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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# "THESE EARLY GREEKS HAVE CLARIFIED MY SOUL"
# D.H. LAWRENCE AND THE PRE-SOCRATICS

BY

CHRISTINA KAULBARS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1990

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DEGREE: MASTER OF ARTS

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: 1990

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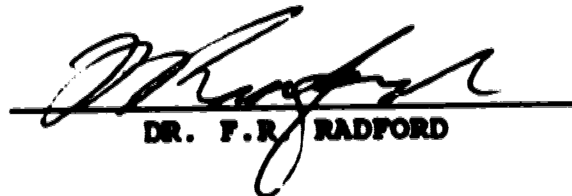

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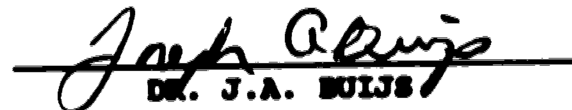

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## ABSTRACT

Change is a watchword when one examines the creative vision of D.H. Lawrence. A significant change appears in his post-1915 work with a dramatic alteration in symbolism between his two major novels The Rainbow (1915) and Women in Love (1920). The new symbols are representative of the major change in Lawrence's world view and, consequently, the alteration in the underlying metaphysic of the novels themselves, based on his discovery in 1915 of the principles of the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers, through John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy (1908).

Other influences prepared Lawrence for the change to this new ideology. His disaffection with the doctrines of conventional Christianity, his brief consideration of the principles of materialism, and his dislike for what he considered to be the logical constraints of Plato all contributed to his embracing the views of the pre-Socratics so enthusiastically. Lawrence found the ideas and symbols of Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles appealing as they served to both confirm and help define many of his earlier notions. Once Lawrence discovered the pre-Socratics in reading Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy in 1915, he immediately began working with these new ideas in his essay "The Crown," published in the fall of that same year.

Working with a new set of symbols, Lawrence uses "The Crown" as a treatise to outline his new cosmology in prose. The elements of opposition, conflict, and balanced polarity represent the new absolutes in Lawrence's ostensibly post-Christian ideology clarified by the early Greeks. His next major novel, Women in Love, shows Lawrence working, to develop these principles further in 1916 and integrate them into a work of fiction. But a number of problems appear in the novel that suggest Lawrence has not successfully incorporated his new philosophy into his fiction.

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# INTRODUCTION

New ideas touched D.H. Lawrence at all stages of his life; and in his writing, he creatively transformed these ideas, building anew from what he assimilated. New influences brought change, and change is always a watchword in the work of Lawrence. He writes, "Men live and see according to some gradually developing and gradually withering vision" (Fantasia of the Unconscious 11); so, for Lawrence, change is inevitable. A significant development in the substance of Lawrence's creative vision becomes apparent in his post-1915 work, with the modification most evident in the startling differences between his two major, supposedly sequential, novels, The Rainbow and Women in Love.

Critics note significant differences in subject and feeling between the two novels (Alldritt 140). Emile Delavenay comments with regard to the structure of Women in Love that "Christian symbols which on the whole dominate The Rainbow . . . are replaced by a new symbolic system" (D.H. Lawrence 514). At the extreme end of the critical scale stands the view of critic Stephen Miko who considers Women In Love to be far from simply a continuation of the saga of the Brangwen family begun in the earlier novel. He finds a distinct shift in tone, subject matter, method, and purpose

from The Rainbow to Women in Love (216). Obviously, something fundamental in Lawrence's vision or personal philosophy changes, for Women in Love was originally to have been volume two of Lawrence's proposed novel The Sisters. But, although many of the characters from The Rainbow reappear, their fictional universe has altered drastically.

