is a continuation of this Flesh versus Word dichotomy, so that the blood is Flesh and consciousness is Word - crucially, here, the blood, or Flesh, comes first. The term blood-consciousness in no way insinuates that the mystical blood is conscious, as such, it is reasonable to question why Lawrence did not name his philosophy the blood-unconscious instead. Part of this is down to the fact that Lawrence knew consciousness is necessary to live and be and to comprehend the importance of the blood. By uniting blood and consciousness, Lawrence affirms that the unconscious blood and the conscious mind, like the Flesh and the Word, will ideally always be balanced in human beings. As this chapter will show, Lawrence's philosophy is built upon a need to put the flesh into words, with the flesh being not only the physical body but also the 'infinite' ('Foreword to *SL*', p.467) psychical mystery which lies behind it.

Black states that when considering the relevance of the foreword 'it would be pointless to try to pin [Lawrence] down, as you would pin down a philosopher, since he is not offering argument of that kind' (1991, p.144). On one level there is some truth in this, as the foreword is an experimental and playful piece of writing that Lawrence felt his publisher Edward Garnett would find 'amus[ing]' (*1L*, p.507).

However, there is also a great deal of significant thought that can be taken from the foreword that paves the way for in-depth discussions in this thesis as to what blood-consciousness is and all that it encompasses. As well as giving insight into his feelings towards the 'Flesh' and the 'Word' ('Foreword to *SL',* p.467), and the body and the mind, this is the first instance that we see philosophy evolving from the process of Lawrence writing fiction (Becket, 1997). Writing this highly autobiographical novel and its foreword encouraged Lawrence to consider how blood-consciousness comes into being, and in what way its development is affected by the relationship between a child and its parents.

The relationship between *Sons and Lovers* and its foreword is the first example of Lawrence presenting an element of overlap between his different literary forms, and as such, represents the beginning of Lawrence's fiction and philosophy informing and shaping one another. It is also fitting that in these works Lawrence is exploring how the development of blood and mental-consciousness develops in the child, with the mother being a crucial stimulus. In the foreword, Lawrence imagines the mother-figure through the metaphor of a Queen bee with another bee as the metaphor of the father, that also implicates the son:

> not only does he come and go: it is demanded of him that he come and go. It is the systole and diastole of the Heart, that shall be … The hive draws home the bee, the bee leaps off the threshold of the hive, with strength, and is gone. ('Foreword to *SL*', p.471)

In clear correspondence to his belief in blood-consciousness, Lawrence uses the metaphor of the heart, blood and body to evoke the need for men to go back and forth from work to the family home and the wife or mother. Passages such as this highlight that Lawrence envisioned the possibility of an idyllic relationship between mother and child, where the mother is representative of the domestic sphere embodying a womb-like space where a man can 'be warmed, and restored, and

nourished, from the store the day has given her' ('Foreword to *SL*', p.472). *Sons and Lovers* conveys that the ability to live blood-consciously and achieve a harmonious state of being is dependent upon this positive relationship with the mother.

Lawrence's later novels such as *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo* include warnings about possessive women, but throughout his writing there are also 'familiar reminders of male figures seeking a therapeutic return to the womb with woman referred to, in that essentialist frame, as the "bath of life" ' (Becket, 1998, p.256). The foreword to *Sons and Lovers* emphasises the co-dependency existing between the bee and Queen bee, so that each relies upon the other. Despite their different spheres of the home and the world of work (Becket, 1998), Lawrence suggests that:

> the man who is the go-between from Woman to Production is the lover of that woman. And if that Woman be his mother, then is he her lover in part only: he carries for her, but is never received unto her for his confirmation and renewal, and so wastes himself away in the flesh. ('Foreword to *SL*', p.473)

Lawrence's own youth and his relationship with his mother who had died in late 1910 are undoubtedly drawn upon in instances such as this, as the ability to live vitally 'in the flesh' is largely determined by the emotional bond between mother and son. Lawrence is also beginning to form the basis of his discontent with Freud and his emphasis is on the sexual-basis of the mother and son relationship, as he stresses that the mother can only ever be a 'lover' to her son '*in part*' ('Foreword to *SL*', p.473, my emphasis).

In *Sons and Lovers* Mrs Morel is overly dependent on her sons Paul and William due to her unhappy marriage and her dissatisfaction with domestic life. The emotional and psychological strain placed on Paul results in him having 'a peculiar pucker on the forehead' (*SL*, p.45). Lawrence also hints that conscious or unconscious feelings are imparted to the unborn child, as the fact that Paul's conception was unwanted 'startled [his] tiny consciousness before birth' (*SL,* p.45).

As a result of her disillusion with her own life and the guilt she feels from not wanting her child, Mrs Morel allows an overly-intense relationship with Paul to develop. This means that she does not embody 'renewal' ('Foreword to *SL*', p.473) as the foreword suggests, instead her influence upon Paul is highly destructive and stifles his psychical development into adulthood.

Alfred Booth Kuttner (1916) was the first of many critics to suggest the relevance of Freud's Oedipal complex in this mother and son relationship stating that the novel 'embodie[d] a theory' (p.77). This review also had a crucial role to play in the birth of blood-consciousness because it enabled Lawrence to consider on what basis his beliefs regarding child-consciousness differed from those of Freud. Despite his discontent with psychoanalysis, Lawrence clearly saw the mythology of Oedipus as relevant to *Sons and Lovers* as in the foreword he explains that:

> the old son-lover was Oedipus. The name of the new one is legion. And if a son-lover take a wife, then is she not his wife, she is only his bed. And his life will be torn in twain, and his wife in her despair shall hope for sons, that she may have her lover in her hour. ('Foreword to *SL*', p.473)

The 'son-lover' and the dissatisfied wife ensure that the stifling mother and son relationship continues to be reproduced through the generations. But although Lawrence mentions the legend of Oedipus, he was vehemently against it being made into a childhood sexual complex. Kinkead-Weekes (1998) recognises that Lawrence's criticism of psychoanalysis was against a theory that 'starts as therapy but ends by seeing disease as the norm' (p.163). Instead Lawrence wanted to propose 'natural growth and creativity [as] inherent in the life-drives within every psyche' so that human beings are 'capable of being liberated from false mental consciousness to become creative again' (Kinkead-Weekes, 1998, pp.163-164).

Lawrence uses the reference to Oedipus in the foreword partly to convey the tragedy that results from the mother and son relationship taking on this unhealthy

dynamic. Nevertheless, it is ironic that Frieda uses the term in a psychoanalytic context as she wrote that 'I think [Lawrence] quite missed the point in "Paul Morel". He really loved his mother more than any body, even with his other women, real love, sort of Oedipus, his mother must have been adorable' (*1L,* p.449). Given their differing stances towards the Oedipus complex it is unsurprising that Frieda also writes that they 'f[ou]ght like blazes' over the early *Sons and Lovers* manuscript.

Despite Lawrence's emphasis on the purely spiritual or emotional Oedipal dynamic at the heart of his novel, Oedipus was a term that forced him into dialogue with Freud and inspired key beliefs regarding the mother and son connection that he would revisit throughout his career. For instance, in the *Fantasia* chapter 'Parent Love' Lawrence returns to the same issues he explored fictionally in *Sons and Lovers,* stating the presence of a pre-conscious connection between a mother and her child. In this chapter, Lawrence claims that:

> a child in the womb can have no *idea* of the mother. I think orthodox psychology will allow us so much. And yet the child in the womb must be dynamically conscious of the mother. Otherwise how could it maintain a definite and progressively developing relation to her. (*FU*, p.106, emphasis in original)

It is highly significant that the ability for a child to be 'dynamically conscious of the mother' (p.106) is due to a direct 'connection with the maternal blood-stream' (*FU,* p.75). This is not only a physiological blood stream but is a bond which develops through the mystical 'solar plexus' centre which exists 'under the navel' (*FU,* p.75). The solar plexus will be explained in the next sub-section but for now, it is only necessary to state that it is 'the greatest and most important centre' (*FU,* p.79) because it is the primary origin of blood-consciousness:

> the great centre, where, in the womb, your life first sparkled in individuality. This is the centre that drew the gestating maternal bloodstream upon you, in the nine-months lurking, drew it on you for your increase. This is the centre whence the navel-string broke, but where the invisible string of dynamic

> consciousness, like a dark electric current connecting you with the rest of life, will never break until you die and depart from corporate individuality. (*FU,* p.75)

The ‘pulse-rhythm’ of this mother and son tie creates a fundamental knowing between them which is ‘non-ideal, non-mental, purely dynamic, a matter of dynamic polarised intercourse of vital vibrations, as an exchange of wireless messages’ (*FU,* p.106). This ‘exchange’ through the blood was evoked years earlier by Lawrence in the metaphorical to-and-fro between the bee and the Queen bee in the *Sons and Lovers* foreword.

As this first section has explained, it was by addressing the mother and son dynamics that Lawrence came to believe in the ‘inconceivable’ quality of the unconscious which can only be known ‘by direct experience’ (*PU*, p.17). By envisioning the growth of blood-consciousness through childhood and establishing what threatens this growth, Lawrence strove to avoid the ‘mechanical principle[s]’ (p.14) and ‘fixed motive[s]’ which he felt characterised Freudian development (*PU,* p.7). When considering how and when blood-consciousness came into being, one must recognise that principal ideas behind Lawrence’s philosophy were being realised in the creation of *Sons and Lovers* and its foreword. As the highly biblical language of the foreword suggests, at this point in his career, Lawrence was very much experimenting with what exactly he believed, and how to convey these beliefs.

To a large extent, Lawrence never possessed a finished or complete philosophy, rather he was continually re-thinking it, and finding different ways to express it. This is evident by the unique style of later writings on blood-consciousness as Lawrence attempted to create a ‘fantasia’ (Becket, 1997, p.55) of the unconscious (*FU)* rather than a theory of it. Because Lawrence was trying to avoid reducing his philosophy to a set of rigorously defined terms, it is unsurprising

that reading and comprehending works such as *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* can prove challenging. Fiona Becket (1998) states that 'the architecture of the maternal body sustains both [Lawrence's] books on the unconscious' (p.256) but:

> However much Lawrence asserts that he is talking literally in this description and in related accounts of fetal development, the boundary between the metaphorical and the literal in this utterance is strategically blurred. This is precisely because Lawrence must talk ultimately about the birth of the self, that elusive self-identification, *and* establish the terms for his prolonged representation of the origins of the unconscious, culminating in his assertion of "blood-consciousness" where the life-blood is posited as the *locus* of feeling and knowing in the individual. (p.256, emphasis in original)

The task of understanding Lawrence's philosophy of blood-consciousness is made difficult due to the blurred lines of his 'metaphorical' and 'literal' (Becket, 1998, p.256) expressions. This is not exclusively applicable to 'the birth of the self' but is a notion which links to Lawrence's all important depiction of blood-consciousness, which as the next section will establish, is not only referring to the physical body but also to that which is beyond the flesh.

BLOOD-CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE BIOLOGICAL PSYCHE: PSYCHICAL OR PHYSICAL?

I have indicated that blood-consciousness is an unconscious of the body, yet it is important to evaluate to what extent this blood and body are comprised of psychical or physical phenomena. This is particularly significant when it comes to comprehending the nature of Lawrence's plexuses and planes, and ascertaining if the blood is primarily a metaphor (Becket, 1998) in Lawrence's thinking and writing. Blood-consciousness is 'created at the moment of conception' and its development is highly dependent on the child's relationship with its mother, but there is ambiguity as to how and from what it is 'created' (*PU,* p.16). On the one hand, Lawrence is

keen to emphasise that the unconscious ‘spontaneously appear[s] in the universe, out of nothing’ (*PU,* p.16), yet it remains unclear as to how ‘literal[ly]’ (Becket, 1998, p.256) this comment should be interpreted. In one instance, Lawrence asserts that ‘psychic and physical development run parallel, though they are forever distinct’ (*PU,* p.28). However, on reading works such as *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* it is strikingly clear that Lawrence does not always distinguish between spiritual and corporeal phenomena and this is why confusion can arise when attempting to understand how Lawrence envisages his blood-philosophy.

The task of differentiating between the separate qualities of blood-consciousness can be challenging especially when Lawrence draws attention to biological aspects of the body in order to reveal their more significant psychical underside. For example, in *Psychoanalysis* Lawrence states that the ‘first relationship [with the mother] is neither personal nor biological’ (*PU,* p.28). This assertion seems to indicate that his references to the ‘maternal blood-stream’ (*FU,* p.75) comprehend more than just the ‘biological’ (*PU,* p.28) blood which passes nutrients from mother to child. Instead, ‘the powerful circuit of vital magnetism’ (p.153) which characterises the ‘maternal blood-stream’ (*FU,* p.75) is in tune with the emphasis this thesis will continue to place on the mystical properties of the blood.

Another complex aspect of Lawrence’s philosophy that can lead to uncertainty is when he identifies the ‘biological psyche’ which describes the changes taking place at the poles of ‘dynamic consciousness’ (*FU,* p.132). The biological psyche and blood-consciousness are not interchangeable terms but they have an important relationship and possess some subtle points of distinction from one another. Unlike blood-consciousness, the biological psyche is not a term which recurs in Lawrence’s writing. Despite this, David Ellis (1986, 1988) has rightly recognised its importance,

suggesting that ‘by making his psyche “biological”, Lawrence had largely been able to skirt around many of the more familiar problems of mind versus body’ (1988, p.77). Ellis (1986, p.90) also suggests that the biological psyche is a more suitable term than the unconscious, however I think this is perhaps an over-simplification of Lawrence’s thinking. In *Fantasia* he explains that:

> What happens, in the biological psyche, is that deeper centres of consciousness and function come awake. Deep in the lower body the great sympathetic centre, the hypogastric plexus, has been acting all the time in a kind of dream-automatism, balanced by its corresponding voluntary centre, the sacral ganglion. At the age of twelve these two centres begin slowly to rumble awake, with a deep reverberant force that changes the whole constitution of the life of the individual. (*FU,* p.132)

The biological psyche is responsible for the awakening and development of the planes and plexuses, the formation of which enables Lawrence to distinguish between the spontaneous flow of unconscious blood and the upper regions of the mind. Thus, Blood-consciousness relies upon the bodily-centres of the biological psyche, but the planes and plexuses also depend upon the fluid blood in order to be brought to life. Thus, it is the flowing and dynamic blood that is the essence of the unconscious according to Lawrence, not his located centres of the biological psyche.

Ellis’s (1986) interpretation of the biological psyche has led him to believe that Lawrence is not ‘speaking metaphorically’ (p.93) about the capabilities of the blood. However, this thesis will go on to stress that Lawrence’s philosophy is highly metaphorical Becket (1997), and both the biological psyche and blood-consciousness are connected by this fact. One of the most challenging aspects of Lawrence’s philosophy to grasp is that his frequent emphasis upon the body makes it difficult to distinguish between physical and psychical components of the self. When Lawrence refers to the biological psyche and blood-consciousness, he wants to draw his readers’ attention to both the physical body but also psychical being

within it. This is evident as Lawrence states that physical changes such as ‘the breasts of a woman beginning to develop’ and the man’s ‘voice break[ing]’ (*FU,* p.133) come into being as the result of the maturation of the biological psyche. Yet, these same centres are united by a psychical energy, so it becomes difficult to tell if Lawrence believes that spiritual changes occur at a certain age, and thus have a biological basis.

As stated previously, Lawrence was highly critical of Freud’s universal Oedipal complex as a way of explaining a stage-by-stage process of child and adolescent development. So it is surprising that when Lawrence explains the development of the biological psyche he depicts it as age-determined. Such claims seem to go against the impetus he places upon individuality and spontaneity at the heart of the self. It is fair to state that examples such as this may exude an element of uncertainty in Lawrence’s own mind regarding the defining line between physical and psychical life. Other instances of him possessing a contradictory stance is when he states that the unconscious ‘contains nothing ideal, nothing in the least conceptual, and hence nothing in the least personal’ (*PU,* p.28) thus it is utterly elusive and unknowable. However, at another time, the reader is offered an entirely different version of the unconscious, one that ‘we can quite tangibly deal with’ and which can be ‘trace[d]’ (*PU,* p.39).

Understanding what Lawrence means by blood-consciousness and the biological psyche is made difficult not only because of a lack of consistency in some of his writing, but also because he switches so frequently and intermittently between descriptions of psychical and physical phenomena. It is important to note that confusion does not always arise due to a lack of critical-thinking on Lawrence’s part. Instead, in many instances, Lawrence intentionally blurs metaphors of the body and

physical entities with things he elsewhere describes as intangible, beyond sight and conscious knowledge. For example, the unconscious is born 'out of no*thing*' (p.16, my emphasis), but Lawrence uses phrases such as a '*body* of our repressions' and a '*body* of sexual passion' (*PU,* p.13 my emphasis). He also asks his reader to consider 'where does any*body* … keep his soul?' (*FU,* p.44, my emphasis), the phrasing of which turns attention to whether the 'body' itself is where the soul is kept.

The soul is another important aspect of Lawrence's philosophy, and it is a term that he uses tentatively on many occasions. As Catherine Brown (2012) demonstrates in her podcast, Lawrence was wary of overusing the term soul in his philosophy, because although it appealed to him due to its archaic connotations, he felt that its spiritual-religious quality meant it could bring the credibility of his philosophy into question. When reading Lawrence it can be challenging to differentiate between the different capabilities of blood-consciousness, the unconscious, and the soul in the first place, as he seems to use them relatively interchangeably at times. For example, in *Fantasia* Lawrence describes the soul as 'that forever unknowable reality which causes us to rise into being' (*FU,* p.154), an expression which by no means distinguishes the soul from blood-consciousness or the unconscious. In *Psychoanalysis* Lawrence describes the soul and the unconscious as almost identical stating we 'call it the unconscious. As a matter of fact, *soul* would be a better word. By the unconscious we do mean the soul' (*PU,* p.17, emphasis in original). He even uses the soul as a way of explaining the nature of the unconscious defining it as 'the active, self-evolving soul bringing forth its own incarnation and self-manifestation' (*PU,* p.38).

Although blood-consciousness works in conjunction with both the soul and the unconscious, it represents the most unknown essence of being. The soul could

convey Lawrence's more spiritual ideas relating to the self, but he felt the soul to be an outdated and unfashionable term (Brown, 2012) that could not express the individuality that he deemed his philosophy to possess. In *Psychoanalysis* Lawrence explains that:

> the word *soul* has been vitiated by the idealistic use, until nowadays it means only that which a man conceives himself to be. And that which a man conceives himself to be is something far different from his true unconscious. So we must relinquish the ideal word soul. (*PU,* p.17, emphasis in original)

Here Lawrence explains that the soul has become representative of what one perceives oneself to be, instead of actually conveying what one really is. This is why *Fantasia* prioritises blood-consciousness, because it:

> is the first and last knowledge of the living soul: the depths. It is the soul acting in part, only, speaking with its first hoarse half-voice. And blood-consciousness cannot operate purely until the soul has put off all its manifold degrees and forms of upper consciousness. As the self falls back into quiescence, it draws itself from the brain, from the great nerve-centres, into the blood, where at last it will sleep. (*FU,* p.185)

By associating the soul with 'upper consciousness', Lawrence seems to suggest that, unlike the blood, it is not completely distinct from conscious knowledge. As such, the soul cannot account for the most mysterious aspects of the self, and nor can it be in direct correspondence with the universe and the non-human world.

Lawrence's attempt to explain the corporeal and spiritual dimensions of blood-consciousness at work in the body can undoubtedly lead him to seem contradictory in some instances. Yet, this is hardly surprising given that he was trying to describe a bodily-unconscious which is vitally connected to the body but also independent of it. Lawrence needed to strike a fine balance in order to ensure that blood-consciousness was not interpreted as only a biological blood, but also that it did not become overly spiritual or mystical. His attempt to avoid these outcomes is shown as

he tries to demonstrate the unity of the psychical and the physical in the evolution of blood-consciousness:

> in the first division of the egg-cell is set up the first plane of psychic and physical life … their psychic and their physical dynamic is the same in the solar plexus and lumbar ganglion … the unchanging great division in the psychic and the physical structure … It is a division into polarised duality, psychical and physical, of the human being. (*FU,* p.81)

This mention of a 'polarised duality' suggests that Lawrence did recognise the separateness of psychical and physical components of the psyche. Thus, although one cannot deny the lack of surety that Lawrence's writing on blood-consciousness and the biological psyche exudes at times, over the course of *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* there is also a definite trend of Lawrence purposely uniting what seem to be opposing terms. In the same fashion that Lawrence brings the words biological and psyche together, he also hyphenates what seem to be opposing terms with blood-consciousness and 'soul-cell' (*PU,* p.33).

Another example of Lawrence merging boundaries between the body and the spirit is when he identifies spiritual planes but splits them horizontally between the diaphragm which is physical. Lawrence stresses that the 'great organs of the lower body are controlled from the two lower centres' (*FU,* p.98), so that organs with a biological or physical presence in the body are determined by centres that are psychic phenomena. Confusion partly arises because Lawrence tries to prove the presence of spiritual entities such as the cardiac plexus and the thoracic ganglion by locating them in the front and back of the body. However, by defining these centres as the upper-negative plane and the lower-positive plane Lawrence allows psychic and physical entities to share space, although of course psychic phenomena are not restricted to this space.

Lawrence refuses to offer a definite split between the body and the mystical properties it bears, as although the biological psyche insinuates that the biological brings about the psychical, he also reverses this. An example of this in 'The Birth of Sex' when Lawrence stresses that there 'are the obvious physiological changes resulting from the gradual bursting into free activity of the hypogastric plexus and sacral ganglia' (*FU,* p.133). In some instances Lawrence distinguishes between the 'body' and the 'psyche' (*FU,* p.77) as separate entities, yet on the whole he is reluctant to reduce his philosophy to fixed meanings, a fact that can cause confusion for his readers but enables Lawrence to explore the relationship between the body and the unconscious more freely.

As Bell (1992) and Becket (1997) make clear, when Lawrence makes anatomical references in his philosophy he is not necessarily attempting to locate the blood, instead he is striving to emphasise the body as the '*locus'* (Becket, 1997, p.32, emphasis in original) of blood-consciousness instead of the mind. It is not the body parts themselves which have a spark of individual life but what lies beyond them in the psychic blood-centres. As Brown (2012) states, Lawrence did not believe that all matter and objects have a corresponding spirit, in the same way that not all spirit has a physical form. In human beings the psychical and physical exist separately but are united in his vision of blood-consciousness, as Lawrence describes that:

> the unconscious brings forth not only consciousness, but tissue and organs also. And all the time the working of each organ depends on the primary spontaneous-conscious center of which it is the issue – if you like, the soul-center. And consciousness is like a web woven finally in the mind from the various silken strands spun from the primal center of the unconscious. (*PU,* p.38)

Being originates from the unconscious and the soul, not from 'consciousness … tissue and organs'. As stated, these are complicated discussions because at times

Lawrence writes clearly regarding the psychical and physical capabilities of blood-consciousness, but this is far from always the case. Nevertheless, it is necessary to acknowledge that by making the corporeal and the spirit in dialogue in his philosophy, Lawrence was able to assert the presence of energy and forces beyond the flesh that conscious beings cannot be aware of.

Thomas Miles (1976) stresses that Lawrence's belief in a secret vitality of the body bears comparisons with Pryse's (1910) 'mystical doctrine of Hindu yogis', with its 'cosmic force called Kundalini … [lying] inert, coiled like a serpent, at the base of the spine and which can be aroused so as to flood the body with its radiance' (p.194). It seems highly likely that 'Lawrence's psychic dynamic centers (solar plexus, lumbar ganglion, cardiac plexus, thoracic ganglion) are analogous to the chakras' through which the 'Kundalini flows' (Miles, 1976, p.206). Lawrence did not simply copy Pryse, but it is clear that this notion of a 'cosmic force' (p.194) helped Lawrence to envision blood-consciousness, in which the psychic can be united with the physic. In the essay 'Why the Novel Matters' (1925) Lawrence explains the relation between the body and the spirit further stating that:

> We have curious ideas of ourselves. We think of ourselves as a body with a spirit in it, or a body with a soul in it, or a body with a mind in it. *Mens sana in corpore sano…*
>
> It is a funny sort of superstition. 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? … 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 … and is just as much *me* as is my brain, my mind, or my soul. (p.193, emphasis in original)

Lawrence believed that being a novelist gave him the power of such insight as the same essay states 'that's what you learn, when you're a novelist. And that's what you are very liable *not* to know, if you're a parson, or a philosopher, or a scientist, or a stupid person' ('Why the Novel Matters', p.193, emphasis in original). Here

Lawrence reinforces the idea that science may establish proof in terms of the anatomy of the body, but it is unable to account for the more mysterious essence of life that he tries to express in his own philosophy. Chapter Five will explore Lawrence's discontent with modern conceptions of the body in relation to *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* but the short story 'Glad Ghosts' (1926) is an excellent example of him exploring hidden sources of energy and power in the human body, as well the possibility of strange spiritual occurrences happening.

The story follows a wealthy aristocratic group of people, including Lady Carlota, Lord Luke Lathkill, and an ageing Colonel Hale through a sequence of uncanny events that occur. The 'Lathkill ill-luck' plagues Lady Carlota and her husband as their daughter dies 'of some sudden illness' and 'the twins [are] killed in a motor-car accident' ('Glad Ghosts', p.179). The possibility of strange encounters happening is entertained by Lady Lathkill's belief in 'the uncanny - spiritualism, and that kind of thing' (p.181), as well as the presence of Colonel Hale's first wife Lucy, in the form of a ghost. The former Mrs Hale haunts her husband due to the lack of attention paid to her body and her sexual needs when she was alive. By postulating so many references throughout to the story to the 'living dead' (p.180) and the 'bodily dead' (p.200), Lawrence emphasises the need for vital human contact which keeps alive 'the speck, or spark' ('Glad Ghosts', p.208) of life.

The irony is that the ghost of Mrs Hale is the most living figure amongst the group, as she forces her husband to recognise her and is one of the main topics of conversation despite her physical absence. The central message of 'Glad Ghosts' is not so much its supernatural element, rather Lawrence is suggesting the possibility for people to be reborn. Initially Lady Carlotta and her husband are like 'two spirits side by side … almost … two ghosts to one another' (p.201). Yet, over the course of

the story, Luke's body 'seem[s] to have come alive (p.195), and he claims passionately that "I want my flesh and blood" (p.201). 'Glad Ghosts' evokes the importance of remembering the body and not becoming simply spiritual beings, turning into 'corpses with consciousness' (p.207). Through his character Luke, Lawrence communicates the danger of human beings becoming too spiritual, as Luke determines to be only concerned with the living. The first-person narrator of 'Glad Ghosts' adopts a similar position, and he explains that "there may be ghosts, and spirits, and all that. The dead must be somewhere, there's no such place as nowhere. But they don't affect me, particularly" (p.200). This change in attitudes from the beginning of the story compared to the end, denotes the shift that occurs from a focus upon lifelessness to the asserted need for the body as the source of unconscious energy and vitality.

Blood-consciousness is a central part of Lawrence's thinking when his fiction explores the need to re-connect with the body. As stated, emphasis is placed not just upon limbs and organs; rather Lawrence is trying to communicate that the physical and psychical aspects of the self must be recognised in order to live fully. Lawrence recognised his own inability to answer 'where does anybody … keep his soul?' (*FU,* p.44). Yet, this links back to his claims that in 'Why the Novel Matters' when he conveys that blood-consciousness is not restricted to the individual human body, but that spiritual and physical self-growth depend upon a person's ability to realise the presence of a wider universe beyond their own body. 'Glad Ghosts' and many of Lawrence's other works assert the vital need to recognise the importance of the body, but also that 'the soul goes in and out of the body' (*FU,* p.101) and that his planes and centres correspond with the wider universe.

Lawrence believed that the attainment of this relationship between the self and the universe is the chief goal of life as he describes in *Psychoanalysis* that:

> The whole of life is one long, blind effort at an established polarity with the outer universe, human and non-human …
> The actual evolution of the individual psyche is a result of the interaction between the individual and the outer universe. Which means that just as a child in the womb grows as a result of the parental blood-stream which nourishes the vital quick of the foetus, so does every man and woman grow and develop as a result of the polarized flux between the spontaneous self and some other self or selves. (*PU,* p.41)

This is an area of Lawrence's doctrine that can be overlooked or undervalued due to his caution towards spiritualism and the supernatural. However, Lawrence's philosophy has a strong impetus on this 'outer universe' and the 'non-human' (*PU,* p.41) world, and this area of his thinking must be given due attention considering the number of times such claims surface in his non-fiction and in relation to blood-consciousness.

THE NON-HUMAN COSMOS

In order to attain a closer understanding of what blood-consciousness is, one must recognise that issues relating to the physical and psychical elements of Lawrence's philosophy, are connected to his belief in a non-human world, which is connected to, but distinct from, the human body. This idea can be explored further through Lawrence's analogy of a bicycle and its rider, as he declares that:

> my body is my bicycle: the whole middle of me is the saddle where sits the rider of my soul. And my front wheel is the cardiac plexus, and my back wheel is the solar plexus. And the brakes are the voluntary ganglia. And the steering gear is my head. And the right and left pedals are the right and left dynamics of the body, in some way corresponding to the sympathetic and voluntary division. (*FU,* p.97)

In her consideration of Lawrence and the subject of consciousness, Brown (2012) has also identified the relevance of this passage, as Lawrence reveals that if the body is the bicycle then 'our individual and incomprehensible self is the rider thereof' (*FU,* p.97). Lawrence suggests that the name this rider is given is largely unimportant, but the mistake is making out that 'there is no one in the saddle' (*FU,* p.96).

This image of the bicycle is fitting as it conveys the need for all components of the blood-conscious body to be working together in order for the self to evolve, as suggested by Lawrence's union of the psychical and the physical in the previous section. Another point of interest in this bicycle analogy is that Lawrence asserts the presence of a 'subtle directing force' (*FU*, p.96) which should be understood as essentially the self's inherent compulsion towards self-evolution. As Chapter Two will highlight through a reading of *The Rainbow* with Bergson, blood-consciousness is characterized by the notion of the blood as an inner force or 'time of the body' (Campbell, 2006, p.55) through which self-growth and change is possible.

Lawrence's 'kind and mysterious force' is likened to Bergson's *élan vital* (*FU,* p.96), as Lawrence imagines the solar plexus as a centre-point from which life goes forth in the blood-conscious body. The mystical blood-flow and the solar plexus are the very basis of life itself in Lawrence's philosophy, as in the foreword to *Fantasia* he states that 'I do not believe in evolution, but in the strangeness and rainbow-change of ever-renewed creative civilizations' (*FU,* p.64). This comment bears great significance for Lawrence's attraction to the *élan vital* as he and Bergson were deeply motivated by the fact that:

> In the late nineteenth century, the sciences of consciousness and of life were dominated by a commitment to materialism and mechanism that meant they struggled to conceptualize growth, change and creativity, or even held such phenomena to be unreal. (Vaughan, 2007, p.7)

Blood-consciousness is a life force that exudes these principles of unceasing 'growth' and 'change', which in Bergson's view in *Creative Evolution* (1907) is 'the real nature of evolution' (Vaughan, 2007, p.13). In Michael Vaughan's (2007) depiction of the *élan vital* he stresses that:

> Bergson does not designate a type of immaterial force in addition to material forces. *Élan vital*, on the contrary, designates the vitality of matter itself, its organization, its growth, its indeterminacy, unpredictability and creativity, and this is inaccessible to mechanism in principle, not merely in fact. (p.16)

Blood-consciousness is not identical to the *élan vital* because for Lawrence the blood is always primarily imagined in connection to human beings, which Bergson's term is not. However, there are definite associations to be made between Lawrence and Bergson's thinking when Lawrence writes in *Fantasia* that:

> There is a great field of science which is as yet quite closed to us. I refer to the science which proceeds in terms of life and is established on data of living experience and sure intuition. Call it subjective science if you like. Our objective science of modern knowledge concerns itself only with phenomena, and with phenomena as regarded in their cause-and-effect relationship. (p.62)

Like Lawrentian blood, Bergson's *élan vital* is a self-organising life-motive that cannot be accounted for by such a 'cause-and-effect relationship' (*FU,* p.62), 'insofar as both hold that organic processes are not explicable in exclusively physicochemical terms, nor are they exclusively determined by the action of physicochemical forces' (Vaughan, 2007, p.16).

For Lawrence, this force of blood-consciousness is not only part of the human body but it is also associated with an impersonal, non-human connection with the universe and the cosmos. There are definite associations to be made between blood-consciousness and the unceasing flow of time and life which is evoked through this 'subtle directing force' (*FU,* p.96), as Lawrence remarks that:

> if only the mysterious will which sways my steering gear remained in place forever: then my pedals would revolve of themselves, and never cease, and no hideous brake should tear the perpetuity of my motions. Then, oh then I

> should be immortal. I should leap through the world forever, and spin to infinity, till I was identified with the dizzy and timeless cycle-race of the stars and the great sun … (*FU,* pp.96-97)

His tone is half-mocking in this passage as he also states that the bicycle 'will inevitably wind up with a philosophy' (*FU,* p.96). However, one should not approach these notions flippantly, as Lawrence is unmistakably serious when he asserts the importance of 'not begin[ning] to define the rider in terms of our own exclusive planet' (*FU,* p.96). The communion of 'the individual soul' (p.95) with 'a rider of the many-wheeled universe' (*FU,* p.96) leaves no question that when Lawrence is thinking about the unique blood-consciousness of every human being, this is also part of a larger vision.

These ideas are expanded upon in *Apocalypse* (1931) where Lawrence describes the 'evolution of the individual psyche' in correspondence with the 'non-human' (*PU,* p.41) world. Here the 'evolution' (*PU,* p.41) of planes and centres of blood-consciousness are not restricted to the body, instead the development of the self is enabled through corresponding symbols and forces beyond it in the universe. In *Apocalypse* Lawrence explains that:

> The numbers four and three together make up the sacred number seven: the cosmos with its god. The Pythagoreans called it "the number of the right time". Man and the cosmos alike have four created natures, and three divine natures. Man has his four earthly natures, then soul, spirit, and the eternal I. The universe has the four quarters and the four elements, then also the three divine quarters of heaven … (*A,* p. 136)

Lawrence's reading of Pryse and Frazer is clearly evident as he explores 'superstition bordering on magic and occultism' (*A,* p.137) in such passages. By evaluating the non-human cosmos as part of Lawrence's philosophy one embarks upon some of his most imaginative and also supernatural ideas regarding how he sought to distinguish blood-consciousness from other theories of the unconscious. In

Apocalypse Lawrence establishes that all living things and beings in the world are vitally connected, as he writes:

> That I am part of the earth my feet know perfectly, and my blood is part of the sea. My soul knows that I am part of the human race, my soul is an organic part of the great human soul, as my spirit is part of my nation. In my own very self, I am part of my family. There is nothing of me that is alone and absolute except my mind, and we shall find that the mind has no existence by itself, it is only the glitter of the sun on the surface of the waters.
>
> So that my individualism is really an illusion. I am part of the great whole, and I can never escape …
>
> What we want is to destroy our false, inorganic connections, especially those related to money, and re-establish the living organic connections, with the cosmos, the sun and earth, with mankind and nation and family. Start with the sun, and the rest will slowly, slowly happen. (*A,* p.149)

Despite the pessimism which Lawrence's writing is associated with particularly around the time of the First World War, his references to 'the great whole' and the emphasis upon 'mankind … nation and family' suggest that Lawrence possessed a philosophy of unity. It is fair to question to what extent Lawrence really believed that '[his] blood is part of the sea' (*A,* p.149), but given his frequent allusions to the solar plexus being in correspondence with the sun it seems that he intends his readers to regard these associations seriously.

The solar plexus is a crucial part of Lawrence's blood-conscious vision as it is 'the root of all knowledge and being' and is 'the original nucleus, formed from the two parent nuclei at our conception' (*FU,* p.79). This nucleus divides into 'polarised duality, psychical and physical' (p.81) so that the solar plexus and the lumbar ganglion present the difference between the knowledge that 'I am I, the vital centre of all things. I am I, the clue to the whole' and 'I am I, in distinction from a whole universe, which is not as I am' (*FU,* p.80). Lawrence relates this locus of vitality in human beings to the wider cosmos stating that:

> we live between the polarised circuit of sun and moon. And the moon is polarised with the lumbar ganglion, primarily, in man. Sun and moon are

> dynamically polarised to our actual tissue, they affect this tissue all the time. (*FU,* p.170).

This aspect of Lawrence's thinking enables him to create powerful images and symbols which uphold his philosophy, and allow him to explain the significance of the non-human world. The ability for the sun to directly 'affect bodily tissue' (*FU,* p.170) is the central subject in Lawrence's short story 'Sun' (1926), as he depicts the sun's ability to bring about changes at the deepest level of the blood-conscious body through the solar plexus.

In likeness to *The Plumed Serpent,* 'Sun' is about a woman who hopes for a transformative experience in another country and finds herself sexually awakened as part of this journey of self-development. On holiday away from her husband, Juliet basks in her independence, choosing to sunbathe all day. Like Lawrence's metaphor of the blood, the sun is not only to be interpreted literally as it does more than warm and tan the skin of Juliet:

> It was much more than that. Something deep inside her unfolded and relaxed, and she was given to a cosmic influence. By some mysterious will inside her, deeper than her known consciousness and her known will, she was put into connection with the sun, and the stream of the sun flowed through her, round her womb … The true Juliet lived in the dark flow of the sun within her deep body, like a river of dark rays circling, circling dark and violent round the sweet, shut bud of her womb. ('Sun', p.26)

The mystical-blood carries the sun's rays like a 'stream' (p.26), 'penetrating into her bones: nay, further, even into her emotions and thoughts' ('Sun', p.21). Lawrence heavily implies that the sun affects Juliet on a deep spiritual level and also that her episodes in the sun are extremely sensual and penetrate the body.

The mystical 'cosmic influence' ('Sun', p.26) of the sun is an essential part of its meaning in the story and in Lawrence's philosophy, but it is also extremely significant that Lawrence envisaged the sun as a gendered symbol. The sun is most often depicted as a male-force that help to revivify the female, whereas the moon is

a female symbol that manifests when male characters have moments of self-crisis. This is shown in the *Sons and Lovers* chapter in 'Lad-and-Girl Love' as Paul struggles to decide whether he can be with Miriam. One evening when they are out walking together:

> The whole of his blood seemed to burst into flame, and he could scarcely breathe. An enormous orange moon was staring at them from the rim of the sand hills …
>
> "Ah!" cried Miriam, when she saw it.
>
> He remained perfectly still, staring at the immense and ruddy moon, the only thing in the far-reaching darkness of the level. His heart beat heavily, the muscles of his arms contracted …
>
> She stood beside him, for ever in shadow. Her face, covered with the darkness of her hat, was watching him unseen. But she was brooding. She was slightly afraid – deeply moved and religious. That was her best state. He was impotent against it. His blood was concentrated like a flame in his chest. But he could not get across to her. There were flashes in his blood. But somehow she ignored them …
>
> "What is it?" she murmured again
>
> "It's the moon," he answered, frowning.
>
> "Yes," she assented. "Isn't it wonderful?" She was curious about him. The crisis was past. (*SL,* pp.215-216)

This passage has been quoted at length to show the contrast between Paul and Miriam's separate experiences of the moon's presence. For Paul this female symbol is a frightening reminder of his need to resolve his relationships with his mother and Miriam, and the necessity of sexual fulfilment. In *Women in Love* there is a remarkably similar scene as Birkin and Ursula are trying to achieve harmony in their relationship.

Ursula initially finds the moon uninteresting as 'it did not give her anything' (*WL,* p.245). However, whilst walking she sees Birkin from afar and moves towards him, watching him throw stones at the reflection of the moon in a pond. The scene is given great significance in the chapter named 'Moony' as 'there was a burst of sound, and a burst of brilliant lights, the moon had exploded on the water, and was flying asunder in flakes of white and dangerous fire' (*WL,* p.247). Lawrence stresses

the violence of Birkin's attack on the moon as he writes that 'like a madness he must go on' (p.247) throwing stones at the reflection. The connection between human beings and the cosmos is affirmed as Ursula is directly affected by this destruction of the moon: 'she felt she had fallen to the ground and was spilled out' (*WL,* p.248).

The moon is a female symbol that is also representative of consciousness, which is partly why it can have such a threatening presence for male characters, in comparison the unconscious sun which more often has a positive impact upon female characters. In 'Sun', the sun's power is both 'cosmic' ('Sun', p.26) and non-human, and yet it is explicitly evoked through the male physical form as the narrative reveals that:

> the sun lifted himself molten and sparkling, naked over the sea's rim. The house faced south-east, Juliet lay in her bed and watched him rise. It was as if she had never seen the sun rise before. She had never seen the naked sun stand up pure upon the sea-line, shaking the night off himself, like wetness. And he was full and naked. And she wanted to come to him.
>
> So the desire sprang secretly in her, to be naked to the sun. She cherished her desire like a secret. She wanted to come together with the sun. ('Sun', p.20)

It is important that Juliet is naked when she sunbathes as she wants to feel the sun's presence all over her body; an idea which strongly relates to her desire to draw the attention of the male embodiment of the sun in the story. However, Lawrence's overly enthusiastic celebration of the male body can be farcical at times, as attention frequently turns to the fact that the peasant is 'powerfully set' with 'powerful shoulders' (p.29), and 'the phallus under his thin trousers' (p.30), 'his big penis against his body' ('Sun', p.38). As Chapter Five will explain in more detail, both Lawrence's fiction and philosophy rely upon phallic imagery in order to convey the importance of desire and sexual experience in rejuvenating the body. Yet, this phallic element of blood-consciousness is so often associated explicitly with the penis in works such as *The Plumed Serpent,* 'Sun', and *Lady Chatterley* that Lawrence's

philosophy can at times seem to endorse the notion of men as primary possessors of a mystical phallic-blood that is desirable for women.

These discussions will form an important part of Chapter Five, as although 'Sun' blurs boundaries between the phallus and the penis, sexual intercourse does not occur between Juliet and the peasant. Instead, the narrative explains that the penetrating rays of the sun and her awareness of the human embodiment of the sun are enough to instigate psychical change within her. Specific details of Juliet's health are not disclosed, but the story opens with a doctor who advises "tak[ing] her away, into the sun" ('Sun', p.18), a recommendation that Lawrence was given during periods of ill health. The sun and the peasant both symbolise a 'healing power, for the soul as well as for the body' ('Sun', p.26) as the stirring of Juliet's sexual desire brings her to life, and re-ignites dormant centres of her own blood-consciousness, something Lawrence believed was important for the sickly human body.

Kessler (1964) has also identified the importance of the sun, moon, and universe in Lawrence's writing, stressing that his 'purpose in promulgating this cosmos is to offer the background of the persistent symbols he thinks residual in the unconscious mind of man' (p.479). This 'Cosmological' (*FU*) aspect of Lawrence's thinking connects him to Jung, who:

> was drawn to seemingly mystical systems like astrology and alchemy because they were oriented toward a synthetic understanding of matter and psyche. He saw in them unconscious projections of *both* man's inner psychological process *and* his fantasies of the workings of the biological and physical world. (Davis, 1997, p.52, emphasis in original)

By cutting ties with Freud in 1913, Jung was able to pursue different avenues of thought, putting forward a psychology of archetypes, and making a distinction between the personal and the collective unconscious. The personal dimension involves memories and lived experiences from a person's life, but the collective

unconscious is universal as well as non-psychological, and is made up of symbols and images which form the psychical life of mankind. Lawrence possesses strikingly similar ideas about a non-human cosmos and its link with blood-consciousness, shown by a letter in 1914 in which he wrote that:

> We want to realise the tremendous *non-human* quality of life - it is wonderful. It is not the emotions, nor the personal feelings and attachments, that matter. These are all only expressive, and expression has become mechanical. Behind us are the tremendous unknown forces of life, coming unseen and unperceived as out of the desert … (*2L,* p.218, emphasis in original)

In 'Sun' and *The Plumed Serpent* Lawrence explores the idea that dormant regions of the unconscious can be brought to life by reconnecting with lost symbolic and cosmological forces. In the same way that the solar plexus directly corresponds with the sun in blood-conscious body, Jung's 'archetypal images … are triggered, released, and experienced in an individual' (Salman, 1997, p.59).

This notion of an innate part of the self that develops in direct relation to universal forces denotes a primitive aspect of the unconscious that will be explored in more detail in Chapter Four with Franz Fanon. Costin (2011) has outlined that Lawrence's 'experience of Cornwall helped to shape the way he thought about the relationship between humankind and the cosmos' (p.10), suggesting that from 1915 he increasingly envisioned blood-consciousness in relation to the primitive. Jung's archetypes are essential aspects of the psyche that can be traced back through the centuries of man's evolution, and similarly, Lawrence believes that the blood links back to 'pre-Christian civilisations, and people who retained vestiges of a link with that past' (Costin, 2011, p.1). These ideas are also present in *Apocalypse* as Lawrence writes that:

> I would like to know the stars again as the Chaldeans knew them, two thousand years before Christ. I would like to be able to put my ego into the sun, and my personality into the moon, and my character into the planets, and live the life of the heavens, as the early Chaldeans did. The human

> consciousness is really homogeneous. There is no complete forgetting, even in death. So that somewhere within us the old experience of the Euphrates, Mesopotamia between the rivers, lives still. And in my Mesopotamian self I long for the sun again, and the moon and stars … (*A,* p.51)

Here Lawrence presents the idea that ancient peoples do not disappear from existence, rather remnants of old forms of consciousness live on in the psyche of modern man. It is no coincidence that when Lawrence envisages a potential re-connection with cosmos, he does so through other countries and cultures that still value 'older religious ideas than those imposed by Christianity' (Costin, 2011, p.2). The Quetzalcoatl religion of *The Plumed Serpent* is a prime example of this, as it is by reconnecting with the old Gods that Mexico can be revived, rather than through the imposed Christian religion.

As Chapter Three will show in relation to Myers, Lawrence was aware that these ideas relating to the psyche, the cosmos, and 'unknown forces of life' (*2L,* p.218) meant that, at times, his beliefs were 'bordering on mysticism' for which he was 'sorry' (*FU,* p.70). Yet, he remained committed to expressing the importance of the non-human cosmos and that the centrality of symbols in the psyche of mankind cannot be completely conceptualised. This would lead him to state that 'I do not believe one fifth of what science can tell me about the sun. I do not believe for one second that the moon is a dead world spelched off from our globe' (*FU,* p.168). Lawrence takes an equally strong stance against perceptions of the sun in his 'Introduction to *The Dragon of the Apocalypse* by Frederick Carter*'* (1930) emphasising that '*our* sun and *our* moon are only thought-forms to us, balls of gas, dead globes of extinct volcanoes, things we *know* but never feel by experience' (p.51, emphasis in original).

Lawrence criticises a rational approach to the universe in the same fashion that he rejects what he saw as limited accounts of the unconscious, explaining that:

> Now this may sound nonsense, but that is merely because we are fools. There is an eternal vital correspondence between our blood and the sun: there is an eternal vital correspondence between our nerves and the moon. If we get out of contact and harmony with the sun and moon, then both turn into great dragons of destruction against us. The sun is a great source of blood-vitality, it streams strength to us. (*A,* p.77)

The blood has a crucial role in all of this as it is the very medium that makes this 'correspondence' possible. Another significant aspect of this passage is the mention of the dragon, which is also an important Lawrentian symbol evoking 'the fluid, rapid, invincible, even clairvoyant potency that can surge through the whole body and spirit of a man' (*A,* p.123). Lawrence refers to the similarities between his ideas alongside the Jungian 'Libido' and Bergson's '*Elan Vital*' (*A,* p.124) but argues that these philosophies do not convey the power of the dragon which:

> is one of the oldest symbols of the human consciousness. The dragon and serpent symbol goes so deep in every human consciousness, that a rustle in the grass can startle the toughest "modern" to depths he has no control over.
>
> First and foremost, the dragon is the symbol of the fluid, rapid, startling movement of life within us. That startled life which runs through us like a serpent, or coils within us potent and waiting, like a serpent, this is the dragon. And the same with the cosmos. (*A,* p.123)

The Quetzalcoatl religion of *The Plumed Serpent* is brought to mind again in this instance, as like the serpent, the mythical dragon represents an unknowable non-human essence of being which is described through fluid metaphors of blood-conscious vitality. Lawrence explicitly states that the appeal of such symbols is that they:

> are organic units of consciousness with a life of their own, and you can never explain them away, because their value is dynamic, emotional, belonging to the sense-consciousness of the body and soul, and not simply mental. (*A,* p.48)

Again Lawrence emphasises that such symbols cross over both 'body and soul' and their meaning escapes consciousness. It is also notable that when describing otherworldly realms such as the cosmos and mythical creatures to denote the

psychical and non-human nature of his philosophy, he chooses the term ‘organic’ (*A,* p.48).

Descriptions of ‘living organic connections, with the cosmos, the sun and earth’ (*A,* p.149) are extremely prominent in *Apocalypse,* and one must not fail to notice that when Lawrence is emphasising the importance of the universe, he is also implicating the notion of cyclical and atmospheric changes that affect the natural world. Skinner (2007) and Costin (2011) highlight the profound effect that the landscape of different places had upon Lawrence, with Costin identifying that it was the very earth and ‘granite stones’ of Zennor that made him think about the connection between himself and Cornwall’s ‘previous inhabitants’ (p.1). Similarly, it is no coincidence that when Paul Morel and Birkin fully realise the moon, they are in remote rural landscapes. As is so often the case in Lawrence’s fiction and non-fiction, the natural world plays a pivotal role in allowing characters and human beings to experience new blood-conscious states. Subsequently, this next section will pay attention to analogies made to organicism when Lawrence is explaining his essential beliefs regarding life and blood-consciousness.

THE NATURAL WORLD AND ORGANICISM

Given Lawrence’s emphasis upon growth, change, decay, and renewal it is unsurprising that references to plant-life and living organisms have an important role in his metaphysic. Lawrence’s travel-book *Twilight in Italy* (1916) shows that Lawrence was deeply affected by his reaction to new natural environments, as his perceptions and memories of Italy are continually infiltrated by his own philosophical concerns for the future of mankind. He writes that:

> I sat on the roof of the lemon-house, with the lake below and the snowy mountains opposite, and looked at the ruins on the old, olive-fuming shores … and the past seemed to me so lovely that one must look towards it, backwards, only backwards, where there is peace and beauty and no more dissonance. (*T,* p.46)

Many passages in *Twilight in Italy* convey that the landscape had a direct impact upon Lawrence, and the impetus he placed upon human beings maintaining some form of deep correspondence the earth. Lawrence felt that one was able to live more religiously, sensually, and thus blood-consciously in Italy, shown by his reference to the people as the "Children of the Sun" (*T*, p.18).

As Carla Comellini (2014) states, Lawrence was also extremely influenced by his experience of Mount Etna in Siciliy, which he interpreted to be a kind of earth mother. Comellini (2014) goes on to suggest that the lava of the volcano symbolised continual self-transformation, renewal, and an ongoing process of change that unites all living things and beings; an idea that bears obvious links with the symbol of the phoenix that Lawrence was so drawn to throughout his life. The natural world was a source of wonder and awe for Lawrence, but he also could find it overwhelming at times, a point identified by Costin (2011) as she outlines that:

> In *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence blames Mount Etna for sending him away from Sicily: 'at the Etna bidding one goes' (S&S 8), something that Roberts suggests is pretence (42). However, examining Lawrence's quest for blood-consciousness indicates that there is an element of truth in Lawrence's statement. Lawrence was not driven from Sicily by the volcano, as Traficante proposes in his linking of Mount Etna with the authoritative discourse of Lawrence's mother (61), but it was implicated in his decision to leave. (pp.184-185)

This imposing figure of nature resonates again in Lawrence's consideration of trees in *Fantasia*, as he describes them in terms which recall his blending of the human and non-human in 'Sun':

> I think there are too many trees. They seem to crowd round and stare at me, and I feel as if they nudged one another when I'm not looking. I can *feel* them

> standing there. And they won't let me get on … (*FU,* p.85, emphasis in original)

Lawrence refers to *Fantasia* as his 'tree-book' (p.86) which is strange given that his most lengthy depiction of trees is followed by an apology for what he perceives to be a 'digression' (*FU,* p.88) from the central argument. On the one hand, Lawrence's tree-writing is a 'digression' as it bears little obvious connection to the chapters which proceed and succeed it. Yet, it would be a mistake to regard this tree-writing flippantly given that it has significant affiliations with Lawrence's writing on blood-consciousness.

Images and descriptions of trees recur throughout Lawrence's writing, sometimes to describe the natural setting of his characters, but on many occasions, he conveys a fascination for trees and repeatedly draws attention to them as human-like. In a letter in 1918, Lawrence writes that:

> Having been seedy this week, I have sat in bed, my usual style, and looked out of the window in front. There is a field - the thatched roof of a cottage - then trees and other roofs … The trees get dark. Those without leaves seem to thrill their twigs above - the firs and pines slant heavy with snow … There is something living and rather splendid about trees. They stand up so proud, and are alive. (*3L,* p.197)

Lawrence writes this letter as he recalls the view from his window, allowing his mind to drift away to other impressions but then returning to the image of the trees. In *Fantasia* Lawrence also expresses awe for the 'big, tall bodied trees … great full-blooded trees, with strange tree-blood in them' (pp.85-86), placing an emphasis upon the 'vast individual life' of the tree's 'roaring' (*FU,* p.86) blood. Lawrence explains that trees are emblematic 'of non-human life, darkly self-sufficient, and bristling with indomitable energy' (p.87), they have 'no hands and faces, no eyes' but possess 'a huge, plunging, tremendous soul' (*FU,* p.86). By choosing to give the trees a 'soul' Lawrence once again draws attention to the spiritual and archaic

aspects of his philosophy, showing great respect, and an element of nostalgia for the past. He describes how the trees' 'roots' (*FU*, p.86) go deep into the ground, mythologizing them as part of a mythical Roman and Greek history by stressing that:

> when the legions crossed the Rhine, they found a vast impenetrable life which had no voice. They met the faceless silence of the Black Forest. This huge, huge wood did not answer when they called. Its silence was too crude and massive. And the soldiers shrank: shrank before the trees that had no faces, and no answer. (*FU,* p.87)

The soldiers are described as in awe of the 'Black Forest' and the ancient power and strength of the trees that will go on to outlive them all. Although Lawrence makes the trees human-like, they have 'no eyes' to be visually aware and 'no mind at all' (*FU,* p.86) which conveys their non-human power that cannot be seen or fully known.

Despite these points, 'Trees and Babies and Papas and Mamas' remains a peculiar chapter title within a book on child-consciousness and it is reasonable to be sceptical as to what trees have to do with the evolving blood-consciousness of children. However, this becomes clearer when one thinks about the cyclical force of the blood returning to the heart to be sent out again. Lawrence is making an analogy between the cyclical stages of birth and death which both the natural world and mankind are subjected to:

> each new tip arises out of the apparent death of the old, the preceding one. Old leaves have got to fall, old forms must die. And if men must at certain periods fall into death in millions, why, so must the leaves fall every single autumn. And dead leaves make good mold. And so do dead men. (*FU,* p.189)

This passage from *Fantasia* stresses the connection between different energies and life forms, and that human beings and trees are part of the same world. The power of the trees corresponds to the vitality of people and that is why Lawrence insists that trees are made up of blood and have a soul (*FU,* p.86).

Fiona Becket (2009) has outlined the need for more research focusing upon Lawrence's 'green thinking', but also warns that although his concern is for both

'human and non-human nature' (p.148), it is crucial to remember that '[his] vision is human-centred; it prioritises the human' (p.157). When Lawrence is considering aspects of the non-human in his philosophy, this is always part of an attempt to explain or depict the nature of human beings. Yet, by adopting organic metaphors to describe his life force, and the link he made between blood and the earth, Lawrence became susceptible to fascist interpretations of his beliefs (Krockel, 2007), most notably by Bertrand Russell who associated Lawrence's pedagogic claims for blood-consciousness with an outlook which could only result in Auschwitz (Kinkead-Weekes, 1996, p.810). Anne Fernihough (1993) has also focused upon controversial aspects of Lawrence's organic allusions, stating that the organic 'appeals to an idea that is precisely the opposite of metaphor, the idea of the "natural", of the way things are' (p.17). If blood-consciousness denotes "natural" differences or genetic traits depending upon sex and race, then this has serious implications for Lawrence's philosophy which has so far been presented as positive and forward thinking.

These matters will form a large part of the discussion in Chapter Four in relation to *The Plumed Serpent* and the blood-consciousness of Mexico. However, it is also an important point to raise in this chapter because Lawrence's reliance upon organic metaphors and analogies highlights some of the more problematic aspects of blood-consciousness and the language Lawrence uses to explain it. These concerns relate back to the consideration of biological terminology in 'The Birth of Consciousness' (*FU*) when Lawrence uses terms such as 'organic development' (p.19) and his frequent use of the term 'nature' (p.16) to denote self-growth. These potentially problematic aspects of Lawrence's language in expressing blood-consciousness are evident in the following passage from *Psychoanalysis* where he highlights that:

> As a natural or automatic result of the process of generation we may look for a new unit of existence. But the nature of this new unit must derive from the natures of the parents, also by law. And this we deny. We deny that the nature of any new creature derives from the natures of its parents. The nature of the infant does *not* follow from the natures of its parents. The nature of the infant is *not* just a new permutation-and-combination of elements contained in the natures of the parents. There is in the nature of the infant that which is utterly unknown in the natures of the parents, something which could never be derived from the natures of all the existent individuals or previous individuals. (*PU,* p.16, emphasis in original)

In the first line, 'natural' implies biological or hereditary tendencies which are passed on but the final use of 'natures' suggests a non-biological entity, which cannot be handed down. In this instance Lawrence's stance is relatively lucid and he is not referring to people of other skin colours and cultures. However, in Lawrence travel-writing, and novels that consider these other peoples, his references to blood in relation to racial difference, and differences in consciousness, can mean that he seems to be making comments about racial supremacy,

'Sun' is controversial for these reasons, as Lawrence suggests that working-class men of other cultures are more blood-conscious than white British men (a theme which is central to the discussions of Chapter Four). Juliet is attracted to a peasant who embodies the desirable qualities of the sun, so much so, that he becomes a symbol rather than a living human being. The peasant who has no name is coarsely described through his sexual potency and lack of intellect even though Juliet has not spoken to him. This negative depiction continues as he is characterized by having a 'big penis' (p.38) and being a 'hot, inarticulate animal' ('Sun', p.37). This representation of the blood-conscious foreigner resonates with the presentation of Cipriano in *The Plumed Serpent* and also the Mexican men of his short story 'None of That' (1928) who are rapists 'without a soul or brain' (p.217). Depictions such as this highlight the most controversial and offensive aspects of how Lawrence envisages blood-consciousness through metaphors of the natural world.

It is necessary to stress that this is only one aspect of Lawrence's writing that can be problematic, and that in many instances he adopts organic language in his philosophy to positive effect. For example, the poppy is a symbol that reveals Lawrence's forward-looking presentation of male and female sexuality, and is a fitting image to describe his views on sex for its obvious connotations with 'reproduction' (p.54) through the spreading of 'pollen' and 'seeds' ('Study of Thomas Hardy', p.53). Rather than identifying the separateness of the sexes, the poppy is a symbol that represents Lawrence's belief in the unity of opposites where the male and female are one:

> In plants where the male stream and the female stream flow separately, as in dogs-mercury or in the oak-tree, where is the flame? It is not. But in my poppy, where at the summit the two streams, which till now have run deviously, scattered down many ways, at length flow concentrated together, and the pure male stream meets the pure female stream in a heave and an overflowing, there there is the flower indeed. ('Study of Thomas Hardy', pp. 53-54)

The union of these two 'streams' is a fundamental belief that underpins Lawrence's depiction of blood-conscious sex in novels such as *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and is a subject that will be explored further in Chapter Five. Lawrence's presentation of the poppy goes further than suggesting the coming together of male and female blood-consciousness, as he communicates the idea of a fundamental bisexuality in human beings (Black, 1991). In 'Study of Thomas Hardy' (1914) Lawrence questions:

> Why do we consider the male stream, and the female stream, as being only in the flesh: it is something other than physical. The physical, what we call in its narrowest meaning, the sex, is only a definite indication of the great male and female duality and unity …
>
> There is female apart from Woman, as we know, and male apart from Man. There is male and female in my poppy plant, and this is neither man nor woman. (p.54)

This is a stance which is not entirely representative of Lawrence's position regarding sexual difference throughout his career, for at other times man and woman, male

and female, are defined as complete opposites. However, it is a positive point of reference given some of Lawrence's more controversial attitudes towards sex, particularly in relation to his male-leadership novels of the 1920s.

At this point, it becomes clear that all the sub-sections that have been considered are highly dependent on one another. For instance, it is impossible to thoroughly assess if blood-consciousness is psychical or physical without paying attention to Lawrence's expressions that relate to the non-human cosmos. Similarly, it is crucial to note the implications of natural and organic metaphors when Lawrence is explaining his ideas in regards to sexuality and race. The interconnected quality of Lawrence's philosophy means that references to blood-consciousness recur in virtually all of his writing, at times emerging in texts where the reader might least expect to find it. For instance, in *Studies in Classic American Literature* Lawrence finds himself mythologizing the split between blood and mental-consciousness through the biblical story of Adam and Eve:

> In the first place, Adam knew Eve as a wild animal knows its mate, momentaneously, but vitally, in blood knowledge. Blood-knowledge, not mind knowledge. Blood knowledge, that seems utterly to forget, but doesn't. Blood-knowledge, instinct, intuition, all the vast vital flux of knowing that goes on in the dark, antecedent to the mind.
>
> Then came that beastly apple, and the other sort of knowledge started. (*SCAL,* p. 82)

This passage fittingly identifies Lawrence's reconfiguration of the symbolic tree of life (an important non-human, natural and religious symbol in Lawrence's work) with the beginning of mankind's inherent struggle between blood and mind-knowledge. These ideas were strongly influenced by the time Lawrence spent travelling, as he came to believe that like England, America was a country that had 'shed the blood [and] become extremely conscious' (*SCAL,* p.84).

Now that this chapter has explained the ways in which blood-consciousness emerges as a philosophical construct, this thesis will now look closely at the different representations of blood-consciousness that manifests in Lawrence's fiction. Lawrence not only viewed his blood-philosophy as relevant to his creative writing, but he also interpreted virtually all forms of literature with his own concerns and principles in mind. In 'Study of Thomas Hardy' Lawrence examines his own views on sex through his reading of *Jude the Obscure* (1895) finding that:

> Whereas Phillotson always only wanted sexual relief of her, Jude wanted the consummation of marriage. He wanted that deepest experience, that penetrating far into the unknown and undiscovered which lies in the body and blood of man and woman, during life … And for this he must go back deep into the primal, unshown, unknown life of the blood, the thick, source-stream of life in her. (p.115)

This 'source-stream of life' will be explored in Chapter Two's discussion of *The Rainbow*, a novel in which Lawrence's developing sense of blood-consciousness enabled him to create a new form of character that he felt was not dependent on what he called the 'old stable ego' (*2L*, p.183).

CHAPTER TWO

THE RAINBOW: 'ARCHED IN THEIR BLOOD'

In 'Morality and the Novel' the symbol of the rainbow forms an arch between fiction and philosophy as Lawrence stresses that 'the novel is a perfect medium for revealing to us the changing rainbow of our living relationships. The novel can help us to live, as nothing else can' (p.175). Thus, *The Rainbow* is the perfect title for a novel that emphasises the fleeting and transitive essence of life, a notion which was central to Lawrence's attempt to write a new kind of novel after *Sons and Lovers.* The first aim of this chapter is to show that by declaring 'you mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character' (*2L*, p.183) in a letter to publisher and lifelong friend Edward Garnett in June 1914, Lawrence signalled his intention to depict characters through the imagery of a flowing blood-consciousness of the body. Part of this effort involved concentrating on characters' internal state rather than describing their personal traits.

As a result of this, Lawrence's attempt to create new forms of character in *The Rainbow* mirrors other modernist authors such as Woolf, Joyce, and Dorothy Richardson, who were exploring similar, yet highly individual ways of expressing human experience. These authors can all be connected by the early twentieth-century stream-of-consciousness narrative that prioritised the internal quality of life as it is experienced. As Fernihough (2007) rightly states, 'Lawrence's version of stream-of-consciousness writing is more *bodily* than that of his contemporaries' (p.76, emphasis in original). This chapter will propose that by creating a blood-conscious quality to his characters and the narrative of *The Rainbow,* Lawrence's

ideas possess clear connections with the French philosopher Bergson, who had a huge impact upon theories of time, space, and consciousness during Lawrence's lifetime.

The success of *Time and Free Will* (1910), and his writing up to and including *Creative Evolution*, as well as his links to the 'nineteenth-century subliminal psychology ... associated with Pierre Janet, Frederic Myers and William James' (Campbell, 2009, p.1) brought Bergson wide critical acclaim. However, given Lawrence's references to Bergson as highlighted in the Introduction and Chapter One, as well as the considerable similarities between Lawrence's presentation of blood-consciousness and specific elements of Bergsonian theory relating to time and consciousness, there is certainly reason to unite the thoughts of these men.

After outlining that both Lawrence and Bergson differentiate between an inner and outer time of the body, the final section of this chapter moves on to consider the change which occurs from the birth of Ursula Brangwen and how this disrupts the blood-conscious narrative flow which has been established up until this point. This will involve drawing attention to the need to move on from the early generations of the Brangwens and their 'blood-intimacy' (*R,* p.11) in order to avoid what Melfi (2001) calls 'circles of confinement' (p.360), which are the 'cycles of unconsciously motivated behaviour's (p.357) that characterise the lives of the first two generations of Brangwens. Melfi suggests that:

> while Lawrence wants us to appreciate the mute, natural instincts the Brangwens embody in the opening for what they are worth in a simpler, more idyllic world, he also wants us to realize that, as the world gets more complex with inevitable industrial progress, articulation and conscious understanding compensates for the inevitable wearing away by external forces of the more naturally instinctive life. (2001, p.359)

Thus, although the blood-consciousness of the early Brangwens is initially depicted as a positive life force, as the novel continues, Lawrence is making the reader question if this is still a viable mode of living in the changing modern world.

TURNING AWAY FROM 'THE OLD STABLE EGO'

Before exploring the ways in which Lawrence sought to move away from 'the old stable ego' (*2L*, p.183), it is first of all necessary to solidify a sense of what exactly this term meant. Initially, Lawrence was reacting to a form of character that he saw as present in his own writing as, in May 1913, Lawrence stated that 'I shall not write quite in that style any more. It's the end of my youthful period' (*1L,* p.551). This desire to differentiate his next novel from *Sons and Lovers* is unsurprising given its strong association with his own adolescence and relationship with his mother. It seems likely that Lawrence considered *Sons and Lovers* to be too constricted by his personal recollections and the dynamics of his own family, so he:

> embarked on the kind of writing which the tragic and realistic forms of his first three novels did not permit. He wrote novels in which men not only resisted women, and women resisted men, but in which the creativity of both could be fulfilled by new relationships. (Worthen, 1991, p.446)

Lawrence's desire to give his characters more freedom was largely down to the fact that he recognised 'how far [his own life] had moved on from the position not only of the central character, Paul, but also from the kinds of interest in women and love with which the book was concerned' (Worthen, 1991, p.445).

This hope to write a new kind of fiction after *Sons and Lovers* was part of what Lawrence deemed to be a 'transition[al]' phase' of his career 'which involved slow progress with intermittent erratic 'outbursts' of creativity (*2L,* p.143). The challenge this involved is clear, as Lawrence was conscious that his draft of 'The Wedding

Ring' was 'shaky' as he defensively warns that 'I am not expert in what I do' (*2L,* p.183). Part of this need to be more experimental resulted from Lawrence's feeling that:

> I have no longer the joy in creating vivid scenes, that I had in *Sons and Lovers.* I don't care much more about accumulating objects in the powerful light of emotion, and making a scene of them. I have to write differently. (*2L,* p.142)

Sons and Lovers contains many powerful 'scenes' particularly within the Morel household, yet Lawrence seems to be suggesting that the incident and setting of the novel was too much of a construct for dramatic effect. In his own words, Lawrence was perhaps guilty of 'put[ting] his thumb in the scale, to pull down the balance to his own predilection' ('Morality and the Novel', p.172).

In *The Rainbow* Lawrence was straining to express a more fluid basis to the novel with change as inherent, rather than the following through of one idea from start to finish. The basis of this proposal is already hinted towards in *Sons and Lovers* in a discussion between two characters who deliberate over what art should strive to express. Miriam questions why she feels impelled towards one of Paul's sketches in particular, and he explains that:

> "It's because - it's because there is scarcely any shadow in it - it's more shimmery - as if I'd painted the shimmering protoplasm in the leaves and everywhere, and not the stiffness of the shape. That seems dead to me. Only the shimmeriness is the real living. The shape is a dead crust. The shimmer is inside, really." (*SL,* p.183)

Paul's attempt to capture "the shimmering protoplasm" rather than "the stiffness of shape" echoes Lawrence's own belief that life, and therefore art, must strive to avoid a fixed form. The basic principles that would shape *The Rainbow* are prominent in another of Lawrence's letters to Garnett in which he outlines his new mode of writing in 'The Sisters'. Lawrence explains that:

> I write with everything vague - plenty of fire underneath, but, like bulbs in the ground, only shadowy flowers that must be beaten and sustained ... I feel that this second half of the Sisters is very beautiful, but it may not be sufficiently incorporated to please you. I do not try to incorporate it very much - I prefer the permeating beauty. It is my transition stage - but I must write to live, and it must produce flowers, and if they be frail or shadowy, they will be all right if they are true to their hour. (*2L*, p.143)

Both the *Sons and Lovers* extract and the letter use metaphors of plant-life to exude the growth and development which is outlined in Chapter One's discussion regarding the organic and natural language of Lawrence's blood-philosophy. These intentions for a new style in his fiction were crucial, as Lawrence wanted to avoid creating a novel that could be described as simply a 'story with a plot' (*2L,* p.143). However it is notable that Lawrence's criticism of the 'old stable ego' (*2L*, p.183) was not only shaped by the evaluation of his own fiction, it was also informed by him responding to other authors and their work.

Although the essay 'John Galsworthy' was not completed until years after *The Rainbow* in 1927, Lawrence's letters reference him from 1908 (p.62), and over the years Lawrence grew increasingly familiar with his writing alongside that of 'Thomas Hardy and Yeats' through the '*English Review*' (*1L,* p.277). In 1913 Lawrence reflected on the 'bloodless drama' of 'Shaw and Galsworthy' also stating that 'I don't want to write like Galsworthy nor Ibsen' (*1L,* p.509). Thus, despite the years that elapsed between Lawrence's letter relating to the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) and the Galsworthy essay, it is clear that Lawrence had already formed strong opinions of Galsworthy's work much earlier. These opinions had a significant impact upon Lawrence's desire to 'get free from [the] authority' of his 'immediate predecessors' (*1L,* p.509) and write a different kind of fiction.

Lawrence was particularly critical of Galsworthy's 'style' and 'form' ('John Galsworthy', p.209) judging him to create rigid novels centred around a limiting 'plot'

(*2L,* p.143) made up of 'social beings' that don't do justice to the 'human individual' who is 'a queer animal, always changing' ('John Galsworthy', p.210). Such criticisms relate specifically to Lawrence's depiction of an unalterable ego which results in characters that lack the quality of 'a really vivid human being' ('John Galsworthy', p.210). Lawrence's emphasis placed upon the 'old' (*2L,* p.183) quality of the ego bears comparison with Woolf's attack on realist authors Wells, Bennett, and Galsworthy in *Modern Fiction* (1925). In her criticism, Woolf confronts what she perceives to be the social triviality of these three 'materialists' that 'are concerned not with the spirit but with the body' (*Modern Fiction,* p.158). Of course Lawrence was very much interested in the body, but, like Woolf, he was critical of characters that appear 'to have lost caste, as human beings, and … have sunk to the level of the social being' ('John Galsworthy', p.210).

Woolf and Lawrence are both critical of many principles behind the realist novel, but Lawrence could be equally critical of modernist authors that he felt were guilty of paying undue attention to irrelevant impressions and details of the mind. In 'The Future of the Novel' he comically makes fun of 'Mr Joyce … Miss Richardson [and] Monsieur Proust', stating that their characters are preoccupied with trivial questions such as "Did I feel a twinge in my little toe, or didn't I? … Is the odour of my perspiration a blend of frankincense and orange pekoe and boot-blacking, or is it myrrh and bacon-fat and Shetland tweed?" (p.151). Thus, Lawrence did not necessarily view the modernist novel as a better alternative to the realist novel, instead he describes that the modern reader is left to choose between 'the pale-faced, high-browed, earnest novel which you have to take seriously' and 'that smirking, rather plausible hussy, the popular novel' ('The Future of the Novel', p.151).

Lawrence believed that ‘The Future of the Novel’ hung in the balance due to increasingly indulgent and self-conscious forms of literature, in which the author is guilty of creating overly-experimental art which he felt to be intrinsically void:

> We judge a work of art by its effect on our sincere and vital emotion, and nothing else. All the critical twiddle-twaddle about style, and form, all this pseudo-scientific classifying and analysing of books in an imitation-botanical fashion, is mere impertinence, and mostly dull jargon. (‘John Galsworthy’*,* p.209)

The Rainbow is emblematic of the need ‘to *feel* the impact of a work of art’ with an emphasis placed on ‘emotion, not reason’ (‘John Galsworthy’*,* p.209, emphasis in original). Although Lawrence trivialises ‘style’ and ‘form’ in this instance, they were undoubtedly at the forefront of his mind in his turn away from the ‘old stable ego’ (*2L,* p.183).

From the first few pages of *The Rainbow* it is evident that Lawrence’s evolving beliefs regarding blood-consciousness had a considerable impact upon his characters and the narrative style. Set in a landscape ‘where the Erewash twisted sluggishly through alder trees, separating Derbyshire from Nottinghamshire’ (*R*, p.9), *The Rainbow* evokes a natural and simple connection between mankind and the earth. Described as ‘fresh, blond, slow-speaking people’ (p.9), the early generation of Brangwens are a different species to the Morels of *Sons and Lovers* as:

> Their life and inter-relations were such; feeling the pulse and 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, lying hard and unresponsive when the crops were to be shorn away. (*R,* p.10)

The rhythmic quality of such early passages is immediately striking as Lawrence incorporates long, flowing sentences in order to describe the communion between the Brangwens and the English landscape (Ingersoll, 1992). The narrative discloses that:

> 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. (*R,* pp.10-11)

An equally striking aspect of *The Rainbow* is the language of the body and the blood that Lawrence adopts as 'the cows yielded milk and pulse against the hands of the men, the pulse of the blood of the teats of the cows beat into the pulse of the hands of the men' (*R*, p.10). There can be no doubt that by writing in this way Lawrence is striving to convey the change[able]' ('John Galsworthy', p.210) essence of life but also the fluidity of blood-consciousness.

Lawrence's belief in the blood is crucial in order for human beings and his characters to experience shifts on an unconscious level. This is conveyed by *The Rainbow*'s emphasis on 'blood intimacy' (p.10) where simple acts such as milking the cows and 'staring into the sun' (*R,* p.11) bring man into greater harmony within himself and the rural world. In this world, human relationships are instinctual and primal, as Tom Brangwen and Lydia Lensky embark on a marriage where language is de-centred. Lydia's foreignness is repeatedly emphasised to show that she and Tom are drawn together by an instantaneous, innate attraction based on 'impulse' and 'blind instinct' (*R,* p.54). These important relationships are described in dynamic terms, never thinking but always feeling, as the narrative reveals the characters' unconscious urges and desires.

As Lydia's initial wariness of Tom begins to pass, 'gradually, she became aware of him, aware of herself with regard to him, her blood stirred to life, she began to open towards him, to flow towards him again' (*R,* p.55). Despite their differences and the strain of having young children, after some struggle Tom and Lydia manage to find peace together through the equilibrium of two separate bloods:

> His blood beat up in waves of desire. He wanted to come to her, to meet her. She was there, if he could reach her. The reality of her who was just beyond him absorbed him ...
>
> Their coming together now, after two years of married life, was much more wonderful to them than it had been before. It was the entry into another circle of existence, it was the baptism to another life, it was the complete confirmation. (*R*, p.90)

Immersed in this concept of 'cyclical time' (Ingersoll, 1992, p.117), Lawrence's fiction affirms the necessity of re-birth through sexual union. Sexual experience is expressed through recurring motifs such as birth and floods, which assert the imagery of immersion and new life which are significant metaphors in the novel. There is also reason to believe that Lawrence is thinking about the Brangwens as living through the solar plexus as he stresses that 'a daze had come over [Tom's] mind, he had another centre of consciousness. In his breast, or in his bowels, somewhere in his body, there had started another activity' (*R,* p.38).

When Lawrence makes such references to the blood and the possibility of new 'activity' through new 'centres' of the body there can be no question that in order to disregard the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) he is exploring a growing belief in an unconscious of the blood. Yet, it is also important to emphasise that by attempting to avoid the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) Lawrence's focus was primarily upon the blood-conscious nature of being, which is not like an 'ego' at all. Rosemary Sumner (2000) points out that 'like Hardy [Lawrence] is moving away from the notion that characters in novels should be fully known, explained' (p.103), instead he was striving to '[articulate] what is not experienced at a cognitive level' (p.105). It is necessary to state that Lawrence did not want to do away with the notion of an ego altogether; rather, he wanted to explore it in a different light. In the same letter to Garnett Lawrence outlines his proposal explaining:

> that which is physic - non-human, in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element - which causes one to conceive a

> character in a certain moral scheme and make him consistent. The certain moral scheme is what I object to. (*2L*, p.182)

'Study of Thomas Hardy' also involves Lawrence disregarding what he refers to as the irritant of 'primal morality' (p.28) and 'the little, pathetic pattern of man's moral life and struggle, pathetic almost ridiculous' (p.29). Whilst Lawrence conveys the blood-conscious quality of being in his characters, when explaining the power of the ego he uses a completely different set of metaphors which again reinforce his association with the artistic and literary movements of modernism.

The letter to Garnett hints towards the presence of 'another ego', which moves through 'allotropic states' indicating a new fluid 'human phenomenon' (*2L,* p.183). Due to the association Lawrence makes between human form and a 'physiology of matter' (*2L,* p.183) in his letter, Andrew Harrison (2003) has connected *The Rainbow* with Filippo Marinetti and the Futurists. Harrison states that Futurism's 'concentration on the impersonal energies of matter would ultimately provide a new language for *The Rainbow,* and a new way of casting relationships in a non-sentimental, less sensational light' (2003, p.73). Instances of Lawrence using futuristic terminology are when *The Rainbow* refers to 'electric ... cloud-edges' (p.48), the fact that Will's 'soul' is 'crystallising' (p.118), as well as the later description of Ursula being 'like metal' with a 'metallic voice' (*R,* p.444).

By switching between natural imagery and futuristic metaphors Lawrence was able to convey characters' sudden changes in consciousness, and that they are governed by strange and powerful unknowable forces beyond their control. Lawrence shows characters to be inwardly questioning their place in the world, trying to comprehend their shifting states of being. An example of this is when early in the novel:

> Brangwen went up to his room and lay staring out at the stars of the summer night, his whole being in a whirl. What was it all? There was a life so different from what he knew it. What was there outside his knowledge, how much? What was this that he had touched? What was he in this new influence? What did everything mean? Where was life, in that which he knew or all outside him? (*R,* p.25)

By drawing the focus to what lies 'outside [Tom's] knowledge', Lawrence invites his readers to consider the nature of the relationship between the body and the spirit, blood-consciousness and the conscious ego. Lawrence attempts to give his characters more insight into the vast experience of life, taking them out of the everyday social world and allowing them to explore the essence of their own existence.

Despite these efforts, Dennis Brown (1989) considers Lawrence's challenge to the old ego a failure claiming that 'despite the brilliance of his insights, he does not create a radically new method' (p.74). Masashi Asai (1992) takes up a similar position stressing that 'Lawrence did not go far enough in *The Rainbow*. However strange and eccentric his characters may seem, we can still find the remnant of "character" or "old stable ego" according to which the individual is recognised' (p.138). Yet, such criticism misinterprets Lawrence to an extent, for he is not stating that the ego must be ignored completely or that it is irrelevant. Instead, he is calling for a shift in emphasis in order to create characters that could evoke how human beings really experience the passage of time on a blood-conscious level. Lawrence's focus upon a narrative of inner blood-conscious time is a strong reason to bring his ideas into direct comparison with the philosophy of Bergson.

LAWRENTIAN BLOOD-CONSCIOUSNESS AND BERGSONIAN DURATION

The similarities between Lawrence and Bergson's ideas may not be immediately clear from reading Lawrence's philosophy alone. However, when close attention is paid to *The Rainbow,* there are definite parallels between the ideas of these two men and the way that they express them. Stephen Linstead and John Mullarkey (2003) state that for Bergson, 'time is experience' (p.5), and as this section will show, when Lawrence is thinking about blood-consciousness, he too is really thinking about time. To quote Linstead and Mullarkey again, 'Bergson's philosophy is *anti-intellectualist*' and 'posits *concrete life as it is lived*' (p.4, emphasis in original). Similarly, when Lawrence differentiates between blood and mental-consciousness, his ideas bear comparison to Bergson's suggestion of a fundamental difference between inner time and a 'materialized' time which is 'set out in space' (*Time and Free Will,* p.127) as it is on a clock face. Blood-consciousness is representative of this inner time that is ongoing beneath conscious awareness and cannot be conceptualised or spatialised into seconds, minutes, and hours.