Most critics agree that change occurs between the two novels. Lawrence's personal philosophy in Women in Love reflects a new metaphysic, a new grasp of ultimate reality, showing a modification in his understanding of the universe. Lawrence demonstrates this alteration by employing a new set of symbols in Women in Love, symbols vastly different from the Christian-centered ones of The Rainbow. What critics do not agree on is the source of this change. Various sources have been named as the likely origin of these new elements. Suggestions range from the influence of the Romantic poets to the doctrines of the Futurist movement, but it is Lawrence, himself, who answers the question of the source of his new ideology. Shortly after reading John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy (1908) in the summer of 1915, Lawrence writes, "I have been wrong, much too Christian in my philosophy. These early Greeks have clarified my soul" (Letters II 364). Lawrence's explicit declaration that his world view has undergone a significant change is a remark often missed, misunderstood, or underrated by many literary

critics. Such critics may be unfamiliar with the approach of the pre-Socratic philosophers and unaware of the extent to which this influence prompted Lawrence's view of reality to change. Oppositions and tensions appearing in Lawrence's writing beginning in 1915 do not arise mysteriously from obscure sources, as some contend, but as a direct result of his exposure to the ideas of philosophers like Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Parmenides.

A key detail to note is Lawrence's choice of the word 'clarify.' Lawrence certainly encountered ideas and concepts similar to those held by the pre-Socratic philosophers previously in other doctrines, but his exposure to the pre-Socratics' symbolic explication of these ideas in 1915 served to confirm and help define many of his earlier notions. Choosing from among their principles just those that appealed to him, as is his practice with all other material, Lawrence took from Burnet what he needed to validate his own ideas. As Mara Kalnins remarks, "in some respects the value of Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy lay not so much in the rigorously developed philosophical doctrines to be found there but in the stimulus to his [Lawrence's] imagination" (182). Lawrence further translated the pre-Socratics' ideas from their already once-translated Greek to English state into a new conceptual framework, a personal world view of his own, beginning first

in his essay "The Crown" (1915) and then developing these principles in Women in Love (1920).

Lawrence could not be immediately receptive to the tenets of the pre-Socratics without a considerable background of events occurring to prepare his mind for a ready acceptance of their ideas. His reading of nineteenth-century philosophers, such as the monist Ernst Haeckel and materialists like T.H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, and Charles Darwin, helped lay the groundwork for Lawrence's conception of a universe without a Christian God. In addition, Lawrence's long struggle with and eventual rejection of his particular view of orthodox Christianity left him open and vulnerable to new influences which might help restore a religious vision of the cosmos to him--one which he could unfold into his life and art. Daniel Schneider describes Lawrence's view of reality as an "insistence on seeing mankind in relation to god-nature and to the great rhythms of the cosmos and of organic life" ("D.H. Lawrence and The Early Greek Philosophers" 108). Lawrence wishes to deny the abhorrent idea of a purely mechanistic universe, a notion that he feels many materialist thinkers were content with.

But once Lawrence found the pre-Socratics, he embraced their ideas with enthusiasm. He found in their writings "the arts and sciences of a newly emerged civilisation, in which the intellect could range freely, while the

imagination retained a religious connection with the natural world" (Pollnitz 30). Evidence, both formal and ideological, within Lawrence's letters, his essay "The Crown," and his novel Women in Love, shows how the ideas from John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy, especially the fragments of Heraclitus, prompted a dramatic change in his personal philosophy. That Lawrence struggled with these concepts, developing and refining his ideas, becomes apparent when tracing their path as they appear originally in "The Crown" and in the earlier draft versions of Women in Love. His eventual integration of these concepts into the actual published novel comes only after several attempts to represent the principles symbolically in both prose and fiction. Peter Balbert notes how "doctrinal abstraction and dramatic concretion typically and bewilderingly intermesh in Lawrence's work as a whole, his essays and novels often cast upon each other a reciprocal light, and readily lend themselves to comparisons which reveal the underlying unity of Lawrence's poetic intuition and his philosophical thought" (10). The reciprocal light between "The Crown" and Women in Love is cast by the symbolic evocation of the pre-Socratic principles.