Both men admit the importance of a spatialised time or the need to express life as it is consciously registered. For Lawrence this is a necessity in the novel form in order to structure the events that occur and to depict his characters' beliefs and feelings. Yet, as Bergson stresses through his term duration or *durée*, there is only one 'real time' (p.30) and the others are 'mathematical fictions' (*Duration and Simultaneity,* p.20). Bergson defines pure duration as 'the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states' (*Time and Free Will,* p.100, emphasis in original). Similarly, Lawrence conceives blood-consciousness to be fluid and unrestricted because he does not envisage the unconscious as a store of

memories and repressions located in the mind. Looking closely at *The Rainbow* there is no question that Lawrence is striving to convey the essence of duration which has so much in common with blood-consciousness.

The Rainbow repeatedly draws attention to the shift between outside to inside which represents the difference between a spatialised time and an inner blood-conscious time. A distinction which Fernihough (2007) describes as 'separat[ing] what is real from the inauthenticity of conventional social structures' (p.76). In *The Rainbow*, Will:

> pushed open the doors of the cathedral, and entered the twilight of both darknesses, the hush of the two-fold silence, where dawn was sunset, and the beginning and the end were one …
>
> 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. (*R*, pp.187-188)

The 'timeless[ness]' which Will experiences in the cathedral and the fact that the 'beginning and the end were one' evokes a continuous unravelling of time that blood-consciousness is representative of. Similarly, Tom questions his own existence in the world:

> He felt himself tiny, a little, upright figure on a plain circled round with the immense, roaring sky ... When did one come to an end? In which direction was it finished? There was no end, no finish, only this roaring vast space. Did one never get old, never die? That was the clue ... What was sure but the endless sky? But that was so sure, so boundless. (*R,* p.126)

Inner blood-conscious time has 'no end, no finish' and is utterly 'boundless' (*R,* p.126) and *The Rainbow* conveys this lack of 'boundaries' associated with 'inner states', so that they 'overflow into one another, interpenetrate, even as they succeed one another' (Guerlac, 2006, p.65), resulting in the flowing narrative which was pointed out previously.

Lawrence would explore the essence of a fluid inner time years later in his short story ‘The Man Who Loved Islands’ (1927). The story has a strong connection with *The Rainbow* as the central character wants his ‘blood [to have] a different throb’ (‘The Man Who Loved Islands’, p.159) like the early generations of Brangwens, so he seeks to live on an island whereby life has not yet become modernised. This is partly related to Lawrence’s own desire for exile from supposedly civilised English society, as this ‘escape’ (p.153) results in the feeling that:

> Strangely, from your little island in space, you were gone forth into the dark, great realms of time … The little earthly island has dwindled, like a jumping-off place, into nothingness, for you have jumped off, you know not how, into the dark wide mystery of time, where the past is vastly alive, and the future is not separated off.
>
> This is the danger of becoming an islander. When, in the city, you wear your white spats and dodge the traffic with the fear of death down your spine, then you are quite safe from the terrors of infinite time. The moment is your little islet in time, it is the spatial universe that careers round you. (‘The Man Who Loved Islands’, p.152)

Here the narrative explores the utopian dream of being free from city time altogether, and the possibility of living in the flux of eternity. The narrative discloses that on these three islands ‘time had ceased to pass’ (‘The Man Who Loved Islands’, p.170), and yet by breaking up the story into three sub-sections, one for each island, Lawrence is of course spatialising time.

Similarly, *The Rainbow* is made up of chapters which spatialise the time of the novel in quite an obvious way (Nakano, 2002). Yet, in the novel itself, Lawrence prefers to trace the passage of time through seasonal changes like the presence of ‘patches of snow’ (p.156), and the arrival of ‘autumn hedges’ (*R,* p.287) which avoids breaking up the continuity of the narrative. Will and Anna disregard a scheduled routine of time as ‘one got up at four o’clock, and had broth at tea-time and made toffee in the middle of the night’ (*R,* p.140). Such small but significant details

highlight that part of Lawrence's rejection of the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) involved trying to avoid presenting a stable presentation of the passage of time in his fiction. Lawrence did this by adopting a Bergsonian approach to the unconscious, recognising that it is 'not the negative of consciousness and being ... rather it is the seat of affectual being and creative life' (Campbell, 2006, p.52).

Bergson's philosophy denotes this 'creative' (Campbell, 2006, p.52) quality to life via his central concept of the *élan vital* which is 'an image that invites us to think outside the mechanistic framework of the physical sciences' and consider time as a 'force' (Guerlac, 2006, p.7). The connections between Lawrence's solar plexus and blood-consciousness in relation to Bergson's *élan vital* have been mostly outlined in Chapter One. However, it is also important to note that their similar approaches to time is also the result of their discontent with idealism. For Lawrence this rejection of fixed ideas relating to life and the unconscious was also influenced by his reading of the psychologist and philosopher William James, who was in dialogue with both Freud and Bergson. Reiko Kamiishida (2007) has recognised an essential connection between these three thinkers stating that:

> Lawrence had read these two philosophers and might have sensed the current of the intellectual world [as] Lawrence, too, made the absolute idea his imaginary enemy and tried to recapture the flow of life with his writings …
>
> The essay which is especially speculative concerning the interaction between the absolute and the relative is "The Crown," written in 1915. First, it describes the conflict between two fierce ideal forces, both of which try to devour the opponent. The clash of two ideas is symbolized by the battle between a lion and a unicorn, who are competing to get the Crown. Besides the two beasts, Lawrence uses symbols depicting two absolute extremes such as "light and darkness" and "the Beginning and the End". (p.45)

This essential opposition between inner forces of the self is central in Lawrence's thinking on unconscious and conscious processes as well as the antagonism between the idea of how time is lived, against its actual quality and how it is experienced. For Bergson, James, and Lawrence, the essence of 'conflict'

(Kamiishida, 2007, p.45) at the heart of philosophical theories of time stems from the fact that its essence is really beyond comprehension, and the moment one attempts to conceptualise it, time becomes fixed and no longer resembles life at all. This is why:

> James, Bergson, and Lawrence all regard existence as a ceaseless process of becoming. The prevention of the process causes "decompositions" or "reduction" in human beings. It is clear they share the recognition that human beings are essentially mutable and the fixation by ideas means death. (Kamiishida, 2007, p.46)

This notion of 'ceaseless … becoming' is central in the continuous flow of blood-consciousness and the organic force that is the *élan vital.* In *The Rainbow* this essential spark of life is conveyed by Lawrence to suggest that blood-consciousness is driven by an unending source of energy, an idea which he explores through the imagery of a centre:

> Inside the room was a great steadiness, a core of living eternity. Only far outside, at the rim, went on the noise and the distraction. Here at the centre the great wheel was motionless, centred upon itself. Here was a poised, unflawed stillness that was beyond time, because it remained the same, inexhaustible, unchanging, unexhausted.
>
> As they lay close together, complete and beyond the touch of time or change, it was as if they were at the very centre of all the slow wheeling of space and the rapid agitation of life, deep, deep inside them all, at the centre where there is utter radiance, and eternal being, and the silence absorbed in praise: the steady core of all movements, the unawakened sleep of all wakefulness. They found themselves there, and they lay still, in each other's arms; for their moment they were at the heart of eternity, whilst time roared far off, forever far off, towards the rim. (*R*, p.135)

In this passage life and time are ongoing despite the lack of action or incident in the room. Words such as 'beyond the touch of time or change … steady core … deep inside' are not intended to convey a lack of dynamism to blood-consciousness or inner time, rather they express the enduring quality of duration, what Lawrence defines as 'eternal being' (*R,* p.135).

Another significant link between blood-consciousness and duration is that both Lawrence and Bergson emphasise the 'universal' (Lehan, 1992, p.323) aspect of 'real time' (*Duration and Simultaneity,* p.30). As Chapter One identified, a key aspect of blood-consciousness is that Lawrence envisioned the individual inner time of each person to also correspond to the universe and the non-human cosmos. Similarly, Bergson proposes 'a duration of the universe' which is 'an impersonal consciousness that is the link among all individual consciousness, as between these consciousnesses and the rest of nature' (*Duration and Simultaneity,* p.31). This relationship between 'the individual psyche' and 'the outer universe' (*PU*, p. 41) is clearly in Lawrence's mind when *The Rainbow* conveys its characters by depicting that:

> 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. (*R,* p.188)

Lawrence repeatedly draws attention to the single human being in the wider scope of the cosmos, cutting off the Brangwens from 'the outside world' (*R,* p.140), in order to emphasise the shifts which occur between the personal and the impersonal, the self and the universe. Another example of this is when the reader is told that:

> if she were arrived now, settled in her builded house, a rich woman, still her doors opened under the arch of the rainbow, her threshold reflected the passing of the sun and moon, the great travellers, her house was full of the echo of journeying.
>
> She was a door and a threshold, she herself. Through her another soul was coming, to stand upon her as upon the threshold, looking out, shading its eyes for the direction to take. (*R,* p.182)

Doorways and the image of the rainbow form important symbols which identify that human beings are always in a state of becoming on the brink of rebirth, by creating new relationships between themselves, other people, and the universe. The

presence of the ‘sun and moon’ (*R,* p.182) convey the eternal and enduring essence of time which goes on beyond the individual lives of the characters in the novel.

This sense of time or life as continuous and ongoing is crucial in order to comprehend Bergson’s central concept of duration, as Suzanne Guerlac (2006) suggests that ‘we must first be willing to give up our conceptual separation of past and present in order to conceive of temporal synthesis *per se*’ (pp.65-66). This notion of a ‘synthesis’ flags up a significant element of Bergson’s philosophy as his consideration of the relationship between *Matter and Memory* (1911) discusses the inter-relations of the past and the present. For Bergson, ‘unconscious representations are not stored away in the mind as another separate psychological reality. Instead they exist as virtual, unperceived memories that are subconscious’ (Campbell, 2006, p.16). Thus, memories, and the past, are not constituted by events or moments which no longer exist. Instead, Bergson states that ‘the psychical state, then, that I call “my present”, must be both a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future’ (*Matter and Memory,* p.177). Like Bergson, Lawrence was exploring the relationship between the body and memory, as Linstead and Mullarkey (2003) state that ‘if it is enduring consciousness alone that is real and spatialised time is an artificial construct, why is it that each of us has a spatial dimension to our own existence? Why do we possess a body?’ (p.6).

Bergson’s work on memory would have appealed to Lawrence because Bergson’s ‘pure memory’ and ‘memory images’ (*Matter and Memory,* p.170) ‘replac[e] a static spatial model that locates isolated objects (memories) in things (brains) with a model of the real as temporal becoming - the real as duration’ (Guerlac, 2006, p.149). Because Lawrence did not want to isolate memory and the unconscious from the body, in *The Rainbow* he identifies that the past and present

merge in the moment and are very much part of the body. The narrative describes that:

> the big shell of [Tom's] body remembered the sound of owls that used to fly round the farmstead when he was a boy. He was back in his youth, a boy, haunted by the sound of the owls, waking up his brother to speak to him. And his mind drifted away to the birds, their solemn, dignified faces, their flight so soft and broad-winged. (*R,* p.71)

If memories are psychical and the body is physical then how can a body remember? In *The Rainbow* Lawrence is probing these questions rather than offering a definite position in relation to them. Yet, Chapter One outlines that Lawrence often intentionally merged the psychical and the physical in order to take the focus away from the mind as the locus of activity. As well as proving crucial for his philosophy, this was a vital part of Lawrence's effort to avoid creating his characters as 'social beings' ('John Galsworthy', p.210) in *The Rainbow.*

Melfi (2001) has considered this issue of memory in *The Rainbow* in detail, recognising that 'truthful recollection of the past is a crucial factor in the process of spiritual growth and evolution in this novel' (p.358). Lawrence's belief in virtual images of the unconscious, as stated in Chapter One, resonates with Bergson's own 'virtual' (Campbell, 2009, p.1) aspect of how the past corresponds to the present. For Lawrence, blood-consciousness is an inner 'time of the body' (p.55) whereby the 'virtual' (Campbell, 2006, p.1) world of the past is always readily available. Lydia possesses specific memories of Poland and 'the big house among the land, the peasants of the village' (p.51), and her past is described as a 'great blot looming blank in its darkness' (*R,* p.50). Similarly, as Tom's thoughts drift back to his childhood, his body relives the memory so that 'his mind was occupied with owls, and the atmosphere of his boyhood, with his brothers and sisters. Elsewhere … he was with his wife in labour' (*R,* p.72). Lawrence conveys instances of remembering

and recalling as the negotiation between an inner time that is continuous and constantly pressing forwards, with the past and virtual memories, which can be called upon and lived through again.

With these ideas in mind, one can see that in *The Rainbow* Lawrence is freely exploring a new notion of how characters live in time. He does this by focusing in on moments when they zone out of the conscious seconds and minutes, and experience the 'real time' (*Duration and Simultaneity,* p.30) of blood-consciousness. As Tom reflects on Lydia's life before they met, he questions 'what was memory after all, but the recording of a number of possibilities which had never been fulfilled?' (*R,* p.91). Thus, by considering remarkably similar concerns to Bergson, in his fiction Lawrence explores the relationship between the past and the present, consciousness and unconsciousness, and the psychical and physical through his gradual evolution of a blood-conscious philosophy.

So far this chapter has drawn attention to how blood-consciousness emerges as a topic for discussion in *The Rainbow* in relation to Lawrence's efforts to avoid the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183), also stating that his ideas bear close comparison to the philosophy of Bergson. As stated, the narrative is embedded with metaphors and images of a fluid blood-conscious inner time. However, it is crucial to highlight that the novel is also concerned with the outside world and 'major changes in English life between 1840 and 1905: with effects of industrialism and urbanisation, with education, the emancipation of women, the decline of religion' (Kinkead-Weekes, 1989, p.122). Thus, the following section will now look closely at how Ursula's birth ignites a change in the blood-conscious narrative of *The Rainbow,* raising uncertainty as to if the blood-consciousness of the Brangwens really symbolises a

way out of ‘the old stable ego’ (*2L,* p.183) or if it ultimately results in just another way of fixing character.

URSULA’S ‘FORWARD-TRAVELLING MOVEMENT’ AND ‘CIRCLES OF CONFINEMENT’

Although the theme of industrial expansion seems to be vastly accelerated by the time that Anna Brangwen gives birth to Ursula, the presence of growing industry is outlined on the very first pages of *The Rainbow* as ‘about 1840, a canal was constructed across the meadows’ (*R,* p.13). The railway also has an important presence in the backdrop of the Brangwen’s ‘blood-intimacy’ (p.10) as ‘the sharp clink-clink-clink-clink-clink of empty trucks shunting on the line, vibrated in their hearts with the fact of other activity going on beyond them’ (*R,* p.14). Thus, personal histories are blended with a social and cultural history of shared experience. So far in this chapter, the blood-conscious lives of the early Brangwens has been shown to be a positive state of being. However, if blood-conscious inner time is resistant to, and distinct from, outer time or the social world, then does it really represent a life-urging principle? If this urge is ultimately opposed to change and results in the characters of *The Rainbow* being enclosed in what Melfi (2001) describes as ‘circles of confinement’ (p.360), then this has serious implications for the positive aspects of blood-consciousness that have so far been highlighted.

Lawrence’s inclination towards a circular theory of time is prominent in *Apocalypse* where he explores the changes in human consciousness over the centuries claiming that:

> Our idea of time as a continuity in an eternal straight line has crippled our consciousness cruelly. The pagan conception of time as moving in cycles is

> much freer, it allows movement upwards and downwards, and allows for a complete change of the state of mind, at any moment. One cycle finished, we can drop or rise to another level, and be in a new world at once. But by our time-continuum method, we have to trail wearily on over another ridge. (p.97)

Despite Lawrence's belief that this circular conception of time is much 'freer'; as Melfi (2001) states, the Brangwen men are in fact 'comparatively static and … at the mercy of their unarticulated impulses in response to the external world' (p.362). The first two generations of the Brangwens are depicted as 'a curious family, a law to themselves, separate from the world, isolated, a small republic set in invisible bounds' (*R,* p.97). Similarly, Anna is also in some ways a 'static' and 'isolated' character, feeling that 'she could not go, when they called, because she must stay at home now. With satisfaction she relinquished the adventure to the unknown. She was bearing her children' (*R,* p.182). Anna's sense of 'content' (*R,* p.182) at this prospect has led Melfi (2001) to argue that Tom, Will, and Anna remain bound to 'circles of confinement' (p.360), which is a reasonable comment if they are all characterised by their compulsion towards stability rather than change.

Lawrence's short story 'England, My England' (1922) was written at the same time that he was completing *The Rainbow,* and this story also explores the theme of characters that seek to remain closed off from the world. With clear similarities to the Brangwens, the characters of 'England, My England' are described as 'strong-limbed, thick-blooded people, true English' (p.7). Again the impetus is upon 'circles' (p.10) that contain Egbert and his family to their home, as he prefers doing domestic and maintenance work in the house and the garden rather than getting a job that pays. The narrative reveals that:

> he had no desire to give himself to the world. No, no, the world wasn't worth it. He wanted to ignore it, to go his own way apart, like a casual pilgrim down the forsaken side-tracks. He loved his wife, his cottage and garden. He would make his life there, as a sort of epicurean hermit. He loved the past, the old

> music and dances and customs of old England. He would try and live in the spirit of these, not in the spirit of the world of business. (p.10)

Like the Brangwens, Egbert perceives himself to be incompatible with the world that exists outside of his circle, and makes a conscious choice to live in an ongoing repetition of the past rather than being open to new experiences.

Similarly in *The Rainbow,* Anna decides to remain a homemaker as Lawrence re-enforces the association between the blood-consciousness of rural England and characters' reluctance to change and evolve with the times. The reader is told that Anna:

> 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 ... having chosen or found the direction in which it shall be carried forward. (*R,* p.189)

On the one hand Anna's resistance to a 'forward-travelling movement' arises from a need to avoid the feeling 'of being roofed in' (*R,* p.189) by the cathedral - a notion that appears to be in tune with Lawrence's turn away from the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183). But there is also the sense that Anna is reluctant to leave the security of the world that she already knows, and that she is not open to new states of being because 'her wings were too weak to lift her' (*R,* p.189). These discussions come to a head with the birth of Ursula who is part of the third generation of Brangwens. Ursula seeks a different life from previous generations and does not wish to be restricted to 'circles of confinement' (Melfi, 2001, p.360) although she is equally apprehensive towards this 'fixed, leaping, forward-travelling movement' (*R,* p.189) which urges her towards the future.

Despite many characters of *The Rainbow* possessing uncertainty towards being 'swept forward' (*R,* p.189), Robert Burden (2000) is right to argue that

'Lawrence is not simply against modernity, as has been often claimed' (p.93). *The Rainbow* also embraces the need to adapt and develop as Tom Brangwen is described as possessing a brain which 'was a slow hopeless good-for-nothing' (*R*, p.17). So the difference between Ursula and previous generations of Brangwens, as well as 'forward-travelling movement[s]' (*R,* p.189) and 'circles of confinement' (Melfi, 2001, p.360), is identified through the tension between 'a much older, cyclical theory of history' and a 'modern theory of history as linear, teleological, and progressive' (Burden, 2000, p.102). Ursula is aware that her outlook is at odds with many members of her family, as she perceives:

> Her beloved father [to be] so utterly simple in his demeanour, yet with his strong, dark soul fixed like a root in unexpressed depths that fascinated and terrified her: her mother, so strangely free of all money and convention and fear, entirely indifferent to the world, standing by herself, without connection: her grandmother, who had come from so far and was centred in so wide an horizon ... (*R,* p.246)

For Ursula, her mother and father now seem greatly detached from the world, and appear to be 'fixed' in the past and unable to make the most of new opportunities for work and travel. Whilst previous generations of the Brangwen women only looked ambitiously towards the buzz of the town and 'the spoken world beyond' (*R,* p.10), Ursula embraces it. Even as a young girl, she wants to break away from the close proximity of her family home and 'burst the narrow boundary of Cossethay, where only limited people lived. Outside, was all vastness, and a throng of real, proud people whom she would love' (*R,* p.246). To an extent, Ursula romanticises this new world and the prospect of new places and people. Yet, her outlook also conveys Lawrence's belief that the old must be continually destroyed in order to make way for the new, an impulse which Kinkead-Weekes (1998) stresses is foundational to *The Rainbow*, arguing that:

> The Heraclitean idea of universal flux, enabling disintegration, "corruption", to be seen as a necessary cyclical phase in an ongoing process of creation, would enable him then to write "the second half" of *The Rainbow*, but also ensured that this would differ greatly from its predecessor as it strove to grasp how one mode of violent disintegration could lead to new life, while another became deadly. (p.155)

Although self-development is a positive change, as Ursula grows older she becomes increasingly aware of the harshness and the unfamiliarity of this new world, realising her family's reluctance to be a part of it. Her hope to become a teacher that can nurture and stimulate children is met with the realisation of 'the graceless task of compelling many children into one disciplined, mechanical set, reducing the whole set to an automatic state of obedience' (*R*, p.355).

Despite Ursula's joy at being distanced from the family home, the prison-like quality of the school, combined with this 'mechanical' education system, means that Ursula 'trade[s] one confinement for another' (Ingersoll, 2001, p.61). An increasingly modern England is an exciting prospect for Ursula, but it can also be a:

> hard, stark reality - *reality.* It was queer that she should call this the reality, which she had never known till today, and which now so filled her with dread ... This was the reality ... This prison of a school was reality. (*R,* pp.346-347, emphasis in original)

In light of this new 'reality', the fluid passages which characterise the first half of the novel become harder to find. By disturbing the previous narrative rhythm, Lawrence signifies that the modern world is in some ways incompatible with the flow of blood-consciousness. What was once the gradual unravelling of time, is now replaced with 'the simple, superficial fact of living' where 'each moment was like a separate little island, isolated from time, and blank, unconditioned by time' (*R,* p.320). This segregation of time into spatialised 'island[s]' (*R,* p.320) characterises a narrative which 'jolts forward ... impelled by [a] ceaseless desire to move ... toward the end, as

plot represents a metonymy of the-next-and-the-next-after-that' (Ingersoll, 2001, p.63).

In 'England, My England', Egbert's idyllic life is also interrupted, but this time by the reality of war as the narrative flow is intruded by the "papp!" of guns and stunting 'mechanical action' (p.31). The story conveys that the war quite literally destroys Egbert's natural connection with England as the reader is told that 'his blood lost consciousness' (p.32). The blow to the head that kills Egbert is even more symbolic, as he is forced 'into an agony of [mind] consciousness … gradually the knowledge emerged' ('England, My England', p.33). Similarly, although the early Brangwens do not suffer this violent death, the more rapid intrusion of the modern world in *The Rainbow* effectively ends their existence as they hardly appear in the second half of the novel. There can be no question that Egbert and the early Brangwens are in some ways representative of Melfi's (2001) 'circles of confinement' (p.360), whereas the second half of *The Rainbow* is more associated with the need for 'forward-travelling movement' (*R,* p.189) in order for human beings to evolve.

There is certainly an element of nostalgia that accompanies the descriptions of rural England in both 'England, My England' and *The Rainbow,* yet Lawrence's decision to effectively kill-off Egbert and the early Brangwens shows that blood-consciousness does not only celebrate the past but it is accompanied by an instinct to look forward. Blood-consciousness does not represent an endless flow of repeated experiences, going round in circles for eternity. Instead, in the same way that 'Bergson had used the image of a snowball, rather than a stream, to evoke his time-philosophy' (p.68), blood-consciousness builds up towards transformative encounters. Thus, it is more clearly aligned with Bergsonian "agglomeration" (Fernihough, 2007, p.69) than a constant stream. This idea of a gathering

momentum of the blood is conveyed even in the earlier pages of *The Rainbow* in Will and Anna's sexual relationship. As Will holds Anna 'he felt his heart and all his veins would burst and flood her with his hot, healing blood. He knew his blood would heal and restore her' (*R*, p.145). This 'life of the running blood' (p.266) is not simply an endless fluidity; rather it builds up to 'burst' (*R,* p.145).

The blood-conscious narrative of *The Rainbow* is emblematic of a fluid force that can enable spontaneous self-transformations on an unconscious level. Yet, there is also the image of the blood being cyclically pumped round the body to the same planes and plexuses from the central solar plexus. Ursula is the bridge between the old world and the new, her birth signals the necessity of not surrendering a belief in the power of the blood, but also that life must go on and characters must be willing to accept change in order to remain vital and not become static. For Robert Sale (1959) there is still too much of an obvious split between the ' "felt life" of the first half of the novel' and the 'social history' (p.37) of the second, and this is a split that breaks up the sense of continuity and fluidity which envelops the narrative. Sale (1959) believes that this is disastrous because it is precisely this natural rhythm of the novel which 'enables Lawrence to break down the "old stable ego" '(p.29).

The early Brangwen generations are undoubtedly a new kind of character in comparison to that of *Sons and Lovers.* Yet, their inability to adapt and evolve suggests that it was in Ursula that Lawrence was able to really explore his vision of blood-consciousness with its emphasis on growth, renewal, and transformation within the self. Ursula can straddle the old world of the Brangwens, whilst realising the inevitability of the new world and a need to adjust to it and move forward. Her most significant act in the novel is her final rejection of her lover Anton Skrebensky

who embodies the worst qualities of the modern world. Anton is a soldier but lacks individuality and any firm beliefs to justify his willingness to risk his life. Ursula asks him “What do you fight for, really?” to which Anton replies “I would fight for the nation” (*R*, p.289). Lawrence’s anti-war attitudes clearly influence the construction of Anton here, as when asked what he would do in the absence of fighting, Anton replies:

> “Nothing. I would be in readiness for when I was needed.”
> The answer came in exasperation.
> “It seems to me,” she answered, “as if you weren’t anybody - as if there weren’t anybody there, where you are. Are you anybody, really? You seem like nothing to me.” (*R,* p.289)

This breakdown in conversation and understanding is important because Ursula’s emphasis on ‘anybody’ and ‘nothing’ (*R,* p.289) exudes that Anton has no soul and no substance. These criticisms also bring to mind Lawrence’s claim that ‘that which is physic - non-human in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element’ (*2L*, p.182).

Lawrence switches back and forth between these descriptions of the self throughout the novel reducing characters to their physical properties. Andrew Harrison (2000) stresses that this is because:

> Lawrence perceived the essential being of any living thing to be its sheer physical existence, its ‘protoplasm’, a substance thought to consist of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon and nitrogen in a complex, unstable combination, to have ‘vital properties’, and to constitute the physical basis of life in all plants and animals. (p.33)

Anton lacks these “vital properties” (Harrison, 2000, p.33) and is associated with ‘deadness’ and ‘sterility’ (p.294) as Ursula believes that he has ‘no core’ (*R,* p.300). Because Anton lacks this centre, he is unable to achieve the fluidity and change of self, which Lawrence believed was necessary in human beings and in fictional characters. There is no question that this ‘impersonal’ (Harrison, 2003, p.86)

language of the Futurists was useful for Lawrence in order to describe his characters in a new way. However, he felt that ultimately such descriptions were not wholly sufficient to explain the organic spark in the self. In reference to the Futurists Lawrence states that they are 'stupid ... only look[ing] for the phenomena of the science of physics to be found in human beings' (*2L,* p.183). Again, in reference to the Futurists, Lawrence explained that 'I like them. Only I don't believe in them … it *isn't* art, but ultra scientific attempts to make diagrams of certain physic or mental states' (*2L,* pp.180-181, emphasis in original). Thus, thinking about human beings as made up of 'radically-unchanged element[s]' (*2L,* p.183) could only take Lawrence so far in his hope to express a new form of character.

As discussed previously, Lawrence believed in the conception of spiritual growth that is at odds with the idea of unchanged elements of matter (Harrison, 2003). Yet, it is fair to say that in *The Rainbow* Lawrence was happy to explore both, as the language of Futurism and matter enabled him to describe his characters through a new ego of states rather than their feelings. In comparison, blood-consciousness stands for life beyond any form of ego at all, completely unknown but integral to being. In a significant decision not to sail with Anton to India and become a 'social wife ... a *material* symbol' (p.419, my emphasis), Ursula refuses Anton's desire 'to enclose her, to have her' (*R,* p.299) and therefore trap her within another 'circle of confinement' (Melfi, 2001, p.360). In contrast to Anna's earlier decision to stay at home and be a mother, Ursula now wants 'to create a new knowledge of Eternity in the flux of Time' (*R,* p.456) and become an independent being. Ursula is finally freed from Anton by her miscarriage which ignites a positive cycle of rebirth and growth rather than binding her to an enclosed domestic world.

By the end of *The Rainbow* it is clear that Ursula does not have to abandon the blood-conscious harmony which her ancestors experienced, but she must be open to new modes of living. This is shown by her 'grasp[ing] and grop[ing] to find the creation of the living God, instead of the old, hard barren form of bygone living' (*R,* p.458). Her determination not to be 'a slow hopeless good-for-nothing' (*R*, p.17) like her grandfather, means that she can try to comprehend for herself the very essence of how to sustain a 'living' (*R,* p.458) connection between self and the world.

Through Ursula, Lawrence was able to openly question lines of thought that were very much central in the development of his fiction and philosophy. In a conversation with Dr. Frankstone, 'a woman doctor of physics in the college' (*R,* p.408), Ursula questions how to understand life and what constitutes living things:

> "I don't see why we should attribute some special mystery to life - do you? We don't understand it as we understand electricity ... May it not be that life consists in a complexity of physical and chemical activities, of the same order as the activities we already know in science?" (*R,* p.408)

These 'physical and chemical activities' enable Lawrence to convey a new ego, but in similar terms to Lawrence's own beliefs as explained in *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia,* Ursula asserts that life and electricity are fundamentally incompatible because 'electricity had no soul, light and heat had no soul' (*R,* p.408). Ursula struggles to envisage herself as just a 'conjunction of forces', believing that each one must be brought into existence by some essential source:

> It was alive. She saw it move - she saw the bright mist of its ciliary activity, she saw the gleam of its nucleus, as it slid across the plane of light. What then was its will? If it was a conjunction of forces, physical and chemical, what held these forces unified, and for what purpose were they unified? (*R,* p.408)

'Forces' and chemical reactions alone cannot convey the essential blood-consciousness or the soul of human beings. Without mentioning blood-

consciousness specifically, *The Rainbow* can only hint towards the seat of individuality in every living being, what life essentially is. This cannot be seen, or even articulated in Lawrence's view, but this enduring quality of life which links to Bergson's duration and *élan vital* is Lawrence's motive for dismissing the false old ego. In the novel, Lawrence emphasises that Ursula cannot scientifically render the essence of life itself, as she considers that:

> It intended to be itself. But what self? Suddenly in her mind the world gleamed strangely, with an intense light, like the nucleus of the creature under the microscope. Suddenly she had passed away into an intensely-gleaming light of knowledge. She could not understand what it all was. She only knew that it was not limited mechanical energy, nor mere purpose of self-preservation and self-assertion. (*R,* pp.408-409)

This incomprehensible aspect of life is exactly what Lawrence strove to express throughout his career in a developing philosophy of blood-consciousness. Its early roots are clear to see here in fictional form, as Ursula is asking the very questions which Lawrence was trying to come to terms with through his fiction and philosophy.

Despite the fact that 'the tiny, vivid germ that contained the bud of [Ursula's] real self, her real love, was killed', Lawrence's belief in the ability for blood-consciousness to repair and revitalise the self means that 'she would go on growing as a plant, she would do her best to produce her minor flowers' (*R,* p.332). Lawrence ends his novel with a vision of the rainbow 'arched in [the] blood' (p.459) of the 'world's corruption' (pp.458-459), it 'would quiver to life in their spirit' (*R,* p.459). This rainbow which 'stood on the earth' seems to indicate a hopeful future as Lawrence's symbol of the phoenix suggests that out of the ashes of the past will rise a new age as:

> naked bodies would issue to a new germination, to a new growth ... She saw in the rainbow the earth's new architecture, the old, brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the over-arching heaven. (*R,* p.459)

The Rainbow ends with hope for Ursula's future, but as *Women in Love* traces her growth into adulthood, this optimism seems ill placed. Mark Kinkead-Weekes (1989) has recognised the magnitude of the shift from Lawrence's vision in *The Rainbow* to the apocalyptic creation of *Women in Love* stating that:

> For that richness of texture came from Lawrence's sense of still *belonging,* to a place, a culture, a history; and also to a literary community, an audience which could share and understand. The denunciation and destruction of the novel shattered these conditions for ever. No fiction like *The Rainbow* could come from Lawrence again. (p.136, emphasis in original)

In order to convey the pessimism and violence of *Women in Love*, Chapter Three considers the death of the vital blood-conscious body through the depiction of England as a lifeless human form. Lawrence is already hinting towards this future towards the end of *The Rainbow* as he describes:

> The rigidity of the blank streets, the homogenous amorphous sterility of the whole suggested death rather than life. There was no meeting place, no centre, no artery, no organic formation. There it lay, like the new foundations of a red-brick confusion rapidly spreading, like a skin-disease. (*R,* p.320)

Chapter Three will suggest that the frequent appearance of such deathly passages in *Women in Love* is largely down to the increasing threat of mental-consciousness which in the extreme, will kill the vital organicism of the blood. Focusing on the theme of 'a dying body' (*WL,* p.396), this reading of *Women in Love* will propose that this disillusion with England leads characters to look to the non-human cosmos for meaning and solutions for the ills of the modern world. In doing so, characters consider if death itself is the only way out, questioning whether there may be an immortal part of the self that can outlive the body. So the second part of Chapter Three takes Lawrence's connections with the research of Myers as the focal point, exploring the most mystical and supernatural essence of Lawrence's belief that the blood of human beings is part of a wider universe.

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN IN LOVE - ENGLAND: 'A DYING BODY'

The close proximity between the publication dates of *Women in Love*, *Psychoanalysis*, and *Fantasia* encourages the view that Lawrence was becoming increasingly convinced regarding the significance of blood and mental-consciousness whilst he was writing *Women in Love.* Lawrence's growing belief in, and need for, a philosophy, is shown by his attempt to put together 'a little magazine to be called *The Signature*, where he could do "the preaching", outlining "the beliefs by which one can resurrect the world" ' (Kinkead-Weekes, 1996, p.261). Just over a year and a half later in 1917, Lawrence would write that 'philosophy interests me most now' (*3L,* p.127). The catastrophic deaths as a result of the First World War undoubtedly intensified Lawrence's need to voice his discontent with the world. His inclination towards philosophical thought when writing *Women in Love* is shown by the endless discussions and disagreements that occur as characters struggle to articulate their own views. There is also an extreme sense of frustration and anger that infiltrates the novel and Lawrence's letters of the time, which was partly the result of Frieda's custody battle for her children, as well as Lawrence's ill health and financial struggles.

Lawrence was proud of the final draft of *Women in Love* but he was also highly sceptical as to how it would be received due to the banning of *The Rainbow,* and the subject of war that is so clearly incorporated into it. Lawrence described it as 'terrible and horrible and wonderful … You will hate it and nobody will publish it. But there, these things are beyond us' (*2L*, p.669). But it was in this 'horrible and

wonderful' novel that Lawrence was able to explore the relationship between the blood and mental-consciousness of his characters with greater purpose than ever before. He does so by abandoning the flowing blood-conscious narrative that conveyed the Brangwens lives in *The Rainbow*, replacing it with resounding violence and pessimism, which is representative of wartime England. With this is mind, the first section of this chapter will establish that Lawrence had the subjects of blood and mental-consciousness at the forefront of his mind when creating *Women in Love*. The sense of crisis that is so clearly conveyed in the novel will be attributed to Lawrence's increasing belief that mental-consciousness was reaching epidemic proportions.

Women in Love exudes Lawrence's feeling that 'the old order is done for, toppling on top of us' (*2L*, p.526); as such, the second part of this chapter will question whether characters see any reason for hope, or if England is simply 'a dying body' (*WL,* p.396) with no future. This notion of 'a dying body' is a subject that resonates on many levels which will inform this chapter. In its most extreme state, mental-consciousness epitomises what Lawrence perceived to be the death of the vital blood-conscious body. *Women in Love* includes the deaths of many characters including Mr Crich, Gerald and Diana, but there is also a more philosophical exploration of the meaning of death within the text. So the second section of this chapter will identify that *Women in Love* explores the possibility that bodily-death may not necessarily mean the end of the spiritual life of the soul. By probing into supernatural issues such as this, and given Lawrence's belief in the non-human world of the cosmos, his philosophy and fiction will be connected to the psychical research of Myers. These interconnected concerns for mental-consciousness and

the possibility of exceeding it through death, come to a head in *Women in Love* which is concerned with the agonizing death of a country and its culture.

THE CRISIS OF MENTAL-CONSCIOUSNESS

In the foreword to *Women in Love* Lawrence claims that 'we are now in a period of crisis' (*WL*, p.486), centralising a term that is not only applicable to Lawrence's writing, but is now a well-established idea at the heart of literary modernism, as explained by Anne Wright's (1984) *Literature of Crisis*. Wright focuses on *Women in Love* in parallel with other works such as *Howards End* (1910) and *The Waste Land* (1922) which all denote 'the fracturing or dismantling of personal relations, of social institutions, of civilisation' (1984, p.3). Yet, *Women in Love* is not simply relaying the notion of crisis that characterises the state of England and its people, rather Lawrence and his characters are involved in the 'struggle for verbal consciousness [which] should not be left out in art. It is a very great part of life. It is not superimposition of a theory. *It is the passionate struggle into conscious being'* ('Foreword to *WL',* p.486, emphasis in original). By attempting to 'verbal[ise]' exactly what constitutes this crisis, Lawrence is directly comprehending what mental-consciousness is and how, or if, it can be avoided.

By suggesting that *Women in Love* demonstrates the 'Crisis of Mental-Consciousness' in England, this thesis does not propose that Lawrence attempted to theorise or workout his philosophy in his fiction. Rather, it should be recognised that writing this novel enabled Lawrence to explore his ideas regarding blood and mental-consciousness in light of his serious concerns for humanity and the future of his homeland. This vital tension between philosophy and fiction is emphasised in a

discussion between Ursula and the artist Loerke who debate whether art bears any significance to life. Loerke claims that his art exists separately to any projection of himself or the real world, stating:

> "It is a work of art, it is a picture of nothing, of absolutely nothing. It has nothing to do with anything but itself, it has no relation with the everyday world of this and the other, there is no connection between them, absolutely none, they are two different and distinct planes of existence, and to translate one into the other is worse than foolish" ... (*WL,* p.430)

On the one hand, Lawrence would agree with Loerke because, as shown in his criticism of the realist authors in Chapter Two, he did not think that art should be restricted to having meaning only in relation to its author or painter. Yet, at the same time, Lawrence also felt that art must reveal something of its creator and their subjective take on the world. Ursula adopts this latter stance claiming that:

> "As for your world of art and your world of reality," she replied; "you have to separate the two, because you can't bear to know what you are. You can't bear to realise what a stock, stiff, hide-bound brutality you *are* really, so you say 'it's the world of art'. The world of art is only the truth about the real world, that's all - but you are too far gone to see it." (*WL,* p.431, emphasis in original)

Women in Love is also making a serious comment on the 'real world' as Lawrence wanted to create a novel that could help to transform the way people think about modern life in England. Throughout this chapter the focus will be upon Lawrence's effort to bring into 'verbal consciousness' ('Foreword to *WL*', p.486) his own specific take on this crisis without destroying the work of art.

There are many different contributing factors as to why Lawrence felt the word crisis was fitting to depict the state of humanity in 1919, but I want to think specifically about how he explores this in relation to mental-consciousness. One hugely significant issue which was raised in Chapter Two, was the growth of industry and the building-up of cities that Lawrence experienced in his lifetime. As stated, this had a huge impact upon his ability to envisage human beings as vital and blood-

conscious. The contrast between the opening pages of *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow* is arresting, and conveys that Lawrence's attitude towards England had changed considerably by the time he had written the latter novel. The positive connection between mankind and the earth in *The Rainbow,* is replaced by 'ugly, meaningless people' and a 'defaced countryside' (*WL,* p.11). The narrative conveys Ursula and Gudrun's antagonism towards what used to be their home, describing that:

> The sisters were crossing a black path through a dark, soiled field. On the left was a large landscape, a valley with collieries, and opposite hills with cornfields and woods, all blackened with distance, as if seen through a veil of crape. White and black smoke rose up in steady columns, magic within the dark air. Near at hand came the long rows of dwellings, approaching curved up the hill-slope, in straight lines along the brow of the hill. They were of darkened red brick, brittle, with dark slate roofs. (*WL,* p.11)

Lawrence's presentation of the miners is once again split, as on the one hand their 'voices sounded out with strong intonation, and the broad dialect was curiously caressing to the blood', yet, Gudrun thinks that 'they sounded also like strange machines, heavy, oiled … like that of machinery, cold and iron' (*WL,* p.115). Throughout the novel, there are references to human beings that are governed by the 'machine principles' (p.42) of an 'automatized psyche' (*PU,* p.43) rather than the spontaneous blood-flow. This relates to Lawrence's belief that people are divided between their 'spontaneous creativity' and 'mechanical-material activity' ('Democracy', p.79), but that the latter impulse is made stronger by the state of modern England.

This is why *Women in Love* presents human beings that reflect the 'material world' ('Democracy', p.79) as the idea of the body as a machine suggests the danger of becoming subject to the 'finite and static' (*FU,* p.106) quality of the mind which is dominated by 'fixed aspirations or ideals' ('Democracy', p.79). Lawrence's feeling

that ‘the whole of modern life’ is nothing but ‘a shrieking failure’ (*PU,* p.41) clearly influenced the creation of characters such as Gerald Crich who “was in the last war” (*WL,* p.64), and is described as soulless with his body described as a machine. His spine is likened to ‘a fearful source of power’ (p.72) whilst ‘rapid vibrations ran through his blood’ (*WL,* p.73). Not only this, but Gerald’s ‘nerves were on fire, as with a subtle friction of electricity’ (*WL,* p.73) so that he embodies the industrial age he is a part of. All of these references to a mechanical body are clearly against Lawrence’s belief in the importance of spontaneous organic vitality in the self. Emphasis is placed upon the power of Gerald’s ‘fierce, electric energy [which] seemed to flow over all his limbs’ (*WL,* p.399), but the implication is that this is incompatible with a more significant form of sensual and spiritual energy.

Beatrice Monaco (2008) has also considered this connection between the human body and the machine in modernist literature. She states that ‘modernity is revealed as offering no redemption, but a purely destructive set of social conditions’ (p.129), which is represented through ‘a (significant) shift from a human machinic to a mechanical, mental one [where] the machine relation of the primitive - mind-body - has been replaced with the hierarchical dichotomy - mind over body’ (Monaco, 2008, p.81). The ability of the mind to dominate the body is a central principal that underlies Lawrence’s description of mental-consciousness in his later philosophy, and is also largely connected to his conception of human-will.

In his essay ‘The Reality of Peace’ (1917) Lawrence identifies will as a necessary guiding force of mental-consciousness. Using the analogy of a river, he writes that:

> This is peace like a river to flow upon the tide of the creative direction, towards an end we know nothing of, but which only fills us with bliss of confidence. Our will is a rudder that steers us and keeps us faithfully adjusted to the current. Our will is the strength that throws itself upon the tiller when we

> are caught by a wrong current … Our will is never tired of adjusting the helm according to our pure understanding. Our will is prompt and ready to shove off from any obstruction, to overcome any impediment. We steer with the subtlety of understanding, and the strength of our will sees us through. (‘The Reality of Peace’, p.28)

Yet, Lawrence’s fierce rejection of will in the majority of his writing indicates that his views regarding the detrimental aspects of rationality were influenced by his reading of Nietzsche. Although it is unclear just how in-depth Lawrence’s knowledge of Nietzsche was, the numerous references to ‘will’ throughout *Women in Love* and the references to Nietzschean terms and works in his letters (*2L,* pp.489, 546), suggest that Lawrence was inspired by Nietzsche’s concept of will in order to formulate his own ideas. Lawrence increasingly believed that will could overpower the blood-conscious self, no longer steering it in a ‘creative direction’ (‘The Reality of Peace’, p.28). As Colin Milton (1987) has pointed out, this is a notion that clearly links Lawrence and Nietzsche because both of these men:

> agree that consciousness and intellect can develop to the point where they undermine the “needs and purposes of life” but both see this as a threat to the continuing vigour and even survival of man rather than as something to be admired … Both argue that reason and consciousness should remain in their subsidiary role as instruments of the unconscious, and that instinct rather than intellect should guide our lives. (p.8)

As ‘The Reality of Peace’ warns not to lose oneself or become ‘wrecked nor stranded nor clogged in the weeds’ (p.28) of the stream, ‘Nietzsche considers that individuality depends on the successful integration of the group of “wills” which makes up the “self” ’ (Milton, 1987, p.121). Although Nietzsche and Lawrence possessed individual ideas as to what constitutes will, Nietzsche’s suggestion of ‘mastery’ (p.188) appealed to Lawrence as an ‘unnatural and damaging dominance of consciousness over instinct’ which is particularly prominent in ‘modern, developed societies’ where characters are ruled by ‘value-systems in which the most important element is some variety of “herd-morality” ’(Milton, 1987, p.161).

In *Women in Love* it is clear that many of Lawrence's characters are shown to be at the mercy of such a will, evoking Nietzsche's presentation of Europeans as 'a shrunken, almost ludicrous species, a herd animal, something full of good will, sickly and mediocre' (*Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886, p.89). In the chapter entitled 'The Industrial Magnate', Lawrence conveys similar ideas as Gerald and the miners are criticised for their submission to a de-humanising system:

> The joy went out of their lives, the hope seemed to perish as they became more and more mechanised. And yet they accepted the new conditions. They even got a further satisfaction out of them ... Gerald was their high priest, he represented the religion they really felt ... The men were satisfied to belong to the great and wonderful machine, even whilst it destroyed them. (*WL,* pp.230-231)

Lawrence envisages industry as a new 'religion' that has replaced Christianity and has been accepted blindly and willingly by society. In *Women in Love,* Gerald is a driving-force behind this new religion and all that matters to him is 'the great social productive machine' (*WL,* p.227). However, he is not the only character who exhibits the damaging effects of mental-consciousness, as modern-will is presented in another form through the 'intellectuality' (*WL,* p.16) of Hermione who flags up previous discussions from the Introduction regarding Lawrence's views on education.

Hermione is described as 'nerve-worn with consciousness', and like Gerald she is a 'tortured' (*WL,* p.16) soul whose faults are most often revealed in conversations with Rupert Birkin who is her former lover and a friend of Gerald. Birkin is appalled by Hermione's mental-conscious 'will' (*WL,* p.140) which is a specific conception of female-will that Lawrence felt was destructive to men. In a conversation between the two characters, this issue of will is central as Hermione states that:

> "I have *made* myself well. I was a very queer and nervous girl. And by learning to use my will, simply by using my will, I *made* myself right".

> "It is fatal to use the will like that," cried Birkin harshly, "disgusting. Such a will is an obscenity". (*WL,* p.140, emphasis in original)

Birkin criticises Hermione with more ferocity than he ever does Gerald, turning attention to 'her mind [that] remained unbroken, [and] her will [that] was still perfect' (*WL,* p.140). Hermione possesses some insight into how mental-consciousness develops and the dangers of it, as she questions:

> "Rupert; *do* you think the children are better, richer, happier, for all this knowledge, do you really think they are? Or is it better to leave them untouched, spontaneous. Hadn't they better be *animals*, simple animals, crude, violent, *anything*, rather than this self-consciousness, this incapacity to be spontaneous." (*WL,* p.40, emphasis in original)

This position seems to be so clearly aligned with Lawrence's own ideas that it is surprising when Birkin - a character that expresses Lawrentian views elsewhere - is so vehemently disparaging in response. Birkin strikes back, declaring that:

> "You are merely making words," … "knowledge means everything to you. Even your animalism, you want it in your head. You don't want to *be* an animal, you want to observe your own animal functions, to get a mental thrill out of them. It is all purely secondary - and more decadent than the most hide-bound intellectualism. What is it but the worst and last form of intellectualism, this love of yours for passion and the animal instincts? Passion and the instincts - you want them hard enough, but through your head, in your consciousness. It all takes place in your head, under that skull of yours." (*WL,* p.41, emphasis in original)

Ironically, by self-consciously questioning the nature of intuition and 'instincts', Hermione ends up intellectualising them, bringing them into consciousness. Throughout the novel, Birkin's verbal attacks on Hermione are relentless and the comment is almost always the same as he continues to express her dependency upon the acquirement and possession of knowledge. Another example of this is when he claims "what you want is pornography - looking at yourself in mirrors, watching your naked animal actions in mirrors, so that you can have it all in your consciousness, make it all mental" (*WL*, p.42).

From these discussions it is evident that Lawrence uses the same language and expressions to depict characters such as Gerald and Hermione as he does to explain his belief in mental-consciousness. Even a minor character of Halliday's bohemian circle contributes towards the debate of what is wrong with life in England. As Gerald and Maxim discuss why life is better when one abandons self-consciousness and a civilized demeanour, Maxim argues that being naked is an important experience that can help rectify a lack of vital contact between human beings. He claims that:

> one would *feel* things instead of merely looking at them. I should feel the air move against me, and feel the things I touched, instead of having only to look at them. I'm sure life is all wrong because it has become much too visual - we can neither hear nor feel not understand, we can only see. I'm sure that is entirely wrong." (*WL,* p.78, emphasis in original)

The allegiance between these views and Birkin's opinions are made clear in a scene where Birkin abandons his clothes after being attacked by Hermione, seeking the 'coolness and subtlety of vegetation travelling into one's blood' (*WL,* p.107).
It is no coincidence that *Women in Love* focuses intently upon male nakedness through Gerald and Birkin wrestling in 'Gladiatorial', the naked bohemians at Halliday's flat, as well as Birkin's desire for nakedness with nature.

Lawrence also considers the need to re-kindle touch and bodily contact with another male body in his short story 'The Blind Man' (1920). In it, Maurice Pervin's blindness means that he experiences the 'sheer immediacy of blood-contact' rather than 'the intervention of visual consciousness' (p.54). Maurice's wife hopes to find him a male friend and so invites Bertie to their house. In a moment alone together, Bertie finds himself:

> under the power of the blind man, as if hypnotised. He lifted his hand, and laid the fingers on the scar, on the scarred eyes. Maurice suddenly covered them with his own hand, pressed the fingers of the other man upon his disfigured eye-sockets, trembling in every fibre, and rocking slightly, slowly, from side to

> side. He remained thus for a minute or more, whilst Bertie stood as if in a swoon, unconscious, imprisoned. ('The Blind Man', p.62)

Birkin's hope to find an 'extra-human relationship' (*WL,* p.363) with Gerald is mirrored here as Maurice exclaims "we shall know each other now, shan't we? We shall know each other now" ('The Blind Man', p.62). This is the same form of knowing that Birkin seeks with Gerald when they wrestle, it is a knowledge of the body that is beyond consciousness. Lawrence was open to the possibility of a bodily union between men in order to create alternative meaningful relationships that are free from specifically female will that he envisaged as a product of mental-consciousness. However, as with *Women in Love*, there is an element of uncertainty and even 'revulsion' ('The Blind Man', p.62) that accompanies these intimate moments between men. Birkin is the instigator in desiring an intense male-friendship with Gerald, as Maurice is the instigator in 'The Blind Man', shown as the narrative reveals that 'whereas Maurice was actually filled with hot, poignant love, the passion of friendship … it was this very passion of friendship which Bertie shrank from the most' ('The Blind Man', p.62).

At times in *Women in Love* Birkin seems to achieve peace and happiness with Ursula, yet in strikingly similar terms to Maurice's experiences with his wife in 'The Blind Man', these are only fleeting moments. For the large part of *Women in Love* Birkin is very much struggling to express what he wants from Ursula, and how blood-consciousness can be restored in the people of England. Like Maurice, Birkin is associated with:

> the rich suffusion of [a] state [that] generally kept him happy, reaching its culmination in the consuming passion for his wife. But at times the flow would seem to be checked and thrown back. Then it would beat inside him like a tangled sea, and he was tortured in the shattered chaos of his own blood. ('The Blind Man', p.54)

On the one hand, Birkin's determination not to close himself to new modes of experience is a positive thing, but it also has consequences for his relationships with women. Hermione is not the only female character of *Women in Love* to be subjected to Birkin's prophetic speeches, Ursula is also on the receiving end after asking:

> "But do you really *want* sensuality?" …
>
> Birkin looked at her, and became intent in his explanation.
>
> "Yes," he said, "that, and nothing else, at this point. It is a fulfilment - the great dark knowledge you can't have in your head - the dark involuntary being. It is death to one self - but it is the coming into being of another."
>
> "But how? How can you have knowledge not in your head?" she asked, quite unable to interpret his phrases.
>
> "In the blood," he answered; "when the mind and the known world is drowned in darkness. - Everything must go - there must be the deluge. Then you find yourself a palpable body of darkness, a demon -" (*WL,* p.43, emphasis in original)

This conversation eliminates any element of doubt as to whether Birkin is in possession of blood-conscious beliefs like his author. The irony is that although Birkin articulates these Lawrentian ideas regarding mental-consciousness and why it must be avoided at all costs, he too is also characterised as struggling within his own internal crisis of "knowledge … of [the] head" (*WL,* p.43). Birkin is a self-proclaimed "word-bag" (*WL,* p.188), so that when he tries to fight off Ursula's incessant desire to be 'loved', Ursula comes back with a chilling and insightful blow, exclaiming ' "Let myself go! ... It is you who can't let yourself go ... you preacher" ... The amount of truth that was in this made him still and unheeding of her' (*WL,* p.251).

As such, Lawrence highlights the fundamental inconsistencies in the verbal attacks Birkin issues against Hermione and Ursula and their female will, as Birkin seems willing to ignore Gerald's deficiencies simply because he is male. The homoerotically charged scene of Birkin and Gerald wrestling is full of language that insinuates the merging of two distinct selves which Birkin strives to avoid with Ursula.

Terms such as ‘oneness ... interfuse ... knotting’ describe their ‘entwined’ (*WL,* p.270) bodies, leading Ursula to point out the discrepancy between Birkin’s didactic claims and his own behaviour, asking:

> “Why can’t you be single by yourself, as you are always saying? - You try to bully Gerald - as you tried to bully Hermione. - You must learn to be alone. - And it’s so horrid of you. You’ve got me” ...
>
> “It’s the problem I can’t solve. I *know* I want a perfect and complete relationship with you: and we’ve nearly got it - we really have. - But beyond that. *Do* I want a real, ultimate relationship with Gerald. Do I want a final, almost extra-human relationship with him - a relationship in the ultimates of me and him - or don’t I?” (*WL,* p.363, emphasis in original)

Michael Black (2001) maintains that this desire for a ‘real, ultimate relationship’ with Gerald does not mean that Birkin is ‘homosexual or bisexual’ (p.213). Rather, ‘the desire for a lifelong bond with another man is a strong emotional need, even an intellectual one’ (p.213). Although this may be the case, Birkin’s ambiguous friendship with Gerald still compromises his ability to transcend a purely physical or spiritual relationship with Ursula. Despite this potentially homosexual subtext within the novel, the main contradictory nature of Birkin’s character lies in the highly intellectual and thought-out nature of his arguments, which, ironically involve him criticising mental-activity and knowledge. Thus, Birkin voices his belief in the values of blood-consciousness whilst also being aware of his inability to escape from mental-consciousness, an issue that frustrates him throughout the novel.

Through characters such as Birkin and Gerald, Lawrence is clearly exploring the relationship between blood and mental-consciousness, and Lawrence’s essay ‘The Crown’, which was begun in 1915 and completed in 1925 shows definite progression towards key concepts of Lawrence’s philosophy. He warns that ‘if the whole quick dies ... there remain only the material, mechanical, unquickened tissue, acting at the bidding of the mechanical will, and the sterile ego triumphant, then it is a poor tale, a barrenly poor tale’ (‘The Crown’, pp.290-291). Yet, the presentation of

Birkin's impossible split between his belief in blood-consciousness and his awareness of the equal strength of his mental-conscious impulses means it is difficult to ascertain if the real crisis of mental-consciousness is that it is inevitable and unavoidable.

In 'The Crown' Lawrence conveys the affinity between the dualistic forces of blood and mental-consciousness through the metaphor of waves, a significant idea that helped Lawrence to envision the characters of his novels. He expresses that the essence of human existence involves being subjected to the touching, then pulling apart of separate impulses within the self. Lawrence declares that:

> I know I am compound of two waves, I, who am temporal and mortal. When I am timeless and absolute, all duality has vanished. But whilst I am temporal and mortal, I am framed in the struggle and embrace of the two opposite waves of darkness and of light. ('The Crown', p.265)

Here Lawrence clarifies that the 'struggle' of these waves is not to be feared, instead the real danger lies in the ceasing of the struggle, and if human beings surrender entirely to one impulse. Thus, although characters such as Gerald and Hermione are presented as mental-conscious beings, they still possess the ability to recover blood-consciousness and revert the crisis of mental-consciousness. 'The Crown' insinuates that this sense of 'duality' (p.265) is an essential characteristic of how human beings live, and that blood and mental-consciousness can never be totally distinct from one another, instead:

> They ebb back and away ...
> Yet they never separate. The whole flood recedes, the tides are going to separate. And they separate entirely, save for one enfolded ripple, the tiny, silent, scarce-visible enfolded pools of the seeds. These lie potent, the meeting-ground, the well-head wherein the tides will surge again, when the turn comes. ('The Crown', p.264)

These aspects of Lawrence's philosophy encourage a reading of *Women in Love* whereby characters still possess the 'tiny' possibility of recovering the lost balance of

the psyche, insinuating that there is hope for the future despite the overall pessimism of the novel.

Despite this, some critics that have been unsatisfied with how Lawrence presents blood and mental-consciousness in his novels, and how he describes the relationship between the two in his philosophy. For instance, Travis (1968) believes that Lawrence's treatment of 'dualisms' such as blood and mental-consciousness leads him to create a limiting and 'inflexible doctrine' (p.163). Such an assertion is understandable, as despite the claims Lawrence makes in 'The Crown' it is hard to envisage Gerald as anything but the embodiment of mental-consciousness. Asai (2007) offers a different approach, questioning 'what does [Lawrence] mean by saying that blood-consciousness is dominated by mental-consciousness? And if it is, is this such an abominable thing as he asserts?' (p.1). Asai (2007) believes that it is:

> somewhat unfair [that Lawrence] neglect[s] to acknowledge the positive aspects of mental-consciousness. These aspects include logical thinking and the self-reflective function which enables man to take the role of other, hence his ability to sympathize, empathize, and have compassion. (p.3)

Asai makes an important point as, in Birkin's case; it can be his lack of mental-consciousness rather than blood-consciousness that stifles the development of his personal relationships. More often than not, Birkin does think 'logical[ly]', instead he gets carried away in hyperbolic rants, nor is he able to 'sympathize' or 'empathize' (Asai, 2007, p.3) with other characters in many instances.

These discussions highlight that mental-consciousness is not only represented through a crisis of the self, but the issue is also how to find an equilibrium between these 'two forms of knowing' (Asai, 2007, p.2). Birkin may voice the need for the blood-consciousness, but he would not be able to engage in such complex debates regarding the nature of being in the modern world without the benefits of mental-consciousness. Thus, instead of Lawrence creating

straightforward representations of mental-consciousness in *Women in Love*, he consciously enters a much wider discussion about the relationship between blood and mental-knowledge.

The issue is therefore not to avoid mental-consciousness altogether, but how to avoid it becoming over-heightened to a crisis point. Yet, *Women in Love*'s late reference to England as a 'dying body' (*WL,* p.396), as well as Lawrence's contemplation over 'Dies Irae' or 'day of wrath' (*2L*, p.669) as a potential title for the novel, suggests that perhaps Lawrence remained uncertain as to how this crisis could be deterred. Jack Stewart (1995) highlights an important element of myth which underlies the novel and particularly its ending, as 'myths of flood and fall converge ... [so that] only a flood of blood-consciousness can sweep away the ingrained habits of mental consciousness' (p.447). Inge Padkaer-Nielsen (1990) similarly states that blood-consciousness can offer a way of starting again, washing away the sin of mankind allowing people to return to the edenic world which was lost. This is a notion that is evident in *Fantasia*'s emphasis upon 're-establish[ing] the broken connection with what Lawrence calls *blood-consciousness'* (Padkaer-Nielsen, 1990, p.281, emphasis in original).

Despite this, as the narrative of *Women in Love* progresses there is little sign that the decadence associated with modern civilization can be stopped. Birkin appears to be aware of the faults of modern England but he is certainly an unlikely hero, ridiculed for 'think[ing] he is the saviour of man' and viewed as a 'megalomaniac' (*WL,* p.384). These facts have led Stevens (2007) to suggest that although Lawrence's earlier fiction 'leaves an ideal of organicism intact' through the opposition between 'healthy rural communities and damaging industrialism', *Women in Love* fails to do this, so that:

> Lawrence's metaphysic of blood-consciousness no longer attaches itself or works within any particular community. If it survives at all, it survives only as an unrealized ideal awaiting the discovery of or creation of a place in which it might be lived out; or within an individualism which is suspicious of community; or within sexual relations outside the dominant ordering of marital domesticity and familial life. (p.147)

As a result of the irresolution which characterises the relationships of Birkin and Ursula as well as Gerald and Gudrun, Stevens (2007) points out that 'it seems … Lawrence was much more skilled at expressing his angry disgust at modernity than he was at suggesting solutions to the problems he identified' (p.147). Yet, if blood-consciousness is ultimately an ideal, is it any less of an idealised position to claim to have the answers for a whole nation in crisis?

With this in mind, it becomes clearer why Lawrence creates Birkin as such an obviously flawed character. *Women in Love* cannot, and will not, attempt to provide a detailed proposal for the saviour of mankind, because as stated, Lawrence's writing about blood and mental-consciousness in his fiction never depicts them as totally fixed or soluble. Instead, the irresolution that accompanies his writing on the unconscious and being, is a fundamental part of the interrogative nature of his fiction. Joyce Carol Oates (1978) sums this position up, stressing that:

> One feels that he writes to discover what he thinks, what is thinking in him, on an unconscious level. Love is an ecstatic experience. Or is it, perhaps, a delusion? Erotic love is a way of salvation - or is it a distraction, a burden? ... Lawrence does not really know, regardless of his dogmatic remarks about "mind-consciousness" and "blood-consciousness". He cannot *know;* he must continually strive to know, and accept continual frustration. (pp.30-31, emphasis in original)

Women in Love expresses the fact that Lawrence had no straightforward answer as to how to get out of the current crisis, yet, this does not deter his characters from striving to know' (Oates, 1978, p.31). One way that a number of characters seek to come to terms with the state of England is by looking out to the mystery of the cosmos for answers. Lawrence's openness towards cosmology certainly infiltrates

Women in Love and is an essential concern that brings Lawrence's fiction and philosophy into direct correspondence with the work of Myers.

F.W.H. MYERS AND AN IMMORTAL SPIRIT

Myers's belief in subliminal consciousness and his investigations into supernatural questions were hugely significant in shaping theories of the unconscious which strongly influenced Lawrence's thinking. Freud was extremely interested in the SPR and as Jan Campbell (2009) and James P. Keeley (2001) have identified, there was a great sense of rivalry between Myers's subliminal self and the unconscious of psychoanalysis. There was genuine intrigue and excitement surrounding the SPR's areas of investigation which was a great source of creative inspiration for writers such as Lawrence. When looking in closer detail at Chapter One's discussion of the importance of the 'Non-Human Cosmos' in Lawrence's philosophy, then the link between these men becomes even more transparent.

Pamela Thurschwell (2001) identifies that when considering 'the human subject', Freud's psychoanalysis is 'inward-looking' towards the 'subject's past' (p.18) for answers, whilst Myers is 'outward-looking, foreseeing the future' and 'the possibility of surviving death' (p.19). Like Freud, Lawrence is 'inward-looking' when he draws attention to the individual human body. Yet, there are many examples of the characters of *Women in Love* looking 'outward', as Birkin questions 'is every man's life subject to pure accident, is it only the race, the genus, the species, that has universal reference? ... Has *everything* that happens a universal significance? Has it?' (*WL,* p.26, emphasis in original). Such questions correspond to Chapter

Two's evaluation of how Lawrence attempted to avoid the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) through characters questioning their place in the universe.

Whereas Harrison (2003) emphasises the impact of the Futurists upon Lawrence's construction of character, Luckhurst (2002) enables insight into why the Myersian-self helped inspire the depiction of characters in *Women in Love*, stating that:

> Tom Gibbons has claimed *direct* borrowing from Myers in one of D.H. Lawrence's most cited passages on his new approach to character. Writing to Edward Garnett in 1914 Lawrence warned that "the old stable ego" coexisted with "another ego". These were in "allotropic states", as diamond and coal were different forms of carbon. The term "allotropic" and the carbon metaphor are repeated from Myers's *Human Personality.* Lawrence, contemptuous of Ouspenskian mysticism or Freudianism, relied on Myersian terms for psychical states because these shared his disgust of mechanical or reductionist accounts for more dynamic, inherently metaphorical language. (p.259, emphasis in original)

The incorporation of such language is evident when Gerald is compared to 'radium … [the] fatal, living metal' (p.396), the fact that Birkin 'could feel his blood changing like quicksilver' (p.252), and the 'electric vibration in [Gudrun's] veins' (*WL,* p.119). However, such references are not the only reason to bring Lawrence into dialogue with Myers.

Lawrence's frustration with Freud's 'more unitary consciousness (which is always threatened with division)', means that Myers offers a viable alternative model through a subliminal self that leans towards 'a multiple view of consciousness' (Campbell, 2009, p.14). For Myers, the "subliminal" is psychical action which acts 'below the threshold of ordinary, empirical consciousness' (p.57), meaning that he envisaged a 'multiplicity of selves, each one potentially transcendent at any given moment' (Johnson, 2005, p.58). Lawrence and Myers both attempt to convey the changeable and spontaneous nature of being. Lawrence does this through blood-consciousness and the solar plexus, whilst Myers puts forward the notion of:

> a threshold in our being, above which ideas and sensations must rise if we wish to cognise them, we may prefer to regard it as a segment of our being into which ideas and sensations may enter from below or above. (Campbell, 2009, p.13)

There are definite affiliations here between Lawrence's solar plexus existing between 'the lower' and 'the upper plane' (*FU,* p.88), alongside the Myersian segment, as it too can be infiltrated from 'below or above' (Campbell, 2009, p.13). Like blood-consciousness, Myers's view of the self attempts to account for the most inexplicable and unknown potential of human beings, as he envisages:

> the subliminal self as an electro-magnetic spectrum, where light filtered through a prism reveals a full spectrum of colours. Perception of this spectrum is limited by our vision of it, in the sense that the rays or waves of this spectrum far exceed what we can be aware of. (Campbell, 2009, p.14)

Lawrence's story 'The Blind Man' resonates once again here, as well as Birkin's emphasis upon the real nature of life that exists beyond 'vision' or sensory awareness. When attempting to explain to Ursula this 'invisible' quality of 'existence' (*WL,* p.147) which lies beyond perception or conscious knowledge, Birkin gets exasperated stating:

> "Don't you see that it's not a question of a visual appreciation in the least" … "I don't *want* to see you. I've seen plenty of women, I'm sick and weary of seeing them. I want a woman I don't see."
>
> "I'm sorry I can't oblige you by being invisible," she laughed.
>
> "Yes," he said, "you are invisible to me, if you don't force me to be visually aware of you" ...
>
> "I want to find you, where you don't know your own existence, the you that your common self denies utterly. But I don't want your good looks, and I don't want your womanly feelings, and I don't want your thoughts nor opinions nor your ideas - they are all bag-atelles to me." (*WL,* p.147, emphasis in original)

Ursula struggles to understand Birkin's meaning as she depends upon more conventional terms such as 'love' (*WL,* p.369) to describe their relationship. Birkin's emphasis on 'you, where you don't know your own existence' (*WL,* p.147) seems to suggest a mystical way of thinking about psychical boundaries in the self, whilst asserting the possibility of unknown regions of the mind.

Women in Love is unquestionably built upon the struggle for human beings to connect and nurture relationships in times of crisis, but by linking up Lawrence's beliefs to that of Myers, it is also clear that Lawrence is intent upon emphasising the non-human cosmos and unknown regions of the psychical and physical body. This is why there is such disregard for "feelings" and "thoughts" (*WL,* p.147) in *Women in Love,* as Lawrence takes his former rejection of the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) to new heights. Birkin considers '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' (*WL,* p.369). As Monaco (2008) stresses, Myers's research would have 'exerted a strong influence on a thinker such as Lawrence who was seeking ways out of normative concepts of the human' (p.57). By discouraging the concept of a fixed "I" (*WL,* p.369) to his characters, Lawrence reinforces the idea of fluidity between blood and mental-conscious states, discrediting criticism that suggests Lawrence is only capable of envisioning characters as either blood or mental-conscious.

Lawrence and Myers can thus be connected as (like blood-consciousness) the 'subliminal self' is at odds with Freud's 'container model of the unconscious lying beneath conscious awareness' (Campbell, 2009, p.13). Although there can be no question that Lawrence wanted to emphasise the mental-conscious qualities of Gerald and Gudrun, it is important to recognise that alongside representations of them as being ruled by the mind, they are still described through the terms of the blood in some instances. Lawrence writes that 'the lovely, creative warmth flooded through [Gerald] like a sleep' (p.345), and that Gudrun's state is 'fluid' and 'melting' in a 'flow' (*WL,* p331). Even when Gerald is at his most dangerous towards the end of the novel, his heart is still pumping 'hot blood ... through his veins' (p.444).

Although Lawrence emphasises the destructive desires of Gerald and Gudrun, it is no coincidence that these deathly characters are also extremely creative and successful. As Adam Crabtree (2007) states, Myers 'belie[ved] that the Subliminal is the source of both the pathological and the sublime, disturbance and inspired genius, the normal and the supernormal' (p.331). Similarly, Gerald is an innovator, bringing his father's mines to new levels of success and productivity, and Gudrun is a promising artist. The later introduction of Loerke, another artist, indicates that Lawrence saw pathological tendencies as also part of brilliance. Described as 'a little obscene monster of the darkness' (*WL,* p.428), Loerke's creative genius comes hand in hand with his eccentricity and his violent outbursts.

Thus, there are definite reasons to associate Lawrence's thinking on blood and mental-consciousness with Myers's belief in the subliminal. Yet, the most striking connection between these thinkers relates back to Birkin's question of the significance of human beings in the scheme of the universe, as well as when Gudrun questions 'what would she do with herself, when she had destroyed herself? For if spirit, if integral being is destructible, Matter is indestructible' (*WL*, p.396). By incorporating these questions into his fiction Lawrence is in line with modernisms':

> attempts to render human subjectivity in ways more real than realism: to represent consciousness, perception, emotion, meaning and the individual's relation to society through interior monologue, stream of consciousness, tunnelling, defamiliarisation, rhythm, irresolution and other terms. (Childs, 2000, p.3)

Women in Love is not simply a novel that wishes to identify how bad the world has become, rather it is about characters striving to find 'meaning' by intensive self-questioning and the exploration of alternative belief-systems to Christianity. Lawrence depicts uncertainty for the future of England by 'deploy[ing] uncanny, supernatural imagery primarily to convey unindividualized characters' (Johnson,

2005, p.156). In doing so, Lawrence was able to evoke just how ‘strange this modern world we have created really is, how much we have normalised it, when in fact modernity is far from normal’ (Monaco, 2008, p.137). Such uncanny language is incorporated to denote Lawrence’s perceptions of London in his letters, as he states that ‘people are not people any more: they are factors, really ghastly, like Lemures, evil spirits of the dead’ (*3L*, p.170). Similarly, Gudrun apprehends the mining Midlands as “like a country in an underworld” (*WL,* p.11) so much so that the miners hardly seem like human beings. Instead, she views them as “ghouls, and everything is ghostly. Every-thing is a ghoulish replica of the real world, a replica, a ghoul, all soiled, everything sordid” (*WL,* p.11). By asserting images of the uncanny and the possibilities of a supernatural world, *Women in Love* presents its characters as in self-crisis, as they engage in debates relating to the possibility of life beyond bodily-death, which was the main preoccupation of Myers’s career.

Lawrence’s late short stories ‘Smile’ (1926) and ‘The Last Laugh’ (1926) show that he had a continued interest in paranormal possibilities into the latter years of his career. In ‘Smile’ a character called Ophelia passes away and is visited by her husband who ‘had always taken life too seriously’ and is described as essentially ‘dead himself’ (p.72). Ophelia seems to have a presence beyond the death of her body ‘nudg[ing] [Matthew] in the ribs, saying to him: *Smile*!’ (‘Smile’, p.75, emphasis in original). Ophelia’s ‘faint ironical curl at the corners of [her] mouth’ leads the sisters to believe that “She has seen him!” and there is an immortal spirit to human beings. In contrast, ‘The Last Laugh’ is a more violent story that suggests a murder is carried out by a laughing spirit described as ‘a being … not a person, exactly’ (p.133). The spirit causes Miss James and a character called Marchbanks to deliberate over the presence of a soul in human beings, as Marchbanks claims:

> "It's certainly made you very strange," … You've got no *soul*, you know."
> "Oh thank goodness for that!" she cried. "My policeman has one, I'm sure. *My policeman* -!" and she went off again into a long peal of laughter, the canaries pealing shrill accompaniment.
> "What's the matter with you?" he said.
> "Having no soul. I never had one really. It was always fobbed off on me. Soul was the only thing there was between you and me. Thank goodness it's gone. Haven't you lost yours? - the one that seemed to worry you, like a decayed tooth?" ('The Last Laugh', p.136, emphasis in original)

The strangeness of the conversations and the occurrences in both of these stories is prominent, as well as the presence of a jeering laughter towards characters who take themselves and their lives too seriously, which has an extreme outcome in 'The Last Laugh'. In *Women in Love* characters participate in a more considered evaluation of whether spiritual life can exist irrespective of a physical body, yet all three works share the SPR's 'emotional impetus [of] … countering the pessimism of a materialist and scientifically determined world view' (Thurschwell, 2001, p.15).

Out of all of Lawrence's novels, *Women in Love* is one of the most open towards different 'world view[s]' (Thurschwell, 2001, p.15), as characters frequently consider ways out of extreme mental-consciousness and the 'dying body' (*WL,* p.396) of England. Lawrence's connection with Myers is not so unlikely given that in January 1916 Lawrence stresses that 'one always believes in the miracle, in something supernatural. I believe in something supernatural, which is not of human life, neither of religion' (*2L,* p.501). For Lawrence, the possibility of supernatural phenomena or the survival of the soul after the body dies is just another step further in his consideration of the relationship between psychical and physical components of human beings, or as *Women in Love* describes it, between "integral spirit" and the "physical body" (*WL,* p.192).

Myers's psychical research directly addresses the relationship between mind and matter, an issue that has been outlined as central to discussions of what blood-

consciousness is, and paramount in *Women in Love* as Ursula wonders "does the body correspond so immediately with the spirit?" (*WL,* p.192). Brown (2012) has highlighted that the possibility of surviving bodily-death, and the body's relationship with the spirit are topics that are foregrounded at the beginning of *Women in Love* by a character called Marshall who states:

> "Sounds as if you were going to be executed instead of married. The *immortality of the soul!"* …
> But he fell quite flat.
> "And what did you decide?" asked Gerald, at once pricking up his ears at the thought of a metaphysical discussion.
> "You don't want a soul, today, my boy," said Marshall. "It'd be in your road."
> "Christ!, Marshall, go and talk to somebody else," cried Gerald, with sudden impatience.
> "By God, I'm willing," said Marshall, in a temper. "Too much bloody soul, and talk altogether-" (*WL,* pp.31-32, emphasis in original)

Lawrence's own uncertainty towards the spiritual soul is expressed in Gerald's response, and is present again in 'The Last Laugh' as Miss James confronts Marchbanks, stressing that "Soul was the only thing there was between you and me. Thank goodness it's gone" ('The Last Laugh', p.136). As stated previously in Chapter One's discussion of 'Glad Ghosts', from the early years of Lawrence's career he was critical of human relationships that only have a spiritual basis. He expresses this in a letter from 1913, explaining that:

> spirit and flesh should be finely balanced. They aren't. The flesh has been starved, denied, and impoverished, till it *is* weary, stiff, moribund. So the spirit is cynical - fancy asking a spirit to live with a half corpse of a body … Don't you see, centuries of Puritanicalism, and feeding the mind and soul at the expense of the body … (*2L,* p.102, emphasis in original)

Lawrence's complicated beliefs regarding the psychical and physical attributes of the blood-conscious body is such that on the one hand he does not advocate spiritual relationships which deny the body. Yet, he also does not believe that the physical

body can be the absolute basis of life - as stressed throughout this thesis, in Lawrence's writing there is always something else behind the flesh.

It is for this reason that the characters of *Women in Love* continue to toy with the idea of '*immortality*' (*WL,* p.32, emphasis in original) as, like Myers, Lawrence is considering the possibility that death is not simply the end of a human beings' existence. This is shown as Ursula considers whether:

> One might come to fruit in death. She had had enough. For where was life to be found? No flowers grow upon busy machinery, there is no sky to a routine, there is no space to a rotary motion. And all life was a rotary motion, mechanised, cut off from reality. There was nothing to look for from life - it was the same in all countries and all peoples. The only window was death. (*WL,* p.193)

Lawrence had no practical recommendations for how to reinvigorate wartime England, but it is notable that Ursula considers death as a way out of cultural and spiritual decline. In *Women in Love* bodily-death does not necessarily mean the end of spiritual life, instead death is believed to offer its characters another form of life. Birkin conveys the idea of being re-born in death due to certain aspects of the self being independent from the body and therefore immortal. Ursula asks "Why should love be like sleep?" leading Birkin to respond that:

> "I don't know. So that it is like death - I *do* want to die from this life - and yet it is more than life itself. One is delivered over like a naked infant from the womb, all the old defences and the old body gone, a new air around one" ... (*WL,* p.186, emphasis in original)

Birkin's emphasis on 'this' life, raises the issue of what other possible life there is available. When Lawrence is encouraging his readers to think about the possibility of life beyond bodily-death, he is stressing the idea of the body as a limitation and a 'prison ... one must break a way through' (*WL,* p.186). This goes against what Lawrence says elsewhere about the importance of the body in relation to blood-consciousness and the universe, but is in line with Chapter One's discussion of the

‘Psychical and Physical’ which identifies that Lawrence also emphasises that these can work together but are not necessarily dependent on each other.

Due to the connected concerns of Lawrence’s philosophy and his fiction regarding an immortal essence of blood-consciousness, it is fair to argue that his characters’ claims relating to life beyond bodily-death should not be taken lightly. Emily W. Kelly (2007) states that Myers’s investigation into the relationship between the mind and body forms ‘*the* basic theoretical question at the heart of psychology’ (p.65, emphasis in original). As such, although the characters of *Women in Love* are generally unable to answer their own questions relating to the supernatural world, Lawrence and Myers are still connected by their consideration of “metaphysical” (Kelly, 2007, p.48) matters relating to the ‘body and soul’ (*WL,* p.92), which were deemed to be ‘unsuitable for a scientific psychology’ (Kelly, 2007, p.48). *Women in Love* conveys the hope but also the uncertainty, of an immortal quality of human beings, as Ursula declares her interest in psychical phenomena but then claims ‘why drag in the stars!” (*WL,* p.148).

In *Fantasia*’s chapter ‘Cosmological’, Lawrence explores supernatural possibilities in detail, encouraging his readers to take his ideas seriously despite any scepticism they may have. Lawrence suggests that:

> When the living individual dies, then is the realm of death established. Then you get Matter and Elements and atoms and forces and sun and moon and earth and stars and so forth. In short, the outer universe, the Cosmos. The Cosmos is nothing but the aggregate of the dead bodies and dead energies of bygone individuals. (*FU,* p.168)

The lingering ‘bodies’ and ‘energies’ of ‘Cosmological’ mean that life is not restricted to the body instead it is part of the timeless atmosphere, a fact that offers the characters of *Women in Love* some sort of comfort when trying to envisage a possible solution to the state of England. Death does not mean a lack of existence –

rather it is the transition into another form of existence which still impacts upon the living. Lawrence states that 'dead energies' (*FU,* p.168):

> re-enter into the living psyche of living individuals. This living soul partakes of the dead souls, as the living breast partakes of the outer air, and the blood partakes of the sun ... The dead soul remains always soul, and always retains its individual quality. And it does not disappear, but re-enters into the soul of the living ... (*FU,* p.152)

Lawrence considers this belief in lingering souls in his story 'The Man Who Loved Islands' as he states the presence of 'an infinite dark world where all the souls from all the other bygone nights lived on' (p.152). Yet, in *Women in Love* Birkin and Ursula do not want to become haunting 'dead souls' (*FU,* p.152) of the cosmos. Instead they choose to live, but the couples' escape to the snowy European mountains only seems to bring their relationships to a new level of crisis.

Black (2001) identifies the 'mild utopianism' (p.223) of *Women in Love* as the need to save England is essentially met by the desire to abandon it. Until the end of the novel Birkin retains a lingering affection for England describing it as:

> "a damnably uncomfortable love: like a love for an aged parent who suffers horribly from a complication of diseases, for which there is no hope."
> Gudrun looked at him with dilated dark eyes.
> "You think there is no hope?" she asked, in her pertinent fashion.
> But Birkin backed away. He would not answer such a question. (*WL,* p.395)

Although Birkin does not answer Ursula, the fact that they choose to abandon England demonstrates their feelings well enough. However, as the pair of couples seek a new life in Europe, this offers no solace as it is described as 'like the underworld, grey, grey, dirt-grey, desolate, forlorn, nowhere' (*WL*, p.390). Thus, on leaving England the apocalyptic feel of the novel gains intensity as the characters realise:

> there *were* no new worlds, there were no more *men,* there were only creatures, little, ultimate *creatures* like Loerke. The world was finished now, for her. There was only the inner, individual darkness, sensation within the

> ego, the obscene religious mystery of ultimate reduction, the mystic frictional activities of diabolic reducing down, disintegrating the vital organic life. (*WL,* p.452, emphasis in original)

Gudrun's new desire for '*creatures* like Loerke' means that she and Gerald treat each other with increasing hostility as the unpredictability of their actions is alarmingly accelerated by their new surroundings and the people they meet.