A considerable divergence of critical opinion also exists concerning the question of Lawrence's successful integration of his new philosophy into Women in Love. Most

suggest that Lawrence does not succeed with this aspect of his novel. For example, Delavenay does not believe that _Women in Love_ represents a successful synthesis. He finds, instead, a tension between the abstract symbolism and the descriptive realism (_D.H. Lawrence_ 428), a conviction echoed by other critics, for "The early notice of _Women in Love_ was characterized by a sense that Lawrence was more a poet than a novelist, more interested in philosophy and sex than in writing convincing fiction" (Farmer and Vasey lv). Lawrence wrote _Women in Love_ from within the early twentieth-century tradition of realist fiction, and his struggle to coordinate the explication of his new metaphysic, with its use of abstract and unfamiliar symbols, through his supposedly realistic characters causes his readers a great deal of difficulty. Katherine Hayles characterizes his struggle to overcome the constraints of conventional literary modes as "Lawrence's attempt to use language to move beyond language" (96).

Lawrence tries to introduce new elements to his fiction in _Women in Love_, believing that his new understanding is vital to his art. He notes, "even art is utterly dependent on philosophy: or if you prefer it, on a metaphysic. The metaphysic or philosophy may not be anywhere very accurately stated and may be quite unconscious in the artist, yet it is a metaphysic that governs men at the time, and is by all men

more or less comprehended, and lived" (Fantasia of the Unconscious 11). His conception of the universe had changed, and this altered metaphysic governed his composition of Women in Love. The novel represents a working-out of Lawrence's new metaphysic in fiction, through both his conscious and his unconscious mind. What remains problematic, however, is whether his new philosophy could be comprehended and lived by others.

Did Lawrence continue to find these pre-Socratic principles significant? Yes, the clarification provided to Lawrence by the early Greeks introduced new elements to his vision, ones that would continue to inform his letters, poetry, prose, and fiction right through to the end of his life. Kalnins notes that Lawrence again reread Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy, refreshing his memory on the doctrines of Heraclitus and the pre-Socratics, in 1929, just before writing his final long prose work Apocalypse and shortly before his death (173). Through his creative transformation of these ancient works in his own writing, Lawrence did, in some measure, succeed in his wish to "write out Herakleitos, on tablets of bronze" (Letters II 364).

CHAPTER 1: MATERIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Lawrence's transition from a belief in the doctrines of his Christian upbringing to the later development of his own personal religion happened only after a period of change. In his biography of Lawrence, Harry T. Moore notes how originally Lawrence "had been brought up on the Bible and had it in his bones" (Intelligent Heart 38). As a child, Lawrence belonged, with his family, to a Nonconformist sect of the Protestant religion, the Congregationalists. Their attendance at church was regular and frequent. In one of his later articles, Lawrence writes, "I was sent to Sunday School and to Chapel, to Band of Hope and to Christian Endeavour, and was always having the Bible read at me or to me" (Preface to Dragon of the Apocalypse 302). Christianity was, then, an integral part of Lawrence's early life, but it was not a doctrine which sat well with him as he matured; note his comment that the Bible was read at him. During World War I, Lawrence's friend Catherine Carswell realised Lawrence's thorough dissatisfaction with the Christian religion: "In the War he came to believe fully in the putrescence--worse because it was denied--of the Christian era" (23-24).

Prefatory to any discussion of Lawrence and the Christian religion, a certain qualification must be made

clear. George Zytaruk isolates this significant consideration when he notes, "If Lawrence's interpretations of Christianity are not always accurate, this is of no great consequence; what is important, however, is his reaction to the Christian religion as he understood it, for it is this reaction that guided his thinking in the formulation of his personal creed" (94). Thus, little can be gained from a discussion of how different Lawrence's views of Christianity are from the true tenets of the faith because it is what develops out of Lawrence's thinking about Christianity that proves the more fertile ground in a critical consideration of the writer's growth. Saying that Lawrence does not understand true Christianity does little towards developing a line of argument to demonstrate the growth of Lawrence's own particular faith.