Without the healing nature of Gudrun's blood stream, Gerald is made up of veins 'that were murdered and lacerated' (*WL,* p.344) and his dependence on Gudrun portrays dynamics of the needy child and the consuming mother which relates back to previous references towards the mother and son relationship of *Sons and Lovers*. Gudrun is depicted as 'mother and substance of all life' whilst Gerald is both 'child and man' (*WL,* p.344). He subsequently ends up a vampiric parasite, who lives and feeds off the lifeblood of other characters such as Gudrun, Pussum, and even Birkin. Lawrence conveys a similar depiction of the vampiric mind that takes blood away from the body in *Fantasia.* He describes how 'the ideal mind, the brain has become the vampire of modern life, sucking up the blood and the life *(FU*, p.105). Gerald's inability to be self-sufficient reflects the lack of growth and organicism in the harsh and bitter climate, as Gerald continues to rely on other characters in order to survive.

Costin (2011, p.157) highlights an important passage in the novel where the narrative invites the reader to consider that there may be a way out of this cycle of destruction for Gerald if he can make his way to Italy:

> It was a grey day, the third day of greyness and stillness. All was white, icy, pallid, save for the scoring of black rocks that jutted like roots sometimes, and sometimes were in naked faces …
>
> It was like a shallow pot lying among the stone and snow of the upper world. In this pot Gerald had gone to sleep. At the far end the guides had driven iron stakes deep into the snow-wall, so that, by means of the great rope attached, they could haul themselves up the massive snow-front out on to the jagged summit of the pass …

> Gerald might have found this rope. He might have hauled himself up to the crest … He might have gone on, down the steep, steep fall of the south side, down to the dark valley with its pines, on to the great Imperial road leading south to Italy.
>
> He might! And what then? The Imperial road! The south? Italy? What then? Was it a way out? - It was only a way in again … Was it any good going south, to Italy? Down the old, old Imperial road? … (*WL,* p.478)

Lawrence's time in Italy made him appreciate the sensuality of the country and the people's inherent blood-consciousness due to the 'endless heat and rousedness of physical sensation which keeps the body full and potent, and flushes the mind with a blood heat, a blood sleep' (*T,* p.6). The narrative seems to imply that death is a conscious choice for Gerald, as his decision not to turn to Italy results in a disastrous sequence of events.

After an aggressive confrontation between Gerald and Gudrun in the mountains, Gerald attempts to strangle her before walking away alone into the snowy abyss never to return. When eventually they find Gerald's lone, frozen body, Birkin is struck by the absoluteness of his death which acts as a stark reminder of how a life can be totally erased from existence. Gerald is simply 'dead, like clay' (p.480) and due to his lack of a blood-conscious soul and the fact that his 'blood [was] turning to ice-water' (*WL,* p.477), there will be no connection between him and Birkin beyond bodily-death. As Birkin nostalgically looks back on their friendship he:

> remembered how once Gerald had clutched his hand, with a warm, momentaneous grip of final love. For one second - then let go again, let go for ever. If he had kept true to that clasp, death would not have mattered. Those who die, and dying still can love, still believe, do not die. They live still in the beloved. Gerald might still have been living in the spirit with Birkin, even after death. He might have lived with his friend, a further life. (*WL,* p.480)

Birkin seems to suggest that despite his death, Gerald is unable to remain 'living in the spirit' due to his inability to stay true to a non-human relationship with Birkin whilst he was still alive, and because Gerald lacks enough spirituality or soul that can outlive his body.

As shown, these references to death and the possibility of outliving the body through the spirit remain focal points of *Women in Love* right up until the end of the novel. Birkin must accept Gerald's death and focus upon his and Ursula's relationship if they are to move forward and reach a harmonious state together. The potential for them to move beyond the wreckage of a mental-conscious wartime-England is shown by their love-making as they create 'a rich new circuit, a new current of passional electric energy, between the two of them, released from the darkest poles of the body' (*WL,* p.314). Earlier in the novel, Birkin insists that they have a future together if they can achieve 'a pure balance of two single beings: - as the stars balance each other' (*WL,* p.148), again relating human beings to cosmology to suggest oneness with the universe.

However, in the same way that *Women in Love* is evaluating rather than asserting a belief in spiritual life after bodily-death, there is always a lack of certainty that accompanies claims that a new "beginning comes out of the end" (*WL,* p.173). Myers's connection with Lawrence regarding the subliminal and the blood-conscious self remains highly relevant, but despite all the talk of supernatural possibilities there is a resounding stalemate throughout the novel as to if death can really be the solution or a way out of the crisis of mental-consciousness. This is shown by Birkin's feeling that:

> Whatever the mystery which has brought forth man and the universe, it is a non-human mystery, it has its own great ends, man is not the criterion. Best leave it all to the vast, creative, non-human mystery. Best strive with oneself only, not with the universe. (*WL,* p.478)

Hope remains for the 'non-human mystery' of life*,* but ultimately it remains a vague and elusive concept, thus leading Birkin to 'strive with oneself only' (*WL,* p.478). The problem with the mystical and supernatural questions of the novel is that they are accompanied by a certain desperation rather than being posited as a genuine

solution to the crisis of mental-consciousness and modernity. Although much is left open to debate at the end of *Women in Love,* the only thing that remains certain is that like the dead body of Gerald, the dead land of England must finally be left behind. Ursula stresses that:

> "You love England immensely, *immensely,* Rupert."
> "And leave her," he replied.
> "No, not for good. You'll come back," said Gerald nodding sagely.
> "They say the lice crawl off a dying body," said Birkin, with a glare of bitterness. "So I leave England." (*WL,* p.396, emphasis in original)

Women in Love is chiefly interested in the possibility of saving England, but it is simultaneously open to rejecting it as a source of meaning altogether; a once vital body of land which is now dead and no longer capable of growth.

Despite the reluctance of *Women in Love* to commit to whether death can be the doorway into another form of life, Birkin is convinced that humanity cannot and will not remain in a rut for long:

> It was very consoling to Birkin, to think this. If humanity ran into a cul de sac, and expended itself, the timeless creative mystery would bring forth some other being, finer, more wonderful, some new, more lovely race, to carry on the embodiment of creation. The game was never up. The mystery of creation was fathomless, infallible, inexhaustible forever ... The fountain-head was incorruptible and unsearchable. It had no limits. It could bring forth miracles, create utter new races and new species, in its own hour, new forms of consciousness, new forms of body, new units of being. (*WL*, p.479)

In its final few pages, *Women in Love* looks forward to 'new forms of consciousness' and 'the timeless creative mystery', ideas that are hinted towards earlier in the novel, as Gerald and Birkin both notice 'several negro statues, wood-carvings from West Africa, strange and disturbing ... it was also rather wonderful' (*WL,* p.74). One particular carving of a woman in childbirth is revealed as 'the extreme of physical sensation, beyond the limits of mental consciousness' (*WL,* p.74). Later on, Birkin recalls these African statues and their profound effect upon him: 'it must have been thousands of years since her race died, mystically: that is, since the relation between

the senses and the outspoken mind had broken' (*WL,* p.253). Reflecting back to discussions regarding mental-consciousness and Birkin's criticism of Hermione wanting to make everything visual, in 'Art and Morality' (1925) Lawrence considers 'African fetish-statues' once again, claiming that encountering such art escapes modern 'kodak-vision' (p.168). Lawrence suggests that 'a new relationship between ourselves and the universe' (p.168) can be attained by realising the value of primitive art that evokes 'powerful blood-feeling' (p.167) rather than 'our vaunted "consciousness", made up, really, of inert visual images and little else: like the cinematograph' ('Art and Morality', p.168).

Much of Lawrence's fiction that followed *Women in Love* incorporated a hope for 'new races and new species' (*WL,* p.479) which could potentially replace the decadence of Europe. Jack Stewart (1999) recognises that 'primitivism reflects a longing for cultural alternatives' (p.95), signposting Lawrence's next major literary transformation as he sought to explore the possibilities of a new life in Mexico. With this in mind, Chapter Four will consider what it means when Lawrence envisages blood-consciousness as part of Mexican identity, stressing that it can be learnt from in order to achieve the non-human relationship that Birkin seeks in *Women in Love.*

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PLUMED SERPENT- 'THE BLOOD IS ONE BLOOD'

Despite the gap between the publication dates of *Women in Love* and *The Plumed Serpent* there is a sense of continuity in the shift from Birkin and Ursula abandoning England, and Kate Leslie's arrival in Mexico. The years leading up to the completion of *The Plumed Serpent* are characterized by Lawrence and Frieda travelling the world, including elongated stays in Italy, Australia, the U.S.A., and Mexico. Lawrence's experiences in these places served as highly inspirational for his philosophy and fiction as he evaluated new landscapes and new cultures. Through his bouts of ill health, and increasing despair for England, the Kiowa ranch of Taos, New Mexico, served as a haven for Lawrence, and the time he spent in Mexico had a tremendous impact upon the writing of the 'Quetzalcoatl' (1923) draft which eventually became *The Plumed Serpent.*

Gregory Tague (2009) rightly stresses that Lawrence was considering a primitive side to mankind well before the 1920s, but there can be no doubt that his years travelling intensified his interest in what he considered to be primitive peoples of communities relatively untouched by industry and new forms of technology. During his time in Mexico, Lawrence was contemplating the relationship between blood-consciousness, the 'spirit of place' (*SCAL,* p.17), and a primitive quality of human beings, by evaluating Mexican people and their culture. In some instances, Lawrence's perceptions of Mexico could be positive, as one of his letters states that 'Mexico [is] very pleasant … the whole atmosphere is easy, and alive … I think we are going to like it' (*4L,* p.414). Yet, in another letter only days later, he wrote that 'we've been in this city five days. And it makes me feel I am tired of travelling … I

don't like the spirit of this continent. It seems to me sub-cruel, a bit ghastly' (*4L,* p.416). On the one hand, Lawrence believed that Mexico had avoided the period of mental-conscious crisis that England had been subjected to, an idea that he viewed as fundamentally positive. However in *The Plumed Serpent*, Lawrence's belief that 'despite centuries of exploitation, the Indian population had retained the potential to live religiously' (Ellis, 1998, p.110) also results in derogatory representations of the people of Mexico, in which they are 'expressive of the "other side" of the European, civilized psyche, the "dark" side of man' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 2002, p.155).

In light of this, the first section of this chapter will identify why Lawrence associated Mexican people and culture with blood-consciousness, and how this resulted in him reinforcing stereotypes of otherness and primitivism to people of other skin colour. Lawrence's 'permanent feeling of religion' ('New Mexico', p.178) from spending time in communities of the Red-Indians has led Torgovnick (1997) to associate Lawrence's views with Freud's theory of oceanic feelings. Freud describes this as 'a sensation of "eternity", a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded' (*Civilization and its Discontents,* 1930, p.1) which is a "regressive" urge or "death wish" (Torgovnick, 1997, p.15). The presence of a similar primitive impulse is apparent when *The Plumed Serpent* refers to the 'limitless ... primeval world' (p.310), and the 'strange, inward pulse of the drum ... [whereby] the singer singing inwardly, swirled the soul back into the very centre of time, which is older than age' (*PS,* p.126).

If this is how Lawrence imagines Mexican blood-consciousness, then it is plain to see why his beliefs may be deemed to be offensive and derogatory, as Mexican characters of *The Plumed Serpent* are identified as the "dark side" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 2002, p.155) of Kate's consciousness. However, the

second part of this chapter will emphasise the most positive aspects of how blood-consciousness in Mexico is presented, by identifying that Lawrence can be associated with Campbell's (2000) evaluation of a 'postmodern bodily imaginary' (p.13). This term relates to the imaginary of Lacanian psychoanalysis, and is a kind of fantasised image of the body carrying 'a historically transmitted form, as pre-linguistic stories' (Campbell, 2000, p.13). Although Campbell's text also incorporates both feminist and queer theory, her theories relating to the bodily imaginary, Fanon, and postcolonial theory, will be the central focus of this chapter.

Lawrence connection with Fanon is that both Mexican blood-consciousness and the bodily imaginary are not suggestive of fixed elements of the unconscious which human beings are born with. Instead they are determined by the external forces of one's specific culture, and are partly the result of 'the white gaze' (*Black Skin, White Masks,* p.90) which affects how the body is represented unconsciously, in turn impacting upon conscious attitudes to skin colour. This discussion will demonstrate that *The Plumed Serpent* attributes an elemental and mythical aspect to blood-consciousness which exists unconsciously and is not biologically determined, so that rather than just reinforcing derogatory myths of the primitive other, Lawrence is confronting them.

Finally, identifying the Mexican-Indians as possessors of a powerful blood-consciousness involves Lawrence's problematic attempt to look through the eyes of the Mexican people. So lastly, this chapter will consider to what degree Mexican blood-consciousness can be thought of as representing some of the aims of postcolonial studies. When assessing the message that *The Plumed Serpent* leaves in its concluding pages, Eunyoung Oh (2007) suggests that 'Lawrence resists the colonialist ideology of the British Empire' (p.1), but he also affirms that his stance is

'complicated' (p.161). Both of these conceptions of Lawrence's position will be explored in detail, as this chapter will pinpoint what Mexican blood-consciousness is, and why it is deemed superior to Western mental-consciousness. *The Plumed Serpent* incorporates a strong element of myth but it is also embedded with politically motivated questions. The narrative constantly alternates between these different positions, making it difficult to ascertain the level of Kate's transformation in Mexico, and on what basis this change takes place. In light of all of these discussions, the representation of blood-consciousness in Mexico is a challenging concept to explore, partly due to the mixed attitudes towards Mexico that are on offer, as well as the unreliability of Kate as the central character.

BLOOD-CONSCIOUSNESS IN MEXICO

In *The Plumed Serpent,* Kate's desire to escape the purely 'mental-spiritual world' (*PS,* p.415) of Europe leads to a number of comparisons being made between Britain and Mexico. Mexico is frequently postulated as a country possessing certain cultural values meaning that its people are more blood-conscious than Kate and her fellow travellers. Yet, the novel repeatedly makes simplistic and offensive distinctions between 'Western' and 'primitive' (Torgovnick, 1990, p.3) ways of life. This has led to Jad Smith (2002) affirming that instead of the blood-consciousness of the Mexican people being a positive difference between them and Kate, it 'is [instead] portrayed as an inferior … dangerously irrational mode of awareness' (p.18). Thus, when attributing blood-consciousness to the Mexican people, with its emphasis on intuition rather than intellect, the primacy of the unconscious rather than consciousness,

Lawrence can be guilty of presenting Mexican people and their culture in an extremely derogatory way.

When Kate first arrives in Mexico and is taken to a bullfight, she quickly comes to possess scathing stereotypes of the local people, describing the men as 'like lost mongrels' (p.12) and 'loutish' (*PS,* p.20). Later in the novel, Kate's fear of the Mexican people and the perceived 'horror' of their 'black eyes' (p.235) results in her lying in bed 'in the black night ... listening intensely, with a clutch of horror ... she was, as she had never been before, absolutely physically afraid, blood afraid' (*PS*, p.136). Examples such as this, have led Torgovnick (1990) to suggest that Lawrence achieves no more than:

> two major stories about primitive peoples he inherited from the nineteenth century: primitive peoples as dangerous and irrational, something to be feared; primitive peoples as the idealized noble savage, something to be emulated. (p.159)

When implying that Mexican people are more connected with their unconscious, Lawrence also conveys that this can result in uncivilised and potentially 'dangerous and irrational' (Torgovnick, 1990, p.159) behaviour. This can be interpreted as the reason for the violence the occurs in 'The Attack on Jamiltepec' where Ramón's home is invaded by intruders, resulting in him 'holding down the head of the bandit by the hair and stabbing him with short stabs in the throat, one, two, while blood shot out like a red projectile' (*PS,* p.295).

Lawrence's presentation of the most dangerous extremes of Mexican blood-consciousness are evident throughout the novel. However, as Kate attempts to realise the cultural differences between her homeland and Mexico, the racist comments she makes and the thoughts she has, become more frequently interspersed with enlightened perspectives. Such instances are often observations inspired by 'details from [Lawrence's] immediate environment' (Ellis, 1998, p.107)

from his time in Mexico. Kate's more open and sympathetic eye is shown especially towards the poorest members of the community, for instance when she sees:

> the big, handsome Indian, sitting so soft and as it were lonely by the kerb, softly, lingeringly polishing his yellow oranges to a clean gleam, and lingeringly, delicately arranging the little piles, the pyraminds for two or three cents each. (*PS,* p.52)

This man is still depicted with a sense of otherness as Kate does not converse with him, instead she watches from a distance. Nevertheless, such passages hint towards Kate's future progression in which comments such as 'the peasants, peons, pelados, Indians, call them what you will. The mere natives!' (*PS,* p.75) are replaced with more respectful and less judgemental comments.

Part of Kate's self-growth is the result of her increasing appreciation for the blood-consciousness of the Mexican people, as on a number of occasions it evokes a superior state of being in comparison with that of the people of Britain. Despite Lawrence's ambivalent feelings towards Mexico, he grew to believe that spiritually it had much more to offer than many of the European countries he had visited. He grants Kate this same insight as she feels that 'the flow of her life had broken, and she knew she could not re-start it, in Europe' (*PS,* p.78). Part of this belief is down to the landscape of *The Plumed Serpent,* which has a crucial role in religious rituals that evoke the 'life' and exuberance of Mexico. Marguerite Beede Howe (1977) emphasises that the novel unites the Mexican people with their natural environment through:

> biological rhythms. The drums of Quetzalcoatl echo the heartbeat of the universe, and besides the cosmic heartbeat that thuds through the novel, there is universal inspiration and expiration in the swelling and waning sense of life, there is circulation and concentration of waters, "blood" and "lymph", which behave like the fluids of life. (p.111)

There is great reason to connect descriptions of Mexico in *The Plumed Serpent* with the world of the Brangwens in *The Rainbow,* as both novels evoke the deep blood-

conscious union between human beings and their surroundings. In likeness to the Brangwens that develop blood-conscious harmony with the earth and animals that they farm, Kate also experiences changes in being in the chapter entitled ‘The Lake’, as ‘ahead, the river was widening, the banks were growing lower, down to the water’s level, like shoals planted with willow trees and with reed’ (*PS,* p.92). The ‘widening’ of the river represents the expansion of Kate’s perspective of Mexico, as she comes to find meaning in the symbol of ‘the morning star, or the evening star, hanging perfectly between night and the sun’ (*PS,* p.92).

‘The morning star’ (*PS,* p.92) is the symbolic representation of harmonious being in *The Plumed Serpent,* and it is an idea that helps Kate to evaluate and understand her relationship with Cipriano, as will be discussed in the final section of this chapter. As the novel continues, Kate’s disparaging references to Mexico and its people do not disappear. However, symbols such as ‘the morning star’ (*PS,* p.92) identify that the narrative increasingly adopts language that mirrors Lawrence’s philosophical writings relating to blood-consciousness and the cosmos. This is shown as Kate’s:

> blood flow[s] softly sunwise, to let the sunwise sympathy of unknown people steal in to her. To shut doors of iron against the mechanical world … to let the sunwise world steal across to her, and add its motion to her, the motion of the stress of life, with the big sun and the stars, like a tree holding out its leaves. (*PS,* p.104)

By developing this blood-conscious awareness of the sun and the essence of balance needed in every human being, Kate begins to recognise her ability to evolve on an unconscious level. The references to ‘the mechanical world’ which is representative of mental-consciousness, and the final depiction of a tree are all ways in which Lawrence sought to express the essence of blood-consciousness as stated in Chapter One. These symbols of growth and equilibrium that Kate is able to

appreciate in Mexico, results in her coming to realise that human beings do not possess:

> a complete self, a complete soul, an accomplished I. And now she realised as plainly as if she had turned into a new being … Men and women had incomplete selves, made up of bits assembled together loosely and somewhat haphazard. Man was not created ready-made. (*PS,* p.105)

This idea of needing to abandon a fixed 'I' relates to Lawrence's rejection of the 'old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) as outlined in Chapter Two. In *The Plumed Serpent* Lawrence suggests that Kate can be liberated from '*man's automatism'* (*PS,* p.105, emphasis in original) and the mental-conscious values of the West, by learning from the people of Mexico who are more in tune with the values of blood-consciousness.

In *Mornings in Mexico* (1927) Lawrence evaluates further why the Mexican-Indian community are in greater harmony with their surroundings, and are able to live through 'the consciousness in the abdomen' (p.62) which is the solar plexus, the nucleus of blood-consciousness. In doing so, Lawrence's focus is not only upon the landscape of Mexico but he is primarily concerned with the religious and cultural traditions that have been passed down through generations. He suggests that:

> what we seek, passively, in sleep, they perhaps seek, actively, in the round dance. It is the homeward pulling of the blood, as the feet fall in the soft, heavy rhythm, endlessly. It is the dark blood falling back from the mind, from sight and speech and knowing, back to the great central source where is rest and unspeakable renewal. We whites, creatures of spirit, look upon sleep and see only the dreams that lie as debris of the day, mere bits of wreckage from the day-Consciousness. We never realise the strange falling back of the dark blood into the downward rhythm, the rhythm of pure forgetting and pure renewal. (*MM,* p.64)

Dance and sleep both relieve the body from the burden of consciousness and subsequently rejuvenate the vitality of human beings. Like *The Plumed Serpent, Mornings in Mexico* is also making an association between the Mexican people and blood-consciousness, as references to 'blood-being', 'blood-stream', and 'blood-circuit' (*MM,* p.64) are rife throughout the text.

Once again, it is necessary to stress that like all of Lawrence's travel writing and fiction that involves him assessing other cultures, his stance is far from always positive or forward thinking. However, Lawrence adopts a favourable position in relation to Mexican blood-consciousness when he affirms that mankind can learn from it in order to spiritually and sensually progress. Both *Mornings in Mexico* and *The Plumed Serpent* state that humanity depends upon a 'relation with the vast living convulsions of rain and thunder and sun, which are conscious and alive and potent, but … inscrutable and incomprehensible' (*MM,* p.82). Yet, the issue that remains is '*how* is man to get himself into relation with these, the vastest of cosmic beasts?' (*MM,* p.82, my emphasis). In *Mornings in Mexico* Lawrence states that this respect for the cosmos is difficult to achieve in the West where all life 'is a matter of science, energy, force' (*MM,* p.82). Kate faces this same difficulty in her time in Mexico as she attempts to think about the world and human beings differently than she ever has done before.

Although Kate remains unsure regarding specific elements of the Quetzalcoatl religion, her relationships with Don Ramón and Cipriano, as well as her encounters with other people of Mexico enables her own blood-conscious development. She comes to possess Lawrence's view that in contrast to the West's focus upon scientific explanations for life and the cosmos, 'the Indian says No! It all lives. We must approach it livingly, with profound respect' (*MM,* p.82). By confronting her own limited perspective, Kate develops:

> a certain sympathy with these dark-faced silent men in their big straw hats and naïve little cotton blouses. Anyhow they had blood in their veins: they were columns of dark blood.
>
> Whereas that other bloodless, acidulous couple from the Middle-West, with their nasty whiteness - - ! (*PS*, p.47)

The ‘bloodless’ nature of the Burlaps suggests the lack of vitality that is signified by the ‘nasty whiteness’ of their skin. In contrast, the blood in the veins of the Mexican people is associated with the circulation of a life-giving vitality, so that dark skin denotes being in touch with your unconscious, rather than representing someone to be feared. Despite these positive depictions of Mexican blood-consciousness, Torgovnick (1990) is right to suggest that Lawrence in some ways articulates Mexican people as idealised and that their cultural values represent ‘something to be emulated’ (p.159).

This notion of Mexican blood-consciousness being romanticised and thus resulting in stereotypes of the people is a notable concern. It is particularly relevant when thinking about to what extent Kate’s understanding of life in Mexico is blinded by her sexual attraction to the men. This ambiguous element of Mexican blood-consciousness is shown as her gaze is frequently drawn to the physicality of the men and these moments carry an element of fantasy, as Kate is shown to perceive ‘a certain richness of physical being, a ponderous power of blood within [them]’ (*PS,* p.52). When Kate is introduced to Don Ramón, the leader of the Quetzalcoatl religious movement, and the general Cipriano, her perceptions of Mexico are increasingly confused by her fear of, and attraction to, these men. Don Ramón is ‘a tall, big, handsome man’ (p.38) and Cipriano is described as ‘primitively physical, beautiful and deep-breasted’ (*PS,* p.201), a fact that leads her to have a sexual relationship with him.

There can be little doubt that part of Lawrence’s inspiration for writing fiction based upon white mental-conscious women and Mexican men was fuelled by the relationship and subsequent marriage between his friend Mabel Dodge Sterne and Tony Luhan. Mabel Dodge Luhan, as she became after their marriage, was a major

influence upon Lawrence's decision to visit New Mexico and Mexico in the first place, and she eventually allowed Lawrence and Frieda to own the Kiowa Ranch that they loved in exchange for the *Sons and Lovers* manuscript. Lawrence's letters refer to Tony fondly as 'a big fellow - nice' (p.311), also stating that he 'always has my respect and affection' (*4L,* p.514). Yet, there is also reason to believe that Lawrence was unable to fully come to terms with their mixed-race relationship, and that ultimately, Lawrence was not in favour of their marriage (Ellis, 1998).

As Robert Young (1995) states, colonisation is not just the exploration of the other from a distance but it is very much interested in, and afraid of, the potential mixing of races. This theme is highly significant in *The Plumed Serpent* as Kate ponders over the possibility of a relationship with a man of another race. When her attraction towards Cipriano and other Mexican men is articulated, it is often accompanied by references to blood. For example Kate envisages Cipriano as a 'column of blood! A red Indian. She looked at him in wonder, as he moved pure red and luminous further into the lake, unconscious. As if on fire!' (*PS,* p.424). Here the imagery of the blood is striking as the pristine blood-conscious energy of Cipriano's body is evoked through the implied erection of the 'column', as well as the 'red' skin which is likened to fire. Kate's need for sexual liberation and her desire for the 'tingling heat of [Mexican] blood' (*PS,* p.310) are clearly suggested as necessary in order for her to spiritually and sensually develop in the novel. However, such allusions to these 'men of flesh and blood' (*PS,* p.320) rather than men and women raises the issue of to what extent blood-consciousness is explored in relation to all Mexican people, or if it is only certain sexes, classes, and sectors of society that possesses the attributes of blood-consciousness.

It is notable that Mexican blood-consciousness is primarily represented through men in *The Plumed Serpent,* and that Mexican women are curiously absent for large parts of the novel. When Mexican women are considered they are susceptible to the disparaging comments of Kate and the narrator, as shown by the negative portrayal of Kate's maid Juana who:

> would seat herself on the ground at a little distance from Kate, and talk, talk in her rapid mouthfuls of conglomerate words with trailing, wistful endings: and all the time watch her mistress with those black, unseeing eyes on which the spark of light would stir with the peculiar slow, malevolent jeering of the Indian. (*PS,* p.211)

Lawrence denotes his own class-anxieties through Kate's perspective here as she openly states that "I really hate common people" (*PS,* p.10). Yet, this is not simply an issue of class, as *The Plumed Serpent* is equally cruel in its treatment of Ramón's first wife Carlota who is openly against the Quetzalcoatl religion asking "What do you think this Quetzalcoatl nonsense amounts to?" (*PS,* p.209). Carlota can be a refreshingly rational voice at times in the face of Ramón and Cipriano's preaching and Kate's desire to appease them. However, Carlota is largely represented by her hysterical tendencies and is eventually silenced by her death. Kate shows no sympathy but is instead found 'smiling a little cynically' (*PS,* p.348) at her bedside.

Rebecca Carpenter (1994) has explained that this treatment of Carlota is perhaps not so surprising given that Kate views her as a rival for Ramón's respect and affections. This is an idea backed up by Kate's immature and envious jibes towards Ramón's second wife Teresa, as she reflects that 'surely she wanted nothing but sex from him, like a prostitute' (*PS,* p.399). Nevertheless, it remains highly significant that when Lawrence is considering the ability of other cultures and peoples to be more connected to blood-consciousness than the West, he does this

by evaluating a lonely Western female character alongside non-Western male characters.

In the story ‘Sun’, the male character embodies blood-consciousness and sexual prowess but does not come into actual physical contact with the female protagonist. However, in other stories such as ‘The Woman Who Rode Away’ (1925), ‘The Princess’ (1925), and ‘None of That!’ Lawrence’s writing denotes an entirely different form of “otherness” to the male characters from Mexico and New Mexico. These works all possess definite similarities with *The Plumed Serpent* as Lawrence articulates the need for white European-women to be disposed of their mental-conscious will. Whereas *The Plumed Serpent* evokes Kate as possessing a slightly irrational fear of the Mexican men at times, in the short stories such fear is for good reason as all the female characters are subjected to captivity and sexual violence. This is not to suggest that Lawrence envisioned blood-consciousness as resulting in such violence. Rather the insinuation seems to be that it is initially difficult to differentiate between Mexican men that possess the inner balance of blood-consciousness, and men that are essentially primitive beings ruled by their most base urges.

In all three short stories there is an underlying theme of women mistakenly trusting or being attracted to Mexican-Indians. Troubling aspects of these stories are the extreme misogynist views that appear to be endorsed by the narrative, for instance when it is deemed that “white women have stayed too long on the earth” (‘The Woman Who Rode Away’, p.65). Yet, even more troubling is the fact that Lawrence merges female desire and submission to these men, as the narrative claims that ‘she wanted it’ (p.67) drawing attention to the ‘broad and powerful’ shoulders of the young captor and the fact that he is ‘darkly and powerfully male’

('The Woman Who Rode Away', p.58). This is highly significant when considering the ending of *The Plumed Serpent* as later in this chapter it will be shown that these themes of women misjudging Mexican male blood-consciousness and the necessity of female submission, cast doubt as to what extent the reader can believe that Kate achieves a blood-conscious communion with Cipriano.

These discussions highlight the extreme ambiguity that accompanies the idea that Western mental-consciousness can be cured by a sexual relationship with Mexican men. In some instances, there is great reason to believe that Lawrence is attempting to present Mexican people as more blood-conscious than Westerners, and that as a result, relationships between people of different cultures can be positive and life changing. Alongside this, there is another valid interpretation of *The Plumed Serpent* in which Mexican blood-consciousness is a stereotype that is either frightening or idealised (Torgovnick, 1990), and that Kate's outlook on the Mexican men runs the risk of being nothing more than a sexual fantasy, in which "dark races" exude 'sexual potency' (Burden, 2000, p.281).

Kate is reluctant to accept her attraction to the dark skin of the Mexican men as 'she wished for men who were not as handsome as these dark natives' (*PS,* p.304). Nevertheless, she remains intrigued by the prospect of a sexual relationship with them as she also asks Ramon "shouldn't one try marrying a man of another race, do you think, even if he were more sympathetic?" to which Ramon replies "It's no good generalising. It's no good marrying anybody, unless there will be a real fusion somewhere" (*PS,* p.271). The air of desperation in Kate's question is fitting, as the narrative appears to be making fun of her rather than adding weight to her ideas. Kate's fluctuating views and her childish attitude make it difficult to evaluate whether Mexican blood-consciousness should be understood as a positive philosophy, or if at

best it is highly problematic, conveying Lawrence's inability to explore his belief in a bodily-unconscious in relation to people of other skin colours and cultures, without affirming primitive stereotypes (Torgovnick, 1990).

On the one hand, Kate believes that it is not Mexico but Europe that has regressed because it has lost 'the dark, strong, unbroken blood, the flowering of the soul' (p.107), whereas the Indian 'understands Soul, which is of the blood' (*PS,* p.116). The association made between Mexican culture and blood-consciousness is a progressive notion when it is the result of the sensual non-Christian religion of Quetzalcoatl, and the heightened connection with the sun and the cosmos. However, if *The Plumed Serpent* is in fact suggesting that blood-consciousness is based on biological or hereditary difference that the Mexican people are born with, then this has significant implications for how forward thinking Lawrence's ideas can be.

The initial difficulty in evaluating what Mexican blood-consciousness is and what it implies is increased by Lawrence's intentional merging of psychical and physical allusions to the blood, as highlighted in Chapter One. There are undoubtedly metaphorical references to the capabilities of the blood in *The Plumed Serpent*, but the term blood is also adopted in relation to racial difference and eugenics (Bradshaw, 2003). An example of this is when a character called Touissant refers to "the real Mexicans", stressing his concern for the political and social future of Mexico due to its population of citizens with "mixed blood" (*PS,* p.64). Touissant insinuates that psychological and spiritual states are the direct result of the blood of different races, stating that:

> "You may mix Spanish and French blood, and it may be all right. Europeans are all of Aryan stock, the race is the same. But when you mix European and American Indian, you mix different blood races, and you produce the half-breed. Now the half-breed is a calamity. For why? He is neither one thing nor another, he is divided against himself. His blood of one race tells him one

> thing, his blood of another race tells him another. He is an unfortunate, a calamity to himself. And it is hopeless." (*PS,* p.64)

Here Touissant exudes fears of degeneration as a result of "mixed blood" (*PS,* p.64) and the threat this posed to the Empire (Edmond, 2000). This discussion also casts doubts as to the meaning of other references to blood in *The Plumed Serpent*. By depicting the unconscious through the blood, Lawrence's philosophy can be confusing as to what extent the blood of blood-consciousness should be interpreted as meaning the literal, biological blood of the body.

The basis of this confusion is paramount in relation to Touissant's comments because if the unconscious is deemed to have a biological element then Lawrence is suggesting the presence of fixed racial types, rather than a changeable nature to blood-consciousness that is applicable to everyone. Touissant's argument is problematic because he conveys the idea of psychical traits being genetically 'handed on' through the blood, as he affirms that:

> "everything, depends on the moment of coition. At that moment many things can come to a crisis: all a man's hope, his honour, his faith, his trust, his belief in life and creation and God, all these things can come to a crisis in the moment of coition. And these things will be handed on in continuity to the child." (*PS,* p.66)

Kate challenges Touissant's belief in the supremacy of "pure blood" (p.64) stating "some people believe in the mixed blood ... they say the half-breed is better than the Indian" (*PS,* p.66). As such, it seems probable that in this case Lawrence is emphasising the ignorance of Westerners rather than trying to endorse Touissant's views. Yet, Kate is still supporting the idea that "pure" and "mixed blood[s]" (*PS,* p.64) are a way of differentiating between the psychical states of different races. This is not an isolated example, as the narrative articulates that 'a queer old woman [has] Spanish blood in her veins' (p.321) and *The Plumed Serpent* repeatedly asserts an 'unspeakable difference in blood' (p.334).

These issues relating to a racial-blood rather than a metaphysical blood of blood-consciousness are not only cause for concern in *The Plumed Serpent.* In fact, throughout Lawrence's fiction there are a number of instances when he creates confusion as to whether he is suggesting a biological difference in the blood between peoples of different race or skin colour, or if he is referring to purely spiritual and psychic differences. In *Kangaroo* Somers ponders over whether his political leader may have:

> Jewish blood. The very best that is in the Jewish blood: a faculty for pure disinterestedness, and warm, physically warm love, that seems to make the corpuscles of the blood glow. (p.110)

The initial expression of 'Jewish blood' may well indicate a racial blood, but this is made uncertain by the later reference to the 'blood' being able to 'glow', which is more suggestive of blood that possesses purely metaphysical properties. In 'The Woman Who Rode Away' there is a more obvious racial depiction of Cuesta as 'a pure-blood Indian' (p.224) which evokes colonial beliefs in racial types and blood-superiority. There are more complex comments relating to race and blood in *The Boy in the Bush,* as Jack:

> did not mind Easu's running with a black girl, and afterwards with Monica. Morally he did not mind it. But physically - perhaps pride of race - he minded. Physically he could never go so far as to lay his hand on the darky's fuzzy head. His pride of race was too intense. He had no objection at all to Lily, until it came to actual physical contact. And then his blood recoiled with old haughtiness and pride of race. (p.132)

It is difficult to discern if the narrative intends to convey that Jack is racist, or if endorses the idea of an incompatibility between the 'physical' bloods of people of different races. Importantly, in all of these examples as well as in *The Plumed Serpent,* there is no consistent representation of racial-blood that Lawrence gives weight to.

This is the case in both Lawrence's fiction and non-fiction as the narratives and characters, and Lawrence's own views do not strongly assert the idea that blood-consciousness indicates a biological basis for difference. On many occasions in *The Plumed Serpent* and in other texts, Lawrence uses the term blood to posit the blood-consciousness of the Mexican people as a cultural-induced state, which is not based on genetics but upon forming a spiritual or religious connection with the 'spirit of place' (*SCAL.* p.17). However, it is important to assert that Lawrence's writing at least conveys an element of uncertainty in his mind as to the relationship between the corporeal and spiritual components of the blood.

On a number of occasions Lawrence expressed the idea of the actual blood of the body could be transformed by ones surroundings. In a letter in January 1922, he wrote that a stint of 'flu' had been brought on by 'an organic change in one's whole constitution - through the blood and psyche' (*4L,* p.174). It is unclear whether 'blood and psyche' are intended to be recognised together or if he is differentiating between the physical body and psychical mind. In another of his letters, Lawrence outlines his intention to move to Australia, because 'it will be cooler' than Ceylon, but also due to his concerns for the 'chemical decomposition of ones blood by the ultra-violet rays of the sun' (*4L,* p.234). Similar beliefs are expressed by Somers in *Kangaroo* as he considers the subject of:

> immigrants … in their first months, before their blood "thins down", by their round and ruddy cheeks …
>
> When your blood has thinned down, out here, there's nothing but the merest sediment of a soul left, and your wits and your feelings are clear of it ...
>
> Yet he said to himself: "Do I want my blood to thin down like theirs? - that peculiar emptiness that is in them, because of the thinning that's gone out of them? Do I want this curious transparent blood of the antipodes, with its momentaneous feelings and its sort of *absentness*? - But of course till my blood has thinned down I shan't see with their eyes. - And how in the name of heaven is this world-brotherhood mankind going to see with one eye, eye to eye, when the very blood is of different thicknesses on different continents,

> and with the difference in blood, the inevitable psychic difference? Different vision! - " (*K,* pp.147-148)

Somers' evaluation of 'different thicknesses' of blood 'on different continents' is a point of comparison between two white characters, but again it is difficult to take this literally as referring to biological blood, because Somers is also thinking about the 'soul' and spiritual 'emptiness' (*K,* p.148. The fact that Somers states it is possible to 'see with their eyes' (*K,* p.148) means he is proposing that this difference is not fixed and biological, rather it is a changeable, psychic notion of blood that he is referring to.

As this thesis will continue to show, Lawrence was very much interested in the subject of difference between Western and non-Western characters in his novels, but there is no consistent depiction of a racial blood that underlies blood-consciousness in Lawrence's fiction and non-fiction. This chapter will further evaluate exactly what is implied by the difference between Kate and the Mexican characters of *The Plumed Serpent,* but with a view to establishing the self's ability to transform and spiritually grow rather than being restricted by racial blood types. Importantly, for all of Touissant's assertion of "pure blood" (*PS,* p.64) it must be recognised that Lawrence is more interested in emphasising multiple cultural-identities for his characters. It is for this reason that the new God and saviour of Mexico Don Ramón, 'is almost pure Spaniard' (p.64) and 'graduated in Columbia University' (*PS*, p.68), whilst Cipriano was brought up and educated at Oxford. The implication appears to be that despite the fact that Ramón and Cipriano are Westernised in many ways through their education and capitalist "Americanism" (*PS,* p.44), through their upbringing in Mexico and their belief in the values of Quetzalcoatl, they have been able to avoid the mental-conscious values of the West.

Torgovnick (1990) articulates that 'Lawrence is guilty of [a] distinct separation

into two categories of Western and primitive, mental and blood, nothing between' (p.3). However, there are numerous examples of when Lawrence does not distinguish between different races, cultures, and forms of consciousness in this way. Throughout *The Plumed Serpent* Kate confronts her stereotypes of the people of Mexico, leading her to find that human beings cannot be so easily categorised into certain types. Although Lawrence still relies on the binaries of civilisation and the primitive, Western and other, he is calling these very definitions into question. In her sensitive and insightful assessment of Lawrence, Julianne Newmark's (2010) writes that he 'was more than simply "fundamentally affected" by his nationality, race, and class; he was aware of this effect and by degrees, over time, he fought harder and harder against it' (p.174). Newmark (2010) stresses the element of 'struggle' that was necessary for Lawrence 'to re-place his "old" colonial stance with a new, revised, deliberate, and hard-fought-for postcolonial one' (p.174).

If critics deem that Lawrence is only capable of one stance regarding peoples of other cultures in his fiction, then the characters of *The Plumed Serpent* become static stereotypes which are created either in the image of Lawrence himself, or as his savage other. However, such a response fails to see how Lawrence relied upon his own mixed reactions to life in Mexico in order to move beyond them. Lawrence's attempt to look through the eyes of a subject who is not white or Western unsurprisingly has its problems. However, the effort to reveal the experiences of people outside of a Eurocentric viewpoint involves more than just reinforcing colonial discourse; it brings it under the microscope.

So far, blood-consciousness has been acknowledged as a vital, yet altogether problematic concept in *The Plumed Serpent.* This is because of the different ways it can be interpreted due to Lawrence being either unable or unwilling to portray

Mexico and its people in any consistent light. Despite negative readings of Mexican blood-consciousness, there is no question that Lawrence intended it to be superior and point the way forward for England's dying culture. Similarly, Howard Booth (2000) establishes that Lawrence's writing into the 1920s involves a blend of positions rather than the adoption of any one specific stance:

> Racist and pro-colonial statements can be found in D.H. Lawrence's writing, but he can also be seen questioning negative Western attitudes to the racial "other". Between 1917 and 1925 Lawrence developed the view that engaging with other cultures and peoples could renew the self and Europe. (p.197)

Booth (2000) describes Lawrence's relationship with colonialism as something which he 'stretched and probed' (p.197), but eventually remained unsure about. So *The Plumed Serpent* is very much a site of multiplicities, as Kate's shifting attitudes are hard to keep up with. Despite Kate's ambivalence and ultimate unreliability, the novel becomes increasingly concerned with the Mexican people as political subjects. The next section is focused upon the moment of contact and interaction between people of different cultures. Campbell's (2000) concept of a bodily imaginary will be used in a reading of blood-consciousness as a non-biological entity that is experienced differently according to culture. This involves exploring Lawrence's attempt to represent the unconscious of Mexican characters, whilst examining how people of other cultures and skin colours exist unconsciously.

THE BODILY IMAGINARY

Given the negative aspects of how Mexican blood-consciousness is presented in *The Plumed Serpent,* it is reasonable to question to what extent it can be interpreted as a positive set of beliefs. At times, the depiction of Mexican characters in Lawrence's fiction and in his travel essays endorses the notion of Kate as a

conscious, civilised being, whereas the Mexican characters represent unconscious primitive urges. For this reason, Lawrence's ideas regarding other cultures and the unconscious can resemble Jung's depiction of a collective unconscious that has:

> layers [which] are biologically determined and racially specific … the collective unconscious is the undeveloped, primitive and biological state that remains non-evolved and undifferentiated ... whilst the European is able to own and contain his unconscious world, the primitive is ruled by it, relating to others by way of projecting. (Campbell, 2000, p.211)

As the previous section outlined, Lawrence considers blood-consciousness to be in contact with the deepest and most elemental forces of a 'primitive state', but overall in his different literary forms Lawrence does not suggest a 'racist typology [like] Jung's collective unconscious' (Campbell, 2000, p.213). By envisioning the blood-conscious nature of the people of Mexico, in *The Plumed Serpent* Lawrence is doing more than just reinforcing 'fixed and archaic' aspects of the unconscious, or positing it as 'something which envelops the individual, whose personality is contained within it' (Campbell, 2000, p.213). Instead, there is reason to connect Lawrence with the ideas of Fanon, a post-Freudian thinker who refers to the experience of black men when confronted with white men.

Like Lawrence, Fanon was evaluating the point of contact between peoples of different skin colour and how it impacts upon both parties. Strongly influenced by his own experiences of racism, Fanon writes about the feeling of inferiority from the position of the colonised which is the result of:

> the white gaze [leading to] an unusual weight descend[ing] on us ... In the white world, the man of color encounters difficulties in elaborating his body schema. The image of one's body is solely negating. It's an image in the third person. All around the body reigns an atmosphere of certain uncertainty. (*Black Skin*, *White Masks,* p.90)

There is every reason to think Fanon would not necessarily welcome a comparison made between him and Lawrence, but they both share an interest in the effects of

the ‘white gaze’ (*Black Skin, White Masks,* p.90) and the relationship between consciousness and race. For Fanon, the ‘image of one’s body’ (p.90) is the representation of a man or woman in the unconscious. In Jung’s work, the body of the other is a stable and negative image that binds a person’s consciousness to their skin colour. It is the image of otherness or primitivism that arises in the white man or woman’s mind and causes a feeling of difference, when actually this difference is only part of what Campbell (2000) calls a ‘bodily imaginary’ (p.13).

An in-depth knowledge of Fanon’s work and Campbell’s (2000) research is not necessary in order to understand their relevance to *The Plumed Serpent* and Lawrence’s writing on Mexico and its people. The central issue is whether Kate’s exploration of Mexican blood-consciousness results in only an asserted hierarchy of white over dark skin, Western over other, or if in fact, difference is an illusion. In *The Plumed Serpent* there are many instances when Kate’s negative perceptions of Mexican blood-consciousness are shown to be the result of her ‘white gaze’ (*Black Skin, White Masks,* p.90), and her fantasised imaginary of the unconscious of Mexican people. In these instances Mexican identity is not fixed, rather Kate’s impressions are able to be broken down and re-assessed, thus resulting in her more enlightened perspectives and spiritual growth.

Kate’s continual re-evaluation of Mexican blood-consciousness throughout the novel is evident when whiteness and otherness merge rather than being asserted as distinct categories. When Kate visits Ramón at his home, the impression he has on her is startling and carries huge metaphorical significance, as:

> He was dressed in white, dazzling, in the costume of the *peones,* the white blouse jacket and the white, wide pantaloon trousers. But the white was linen, slightly starched, and brilliant, almost unnatural in its whiteness. (*PS,* p.167, emphasis in original)

The contrast between Ramón's dark skin and the whiteness of his outfit is arresting for Kate. Importantly this scene suggests that false racial categories can be collapsed, and that there are multiple possibilities for human identity rather than restrictive types. On some occasions, Kate appears to possess definite ideas as to what constitutes Mexican or Indian identity, yet in other instances addresses the subject of difference in a more open-minded way. This is evident in a conversation with Ramón as Kate comments that "Don Cipriano says that white people always want peace … Don't you consider yourselves white people?" (*PS,* p.187). Ramón responds by stating "No whiter than we are … Not lily-white, at least", a claim that exudes that whiteness as more than just the literal colour of the skin. Instead, there is a deeper implication of what whiteness stands for and what it signifies.

Another example of Lawrence addressing the concept of a 'bodily imaginary' (Campbell, 2000, p.13) is in one of many tense discussions between Kate and her servant Juana. Lawrence suggests that points of confrontation can result when people of different cultures and skin colours are subjected to the judgemental 'white gaze' (*Black Skin, White Masks,* p.90). This is shown as:

> Kate caught the other woman's black, reptilian eyes unexpectedly. Usually, she forgot that Juana was dark and different. For days she would not realise it. Till suddenly she met that black, void look with the glint in it, and she started inwardly, involuntarily asking herself: Does she hate me? (*PS,* p.334)

This 'black, void look' is part of the novel's most offensive terminology which has racist connotations, but importantly, Kate also forgets that Juana is 'different' which again reinforces the sense of an imaginary difference being present. This scene also conveys that Kate's pre-conceived feelings of superiority affect her ability to form friendships with people in Mexico, as they recognise the innate prejudice that Kate possesses.

Both Fanon and Lawrence recognise that race has an effect upon consciousness and how life is experienced. In the essay 'Indians and an Englishman' (1923) Lawrence questions 'what is the feeling that passes from an Indian to me, when we meet. We are both men, but how do we feel together?' (p.116). Here, his emphasis is upon the 'feeling[s]' of both individuals in these meetings and the possibility of shattering preconceived ideas about other peoples. In *Mornings in Mexico* Lawrence is similarly trying to understand what he viewed as an essential difference between himself and the Indians in Mexico, writing that:

> The Indian way of consciousness is different from and fatal to our way of consciousness. Our way of consciousness is different from and fatal to the Indian's. The two ways, the two streams are never to be united. They are not even to be reconciled. There is no bridge, no canal of connection.
>
> The sooner we realize and accept this, the better, and leave off trying, with fulsome sentimentalism, to render the Indian in our own terms. (*MM*, (p.61)

In relation to *The Plumed Serpent,* the suggestion is that Kate cannot possibly see through the eyes of the Mexican-Indians no matter how hard she may try, and what illusions she may have. *Mornings in Mexico* conveys Lawrence's recognition that his own perceptions of Mexico and its people were restricted to his white Western perspective that restricts any level of insight he felt he had into Mexican culture. He emphasises that a white Westerner cannot possibly 'render the Indian in [their] own terms' (*MM,* p.61); a notable claim which supports the idea that *The Plumed Serpent* encourages its readers to be sceptical regarding Kate's supposed understanding of life in Mexico. By suggesting that one cannot 'express one stream in terms of another' Lawrence believes that you can 'have a little Ghost inside you which sees both ways … But a man cannot *belong* to both ways' (*MM,* p.61, emphasis in original).

Given these discussions, there are reasons to believe that *The Plumed Serpent*'s representation of Mexican blood-consciousness does not fix the unconscious of the Mexican people 'like the biologically determined Jungian archetype' (Campbell, 2000, p.13). Instead, like Fanon, Lawrence proposes that differences between Indian and Western consciousness are determined by a 'cultural unconscious, not a collective one' (Campbell, 2000, p.13). Lawrence's claim that there is 'no bridge' (*MM,* p.61) between different forms of consciousness, affirms that Kate will never be able to experience or understand the world through the eyes of a Mexican-Indian. Yet, because blood-consciousness is dependent upon culture and not upon racial types or a biological blood, it remains an achievable state of being regardless of skin colour, race, and nationality. Blood-consciousness is not a regression to the past, instead, it strips away the materialistic self-consciousness of the ego allowing Kate to form new and vivid relationships. Her ability to transform is affirmed through the numerous references to 'the death of her individual self' (p.417), and that 'when she spread forth the wings of her own ego, and sent forth her own spirit, the world could look very wonderful to her' (*PS,* p.439). Lawrence's belief in a fluid, unconscious-self means that human beings can be changed and transformed at any moment.

Howard Booth (1997) has considered this important Lawrentian concern for 'the possibility of an encounter with the "other" that transforms and changes the self' (p.171). Booth is attentive to the inconsistencies at work in Lawrence's philosophy, but affirms that 'the connection at the level of the blood, [is] a physical tangible link rather than the "othering", "knowing" glance leads to a change in the way one is - physically and mentally' (p.190). This 'glance' is how Kate's relationship with the Mexican people begins, but right at the end of the novel her claim that '*the blood is*

one blood' (*PS,* p.416, emphasis in original) suggests that a deeper and more meaningful "knowing" (Booth, 1997, p.190) has taken place, which has altered Kate's very being.

The significance of this notion that '*we are all of one blood-stream'* (*PS,* p.416, emphasis in original) is reiterated by Lawrence's adoption of italics, suggestive of an unconscious revelation. This epiphany is the culmination of Kate's entire journey of self-discovery through *The Plumed Serpent.* Lawrence identifies that it is only by living amongst the people that she can confront her stereotypes of Mexican otherness and her lack of surety as to whether a racial blood is the basis of difference. Thus, the notion of a 'blood-unison' (*PS,* p.416) is a positive depiction of blood-consciousness as a non-biological basis for the unconscious. On her arrival in Mexico, Kate believes she is fundamentally different to the native people due to the fact that she:

> was of a proud old family. She had been brought up with the English, Germanic idea of the *intrinsic* superiority of the hereditary aristocrat. Her blood was different from the common blood, another, finer fluid.
>
> But in Mexico, none of this. Her criada Juana, the *aguador* who carried the water, the boatman who rowed her on the lake, all looked at her with one look in their eyes: *The blood is one blood. In the blood, you and I are undifferentiated.* (*PS,* p.416, emphasis in original)

Despite this change in Kate's outlook, the narrative still depicts her reluctance to accept the idea that '*the blood is one blood'.* The novel demonstrates that Kate may have feelings of superiority to address, but this process has already begun and has enabled a level of psychical transformation in her. *The Plumed Serpent* continues to depict that the spiritual change that Kate experiences, and her more progressive ideas regarding the blood-consciousness of Mexico is the result of her relationship with Cipriano.

Rather than embodying Kate's need to regress, Cipriano is described as 'bring[ing] her back to the new' (*PS,* p.422) which is an idea that associates Cipriano with self-progression and positive reconstructing experiences for Kate. The 'Morning Star' (*PS,* p.388) arises again at the end of the novel in order to convey Kate's belief in the importance of balance between her and Cipriano, as the reader is told that:

> Kate had convinced herself of one thing, finally: that the clue to all living and to all moving-on into new living lay in the vivid blood-relation between man and woman. A man and a woman in their togetherness were the clue to all present living and future possibility. Out of this clue of togetherness between a man and a woman, the whole of the new life arose. It was the quick of the whole.
>
> And the togetherness needed a balance. (*PS,* p.399)

Kate and Cipriano's relationship connects with Oh's (2007) evaluation of Lawrence's 'spirit of place' (*SCAL,* p.17), as the ability of Kate's blood-consciousness to be transformed is dependent on both the 'spiritual and material' components of 'place' (Oh, 2007, p.5). Similarly, Newmark (2010) redefines the notion of travel in Lawrence's writing, emphasising that Kate's physical journey to Mexico, a "place" (Oh, 2007), also implies psychical and bodily self-discovery. She identifies that Lawrence's:

> movement, his re-placement of self, is not just a spatial geographical matter, the kind that typically concerns the crossing or penetrating of discrete, physical frontiers. Rather, Lawrence's re-placement reveals a new vision of the mutable frontiers that constitute one's own human geography. With close attention to the distance he travels between his "early" and "late" New Mexico writing about Native Americans, we can come to view him as a writer grappling with his own interior, sensory landscape. (Newmark, 2010, p.157)

Oh (2007) and Newmark (2010) both articulate the importance of Kate's ability to achieve self-growth and to form new relationships that further this growth in her time in Mexico. The difference in Kate's perceptions of the country at the beginning and at the end of *The Plumed Serpent,* shows clear signs of her coming to terms with cultural differences that impact upon blood-consciousness. This involves her

recognising her own tendency to romanticise Mexican identity and culture, as well as her need to confront feelings of white Western superiority.

Despite all these progressive aspects of *The Plumed Serpent* and the attribution of blood-consciousness to the Mexican people, it is necessary to note that the end of the novel is highly ambivalent. Booth's (2000) analysis of Lawrence alongside Fanon is rightly tentative regarding to what extent their separate ideas share similarities. Ultimately, for Booth their positions remain at odds because:

> The model suggested by Lawrence's work is that equal and positive engagements are possible, as opposed to the internalisation of fierce hierarchies of power described by Fanon ... [Thus] if the races are separate and their difference is respected, how can something joint result? Who confers the authority on the Western subject to use the "other" to help revivify an exhausted culture? What of the wishes of the racial "other" and the colonial subject? (p.205)

Booth recognises that no matter how sensitive Lawrence is to the position of colonised people, when he tries to speak for them he inevitably becomes dominant making them silent. Thus, in Lawrence's writing of the 1920s, blood-consciousness provides the medium for a 'transformative encounter' (p.203) but it also develops into theories which 'came under strain', and in Booth's (2000) opinion 'eventually collapsed' (p.207). Despite the positive association of blood-consciousness with Campbell's (2000) bodily imaginary, it is crucial to take into account Booth's (2000) awareness of 'the wishes of the racial "other" ' (p.205). Given Lawrence's attempt to consider a consciousness other than his own, as well as his presentation of the positive aspects of blood-consciousness and Kate's critical evaluation of her own white Western viewpoint, there are reasons to think of Mexican blood-consciousness as leaning more towards a postcolonial perspective rather than a colonial one.

In light of this, the final part of this chapter will assess to what extent Mexican blood-consciousness is affiliated with the aims and concerns of postcolonial studies.

This will involve a more detailed evaluation of the ability of the "other" (Booth, 2000, p.205) to speak in *The Plumed Serpent,* taking into account the period that Lawrence was writing in. Although Mexican blood-consciousness remains an ambiguous concept in the final pages of the novel as well as in Lawrence's travel writing, Booth (2000) encourages critics to consider:

> could it have been otherwise: was it possible to think and write in the modernist period wholly outside colonial and racial discourses? I think not- though it must be stated that some positions at the time were certainly better than others, and that a number of writers were pushing in strongly anti-colonial directions. The challenge for historically aware work on modernism is to explore the shaping of possibility in the period. (p.219)

Despite Kate's belief that '*we are all of one blood-stream ... In the blood, you and I are undifferentiated'* (*PS,* p.416, emphasis in original), there is still reason to question the believability of Kate's transformation through her relationship with Cipriano. As such, the final section of this chapter will now move on to explore whether Mexican blood-consciousness is a catalyst for real change in order to construct a future for Kate, but more importantly, for the Mexican people. This involves examining if Mexican blood-consciousness and the Quetzalcoatl religion can provide the basis for the societal and political stability that the country needs. On the other hand, if the novel remains primarily concerned with Kate's fantasy of a sexual relationship with a man of a different race, then in reality very little spiritual or political change is instigated in *The Plumed Serpent.*

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FUTURE

This chapter has emphasised the positive qualities of Mexican blood-consciousness, showing that the Mexican body is not the antithesis of a civilized Western body, rather its relationship with consciousness is different due to contrasting cultural

values and beliefs. Despite this, it is necessary to acknowledge that this is not the only presentation of characters and ideas being offered, as the narrative and the characters of *The Plumed Serpent* frequently manoeuvre between different positions. For Sherry Lutz Zivley (1995-6), Lawrence's uncertainty regarding New Mexico was not short lived but was evident in his writing until his final days:

> he poignantly describes his longing for New Mexico less than two months before his death. He finally praises this land and its influence and he realizes - too late - that if he could only return to New Mexico, he might very well (as so many people with tuberculosis and other respiratory problems did) recover. Instead he died in Italy longing for the land which had at first baffled and repulsed him but which he finally came to understand and love. (p.105)

One cannot help but think that if Lawrence's life had not ended so prematurely and he had been able to live in Mexico longer, he may well have written a very different novel in which he would rethink the presentation of the Mexican people as blood-conscious beings.

Lawrence should still be praised for striving to think outside his own body and his white Englishman's perspective, but throughout *The Plumed Serpent* it is clear that the focus remains on a Western character and if she can be transformed. As a result, Mexican blood-consciousness and *The Plumed Serpent* never fully make the necessary break away from colonial discourse which postcolonial theory demands. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin (2002) emphasise that it is not enough to just explore colonial stereotypes, instead 'the crucial function of language as a medium of power demands that post-colonial writing defines itself by seizing the language of the centre and replacing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place' (p.37). Although Lawrence was physically writing from a 'colonized place', Booth (2000) argues that 'this post-coloniality is not for the colonised - their *post*-colonial experience is now being colonised by a Western author - but for the needs of a threatened European' (p.213, emphasis in original). In order for Mexican blood-

consciousness to be a truly progressive concept, Lawrence must not only be evaluating Kate's experiences, but the state of Mexico and its people must take centre stage.

Edina Pereira Crunfli (2010) identifies Lawrence's 'serious efforts to learn about, study, and rescue other histories, other cultures, and other aspirations' (p.61), and that he was fully aware that his position as an outsider in foreign lands would inevitably influence his impressions of the Mexican people. In 'Indians and an Englishman', Lawrence stresses that:

> here am I, a lone lorn Englishman, tumbled out of the known world of the British Empire onto this stage: for it persists in seeming like a stage to me, and not like the proper world. Whatever makes a proper world, I don't know. (p.113).

Lawrence opened up his mind to new lands and cultures, but his writing is still permeated with the ignorance of a traveller who had spent a relatively short time in Mexico and New Mexico. This is an idea supported by expressions such as Mexico not being 'like the proper world' ('Indians and an Englishman', p.113). It is notable that in comments such as this, Lawrence is questioning his own stance, and precisely why it does not feel 'like the proper world'. Pereira Crunfli (2010) asserts Lawrence's struggle to do more than offer an essentially incomplete vision of Mexico and its people, but that:

> he, like any other subject in his position, with the burden of his culture, would be incapable of practising such an advanced deconstructive exercise. For the dissemination of meaning and the abandonment of the terrain of the deconstructed system to take place, the voice of the other would have to be speaking by itself, from a point of its own origins. (p.69)

The novel confronts fundamental questions that postcolonial readers have sought to address, as *The Plumed Serpent* continues to self-consciously consider what constitutes Mexican identity, and who has the right to speak for the country and its people.

This is an important point, as Kate's attempt to describe the blood-consciousness of the Mexican people leads her to evaluate who is Mexican in the first place. For instance, given Ramón's time spent away from Mexico, Kate remains unconvinced that he is the person to give the Mexican people the security and stability they need. She states that "Don Ramón isn't really Mexican … He feels European" (*PS,* p.237) which is a significant insight that shows Kate to be assessing his political right to speak for the people. At times, Kate's views are blinded by her attraction to Ramón and Cipriano, leaving her unable or unwilling to recognise the fascist element of their desire to rule. However, in her most honest, self-reflective moments, she knows that they do not really represent the people of Mexico and their needs. The narrative evokes that:

> those pale-faced Mexicans of the Capital, politicians, artists, professionals, and business people, they did not interest her ... Mexico still meant the mass of silent peons, to her. And she thought of them again, these silent, stiff-backed men, driving their strings of asses along the country roads, in the dust of Mexico's infinite dryness, past broken walls, broken houses, broken haciendas, along the endless desolation left by the revolutions ... (*PS,* p.75)

It is the small communities of people born and living in Mexico that can show Europe the way forward into blood-consciousness, rather than the self-interested and corrupt minority of the country. Kate's belief that 'the power of the world was dying in the blond men, their bravery and their supremacy was leaving them, going into the eyes of the dark men, who were rousing at last' (*PS,* p.400) is a complex assertion, calling up the Mexican people to claim their own land and futures. These aspects of *The Plumed Serpent* offer a different perspective compared to the supposedly primitive savagery of the country.

David Ellis (1998) conveys that Lawrence has been criticised for 'exaggerat[ing] the dangers of life in [Mexico] but of all the countries one might have chosen to visit in 1923 [it] was certainly far from being safest for foreigners' (p.109).

Similarly, in the majority of cases, *The Plumed Serpent* does not depict mindless primitive violence. Rather, episodes of conflict that occur in chapters such as 'The Attack on Jamiltepec' should be recognised as the reaction of the oppressed. The violence here is in fact a response to the peoples' lack of human rights brought about by Ramón's enforced rule upon the people, which at times seems like a dictatorship. Lawrence does not simply idealise blood-consciousness as prominent in the Mexican people, he also understands the Mexican individual as a political subject that is neglected, misrepresented, or not represented at all. Going back to Touissant's belief in the "mixed blood" (*PS,* p.64) as the reason for social unrest in Mexico, it is also paramount to note that this view is counteracted by Owen.

As a number of characters discuss the despondency of many Mexican people, Owen's reasoning is practical as he states that they would be happy if 'they had comfortable homes, and a sense of real freedom ... But being in the grip of outsiders, as they have been for hundreds of years, life of course seems hardly worthwhile to them' (*PS,* p.63). In his time in Mexico, Lawrence was struck by the neglect of many of the country's poorest people. The impression this had upon Lawrence is relevant in his construction of characters such as Owen, who are the voices of reason that understand that the crime and social upheaval in Mexico is simply the result of political abandonment of the people. These are undoubtedly progressive views on Lawrence's part which confront colonial hierarchies of power as Owen states 'if [only] they felt that they could control their own lives and their own country ... they don't feel *free'* (*PS,* p.63, emphasis in original). The assertion of these beliefs contradicts the idea that Lawrence is too idealistic towards Mexico and that he can only envisage change as a result of the renewal of the mystical-blood in the Mexican people.

Despite *The Plumed Serpent*'s emphasis upon the need for real political change in Mexico, the focal point of the novel remains fixed upon Kate's spiritual evolution by her attempt to live in a blood-conscious connection with Cipriano. Mexican blood-consciousness as a theme in the novel is not a postcolonial concept due to the lack of attention paid to characters or occurrences in the Mexican communities. The subject of political change in Mexico always remains a secondary issue compared to the prioritisation given to Kate's internal world. As stated in the previous examples, *The Plumed Serpent* seems to assert who the real people of Mexico are, but Kate's housemaid Juana and the boatman rowing her across the lake have nowhere near a strong enough presence or voice in the novel (Carpenter, 1994). Perhaps Lawrence did not feel confident enough to speak for them, but regardless of this, their relative silence relates to their position in society where they are spoken for by Ramón and Cipriano. It is a shame that Lawrence does not give these 'silent men' (*PS,* p.75) and women a larger role, for *The Plumed Serpent* would make a much stronger and clearer statement if it did.

When thinking about blood-consciousness as a psychical and spiritual philosophy of being, Burden (2000) importantly emphasises that in many instances *The Plumed Serpent* proposes a 'mythic' rather than a 'realistic' (p.283) picture of Mexico and its people. The 'realistic' elements of the novel lie in the fact Ramón's wife Carlota is dead, his children live away from him and are embarrassed by his involvement in Quetzalcoatl, and his young wife Teresa, as well as Kate, and Cipriano are his only real friends. In contrast to the hymns and the didactic passages he is responsible for, Ramón is actually revealed as a lonely and vulnerable man in his mission, shown as he states that "I am tired. These people make me feel I have a hole in the middle of me" (*PS,* p.407). Similarly, no matter how much the reader is

encouraged to believe that Kate is drawn to Cipriano because he embodies the balancing principles of 'the morning star' (p.92), towards the close of the novel it seems the 'real' (Burden, 2000, p283) reason is down to Kate's fear that 'without Cipriano to touch me ... I shall become a horrible, elderly female' (*PS,* p.439). Subsequently, it becomes difficult to take Kate's role as Goddess Malintzi in Quetzalcoatl seriously, especially when she relies upon a "song-sheet" (*PS,* p.345) to sing the hymns of her own religion.

Kate's desire to become part of a religion that she does not completely understand highlights her desperation to turn away from her Western culture and find new purpose and hope in other belief systems. Michael Bell (2001) points out that Lawrence was not alone in turning to myth as an alternative source of meaning, stressing that 'Pound, Joyce, H.D. and Thomas Mann turned to myth not as a flight from history but as a concentration of its meaning' (p.188). Although blood-consciousness is very much an individual philosophy, it is born out of a collective sense of disillusion and apprehension that Lawrence shared with many artists and authors living in post-war Europe. For writers such as W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, and Joyce, it became a necessity to turn away from 'religious narrative elements to the construction of new mythological models' (Childs, 2000, p.58). However, one of the central reasons why *The Plumed Serpent* cannot be thought of as a postcolonial novel is that it relies upon myth as a way of exploring 'being rather than [using it to make] a historical statement about cultural development' (Bell, 2001, p.181). The turn against wartime England and the dominant religion of Christianity are significant factors that influence Kate's hope for Quetzalcoatl, yet as Jamie Jung Min Woo (2009) states, at times Lawrence is unable to sufficiently reconcile myth with the form of the novel.

Such criticisms go back to novels such as *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* which are subject to similar criticisms whereby Lawrence's incorporation of myth means that he avoids the central questions at the heart of the novel which are related to the future of England and how to avoid mental-consciousness. It is perhaps unsurprising that at times in *The Plumed Serpent* there can seem to be 'too little connection between the symbolic world and ordinary, mundane, or everyday life' (Jung Min Woo, 2009, p.194). Jung Min Woo argues that the novel is representative of the 'Latin American form of "magical realism" that privileges indigenous mythology over colonizing narratives from Europe' (p.187). This form of fiction befits powerful scenes where transformation of the unconscious can occur, but it can lead to basic difficulties in interpreting the text, as Jung Min Woo (2009) suggests that:

> it remains a question whether Lawrence succeeds in avoiding sentimental mysticism in making Kate over in this way. His Mexican novel may be a failure, in the sense of traditional English fictional narrative. Indeed, the author seems quite lost in translating the other; as well as in translating himself and his own characters. But the old land Mexico, for Lawrence, is a virgin land of new possibility for the future civilization. And in this naïveté of a foreigner's observation, which generally involves sentimental excitement, is a perspective that the local people would not have for themselves. (p.204)

Lawrence warns against such 'sentimentalism' (p.61) in *Mornings in Mexico,* but as this chapter has shown, there lies a definite element of romanticism in the descriptions of Mexican blood-consciousness and the idea that it can pave the way for a better future in Europe and Mexico.

Despite allusions made to the need for political revolution in Mexico, on the basis of how Lawrence depicts the Quetzalcoatl movement, it seems that only further oppression lies ahead for the Mexican people. This position is supported by Jeffrey Meyers (1974) and his assessment of *The Plumed Serpent* in light of the Mexican Revolution. Meyers (1974) believes that Lawrence offers the same image of Mexico at the beginning and the end of the novel criticising his 'inability to create a

meaningful social or religious alternative to the frightening revolutionary reality that he knew so well' (p.72). Yet, not all critics have agreed with this stance, as Yudhistar (1969) suggests that there is genuine reason for optimism towards Quetzalcoatl because:

> what "Ramon means" is not the institution of savagery or the abandonment of civilised consciousness, but the attainment of a balanced, integrated personality by bringing into unison the blood and the spirit, the dark and the light, the mind and the body, the eagle and the snake, Quetzal and Coatl: the aim is the enrichment, not the impoverishment of life. (p.255)

For Meyers (1974), the fact that 'Ramon's quest is … purely a "religious" one - not social or political' (Yudhistar, 1969, p.253) is the greatest disappointment of all. If blood-consciousness is represented as affecting the lives of the Mexican people as well as instigating Kate's own personal development, then the novel would offer a more powerful and challenging message, and give its readers further reason to praise the postcolonial attitudes embedded within it.

Much of Lawrence's post-1920 fiction is cautious regarding the creation of a future, not just in Mexico but anywhere. However, this fact should not be mistaken as Lawrence desiring to live through the past, instead it is central to the 'cultural and aesthetic reaction of modernism' (p.17) against the 'rise of capitalism' (Childs, 2000, p.16). Similarly, in 'Indians and an Englishman' Lawrence stresses that he is not idealising a pre-civilised world:

> I have gone a long road since then. And as I look back, like memory terrible as blood-shed, the dark faces round the fire in the night, and one blood beating in me and them. But I don't want to go back to them, ah never. I never want to deny them, or break with them. But there is no going back. Always onward, still further. The great devious onward-flowing stream of conscious human blood. From them to me, and from me on.
>
> I don't want to live again the tribal mysteries my blood has lived long since. I don't want to know as I have known, in the tribal exclusiveness. (p.120)

Here Lawrence mythologises the earliest people of the human race, tracing evolution to the present day. Lawrence imagines the shared blood of mankind to result in an

eternal connection between peoples, but that this 'stream' ('Indians and Entertainment', p.120) should not become stuck in the past instead it must continue to flow on.

Towards the end of the novel Kate feels that she is 'a bit bored with living Quetzalcoatls' (*PS,* p.427), but she needs something to believe in to give her life meaning. Her gradual awareness that *'We are all of one blood-stream'* (*PS,* p.416, emphasis in original) towards the end of the novel, finally breaks down the perceived difference between her and the Mexican people. This idea also conveys her own need to continue to evolve as she envisions herself as comprised of:

> two selves: one, a new one, which belonged to Cipriano and to Ramón, and which was her sensitive, desirous self: the other hard and finished, accomplished, belonging to her mother, her children, England, her whole past. (*PS,* p.429)

Given Lawrence's strong feelings against the First World War, it is unsurprising that he would explore the possibility of new life in new places. It is also unsurprising that he believed that European men and women were in urgent need of change to ensure such a catastrophe would never happen again. It is from this perspective that Lawrence developed his profound insights into other cultures, whilst stressing that white Western superiority is to be questioned and destabilized, rather than asserted.

It is telling that Lawrence attributes the most vital and positive state of being of blood-consciousness to the Mexican people. In his time in Mexico 'the place [Lawrence] comes to know is simultaneously a hard-lined geographic and political site *and* an abstract domain of spirituality, timeless permanence, and relationships of equilibrium and not dominance' (Newmark, 2010, p.178, emphasis in original). *The Plumed Serpent* suggests that personal and political change are fundamentally connected and although Mexican blood-consciousness is a complex concept, it is founded on the primitive being able to construct a future. This future is not just for

Kate and Europe but also for Mexico. It identifies the significance of individual human relationships, and identifies that they can change the way people conceive entire cultures, which are not outdated views.

Alongside the issues of race, culture, and blood-consciousness, the closing pages of *The Plumed Serpent* have drawn critical attention because of Kate's final words to Cipriano, "You won't let me go!" (*PS,* p.444). It is unclear whether Cipriano would actually prevent Kate from leaving Mexico, or if this is just another example of her fantasising elements of their relationship. Nevertheless, throughout *The Plumed Serpent* there are definite signs of Lawrence's intensive focus upon masculinity, which is now an infamous characteristic of his fiction in the 1920s. Novels such as *Women in Love, Aaron's Rod,* and *Kangaroo* all involve male friendships which assert a desire for masculinity alongside disparaging descriptions of needy and wilful women. Although there are numerous references to the necessity of balance and equilibrium between Kate and Cipriano in *The Plumed Serpent,* there is also a strong emphasis upon the need for Kate's submission. This has led Carl Krockel (2007) to state that ultimately, Kate's relationship with Cipriano is an essentially negative experience and that 'the change in her blood is both an erotic and political process: it liberates her body, but dispossesses her of an independent will' (p.294). This element of the novel is extremely problematic because in many instances, their relationship is depicted as a positive blood-conscious union, but this cannot be the case if Kate's:

> marriage with Cipriano [involves] the supreme passivity, like the earth below the twilight, consummate in living lifelessness, the sheer solid mystery of passivity. Ah, what an abandon, what an abandon, what an abandon! - of so many things she wanted to abandon. (*PS,* p.311)

This passage is an example of some of most disturbing parts of *The Plumed Serpent* as the novel stresses the need for Kate's 'submission' (p.439) in order to realise 'the

god-power in man' (*PS,* p.418). This theme of aggressive masculinity and female 'passivity' (*PS,* p.311) resulted in Hilary Simpson's highly regarded *D.H. Lawrence and Feminism* (1982) and many more feminist responses to Lawrence's fiction.

Given the huge emphasis Lawrence places upon blood-consciousness and the sexual union of man and woman as the way to re-build a damaged English society, Chapter Five will return the focus once more to England and the last major novel of Lawrence's career. In a reading of *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* the next part of this thesis will assess the phallic element of blood-consciousness, which is part of the vision in *The Plumed Serpent* when men are described as 'columns of dark blood' (*PS,* p.47). In light of *Lady Chatterley's* openness regarding sexuality, Chapter Five will identify the complex presentation of a blood-conscious marriage through the affair of Oliver Mellors and Connie Chatterley.

CHAPTER FIVE

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER: A BLOOD-CONSCIOUS MARRIAGE

Lady Chatterley's Lover is strongly associated with the closing cycle of Lawrence's life; viewed as his final significant offering to his readership, it returns the focus to England after his writing of other countries and cultures in the 1920s. The well-documented history of *Lady Chatterley* is immersed in scandal in connection with The Obscene Publications Act of 1959. However, seizing copies of *Lady Chatterley* as well as some of Lawrence's paintings only galvanised interest and desire for a text that had been deemed unfit for the public domain. The controversy of this novel stemmed from Lawrence's hope of creating fiction that could tackle the taboo subjects of sexual intercourse and the naked human body. He conveys this motive in a letter in May 1929:

> I write in all honesty and in the sincere belief that the human consciousness needs badly now to have the doors freely opened into the dark chamber of horrors of 'sex' - it is no chamber of horrors really, of course - and I feel the language needs to be freed of various artificial taboos on words and expressions. All those taboos and shut doors only make for social insanity. I do my work, and take the reward of insult, since it is to be expected. (*7L*, p.308)

Despite the notorious nature of *Lady Chatterley* and Lawrence's ongoing difficulties with royalty rights and its publication, as 'A Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*' states, the novel is about the simplest of stories, 'the deepest of all communions' (p.325) when 'the great river of male blood touches to its depth the great river of female blood' (pp.324-325).

The affair that occurs between Mellors and Connie asserts the importance of 'fucking with a warm heart' (p.206), whilst the presence of other expletives such as 'cunt' (p.178) and 'shit' (*LCL,* p.223) have made *Lady Chatterley* a notorious text in the history of English literature. Yet, Lawrence dismissed 'the evocative power of the so-called obscene words' claiming that the novel is nothing short of 'an honest, healthy book, necessary for us today' ('A Propos'*,* p.307). Despite the importance of these 'obscene words' in *Lady Chatterley*, the first section of this chapter will show that it is the blood-conscious marriage of 'A Propos' that is the real foundation for the novel*.* By paying close attention to this description of a blood-conscious marriage, I will identify Connie's need for such a union in the novel*.*

The section entitled 'Sir John Thomas and Lady Jane' will focus upon the way that Mellors and Connie's sexual relationship is presented and the sexual roles that they adopt. The central concern for this section is whether the values of balance and sexual harmony which Lawrence depicts in the blood-conscious marriage of 'A Propos' are jeopardised because of his idealisation of the phallus*.* Millett (1970) and Simpson's (1982) texts include probably the most iconic resistance to accepting *Lady Chatterley* as a novel about a woman's sexual liberation. In these works, the emphasis on the dark and mysterious phallic nature of blood-sex which can conquer mental-conscious relationships is subject to criticism, due to a perceived leaning towards male experience in Lawrence's writing. Subsequently, this section will acknowledge that the blood-conscious marriage of *Lady Chatterley* does seem to prioritise the male body when Lawrence states that 'the phallus is a column of blood, that fills the valley of blood of a woman' ('A Propos'*,* pp.324-325). Yet, this is only one possible reading of Connie's relationship with Mellors and fails to incorporate the element of fantasy which is involved in their sexual union. Attention will also be paid

towards ‘phallic consciousness’ as a positive term which Lawrence used ‘to transform an exclusively male word into a special term for awareness of the life of Connie’s bodily experiences’ (Nakabayashi, 2011, p.3).

These ideas finally link up to the notion that *Lady Chatterley* presents a number of different fictions which must be differentiated between (Pinkey, 1990). The naming of Sir John Thomas and Lady Jane masks the reality of the couple’s weakened physical form, as well as the sadness and loneliness of their lives. Thus, the final section will address the idea of multiple fictions at work in *Lady Chatterley.* As critics such as Earl G. Ingersoll (2001) have pointed out, it is ironic that the novel should conclude with a letter, when a blood-conscious marriage prioritises the body over the written or spoken word.

‘A PROPOS’ AND THE NEED FOR A BLOOD-CONSCIOUS MARRIAGE

In ‘A Propos’ Lawrence stresses the need to ‘*think* sex’ (p.308, emphasis in original) in a different way, which is an unusual claim considering his frequent criticisms that human beings have become too conscious. Yet, in Lawrence’s opinion, the human ‘mind’ is ‘unevolved’ in terms of its ability to fully comprehend the significance of sex, and is in need of ‘catch[ing] up … [in order to] make a balance between the consciousness of sex and the act’ (‘A Propos’, p.308). Many aspects of these discussions in ‘A Propos’ link back to Lawrence’s 1915 letter to Bertrand Russell which was explored previously in the Introduction. Lawrence once again identifies the blood as a vital force in sex, stating that:

> Marriage is no marriage that is not a correspondence of blood. For the blood is the substance of the soul, and of the deepest consciousness. It is by blood that we are: and it is by the heart and the liver that we live and move and have our being. In the blood, knowing and being, or feeling, are one and

> undivided: no serpent and no apple has caused a split. So that only when the conjunction is of the blood, is marriage truly marriage. The blood of man and the blood of woman are two eternally different streams, that can never be mingled. Even scientifically we know it. But therefore they are the two rivers that encircle the whole of life, and in marriage the circle is complete, and in sex the two rivers touch and renew one another, without ever commingling or confusing. We know it. ('A Propos', pp.324-325)

This passage demonstrates Lawrence's lifelong belief that the union of blood-conscious bodies is the true basis of sex and marriage. This is a notion that has been explored throughout this thesis because so many of Lawrence's novels use metaphors of fluidity and the meeting of blood streams to express the harmony that can be achieved in sexual relationships.

This idea of a blood-conscious marriage is particularly prominent in *Lady Chatterley* as the novel seems to suggest that in their affair, Connie and Mellors realise the possibility of this 'correspondence of blood' ('A Propos', p.324) to take place. In comparison, Connie's marriage with Clifford is evocative of the 'counterfeit marriage' of 'A Propos', which is a common form of relationship based purely on a joining of "personalities" and "minds" (p.325). This modern inclination towards a '*personal*' ('A Propos', p.325, emphasis in original) rather than a blood-conscious relationship, is described as partly due to societies' repression and censorship of the body. The concerns of 'A Propos' and a number of Lawrence's *Late Essays* (2004) set the scene for many of the characters and their beliefs in *Lady Chatterley.* Lawrence suggests that negative attitudes toward sex and the human body have been instilled into men and women from a young age, leaving them unable to achieve blood-conscious harmony in their adolescence and adulthood.

In Lawrence's 'Introduction to these Paintings' (1929) he confronts 'the growth of the "spiritual-mental" consciousness', and the body being regarded with 'horror' and a need to 'suppress' (p.186). Christianity is blamed for scare-mongering men

and women into fearing the body by over-emphasising the dangers of contracting syphilis. The church is also criticised for depicting sex as a disease carrier and is at fault for celebrating 'the nauseating and repulsive history of the crucifixion of the procreative body for the glorification of the spirit, the mental consciousness' ('Introduction to these Paintings', p.203). Lawrence challenges these negative representations of sex in the essay 'We Need One Another' (1930) when he writes 'what is sex, after all, but the symbol of the relation of man to woman, woman to man?' (p.301). In his opinion, human beings are unable to realise this due to a lack of psychical 'wholeness' (p.330) and an inner 'emptiness' ('We Need One Another', p.301), thus the self becomes sick and incapable of vital human relationships.

Such negative representations of human bodies and sex, as well as Lawrence's own battle with tuberculosis and his horror towards the mutilation of many bodies through the First World War, undoubtedly has a heavy impact upon *Lady Chatterley*. Images of bodily illness and sickness are rife throughout the novel and the healthy human body is considered to be a rare and treasured thing. Connie and her sister's German boyfriends are killed in the war, as well as Clifford's elder brother. Reminders of ill health are everywhere as 'somebody always seemed to have influenza at Wragby' (p.65), and the very air of England is 'soft and dead, as if all the world were slowly dying' (*LCL,* p.65).

The representation of Clifford's body is hugely significant as he is brought home paralysed and 'more or less in bits' (*LCL,* p.5) from the war. Lawrence states that 'I have been asked many times if I intentionally made Clifford paralysed ... whether the "symbolism" is intentional - I don't know' ('A Propos', p.333). The fact that Clifford is in a wheelchair clearly suggests that he and Connie are not able to achieve the mystical blood-communion of sex that is so important to Lawrence.

However, the narrative also implies that even if Clifford was not physically-paralysed, he already possessed 'the deeper emotional or passional paralysis, of most men of his sort and class, today' ('A Propos', p.333). This relates to the Introduction's discussion of the perceived effects of institutionalised education and class upon a person's ability to realise the importance of blood-consciousness. As Ellis (1998) states, in *Lady Chatterley* 'class antagonism' is directly related to Lawrence's beliefs regarding 'the mind's conflict with the body' (p.325).

Class is a distinguishing factor between the beliefs and behaviour of Clifford and Mellors throughout the novel. Clifford's inherited wealth and his position as a member of aristocracy results in him being a snob 'frightened of the vast hordes of middle and lower-class humanity, and of foreigners not of his own class' (*LCL,* p.10). He is also asexual as he 'blushed and looked uncomfortable' (p.34) in a conversation with his contemporaries about sex, and he is described as 'uneasy as a woman in such talk' (*LCL,* p.35). Lawrence suggests that even if he was not paralysed, Clifford would not be able to fulfil Connie due to his repressive views on sex. Connie's need for a blood-conscious marriage is highly related to Clifford's 'aristocratic relations' (p.19) that she is subjected to, as Wragby Hall is depicted as a hub of monotonous philosophising vain young men who 'all believed in the life of the mind, and keeping pure the integrity of the mind' (*LCL,* p.31).

Lawrence stresses that this results in highly emotional and spiritual relationships forming between men and women that are purely destructive for the self. In novels such as *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley,* Lawrence explores this through the dynamics of parent and child relationships occurring between adults and lovers. Gerald Doherty (1998) suggests that 'though Lawrence was unwilling to sexualize the infant's relations with others, he was more than willing ... to sexualize

the adult regression to infantile states' (p.375). *Women in Love* frequently denotes the child-like quality of Pussum, which only seems to make Gerald Crich desire her more, and Chapter Three highlighted passages of Gerald being described as like a child in love-making scenes between him and Gudrun. Similarly, Clifford experiences psychic regression in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as Lawrence implies that in middle and upper classes, as well as aristocrats, psychical development can become stuck or fixed (Doherty, 1998).

In 'A Propos' Lawrence suggests the serious repercussions can result from sexual repression in 'the so-called "cultured" classes' (p.332), an idea which surfaces in *Lady Chatterley* as Clifford increasingly depends on his maid Mrs Bolton. Due to his repressed sexual desire, Clifford becomes a 'child-man' (*LCL,* p.291) replacing a blood-conscious marriage with an overly emotional and spiritual mother and son relationship that Lawrence condemned so often throughout his life. The narrative describes how:

> He would hold her hand, and rest his head on her breast, and when she once lightly kissed him, he said: "Yes! Do kiss me! Do kiss me!" … And he lay with a queer, blank face like a child, with a bit of the wonderment of a child … It was sheer relaxation on his part, letting go all his manhood, and sinking back into a childish position that was really perverse. (*LCL,* p.291)

In contrast to this, Mellors is representative of 'the working-classes' who have kept 'the old blood-warmth of oneness and togetherness some decades longer' ('A Propos', p.332). It is no coincidence that Mellors is the son of a collier, as he conveys Lawrence's ideas regarding what constitutes 'real men' (*LCL,* p.75), a term that resurfaces in Lawrence's late writings to distinguish between men that are capable of blood-unions and men that are not. 'The Captain's Doll' (1923) evokes uncertainty regarding the relationships of men and woman in the modern age, as Hannele's loneliness results in her 'touching things and moving them a little, just for

the sake of the contact' (p.78). Hannele's initial affair with the Captain gives her some excitement but she soon begins to question what constitutes real 'men' and 'real beings' ('The Captain's Doll', p.90).

For Connie, Mellors is a completely different kind of man to any she has ever met before. Similarly, in 'The Captain's Doll', Hannele is shocked when she travels to the Tyrol and realises:

> Everything [is] so physical. Such magnificent naked limbs and naked bodies, and in the streets, in the hotels, everywhere, bare, white arms of women and bare, brown, powerful knees and thighs of men. The sense of flesh everywhere, and the endless ache of flesh … [the] endless ache of physical yearning. (p.122)

It is the sight of naked flesh that awakens Connie's desire for a union of the blood as when she sees Mellors for the first time 'he was naked to the hips … and his white, slender back was curved over a big bowl of soapy water' (*LCL,* p.66). Yet, it is important that her relationship with Mellors develops not only on a sexual basis, as Ellis (1998) points out that in Lawrence's final version of *Lady Chatterley* Mellors has become a far more 'articulate gamekeeper' and subsequently a more 'dominant figure' (p.393) in the novel.

As stated in the Introduction, it was important to Lawrence that working-class characters could achieve social mobility and become relatively educated and eloquent. Although Mellors is representative of the working-class values that Lawrence admired, he really belongs to neither one class nor the other, and is stuck in between, not wanting to push higher, but being too educated and refined to convincingly pass for a member of the lower classes. This aspect of Mellors' character was partly inspired by Lawrence's own feeling of not really belonging to any class, as in 'Which Class I Belong To' (1927) he writes that:

> The door to “success” has been held open to me. The social ladder has been put ready for me to climb. I have known all kinds of people, and been treated quite well by everyone ...
>
> Yet here I am, nowhere, as it were, and infinitely an outsider. And of my own choice.
>
> It is only this year, since coming back to Europe from America that I have asked myself why. Why, why, why could I never go through the open door, into the other world? ...
>
> I have, as far as circumstances go left the working-class world. So I have no world at all, and am content. (p.38)

Mellors is content being an outsider not fully integrated into a specific class, and this strongly appeals to Connie, who is depicted as having the very life sucked out of her by the upper-class culture at Wragby. Her doctor states that ‘there’s nothing organically wrong [but] your vitality is much too low’, encouraging her ‘to be amused, properly healthily amused’ (*LCL,* p.78).

Despite all the talk and writing that goes on at Wragby (Bell, 1992), there is ‘no touch, no actual contact’ (*LCL,* p.16). This is a notion that clearly links to the novel’s emphasis on the need for ‘tenderness in human relationships’ (p.269) that can counteract the ‘over-intellectualised emotionally paralysed humanity of the day’ (Yudhistar, 1969, p.271). In ‘A Propos’, Lawrence uses terms such as ‘touching’ (p.325) and ‘contact’ (p.326) to convey that the essential principles of a blood-conscious marriage are ‘being’ and ‘feeling’ (p.324) together, rather than the achievement of an orgasm. A lack of such physical intimacy is extremely apparent at Wragby, as the reader is told that ‘no warmth of feeling united it organically’ (*LCL,* p.17). Clifford and his friends go on for pages and pages debating on issues relating to sex and the human body. An example of this is when Lady Bennerley states that:

> “So long as you can forget your body, you are happy … And the moment you begin to be aware of your body, you are wretched. So if civilisation is any good, it has to help us to forget our bodies, and then time passes happily, without our knowing it.” (*LCL,* pp.74-75)

There is an element of flippancy in Lady Bennerley's claim that, overall, the argument of 'A Propos' and the narrative of *Lady Chatterley* do not support. As stated, Lawrence makes a clear effort throughout the novel to bring the body into acknowledgment and to make people '*think* sex' ('A Propos'*,* p.308, emphasis in original). Yet, Lady Bennerley's opinion is not completely at odds with Lawrence's ideas, as his depiction of 'sex in the head' (*FU,* p.148) in *Fantasia* is a criticism of modern people being too self-conscious and making sex a conscious act. Williams (1993) considers this Lawrentian concept in detail, and she states that:

> Sex in the head is sex made visible, sex in the wrong place and aroused to visual pleasures. Darkness is the realm of the valorised macho superhero, whilst women too often prefer the illuminated world of conscious control, sexual inauthenticity, visual engagement. (p.1)

Criticisms against this extreme form of mental-consciousness are apparent in Birkin's verbal attack on Hermione in Chapter Three. Despite this, Williams (1993) is right to identify that 'Lawrence [also] contradicts himself, enjoying the visual, experimenting with forms of narrative which are cross-fertilised with cinematic technique, looking with the eyes of femininity' (p.2). The next section will show how Lawrence experiments in this way in *Lady Chatterley*, but for now, Lady Bennerley's call to "forget your body" (*LCL,* p.74) must be recognised as important because it echoes Lawrence's disillusion with modern sex in *Psychoanalysis.* Lawrence suggests that Adam and Eve were not thrown out of Eden for having sex, rather 'when sex became to them a mental object - that is, when they discovered that they could deliberately enter upon and enjoy and even provoke sexual activity in themselves' (*PU*, p. 11).

Negative depictions of sex and marriage are rife throughout *Lady Chatterley* as Clifford describes marriage as a 'habit' and believes that he and Connie 'ought to be able to arrange this sex thing' (*LCL,* p.44). However, there are also more positive

aspects of Clifford's thinking which are in tune with the central features of a blood-conscious marriage as outlined in 'A Propos'. Clifford explains to Connie that:

> "It's the life-long companionship that matters. It's the living together from day to day, not the sleeping together once or twice. You and I are married, no matter what happens to us ... The long, slow, enduring thing - that's what we live by - not any occasional spasm of any sort. Little by little, living together, two people fall into a sort of unison, they vibrate so intricately on one another." (*LCL,* p.44)

It is important that in 'A Propos' weight is placed specifically upon the term 'marriage' not just sex, as like Clifford, Lawrence affirms the importance of the 'life-long companionship' (*LCL,* p.44) that gives a blood-conscious relationship its strength. In 'A Propos' Lawrence adopts strikingly similar language to that used by Clifford, as he writes that:

> marriage, or something like it, is essential, and … the old Church knew best the enduring needs of man, beyond the spasmodic needs of today and yesterday. The church established marriage for life, for the fulfilment of the soul during life, not postponing it till the after-death. ('A Propos', p.322)

Here Lawrence highlights the more positive values of the church that are still relevant to people of his generation. This belief in the lasting connection of a blood-conscious marriage was undoubtedly influenced by Lawrence's problems with erectile dysfunction, as he became increasingly ill and sex could no longer play a central role in his marriage with Frieda.

Connie's desperate need to be 'properly healthily amused' (*LCL,* p.78) is not necessarily due to a lack of sex, rather the wrong kind of sex. Her affair with the play-writer Michaelis does not satisfy her in the same way that Mellors does later in the novel. This is because Michaelis is representative of 'modern sex [which] is a pure matter of nerves, cold and bloodless' ('A Propos', p.326). No harmony or union can result from this form of sexual encounter, shown by the fact that Connie is left often 'dazed, disappointed [and] lost' (*LCL,* p.29) afterwards. Sex is reduced to one

person doing another a favour, as Michaelis is grateful to Connie for sleeping with him, crying “You’re *frightfully* good to me” ... “You’re only too infinitely good to me - I can hardly bear it” (*LCL,* p.26, emphasis in original). Michaelis is also a selfish lover, shown by his aggressive confrontation with Connie about her attempts to seek her own orgasm. The narrative seems to support Connie’s claim to her own sexual fulfilment, as she asks:

> “But you *want* me to go on, to get my own satisfaction?” …
> He laughed in a hollow little way.
> “*I* want it!” he said. “That’s good. I want to hang on with my teeth clenched, while you go for me!”
> “But *don’t* you?” she insisted.
> He avoided the question.
> “All the darned women are like that,” he said. “Either they don’t go off at all, as if they were dead in there - or else they wait till a chap’s really done, then they start to bring themselves off, and a chap’s got to hang on. I never had a woman yet who went off just at the same moment as I did.” (*LCL,* p.54, emphasis in original)

The insight given into the inadequacy of Michaelis as a lover is a progressive perception from a male author writing in 1928 (Spilka, 1990). This conversation also paves the way for the more considerate lover that Connie finds in Mellors, who is representative of many values that are central in ‘A Propos’. Such values include the ability for both lovers in a blood-conscious marriage to enable a balance through ‘two rivers of blood … two distinct eternal streams’, as without this sex becomes masturbatory and there is no ‘renewing [of] one another’ (‘A Propos’, p.325). Michaelis evokes regressive contemporary attitudes towards sex that Lawrence felt were largely down to the ‘exhaustive and debilitating’ (‘A Propos’, p.327) form of masturbatory sex that young men participated in.

Lawrence’s late essay ‘Pornography and Obscenity’ (1929) outlines that certain forms of sexual experiences such as masturbation can be extremely damaging, meaning that the ‘creative flow’ of sexual arousal leads only to spiritual

'dissolution' (p.242). He also describes the negative impact that the wrong kind of sex can have upon the 'psychic health of the individual' ('Pornography and Obscenity', p.243), a theme which is prominent in *Lady Chatterley* as well as *The Lost Girl* (1920) and *The Plumed Serpent.* Chapter Four explained that in the 1920s Lawrence was exploring the idea of female characters being brought back to life by significant sexual experiences. It has also been identified that so often in Lawrence's fiction, a new 'place' (*SCAL,* p.17) is also necessary in order to rejuvenate the self. In *Lady Chatterley* Lawrence suggests that a blood-conscious marriage cannot occur at Wragby Hall, nor can it be realised through Connie's affair with the immature and selfish Michaelis. Instead, Connie must wander into the wood and find Mellors in order to reignite the regenerative cycle of blood-consciousness once again.

The wood is described in wholly positive terms as Connie's 'refuge, her sanctuary' (p.20), and it symbolises a possible way of re-connecting with 'the substantial and vital world' (*LCL,* p.20). Despite Clifford's association with the lifelessness of Wragby, even he 'loved the wood. He loved the old oak trees. He felt they were his own through generations. He wanted to protect them. He wanted this place inviolate, shut off from the world' (*LCL,* p.42). Clifford can only appreciate the wood from afar, as despite his efforts to protect it with his wealth and power, his mechanical chair tarnishes the very countryside he is striving to maintain. As Connie and Clifford roam the grounds of Wragby:

> The chair puffed slowly on, slowly surging into the forget-me-nots that rose up in the drive like milk-froth, beyond the hazel shadows. Clifford steered the middle course, where feet passing had kept a channel through the flowers. But Connie, walking behind, had watched the wheels jolt over the wood-ruff and the bugle, and squash the little yellow cups of the creeping-jenny. (*LCL,* p.184)

The narrative stays close to Connie's critical perspective, as her judgemental eyes watch the flowers being trampled on in a scene that expresses Clifford's ultimate

inability to allow growth, as he re-plants flowers and trees only to mow them down unknowingly. However, another scene with Clifford and Connie overlooking the wood is one of the saddest and most sympathetic towards Clifford in the entire novel. Clifford states that “this is the old England, the heart of it: and I intend to keep it intact ... I mind more, not having a son, when I come here, than any other time” (*LCL,* pp.42-43). Despite his seeming desire for money and success in the public eye, like Connie and Mellors, Clifford is also ambivalent about the future and feels nostalgic about England and is determined to preserve it.

Although Clifford has great love for the wood, it is vital that ‘the narrow track to the hut … was not wide enough for the chair’ (*LCL,* p.185) so that he cannot go looking for Connie. The wood is a hugely significant setting for the affair to take place between Connie and her gamekeeper, as Charles Burack (1998) identifies that Connie’s:

> erotic development is implicitly linked to the growth of the wood’s organic life. She and the trees are linked by their common sentience and inwardness ... Lawrence always emphasized that being connected to the living universe means experiencing the rhythms of decay and growth in the natural environment and being synchronized with those same rhythms in the body. (p.109)

Such ‘rhythms’ are vital in the expression of the relationship between man and woman in ‘A Propos’. Burack’s (1998) comments also look back to Chapter One’s emphasis placed upon the blood in connection with the cosmos and the natural world. Similarly, in ‘A Propos’ Lawrence evokes that a blood-conscious marriage is not only the achievement of sexual harmony between two bodies, instead:

> Sex is the balance of male and female in the universe, the attraction, the repulsion, the transit of neutrality, the new attraction … The long neuter spell of Lent, when the blood is low, and the delight of the Easter kiss, the sexual revel of spring, the passion of midsummer, the slow recoil, revolt, and grief of autumn, greyness again, then the sharp stimulus of winter, of the long nights. Sex goes through the rhythm of the year, in man and woman, ceaselessly changing: the rhythm of the sun in his relation to the earth. Oh what a

> catastrophe for man when he cut himself off from the rhythm of the year. From his unison with the sun and the earth. (p.323)

The wood appears to provide a protected space whereby Connie can rediscover the blood-rhythms of her body but also the rhythms of the 'sun and earth' ('A Propos', p.323). Lawrence's tree-writing in *Fantasia* is brought to mind as 'A Propos' makes an analogy between trees and the need for human beings to re-establish their lives with these 'rhythms of the year' (p.323). Lawrence writes that:

> We are cut off from the great sources of our inward nourishment and renewal, sources which flow eternally in the universe. Vitally, the human race is dying. It is like a great uprooted tree, with its roots in the air. We must plant ourselves again in the universe. ('A Propos', p.330)

There can be no doubt that these notions were very much in Lawrence's mind when he chose the wood as the setting for Connie's affair with Mellors, as the hut lies at the centre of the powerful trees and of the cyclical seasonal changes which the natural world undergoes around them.

This kind of mythical power that the wood possesses has led critics such as David Seelow (2005) to suggest that Connie enters 'a dream state' (p.103) within the wood, which Burack (1998) associates with a retreat to the womb. Becket's (1998) article on Lawrence's representations of the maternal body and the restorative womb is relevant here, as the tranquillity and safety of the wood in *Lady Chatterley* appears to exist free from civilisation, progress, and time. Thus, although the novel does not posit other countries and cultures as a source of spiritual and sensual renewal for Connie, the wood and the 'blood-relationship' ('A Propos', p.331) that takes place within it, are unquestionably linked to Lawrence's lifelong interest in the primitive.

Chapter Four gives much insight into Lawrence's belief in primitive being, so this chapter will avoid repeating earlier discussions. However, it is necessary to briefly mention the significance of the wood as a primitive space, especially given

that ‘A Propos’ makes frequent comparisons between past and present modes of living, in order to explain why a blood-conscious marriage is difficult to realise in modern England. In *Lady Chatterley*, Lawrence is not seriously recommending that human beings must all go and live in the woods, rather the novel emphasises the need to recover that which has been lost through the war and the modernization of England.

In ‘The Ladybird’ (1923) Lawrence was already exploring many of the same issues that would come together in *Lady Chatterley* as Lady Daphne ‘married an adorable husband’ for fame, when really ‘she needed a daredevil’ (p.161). This short story is also set in a time when ‘the old spirit [had] died for ever in England’ (‘The Ladybird’, p.158), and like Connie, Lady Daphne finds herself split between her desire for a blood-conscious marriage, and the reality of her ‘counterfeit marriage’ (‘A Propos’, p.325) with her husband Basil. Daphne is depicted through her weakened physical form with her thin ‘white throat’ and ‘nerve-worn’ eyes (p.160), but her desire for the Count Dionys Psanek seems to rejuvenate her. The Count is described as having a ‘dark face’ and a ‘primitive’ quality (p.163) that leads Daphne ‘to dream about’ him and ‘yearn wistfully for him’ (‘The Ladybird’, p.196). Similarities between the short story and *Lady Chatterley* are furthered by the focus upon ‘contact with reality’ (p.199) in ‘The Ladybird’, as Daphne seeks a way out of her own stark reality with Basil by becoming the ‘night-wife’ (p.217) of the Count. Like the wood of *Lady Chatterley,* the night of ‘The Ladybird’ offers a way out of Daphne’s mundane and sexless marriage, in which the ‘hot and invisible … dark flame [of the Count] might warm the cold white fire of her own blood’ (p.211).

It is significant that the Count and Mellors are both pessimistic towards mankind after the war, and that their time spent with their female lover must exist in a

kind of utopian space and haven that is uninterrupted by society and the clock time described in Chapter Two. Katie Gramich (2001) links these ideas back to *The Plumed Serpent* noting that:

> *Lady Chatterley's Lover* constitutes a paean of spasmodic praise for the unaccommodated body, which must, according to Lawrence, be stripped of its oppressive shell of civilization. In effect, what the novelist is calling for in an explicitly evangelistic manner is no less than a turning back of the clock of history, a return to a preindustrial, a precivilized, indeed a primeval world. In doing so he continually invokes the clay, earth, or mud, which is the raw material of incarnation. (Gramich, 2001, p.149)

The wood is not only a physical place to escape to, it corresponds to a changing of self, providing a way to re-kindle organic self-growth made possible through blood-conscious connections. As stated in Chapter Four, this is not necessarily a regressive-drive, rather the central aim is to get out of the current state of regression in England, by a place that has not become modernised. Gramich (2001) suggests that:

> The primeval mud and the jungle are the symbols used in the novel to represent that lost territory of wild, authentic existence where the life of the body is still possible ... As the reference to the "jungle of herself" suggests, however, the territory is not only an external landscape but an inner region, a heart of darkness which is identified with the blood-consciousness of the resurrected body. (p.150)

For these reasons, the wood acts as a place where a blood-conscious marriage is given the basis to thrive. Yet, 'casting off of the civilized body is a gradual process' (Gramich, 2001, p.159), as Kate's decision to return to the wood again and again rather than one prolonged stay there, enables Lawrence to express the progress that she makes throughout *Lady Chatterley.*

There can be no doubt that Connie suffers in the presence of 'the young intellectuals of the day' (p.31) and longs to find a way out of the 'tragic age' *(LCL,* p.5) that she is living through. The crux of the text lies in the fact that Connie's attraction to Mellors boils down to how he makes her feel and the appreciation he

has for her body. Through the unconscious revitalisation that both characters experience*, Lady Chatterley* encourages its readers to recognise that the significance of their lovemaking and their time together hidden in the wood is because it enables a harmony between their blood. Although the blood-conscious union of Connie and Mellors is largely depicted in positive terms, there are other aspects of the novel that seem to contradict associations made between balance and sympathy in a blood-conscious marriage. Thus, the next section will look closely at another aspect of 'A Propos', particularly focusing upon the recurring expressions of the phallic element of the blood.

As this thesis has continued to highlight, when Lawrence is referring to blood-conscious sex his descriptions can often seem to privilege or idealise the male body and present the woman as passive. This is evident when it is the male blood that actively 'fills' and 'touches' (p.324) the female blood in 'A Propos'. In light of this, the following section will look closely at the sexual dynamics in the love-making scenes between Mellors and Connie, as well as evaluating in more detail what Lawrence means by defining his blood-conscious marriage as 'phallic' ('A Propos', p.324). Before doing so, I first want to highlight the difficulty in ascertaining the nature of Connie and Mellors sexual relationship. This is partly because Lawrence purposefully confuses descriptions of the physical bodies and actions of Connie and Mellors with a narrative voice that belongs to neither of them, but attempts to communicate their sexual experiences.

SIR JOHN THOMAS AND LADY JANE

When considering the relationship that develops between Connie and Mellors, it is important to recognise that although 'A Propos' is a detailed presentation of what a blood-conscious marriage is, the affair that takes place in *Lady Chatterley* is far more ambiguous. This is due to the contrast between the more realistic descriptions of their bodies and their lives alongside the more fantastical details of their affair. For example, Mellors is presented as the primeval figure of the woods, but he is also well educated and acquired 'a scholarship for Sheffield Grammar School' (*LCL,* p.145) where he learnt anatomy and French. Clifford and his friends are damned for their talk of literature, but Connie finds out that Mellors is also an avid reader, as she stumbles upon his collection of:

> some [books] from a circulating library. She looked. There were books about bolshevist Russia, books of travel, a volume about the atom and the electron, another about the composition of the earth's core, and the causes of earthquakes: then a few novels: then three books on India. So! He was a reader after all. (*LCL,* p.212)

Lawrence shows Mellors to be reading a wide and diverse selection of literature to highlight that his blood-conscious male figure does not have to be uneducated or slow like the early Brangwen farmers of *The Rainbow.* Yet, it is also important to realise the discrepancy between the characters' viewpoints and their perceptions of one another and the more objective perspective offered at times by the narrator. For instance, Connie is mildly irritated by Mellors switching back and forth between Standard English and his working class persona throughout the novel, as she asks him "Why don't you speak ordinary English?" (*LCL,* p.95). Mellors replies "I thowt it *wor'* ordinary" (*LCL,* p.95, emphasis in original) and he continues to use dialect to protect himself in his fall back into the lower class sectors of society, relying on Derbyshire slang so as not to flaunt his intelligence or seem above himself.

Despite this, it is fair to state that Mellors subsequently has a farcical demeanour as the other characters are fully aware that 'he can speak perfectly well' (*LCL,* p.92) when he wants to. Connie is extremely critical of Clifford's class-consciousness, yet she does not seem troubled by Mellors' impersonation of a humble working-class man. It is not Connie but her sister Hilda that has the insight to recognise 'his smallish, sensitive, loose hand on the table [as they ate]. He was no simple working man, not he: he was acting! acting!' (*LCL,* p.243). These instances in *Lady Chatterley* are extremely relevant, as they highlight that the narrative and the characters' perspectives should be read with a very critical eye, as the events that unfold are merged with a high level of fantasy.

The naming of Mellors and Connie's genitalia as Sir John Thomas and Lady Jane links to the idea that the narrative does not only disclose the physical actions of Connie and Mellors' bodies during sex. Instead the affair which takes place in both the cottage and the hut is largely disclosed by the 'mystic' (p.325) and 'phallic' ('A Propos', p.324) elements of a blood-conscious marriage. In reality, Mellors' body is quite sickly and thin, a notion that contrasts with how Connie envisages it during sex. Mellors comments that "the last pneumonia left me with a cough - but it's nothing" (*LCL,* p.113), and the inclusion of the term 'last' suggests that he is frequently taken sick. Like Birkin of *Women in Love,* Mellors' ill health is counteracted by a hidden organic spark of his body, but he:

> is [still] badly in need of revitalization both at the beginning and at the end of the narrative. The development of his relationship with Connie transforms him as much as it does her. One might even argue that at the end of the novel she is the fuller, stronger, more confident character. (Burack, 1998, p.106)

Early on in the novel, it is obvious that Connie needs Mellors to counteract her dreary life at Wragby, but as *Lady Chatterley* continues, it is increasingly clear that Mellors is equally dependent on her. Yet, there still seems to be much more focus on

Sir John Thomas than Lady Jane. Subsequently, it is understandable that some critics have remained sceptical as to whether this blood-conscious union is really a balancing at all, or if Lawrence is only able to portray Connie in a submissive role, and *Lady Chatterley* is guilty of penis worship (Simpson, 1982).

Gerald Doherty (1996) has used terms like 'male will-to-power' and 'colonizer' (p.292) to describe Mellors' sexual dominance over Connie, whilst Millett (1970) and Burack (1998) have also identified dominance and submission as the bedrock of the couple's sexual roles. In some instances, *Lady Chatterley* is undoubtedly preoccupied with Mellors' penis and its ability to satisfy Connie, especially in instances when the reader is told that his 'penis began to stir like a live bird' (p.120) and 'she felt his penis risen against her with silent amazing force and assertion' (*LCL,* p.173). Anal sex is another questionable aspect of Connie and Mellors' lovemaking, which again throws *Lady Chatterley*'s blood-conscious marriage into ambiguity. Undoubtedly, Lawrence confronts what is still a major taboo, but his inclusion of this particular sexual episode has other implications, as these passages can contain derogatory depictions of Connie. A clear instance of this is when she is 'burning out the shames, the deepest, oldest shames, in the most secret places. It cost her an effort to let him have his way and his will of her. She had to be a passive, consenting thing, like a slave, a physical slave' (*LCL,* p.247). This idea of Connie as 'like a slave' in anal sex only adds weight to the idea that *Lady Chatterley* supports a female-passive, male-active marriage of the blood.

Lawrence's emphasis upon a 'phallic mystery' (*LCL,* p.138) in *Lady Chatterley* as well as in 'Sun' and *The Plumed Serpent* is undoubtedly a problematic notion. In 'A Propos' Lawrence writes that:

> The phallus is a column of blood, that fills the valley of blood of a woman. The great river of male blood touches to its depth the great river of female blood,

> yet neither breaks its bounds. It is the deepest of all communions, as all the religions, *in practice,* know. And it is one of the greatest mysteries: in fact, the greatest, as almost every apocalypse shows, showing the supreme achievement of the mystic marriage. ('A Propos', pp.324-325, emphasis in original)

This depiction of the phallus suggests ultimate harmony between the sexes, as neither river is able to 'brea[k] its bounds' and overpower the other one. Yet, in *Lady Chatterley* Connie fears that 'if she adored him too much, then she would lose herself, become effaced … a slave, like a savage woman', whereas Mellors never seems to be in any danger of becoming a slave to her, or falling into senseless 'adoration' (*LCL,* p.135).

Mellors also talks extremely disparagingly about his previous sexual encounters, particularly in relation to his wife Bertha who he married because 'that was what I wanted: a woman who *wanted* me to fuck her. So I fucked her like a good un' (*LCL,* p.201, emphasis in original). Not only this, but Mellors refers to 'the Lesbian sort' (p.203) of women, who are defined as such because they cannot achieve orgasm through his penis alone. These instances encourage the idea that Lawrence does not create Mellors as an ideal male suitor for Connie, rather he is presented as a preferable alternative to Clifford. Mellors' decision to marry Bertha is one that comes back to haunt him, as she spreads the rumour about his affair. This in turn leads to Connie leaving the country to avoid scandal, and may also add to her uncertainty as to if Mellors is the right man to plan a future with.

These aspects of the novel certainly bring into question if Mellors is emotionally capable of a blood-conscious marriage with Connie. Although Mellors' viewpoint must not be confused with Lawrence's beliefs, as has been show, certain features of *Lady Chatterley* only adds weight to concerns regarding the phallic references and imagery in Lawrence's writing about sex and a blood-conscious

marriage. In ‘A Propos’ Lawrence asserts the importance of ‘phallic language’ (p.334) to explain his beliefs regarding the unconscious connection between men and women. However, in Lawrence’s fiction of the 1920s the phallus is frequently depicted as a male power that categorically excludes or objectifies women. The strength of the narrative voice that describes the phallus in novels such as *Aaron’s Rod*, means that it is difficult to read the novels which follow it more objectively.

In *Aaron’s Rod* there are frequent references to women as threatening to man’s individuality. Marriage is pessimistically described as ‘a self-conscious egoistic state’ (p.99) and Lilly claims that “there isn’t any such thing as love … men are simply afraid to be alone” (*AR,* p.107). Aaron is described as a phallic God that must be wary in case his sexual relationships with woman destroy his power:

> his soul saw himself, saw his own phallic God-and-victim self there lying, with her on his breast. Only his soul apart.
>
> She lay curled on his breast, with her wild hair tangled about him. And he was aware of the strength and beauty and godlikeness that his breast was then to her, the magic male breast with its two nipples …There lay the phallic God, the phallic victim …
>
> There was a lust and a temptation: the phallic Godhead. The lust and loveliness of his flesh, his godlike phallic power in the flesh. (*AR,* p.273)

There is a certainly a misogynist aspect of Lawrence’s phallic-writing here which he would reproduce again when envisaging Cipriano in *The Plumed Serpent.* This, as well as troubling descriptions of Mellors and Connie’s sexual experiences, were influenced by Lawrence’s association made between the myth of the God Pan and phallic-power. In *The Plumed Serpent* ‘it [is] the ancient phallic mystery, the ancient god-devil of the male Pan’ (p.311) that takes over Cipriano, and demands Kate’s ‘passivity’ (*PS,* p.311). Pan is predominantly a God of the wild and sexuality, and his mythical power seems likely to have influenced the characterisation of Mellors who of course also resides in the woods, and exudes the notion of potent male sexuality.

Given all of these links made between a male sexual-power and the more sinister aspects of the God Pan, one may be rightly sceptical towards Lawrence's claim in 'A Propos' that the 'phallus is the connecting link between the two [blood] rivers, that establishes the two streams in a oneness' (p.325). In order to discern whether a blood-conscious marriage is the positive vision that Lawrence intended it to be, one must first focus in greater detail upon how phallic language is incorporated into *Lady Chatterley* specifically. Nakabayashi (2011) stresses that much can be revealed about Lawrence's belief in a male essence of the phallus if one attends to the subtle changes in terminology which occur depending on who is speaking in the novel. He goes on to suggest that:

> The appearances of the two words "penis" and "phallos" challenge readers … The word "penis" certainly suggests Connie's point of view; the word is within her linguistic range. "Phallos" seems, on the other hand, to be an inappropriate language for her and one dealing with feelings and emotions other than those she herself could acknowledge. (p.94)

Slight shifts between the characters' and the narrator's perspective makes it difficult to distinguish between the penis, the phallus, and the phallos as well as between Mellors and Connie's separate experiences. The novel draws attention to the fact that the phallos is rising but blurs references between an anatomical penis and the mythical phallus, as the narrative reveals 'the strange weight of the balls between his legs. What a mystery! ... she felt again the slow, momentous, surging rise of the phallos again, the other power' (*LCL,* p.175). There can be no question that the terms phallic, phallus, and phallos are used in association with male rather than female sexuality in many cases in Lawrence's writing. However, Nakabayashi (2011) criticises Simpson's (1982) evaluation of 'Phallic Consciousness' stating that an over-simplification of the term results 'in a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature and function of the symbol' (p.3).

From the discussions of Chapter One it is evident that the phallus was becoming an increasingly important symbol for Lawrence throughout his life, as later works such as *Apocalypse* and *Sketches of Etruscan Places* (1932) show him to be considering it in some detail. Lawrence was writing *Sketches* at the same time that he was revising *Lady Chatterley,* and it is no coincidence that both his travel-book and his novel contain imagery of the phallus and the womb. Lawrence writes that:

> The stone house, as the boy calls it, suggests the Noah's Ark without the boat-part: the Noah's Ark box we had as children, full of animals. And that is what it is, the Ark, the arx, the womb. The womb of all the world, that brought forth all the creatures. The womb, the arx, where life retreats in the last refuge. The womb, the ark of the covenant, in which lies the mystery of eternal life …
>
> And perhaps in the insistence on these two symbols, in the etruscan world, we can see the reason for the utter destruction and annihilation of the etruscan consciousness. The new world wanted to rid itself of these fatal, dominant symbols of the old world, the old physical world. The etruscan conscious was rooted, quite blithely, in these symbols, the phallus and the arx. So the whole consciousness, the whole etruscan pulse and rhythm, must be wiped out. (*SEP,* p.342)

Lawrence was fascinated with this lost pre-modern world and the tombs which led him to romanticise the old Italian civilization of the Etruscans. As is the case in *Lady Chatterley,* in *Sketches* Lawrence imagines gendered symbols and it is the 'phallic symbol' that he is most preoccupied with, and that which 'impresses' (*SEP,* p.341) him the most.

In *Lady Chatterley,* Ingersoll (2001) states that although Lawrence sometimes adopts 'the penis as a symbolic representation of the phallic' (p.147) it is vital 'to separate it from the penis and to stress that he means the phallus to be understood as a signifier and not a body part' (p.149). There may be some level of uncertainty present regarding Lawrence's use of the terms penis, phallus, and phallic, yet there is also a definite level of consistency in how the terms are differentiated between in

‘A Propos’. Lawrence again conveys that he is not simply referring to sex when he stresses the importance of a blood-conscious marriage stating that:

> If England is to be regenerated … then it will be by the arising of a new blood-contact, a new touch, and a new marriage. It will be a phallic rather than a sexual regeneration. For the phallus is only the great old symbol of godly vitality in a man, and of immediate contact.
>
> It will also be a renewal of marriage: the true phallic marriage. And still further, it will be marriage set again in relationship to the rhythmic cosmos. (‘A Propos’, p.328)

A connection between ‘the phallus’ and ‘man’ is once again made here, yet it is notable that Lawrence is depicting the phallus as a ‘symbol’ and a ‘signifier’ rather than ‘a body part’ (Ingersoll, 2001, p.149). Thus, one must not only be alive to changes in terminology which infer a difference in meaning, it is also important to recognise when ‘phallic language’ (‘A Propos’, p.334) and the ‘phallic mystery’ (*LCL,* p.138) of *Lady Chatterley* does not relate to the physical act of sex, but the unconscious change that results from it. For example, the phallus is depicted when:

> Connie went slowly home, realising the depth of the other thing in her. Another self was alive in her, burning molten and soft and sensitive in her womb and bowels. And with this self, she adored him, she adored him till her knees were weak as she walked ...
>
> it made her feel she was very different from her old self, and as if she was sinking deep, deep to the centre of all womanhood, and the sleep of creation. (p.135)

Connie’s changing state is described through a permeation of layers, deeper and deeper into the self, enabled by ‘the bridge to the future [which] is the phallus’ (‘A Propos’*,* p.327). Connie’s sexual union with Mellors in the wood and the cottage is depicted in hugely positive terms, as her body is brought to life by ‘the unspeakable motion that was not really motion, but pure deepening whirlpools of sensation, swirling deeper and deeper through all her tissue and consciousness, till she was one perfect concentric fluid of feeling’ (*LCL,* p.134).

In his reading of the phallus and phallos in *Lady Chatterley,* Ingersoll (2001) explains that 'this "phallos" is hardly the emblem of male domination Millett would frame it as' (p.154). When one considers the dynamics of physical movement in the novel and who instigates sex, can Mellors really be the 'phallic hunt[er]' (*LCL,* p.247) when it is Connie who invades the wood and seeks out Mellors in the first place? If Wragby is understood as Connie's domain and the wood as Mellors', then Connie is the one that penetrates his space and takes the hut for her own. Connie is the explorer leaving the confines of the house, finding the 'narrow track' and 'turn[ing] down it adventurously' (*LCL,* p.87), whereas Mellors is passive waiting in the woods for her. This is reinforced as 'the keeper lifted his face suddenly, and saw her. He had a startled look in his eyes. He straightened himself and saluted, watching her in silence ... he resented the intrusion' (*LCL,* p.87). This is not the only time Mellors' private space is invaded by a woman, as later his estranged wife Bertha Coutts breaks into his cottage and rifles amongst his things in order to find out who he is sleeping with.

Details such as these must be taken into account when considering if the blood-conscious marriage that appears to take place between Connie and Mellors should be interpreted as a union or not. Williams (1993) has challenged misogynist readings of *Lady Chatterley* claiming that such interpretations of Lawrence's fiction highlight 'some of the paradoxes which still lie at the heart of our reception of his work' (p.106). Williams (1993) writes that:

> Lawrence, impossibly, not only epitomises certain sexist positions on knowing women, he is also taken to be *the* writer of classic dirty books, as well as (for traditional Lawrence scholarship) an exemplary voice against perversion, fragmented sex, and the sexually inauthentic ... Where, then, does he stand? (p.106, emphasis in original)

In light of these largely contradictory positions that he straddles, it is unsurprising that Lawrence's attitudes to, and portrayals of, male and female sexuality, remain complex topics for discussion. Williams (1993) goes on to confront the common association made between *Lady Chatterley* and a form of penis worship, stressing that:

> What is perhaps more interesting is the way in which, in these riskier passages, the experience of the arse and cunt takes precedence over that of the primary Lawrentian organ, the penis. The phallus may come first (as it were) on the conscious level of the sexual philosophy of *Lady Chatterley,* but in its "secret places" the narrative affirms and enjoys submission to penetration, rather than erection and active insertion. (p.110)

Williams calls for a closer look at the sexual roles of *Lady Chatterley*, stressing that Lawrence's lifelong emphasis on the phallus can blind readers to other prominent aspects of how characters' sexual pleasure is described. At one point in *Lady Chatterley* Connie is looking at her lover's penis and says "he's not only yours. He's mine" (*LCL,* p.210). This could be interpreted as penis worship, but actually Connie is not so much stating adoration for Mellors' penis; instead, it has become part of her body and enjoyment, thus distinctions between the male and female body are merged. Williams (1993) crucially stresses that Mellors' 'pleasure is curiously absent - it is Connie the sodomised submissive who has all the fun' (p.111). By claiming that 'if Lawrence is Mellors the phallic hunter, he is also Connie the sodomised prey' (p.122), Williams (1993) encourages the reader to attend to more complex aspects of the text where sexual roles are not fixed and defined categories laid out by Lawrence.

For these reasons, a blood-conscious marriage is a complicated issue in *Lady Chatterley* as the novel explores different roles and dynamics at work when two people engage in sex. James Cowan (2002) suggests that the ambiguity surrounding the subject of sex in the novel is partly down to Lawrence's own level of fantasy

entering the narrative. In his response to Mellors and his 'sexual potency', Cowan states that 'in Mellors he could project the phallic hero he would like to be; in Clifford he could cruelly berate himself for not being that hero' (2002, p.143). Although biographical readings of Lawrence's work bring their own problems, Lawrence's somewhat inconsistent presentation of Mellors as the empowered phallic male needs further analysis. It seems likely that Lawrence created Mellors with elements of himself in mind:

> In his longstanding anxiety about his sexual performance, Lawrence creates in Mellors a middle-aged man in frail health and on the edge of despair, whose sexual wounds, largely from psychic blows to his masculine identity and self-esteem in a marital relationship characterized by anger, frustration, and disappointment, are so fully healed in a regenerative love relationship that his sexual performance equals or surpasses that of a man half his age and in his physical prime. (p.145)

Although this chapter is not necessarily focused on the root of 'psychosexual issues' (p.137), Cowan (2002) encourages the Lawrentian reader to think about the mythical exchange of blood in sex more literally, taking into account the reality of the physical bodies of the characters and what they are doing.

It is important to remember that Mellors' body is not a supreme physical display of manhood that may truly threaten or dominate the female body. Instead, Mellors possesses a 'thin white body like a lonely pistil of an invisible flower!' (*LCL,* p.85). When Connie stands, looking at herself naked in the mirror she sees a similarly weakened physical form:

> she thought as she had thought so often: what a frail, easily-hurt, rather pathetic thing a naked human body is: somehow a little unfinished, incomplete!
>
> ... Her skin was faintly tawny, her limbs had a certain stillness, her body should have had a full, downward-slipping richness. But it lacked something. (*LCL,* p.70)

Throughout the latter writing of Lawrence's career, his male characters are unconvincingly celebrated for their ability to transform women through their blood.

However, it is also notable that Lawrence intentionally draws attention to the fragility of their bodies, and mocks the laughable aspects of sex and the human body such as:

> the butting of his haunches [which] seemed ridiculous to [Connie], and the sort of anxiety of his penis to come to its little evacuating crisis seemed farcical. Yes, this was love, this ridiculous bouncing of the buttocks, and the wilting of the poor, insignificant, moist little penis. (*LCL,* pp.171-172)

In 'A Propos', Lawrence states that 'the new impulse to life will never come without blood-contact, the true, positive blood-contact', but significantly this 'impulse' is not a guarantee of new life (p.327). The 'butting' of Mellors' 'haunches' (p.172) trivialises the sexual act, and points out the disparity between the physical reality of sex and the way it is internalised into a 'phallic mystery' (*LCL,* p.138). Although a blood-conscious marriage can empower the body, and help to transform the unconscious self, there is no guarantee that this alone can protect Connie and Mellors from the wider world of which they are still a part.

Lady Chatterley reaches a point where Connie and Mellors must leave Wragby and file for divorces, or they must put an end to their affair. Connie becomes less cautious about her absence from the house, whereas Mellors is increasingly concerned about his own wife who continues to cause trouble. Importantly, there is no actual marriage to close the story, and although Connie is with child, she and Mellors remain apart. So once again, it remains ambiguous as to what extent blood-consciousness presents a viable and sustainable reality. In 'A Propos', Lawrence voices his own uncertainty regarding his philosophy, stating 'the warm blood-sex that establishes the living and re-vitalising connection between man and woman, how are we to get that back? I don't know' (p.327). For a number of critics this ultimate unknown of where (if anywhere) blood-consciousness leads to, remains a substantial limitation in both his thinking and fiction which cannot be ignored. Seelow (2005)

evokes the stalemate that much of Lawrence's fiction is associated with, stressing that:

> The war leaves, Lawrence suggests, a bruise in the very circulatory system of England. The regeneration of England requires a new blood consciousness, something to heal the war's lasting wound; this new blood connection will be the "new hope". The novel must realize this new hope through Mellors' and Connie's vibrant relationship. And although the couple do enact a symbolic, natural marriage and merge their blood stream in simultaneous orgasm, do they ever achieve a phallic marriage? Does the new touch really happen? The answer must be no. As I have been demonstrating, the phallic reality is a dream enclosed and choked off by industrial reality. (p.112)

The affirmation of the need for a new form of human relationship through the blood and the supposed achievement of this is met by Lawrence's eventual inability to convince his readers that such an achievement can bring about real change.

Connie and Mellors can no longer hide away, yet both characters are afraid of how the scandal will be received by a judgemental and snobbish society. 'A Propos' places emphasis on 'the great dual blood-stream of humanity' (p.325) and the necessity of 'blood-sympathy' (p.326), but it remains to be seen if this alone is enough to face the challenging times ahead. Connie recognises 'the great laws of the human soul' as 'slowly, slowly the wound to the soul begins to make itself felt, like a bruise which only slowly deepens its terrible ache, till it fills all the psyche' (*LCL,* p.49). On the very next page this similar idea is conveyed as the spirit of England is described as bleeding internally, and this bruise is 'deep, deep, deep - the bruise of the false and inhuman war. It would take many years for the living blood of the generations to dissolve the vast black clot of bruised blood, deep inside their souls and bodies. And it would need a new hope' (*LCL,* p.50). The closing pages of *Lady Chatterley* include reminders of the damaged human psyche which is the result of a country at war. The affair of Mellors and Connie seems to offer little hope in the face of a spreading destructive consciousness, which threatens to consume the

country. As a result of this, Peter Scheckner (1985) has questioned how seriously Lawrence expects his readers to believe that sex with Mellors possesses all the answers, stressing that *Lady Chatterley* includes an essential 'tentativeness about where to go' (p.144). The novel is wary that one human relationship may not be enough to beat the 'tragic age' (*LCL,* p.5) which the characters are living in. Scheckner (1985) stresses that this is inextricably linked with Lawrence's uncertain stance regarding his own theories, and that as a result of this 'characters make political statements they themselves are ill-prepared to carry through' (p.151).

By imagining Sir John Thomas and Lady Jane, Lawrence liberates Mellors and Connie's bodies by giving their genitalia names and making them characters themselves. Yet, other crucial words remain silent in *Lady Chatterley,* for instance the blood-conscious marriage which is outlined so clearly in 'A Propos' is never really spelt out in the pages of the novel. Does this make it any less significant or prevalent in *Lady Chatterley*? The answer is surely no. Attempting to confront taboos of sex and the human body was a huge task for Lawrence, and a large part of this challenge involved deciding what must be put into language and what should remain unwritten or unspoken. For a novel which is fed up of 'all the brilliant words [which] seemed like dead leaves' (*LCL,* p.50), it is interesting that Lawrence chooses a letter as the way to close the novel. For an author who was so didactic about the role of literature in changing views and perceptions, Mellors' letter highlights Lawrence's dependence on fiction, but also his awareness of its limitations in expressing his ideas. After considering the multiple aspects of *Lady Chatterley* in relation to sex and modern-consciousness*,* it remains to be seen whether Lawrence is better off for his attempt to liberate certain words and subjects, or if, following his own advice, literature has a duty to let specific things remain unsaid and unwritten.

‘AND THEN HE SPOKE IN GOOD ENGLISH’

In ‘A Propos’ Lawrence warns that ‘these notes … are not intended to explain or expound anything: only to give the emotional beliefs which perhaps are necessary as a background to the book’ (pp.333-334). This chapter has not claimed that ‘A Propos’ reveals all meaning behind *Lady Chatterley;* rather it has been shown to articulate a number of beliefs that influenced his fiction. A vital aspect of the novel is its didactic nature and the instruction it appears to give its reader at times. For example, mid-paragraph, the narrative tails off from the characters’ conscious and unconscious perspectives and motives, to stress that:

> The novel … properly handled … 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 …
>
> But the novel, like gossip, can also excite spurious sympathies and recoils, mechanical and deadening to the psyche. The novel can glorify the most corrupt feelings … (*LCL,* p.101)

The irony of this passage must be recognised, as *Lady Chatterley* can be scathing regarding the self-conscious process of writing literature, yet, it too is a complex modernist novel, highly concerned with fiction as a subject. Clifford’s need to write and talk about English literature is a great cause of frustration for Connie who feels that ‘All that talk! All that writing! ... It was just insanity’ (*LCL,* p.97). He is criticised for ‘his endless treadmill obsession with himself and his own words’ (p.93) and his writing is also dismissed by her father as having ‘nothing in it’ (*LCL,* p.17). Clifford is the main contributor to the deadening words which echo throughout Wragby Hall, but his nurse Mrs Bolton is also a “story teller”, who ‘becomes implicated in the generation of Wragby as text, adding her Tevershall gossip to its textuality’ (Ingersoll, 2001, p.151). Connie prefers the relative silence of the wood compared to the incessant chatter of Wragby (Bell, 1992), appreciating ‘the *inwardness* of the

remnant of forest, the unspeaking reticence of the old trees. They seemed a very power of silence, and yet, a vital presence' (*LCL,* p.65, emphasis in original).

Despite the clear critique of modernism which is at work in Connie's rejection of Mrs Bolton's stories, Clifford's writing, and the plays of Michaelis (Pinkey, 1990), there is a strong level of contradiction which accompanies this critique. As stated, Mellors is also an avid reader, and despite the difficulty Connie has in understanding his Derbyshire dialect, his letter at the end of the novel is the most eloquent use of English by any character in *Lady Chatterley.* Mellors writes of the 'forked flame between me and you' (p.301), but also predicts that 'there's a bad time coming' (*LCL,* p.300). Ingersoll (2001) states that this letter stands in vital significance to the whole effort of *Lady Chatterley*:

> as the text makes eminently clear, all these words are a replacement for the ultimate signifier, the veiled phallus, which implicates the subject in words and makes signification possible ... In the end, then, this text collapses the distance between Wragby as manor house and the gamekeeper's hut, the locus of silence in juxtaposition to the authority of Wragby's wordy web. (p.167)

This 'collapsing' effect of Mellors' letter exists because he must finally attempt to put into words what has up until this point remained relatively unspoken. The phallus and the importance of a blood-conscious marriage are at the focal point of this heartfelt letter. Linking back to 'A Propos', Lawrence once again communicates the idea that literature must have a purpose, or an honest message to get across; it must not accumulate into the meaningless 'wordy web' (Ingersoll, 2001, p.167) of Wragby Hall.

Despite the contrast which is made between Mellors' own loaded and, at times, virtually indecipherable speech and the clarity of his letter, Lawrence links them both to Mellors' continuing dependence on explicit words:

> My soul softly flaps in the little pentecost flame with you, like the peace of fucking. We fucked a flame into being. Even the flowers are fucked into being, between the sun and the earth. But it's a delicate thing, and takes patience and the long pause. (*LCL,* p.301)

Lawrence wanted to confront an overly sensitive and repressive English society in *Lady Chatterley* through his use of 'fucking' and other terms throughout the novel. Yet, this too is a highly self-conscious use of language that can seem forced and it disturbs the natural flow of the text. Similarly, the naming of Sir John Thomas and Lady Jane makes it difficult to ascertain to what level the reader is intended to take these moments seriously. Tony Pinkey (1990) describes that:

> the snort of laughter is the novel's mockery of its own mythic pretensions, of its claim to have found the utopian language of immediacy, breaking irrepressibly through like a jeering gargoyle to Mellors' linguistic Gothic cathedral. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is not taken in by its "fucks" and "shits", even if most of its critics have been. The use of the obscenities in the novel's central relationship must be understood as a self-wounding textual device, akin to the intrusive authorial abuse in *Kangaroo.* (p.146)

This may be the case, but by laughing at its own controversial use of English, *Lady Chatterley* encounters other problems such as to what extent the novel as a whole can be taken seriously. The fantasy of Mellors and Connie's lovemaking, the dream-like world of the wood, and this farcical use of foul language, results in a kind of watering-down of *Lady Chatterley* and its themes.

The narrative draws attention to the fact that Mellors 'spoke in good English' (*LCL,* p.224), but it is reasonable to argue that the 'self-wounding textual device[s]' (Pinkey, 1990, p.146) that give Lawrence's novel its shock factor, come at the price of *Lady Chatterley's* credibility as a work of English literature. At times, it can feel that the use of expletives and the subject of sex are too obviously at the forefront of a debate, rather than fully blending into the novel's form. Lawrence was extremely wary of fiction becoming too self-conscious, but his attempt to free the body and sex from their taboos shows what a precarious balance this involved. Mellors' didactic

and unrecognisable writing-hand proves that, perhaps in the case of *Lady Chatterley,* Lawrence did not get it quite right.

Mellors' heartfelt letter marks a poetic end to the multitude of words that are written and spoken throughout *Lady Chatterley.* However, the letter is also a final reminder that the psychical and bodily journey that Connie and Mellors embark on together is more valuable than any conscious expression of it (Bell, 1992). Mellors attempts to put into language what has so far remained unspoken, but there is a fundamental futility in this effort as the letter and the reader await a response they will never receive:

> The text of Mellors' unexpectedly long letter to Connie at the end is privileged over anything in Wragby's textual production by virtue of its offering this narrative whatever fragile closure it may have. Within the constraints of the text, this letter functions as its last will and testament, so to speak. There is an appropriateness in this ending in a letter, for this narrative has been throughout a web of words, a concatenation of spoken discourse as well as a collection of "stories" and letters. (Ingersoll, 2001, p.166)

Lady Chatterley closes on the idea of 'a hopeful heart', but the fact that Sir John Thomas is described as clinging on 'droopingly' (*LCL,* p.302) is the greatest cause for concern. Without the physical bond of blood-conscious sex, Mellors and Connie's relationship is in danger of becoming nothing more than the marriage of words that she already has with Clifford.

Although Lawrence does not offer resolution in the final pages of *Lady Chatterley,* hope is all that could reasonably be offered given the situation in Lawrence's own life, and the obvious scandal and controversy the novel would encounter. There is remaining conflict as to whether *Lady Chatterley* is optimistic or pessimistic, to be taken seriously or written with comic effect in mind. Yet, it is clear that Lawrence wanted to create a novel that could change people's minds about sex

and human relationships, and remind England that nothing can possibly substitute or replace the vital importance of loving human contact:

> "Have you ever read Proust?" he asked her.
> "I've tried - but he bores me."
> "He's really very extraordinary."
> "Possibly! But he bores me: all that sophistication! He doesn't have feelings, he only has streams of words about feelings. I'm tired of self-important mentalities." (*LCL,* p.194)

In what seems to be a direct criticism of the radical subjectivity of modernist aesthetics, Clifford and Connie debate what makes good literature. Lawrence paradoxically relies upon language to convey the fact that words can only stand in the place of feelings. *Lady Chatterley* remains sceptical yet ultimately dependent on written and spoken words. Yet, Cowan (2002) commends Lawrence on his ability to write transformative literature for change at such a late stage in his life, and in such times of illness:

> Lawrence was never impotent in the general sense. He was not impotent as a writer. On the contrary, as I hope this study demonstrates, his works in this period, including *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Last Poems,* are major contributions to modern English literature. He was not impotent as an artist. He mounted a major exhibition of his paintings at the Warren Galleries in a significant challenge to official censorship of art. He was not impotent as a human being. (p.137)

Despite Lawrence's literal impotency when writing *Lady Chatterley,* his determination to convey the important message of a blood-conscious union is carried out with both passion and sincerity. Lawrence felt that in order to be whole and alive, human beings and his characters must be made up of both the wood and Wragby Hall, they must be aware of the physical human body and the phallus, knowing the power of the written word, but more importantly they must recognise the significance of the feelings which lie behind them.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has demonstrated that blood-consciousness is not merely a recurring metaphor in Lawrence's fiction. Instead it is part of a gradually evolving philosophy centred upon the essence of being vitally in touch with a fluid bodily-unconscious. The previous chapters have also stressed that Lawrence's beliefs regarding the power of the blood was imagined and informed by the creative process of writing fiction. Although blood-consciousness is, in many ways, a highly personal metaphysic, by identifying Lawrence's shared interests with Freud, Jung, Bergson, Myers, and Fanon, one gets a sense of how insightful Lawrence's arguments could be, given that he had no research or evidence as such to shape his views. This thesis has identified that Lawrence's connection with these thinkers involved points of resistance as well as similarities. In the case of Fanon, there is not direct influence between his ideas and Lawrence's vision of blood-consciousness, and one cannot be certain whether Lawrence had definitely read Myers. Nevertheless, as shown, there are many reasons to connect Lawrence's ideas with various strands of philosophy, psychoanalysis, and psychology that this thesis has included, in order to highlight that Lawrence's writings on blood-consciousness were valuable contributions to readings of the unconscious in the early twentieth century.

Critics such as Becket (1997), Asai (2007), Skinner (2007), and Costin (2011) have all been important in inspiring and shaping the rationale of the thesis, as all of these works have stressed the particular importance of considering blood-consciousness as a topic worthy of further critical attention. Yet, my approach to Lawrence's blood-philosophy is new in that I have provided a comprehensive study

of blood-consciousness with Lawrence's fiction being centre stage. This thesis articulates that in Lawrence's novels blood-consciousness is a pivotal belief that he explores in new ways through his characters in their ever-changing landscapes. For this reason, from Chapter Two I have evaluated one novel alongside Lawrence's short stories as well as his non-fiction, to get a sense of the overlap of ideas that occurred throughout his different literary ventures. By writing fiction that continually shapes and is then shaped by philosophical questions, Lawrence was able to create some of his greatest novels. Yet, it must also be said that by putting so much of himself and his own philosophy into works such as *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence inadvertently left himself vulnerable to autobiographical and overly simplistic psychoanalytical readings. It was in *Sons and Lovers* that Lawrence began to explore the mother as a powerful figure in the unconscious (Becket, 1998), and reflection upon Jung's mother imago and Freud's Oedipal complex allows clear insight to be gained regarding how the mother features in both Lawrence's fiction and philosophy. Thus, Chapter One began by looking closely at the emergence of blood-consciousness as a subject in Lawrence's writing, identifying that it was the writing of *Sons and Lovers* that encouraged him to believe in the split between blood and mental-consciousness in human beings.

Chapter One provides a detailed account of a number of different representations of blood-consciousness in Lawrence's writing. By breaking the subject down into four separate headings, I have been able to provide an overview of it as a term that denotes a number of different principles that are all closely linked. Blood-consciousness has been identified as a prevalent theme in Lawrence's literary output from the outset of his career, and a central point for consideration when regarding the connection between mother and child, which is a subject he began to

explore in the foreword to *Sons and Lovers.* Blood-consciousness is then evaluated as both a physical and psychical entity in relation to the human body. In doing so, I discuss how blood-consciousness differs from other important terms in Lawrence's philosophy, such as the biological psyche, the soul, and the unconscious. All of these different, yet connected entities are linked by the fact that Lawrence imagines them not only in relation to the body, but as corresponding to the wider universe and the non-human cosmos. Finally, the chapter comes back full circle to outline the significance of natural and organic symbols and imagery that evokes the growth and development associated with blood-consciousness. These discussions foreground the representations of blood-consciousness that are considered throughout the thesis in relation to Lawrence's fiction.

Chapter Two begins by evaluating the notion of a living-impetus of human beings in accordance with Lawrence's attempt to be rid of 'the old stable ego' (*2L,* p.183) in *The Rainbow*. The first two generations of the Brangwens are shown to convey the fluctuating and changeable nature of blood-consciousness. Lawrence is experimental in constructing these characters as he presents recurring images of shifts through time and space, also exploring the union of memory, the body, and consciousness, in a manner that clearly corresponds to Bergson's own research. Chapter Two demonstrates that the narrative and characters of *The Rainbow* denote blood-conscious qualities that are likened to Bergson's belief in duration and unspatialised time.

The Rainbow is not simply a fictional representation of Bergson's theories but there are clear affiliations to be made between Bergson's philosophy of time and space, and how Lawrence describes his characters' unconscious bodily states in the novel. This discussion is finally brought to a head by Ursula's birth and her

determination to get out of the 'blood-intimacy' (*R,* p.10) of previous generations of Brangwens. However, she soon realises that the material world of mechanised time offers only another undesirable alternative. The chapter ends with Ursula's rejection of Futuristic matter as a way of explaining the psyche, as she eventually reverts to more organic and natural descriptions of human beings in similar terms to the essential essence of blood-consciousness. Thus, *The Rainbow* has been signposted as a crucial novel in Lawrence's career, in which he began to explore the notion of character in light of his own developing surety that human beings live through the ever-changing life force of the blood.

In contrast to *The Rainbow, Women in Love* possesses a distinct lack of images and metaphors that denote the growth and rebirth associated with the blood. The First World War and Lawrence's increasing disillusion with humanity are prominent themes that emerge in Chapter Three's discussion of the relationship between blood and mental-consciousness in the novel. Given the disparaging presentations of characters such as Gerald and Hermione, in Chapter Three I suggest that *Women in Love* conveys what Lawrence perceived to be the modern crisis of mental-consciousness. In this reading, I identify that it is precisely the lack of blood-consciousness that is a central concern, and is part of the reason characters try to find a way out of the desolation of modern England.

The supernatural questions that Myers was asking in his lifetime are of crucial significance here, as characters continue to query the nature of their own existence and if there is an immortal nucleus to life which can survive the death of the body. The hope for a 'non-human mystery' (*WL,* p.478) involves a trace of desperation as characters struggle to envision a way out of the death and decay of the world in which they live. Lawrence's writing in 'Cosmological' is suggested as a further

reason to connect Lawrence with Myers, alongside the similarities between blood-consciousness and the Myersian subliminal self. In Chapter Three I explain that Lawrence became open to exploring the impersonal forces of the universe which are beyond human control, due to his increasing need for a philosophy in light of the disasters of the First World War, and in response to the manifold forms of dying bodies that he saw around him.

The final pages of *Women in Love* indicate that Lawrence was unwilling to commit to the future. His characters prefer to admit their uncertainty as to if and how blood-consciousness can be rekindled, rather than Lawrence choosing to offer a blueprint for a new world. Although Lawrence is non-committal, this in itself is in some ways a positive conclusion, as despite the violence and many deaths of *Women in Love*, blood-consciousness remains as an undiscovered possibility. Death does not offer the solution, but it comforts Birkin to think that there could be an indestructible spark of human beings that exists independently from the physical body. Such views are considered rather than asserted, but the novel suggests that if Birkin can overcome his grief for Gerald, he and Ursula may be reinvigorated with new life and blood-consciousness. This is not a fixed state; instead, it is depicted as a harmony that can be achieved through human relationships in a vital connection with the cosmos.

Chapter Four begins by identifying that Lawrence's reproach for England was met by his search for signs of blood-consciousness in other cultures. Influenced by his own perceptions of Mexico and New Mexico, Lawrence gives his central character, Kate, the status of a fascinated voyeur. For a long time, Lawrence believed that the people of Mexico (in comparison to the people of Europe) were more deeply connected with blood-consciousness. Yet, as shown, Lawrence

remained ambivalent as to what exactly this meant, making him prone to generalisations about different cultures, race, and nationality. Chapter Four's investigation into blood-consciousness, the primitive, and Mexican identity in *The Plumed Serpent,* concisely outlines and evaluates aspects of Mexican blood-consciousness, identifying how this emerges as a significant theme in the novel. In many ways, this is presented as a hugely positive concept, whereby Lawrence gains insight into the point of contact between people of different cultures. Lawrence believed that cultural differences such as the lack of mechanistic industrialisation, and the presence of a more sensual and vibrant religion in comparison to England meant that blood-consciousness was heightened in the Mexican people. The Mexican community are often represented as possessing a more vital relationship between the psyche and the living universe, which enables a greater sense of well-being and meaningful human relationships to form.

This evaluation of *The Plumed Serpent* presents the most positive and enlightened components of Mexican blood-consciousness. However, Chapter Four also presents instances of disparaging and offensive comments made by characters and the narrator in the novel, particularly in relation to a racial-blood. With the benefit of postcolonial studies today, *The Plumed Serpent* and Mexican blood-consciousness should be evaluated in light of Lawrence's construction of Mexican identity, and the ability of the Mexican people to speak, whilst destabilizing the dominant Eurocentric viewpoint.

Chapter Four's reading of Mexican blood-consciousness identifies Lawrence's urgent and ambitious attempt to understand the consciousness of people of different race. The connection made with Fanon demonstrates that the Lawrentian unconscious is formed through mythical images of the body, which are not stable

and biological, but manifest through culture. Although Lawrence's insight was limited by his short stay in Mexico and New Mexico; in *The Plumed Serpent* he does not only draw attention to the mythical nature of the body in the unconscious, his central character Kate also comes to recognise the Mexican individual as a political subject. As a result, this thesis suggests that *The Plumed Serpent* is one of Lawrence's most exploratory novels, and remains crucial for Lawrentian studies because of his attempt to do something new, and to understand life beyond the borders of England. It is highly significant that Lawrence's blood-conscious philosophy was not limited to white English characters, and as such, *The Plumed Serpent* should be recognised for its self-aware and honest attempt to portray Mexican blood-consciousness as a progressive concept. Of course, in doing so, one must acknowledge Lawrence's inherent feelings of superiority as a white English man in the 1920s, and that at times his ideas were offensive, inconclusive, and to a large extent contradictory.

Like *The Plumed Serpent, Lady Chatterley's Lover* has also been the subject of controversy for its perceived misogyny in relation to the supposed blood-conscious marriage that occurs between Connie and Mellors. Chapter Five asserts that Lawrence's positive depiction of a blood-conscious marriage in 'A Propos' can conflict with his tendency to glorifying the male body in his fiction, and what at times can appear to be a fantasised and sexist phallic mystery. Thus, in Chapter Five's reading of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* I outline that Connie's need for a blood-conscious marriage is very real, but her lovemaking with Mellors is extremely ambivalent although there is reason to believe that they achieve some level of self-growth and unconscious union through their sexual experiences together.

The naming of Sir John Thomas and Lady Jane highlights the importance of fantasy in their lovemaking, which accounts for the disparity between their physical

bodies and how they are imagined in sexual scenes. Yet, this novel is also particularly relevant as a final chapter because *Lady Chatterley* draws attention to the difficulty Lawrence faced in putting life and unconscious experiences into words (Bell, 1992). The negative depictions of Clifford's writing and Michaelis's plays, mirror Lawrence's uncertainty as to how blood-consciousness could be put into language without it becoming a vague or indecipherable concept which strangles a work of art (Bell, 1992).

The expletives and naming of genitalia in *Lady Chatterley* and the articulation of the planes and plexuses of the blood-conscious body are connected, as both portray an author committed to liberating the body through the adoption of specific language (Bell, 1992). Lawrence believed that banning *The Rainbow* and *Lady Chatterley* was futile, when the controversial words they contain are merely part of life. For Lydia Blanchard (1985), the subject of language as a means of explaining and understanding is paramount in Lawrence's fiction, as she writes that:

> *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is a study of the tension between these two ideas, between the need to rescue sexuality from secrecy, to bring it into discourse, and the simultaneous recognition that the re-creation of sexuality in language must always, at the same time, resist language. (p.33)

Lady Chatterley and blood-consciousness mutually depend on language whilst being simultaneously aware of its limitations. The issue is greater than naming body parts or mocking society's attitudes towards obscenities, because in creating the blood-conscious body Lawrence needed to develop a whole new language to describe it. Obvious problems are encountered here, such as where these words and phrases would come from, and how they could be incorporated into literature without becoming a fixed theory. For some critics, Lawrence ultimately fails in this respect as Blanchard (1985) states that:

> even Lawrence's most sympathetic critics have concluded that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as a whole is a failure; that because its passages of sexuality are not integrated into the rest of the novel, it falls short of the earlier works ... In fact, many critics argue that Lawrence would have done well to listen to himself, to his own bitter indictment of a sterile Wragby that destroyed sex by talking about it. (p.20)

Similarly, Lawrence's struggle to put blood-consciousness into written language has at times led him to being guilty of creating overly didactic fiction, and philosophical works that can be lacking in rigour and focus. There is a fundamental contradiction involved in putting blood-consciousness into words, as it attempts what Lawrence himself believed was impossible.

Nancy Katherine Hayles (1982) approaches Lawrence from his connection with 'new physics' and recognises similar problems that span his writing:

> On the one hand, Lawrence feels deeply that reality is essentially mystical and unspeakable, to be experienced rather than understood rationally. On the other hand, he is committed to depicting this ineffable reality in words. The closer he comes to rendering the unconscious in language, the closer he comes to destroying its realization, because language is necessarily conscious. (p.95)

Similar difficulties exist in both *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* as Lawrence seeks to mark out unknown centres in the body such as the solar plexus and the lumbar ganglion, but ironically, he can only do this by naming and locating them. Hayles (1982) suggests that Lawrence's fiction exudes the need to bring life into consciousness and to express ideas and emotions through language. However, characters also possess scepticism towards the ability of words and language to give real meaning, for example in *Women in Love*:

> To prefer words to reality is the mistake Gudrun and Loerke make in their "quips and jests and polygot fancies"... Lawrence is not interested in this kind of verbal intricacy because he fears that whatever calls attention to a particular verbal formulation can be dangerous, tempting the reader to stay on the verbal surface rather than go beyond the language to the reality to which it is meant to point. (Hayles, 1982, p.97)

Paul Poplawski (2001) also outlines the ‘paradoxes and problems engendered by [Lawrence’s] career-long quest to forge a narrative art-speech homologous to bodily experiences’ because such ‘experiences’ are ultimately “wordless, and utterly previous to words” (xi). Although Hayles (1982) and Poplawski (2001) are not referring to blood-consciousness specifically, their comments reveal the conflicting nature of Lawrence’s metaphysic, given his claim that some things are better off not put into language. There is reason to believe that over the course of his career, Lawrence found himself adopting ‘a highly sophisticated theoretical position in which the body ha[d] become both profoundly more bodily and more “writerly”, or textual, than he had originally understood it to be’ (Poplawski, 2001, xiii).

Lawrence’s journey towards *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* was undoubtedly a struggle, but it is striking that he failed to make more allowances for other great thinkers with whom he shared this effort towards creating a language of the unconscious. Some of Lawrence’s criticisms made against Freud, Jung, and Bergson are ironically based upon his distaste for the language they adopt to express their ideas (Becket, 1997). This sensitivity to the specific vocabulary of other theories could lead to Lawrence making insightful critiques of other thinkers’ work, but at times, it could also hinder his understanding. I believe that in many instances Lawrence failed to acknowledge his intellectual debt to other thinkers. Not only this, but he sometimes neglected to realise that like his own beliefs, the theories of Freud, Jung, Bergson, and Myers were all subject to change, as the criticisms Lawrence aimed at Freud in earlier years, were far less valid and accurate by the time Freud had published *The Ego and the Id* in 1923.

Despite these more limiting aspects of Lawrence’s writing on blood-consciousness, *Fantasia* is the perfect expression of the artistic and theoretical

nature of his thinking and writing. It is expresses both a need to create a new language to convey the meaning of blood-consciousness, but it also exudes his reluctance to fix the meaning of the mystical blood. Becket (1997) explains that 'the title of the longer book, then, presents us with two terms in a tense relation to each other; "fantasia" with its emphasis on the impromptu and free-form, and "unconscious" defined by psychoanalysis as something determined' (p.69). This 'tense relation' between "fantasia" and the "unconscious" is highly significant, as blood-consciousness is steered more by feeling and belief rather than any actual research. Thus, Lawrence's philosophical works were both an attempt to destabilise the idea of a fixed meaning of the unconscious, whilst acknowledging the necessity of making a coherent argument.

For all of these issues, it is unsurprising that when Lawrence attempts to convey his metaphysical beliefs, it can feel like he is speaking in an entirely different language to his readers. To an extent, Lawrence was aware of this, as shown by his almost apologetic tone at times in works such as *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* in comparison to the surety and persuasiveness he possesses in many of his essays. In *Lady Chatterley,* it is Connie and Mellors' sexual experiences that are most significant, whereas their talk (Bell, 1992) often results in confusion as well as frustration. The reader is told that Connie 'hated the dialect: the *thee* and the *tha*' (p.173, emphasis in original), as speech creates emotional distance between them, shown when Connie is forced to ask Mellors "What do you mean?" (*LCL,* p.94).

There can be no doubt that Lawrence's efforts to articulate blood-consciousness can lead him to employ repetitive language, and write in an almost indecipherable way at times. However, Lawrence's literary contemporaries were also trying to create a new novel and put new urges, experiences, and levels of

consciousness into a language which was recognisably theirs, so Lawrence was not alone in the difficulties he faced and the criticisms he has received as a result. Blood-consciousness emerged from the foundational movements and events which are now considered to be part of early twentieth-century modernism. Lawrence's fiction and philosophy are deeply concerned with the shift between a pre-industrial England and the materialism of the modern world, the history of the unconscious, the horrors of the First World War, Futuristic and organic conceptions of the body, an interest in new worlds beyond Europe, and, crucially, the rejection of Victorian realism through a new form of character and narrative.

The novels and short stories incorporated into this thesis identify that Lawrence brought societal and cultural values into question through narratives which continually change perspective, between consciousness and an unconscious 'time of the body' (Campbell, 2006, p.55), whilst retaining a strong element of myth which further disturbs the idea of any sort of reality being on offer. In many of the chapters of this thesis, Lawrence is shown to convey a rejection of the past and a need to move forward, which is a clear trait of the modernist novel. Yet, as Amit Chaudhuri (2003) states, his writing still has clear associations with 'the romantic tradition' (p.166) which is less in tune with modernism's sense of crisis (Wright, 1984):

> Despite the contradictory nature of his ideas, it is often said that there is present in his writing a powerful strain of romantic individualism, self-expression, and rebellion. The celebration of "life", "blood", and sexuality in his work can be thus interpreted as a romantic rebellion against the intellect. (Chaudhuri, 2003, p.166)

Blood-consciousness is at the heart of Lawrentian fiction that longs for the past and a world untarnished by modernisation, but it is also part of Lawrence's most revolutionary ideas about the wrongs of modern sex and human relationships, and the false character of many modernist novels. The relationship between Lawrence's

fiction and philosophy exudes this need to learn from past experiences in order to make way for a new world.

In light of these discussions, this thesis calls for greater critical attention to be paid to blood-consciousness and its many representations in various forms of Lawrence's writing. The chapters I have considered identify a number of different aspects of blood-consciousness, and show Lawrence's correspondence with other important thinkers and their beliefs. Yet, the thinkers included is by no means an exhaustive list of philosophers, psychologists, and psychoanalysts that had an impact on Lawrence's thinking, or that reveal important aspects of his ideas. This thesis has briefly touched upon the influence of William James and Nietzsche upon Lawrence's philosophy of blood-consciousness, and I think there is far more to be written on this subject.

Another area of Lawrentian criticism that requires more attention is the connection between blood-consciousness and the issue of place (Michelucci, 2002), specifically in relation to the impact of Italy upon Lawrence's thinking. This thesis has focused predominantly upon novels based in England, with the exception of Chapter Four and its reading of blood-consciousness in Mexico. There is still much to be said in terms of how Lawrence's perceptions of Italy inspired his belief that certain peoples are more vitally blood-conscious than others. Antonio Traficante (2007) has pointed out that Lawrence's time in both Italy and Mexico was connected by his attempt to comprehend the essential differences between cultures, stating that:

> While Lawrence could hold the view that the life of the North American Indian was in some respects underdeveloped or backwards in relation to the Europeans, he nonetheless felt that they (the Indians) continued to share a special kind of affinity with their universe which the Europeans (particularly the English) clearly lacked, the same kind of affinity he himself sought throughout his life. His writings in different genres are a testament to this conviction and in part help us to understand his ambiguous position *vis-à-vis* the white Europeans and native peoples. As was the case with the Native North

> American, Lawrence saw an important element in the Italian Other which greatly appealed to one side of his make-up, and one which he often tried to emulate. (p.35)

In both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* (1921) Lawrence expresses his admiration for the 'hot southern blood' which is so 'subtle and spontaneous' in comparison with 'mental communion or spirit sympathy' (*Sea and Sardinia,* p.326). Skinner (2007) and Costin (2011) have both emphasised that Lawrence was extremely appreciative of the Italians that he came into contact with, and that he believed their essence of being contrasted with the mental-consciousness of England. However, when explaining the rationale for not focusing in more depth upon the subject of fictional representations of blood-consciousness in Italy, Costin (2011) stresses that:

> Whilst I would have liked to trace the development of Lawrence's relationship with Italy through his novels, in this particular instance it is his travel writing that gives the clearest insight into his ideas. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that there are three novels, *The Lost Girl* (1920), *Aaron's Rod* (1922) and *Mr Noon* (1934), that were written during the same period and which, in part, use Italy for a setting. Therefore it is worth briefly summarising why I have chosen not to focus on these in my work.
>
> These novels are distinguished by a difference in style and reviewing their composition suggests that Lawrence found some difficulty in completing them. His effort on all these novels progressed in fits and starts over a period of several years and was often abandoned in favour of other projects that he found more engaging. For example, *Mr Noon* was begun in 1920 but never finished. Lawrence started writing *Aaron's Rod* in 1917 and rewrote it in 1920 but set it aside, together with his work on *Mr Noon*, to write *Sea and Sardinia*; it was not published until 1922. Lawrence started on a story - 'Elsa Culverwell'- in 1912 and again abandoned it, only returning to rewrite it and publish it in 1920 as *The Lost Girl* because, in John Worthen's view, 'it seemed to offer a way of making money' (Introduction xxxi). (Costin, 2011, pp.145-146)

Costin's (2011) stance is understandable as when dedicating a chapter to Lawrence's writing about other peoples and blood-consciousness, this thesis has chosen to focus upon Mexico and *The Plumed Serpent.* However, given that *Women in Love, The Lost Girl*, *Aaron's Rod, Lady Chatterley's Lover,* and *Mr Noon* (1934) all

incorporate Italy as an important setting; fictional representations of blood-consciousness in relation to Italy, and Lawrence's travel-writing is certainly an aspect of Lawrence's literary output that requires more attention.

As this thesis has explained, blood-consciousness is a far-reaching set of beliefs, relevant to virtually all of Lawrence's writing when he is thinking about the nature of being. The most in-depth and focused attempts to convey his ideas occurs in *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia* which both represent the strengths of Lawrence's creative vision, but also its limitations. John Middleton Murry (1931) identifies the importance of *Fantasia,* describing how it offers an honest insight into Lawrence's character, and 'is the perfect expression, and the perfect portrait of Lawrence: it utters the paradox of the man completely - the man who sees and knows, but cannot be, who sees and knows, because he cannot be' (1931, p.196). Lawrence felt that it was not enough to 'know' blood-consciousness as a term or phrase, he believed it could only be realised if it was turned into something felt and experienced. Developing his philosophy of blood-consciousness was a challenging effort for Lawrence, but what can never be questioned is his struggle to express a vision he really believed in:

> We may be as sceptical as we like concerning the plexuses and planes with which the book begins, or concerning cosmology with which it ends. This last is only a language of expression for the central truth that "there is only one clue to the universe: that is the universal soul within the individual being." (Murry, 1931, p.197)

Referring to *Fantasia* here, Murry (1931) calls for readers to see beyond the difficulties Lawrence had in creating a language for his philosophy, so that the 'central truth' (p.197) behind it may be realised. By attending to the 'the universal soul' of 'the individual being' (Murry, 1931, p.197), readers come into direct contact with blood-consciousness, a philosophy which Lawrence spent years working out

and striving to explain, only to come back full circle to the fact that it will always represent that which cannot be known.

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