Disillusionment with Christianity appeared in Lawrence as a young man, and, as his feelings of dissatisfaction grew, he began to cast about him for alternatives to the faith he believed he was abandoning. Christian influences never actually leave his work; they appear persistently throughout his earlier and later works in images, prose rhythms, and language. What Lawrence discarded, then, was the authority of the Christian God and the perceived tenets and restrictions of the faith. "Oh, how is it possible that a God who speaks to all hearts can let Belgravia go laughing

to a vicious luxury, and Whitechapel cursing to a filthy debauchery--such suffering, such dreadful suffering--and shall the short years of Christ's mission atone for it all?" (Letters I 40), asks Lawrence of the Reverend Robert Reid in a letter of December 1907. "I do not wage any war against Christianity--I do not hate it--but these questions will not be answered, and for the present my religion is the lessening, in some pitiful moiety, the great human discrepancies" (Letters I 41). For Lawrence, at this early stage of his life, the inequities he saw in the distribution of wealth and suffering of those around him could not be put off or explained by the Rev. Reid's assurances that God's ways are inscrutable and that Lawrence must simply have faith (Letters I 40). Lawrence grappled with the stark reality of what surrounded him daily and felt he needed to answer the questions, "where is the human harmony, where the balance, the order, the 'indestructibility of matter' in humanity? And where is the personal, human God?" (Letters I 41). None of what Lawrence understood as recognized Christianity served to answer these questions for him.

As his letter to Rev. Reid indicates, Lawrence had difficulty accepting the idea that Christ's mission could serve to atone for all the suffering of humanity. Christ, himself, was a problematical figure in Lawrence's eyes. Eugene Goodheart describes how the traditional figure of the

suffering Christ is so antithetical to Lawrence: "The gentle Jesus who embodied the hopes and aspirations of the meek and the poor (the Jesus of Christianity), is an alien spirit to Lawrence" ("Lawrence and Christ" 176). Lawrence could not accept this idealistic figure of Christ leading such a sinless life and setting the example for others to follow. Lawrence believed that in this figure of the ideal lay "the final and unanswerable criticism of Christ . . . borne out by the long experience of humanity. It is reality versus illusion, and the illusion was Jesus', while time itself retorts with reality" (Preface to The Grand Inquisitor 283). Real individuals in the real world could not follow the example of Christ whose domain lay in the realm of the spiritual ideal, split from the physical body which limits mortals. "I do not worship hands nailed and running with blood upon a cross," Lawrence writes in his Review of Georgian Poetry: 1911-1912, published in March 1913. The crucified Christ became a horror to Lawrence. Even in his early Sunday School instruction as a child, the plight of Jesus failed to move him to pity:

> I remember . . . a woman teacher trying to harrow us about the Crucifixion. And she kept saying: 'And aren't you sorry for Jesus? Aren't you sorry?' And most of the children wept. I believe I shed a crocodile tear or two, but very vivid is my memory of saying to myself: 'I don't really care a bit.' And I could never go back on it. ("Hymns in a Man's Life" 601)

However, Lawrence did, throughout his life, maintain a certain fascination with the figure of Christ, as his last complete work of fiction, The Man Who Died, demonstrates, just as Christian influences in general continued to appear in his writing.

For Lawrence, Christ represented the conventional Christian ideal of his day, an ideal which ignored man's true nature. "Christianity, he felt, taught men to die; it did not teach men to live" (Zytaruk 22). This emphasis on the spiritual domain to the exclusion of the physical, as Lawrence understood Christianity to be, led him to see this conventional ideal as anti-human. He writes, "But in Christ we abjure the flesh, there is no flesh" (Study of Thomas Hardy 465). For Lawrence, his desire to live passionately alive in the flesh must, at the very least, interfere with his acceptance of the Christian doctrine of following an idealistic, spiritual way towards salvation in the next life. And all Christians were, in Lawrence's understanding, to strive for a oneness and eternal identity with God (Zytaruk 98). But for Lawrence, "[t]o become one with God is a violation of the individual self for the very existence of all life is made possible by the myriad identities which constitute life" (Zytaruk 150). Lawrence was firmly against the denial of the individual self in favor of promoting a homogeneous, indistinguishable mass of Christians trying and

failing to live the idealized life of Christ. To deny the self is, to Lawrence, to repudiate the physical body. Lawrence felt much the same about the idealism of Plato's doctrine of dualism, which suggests that only the Forms or Ideas are truly real and not the physical world perceived around us. Life in its open, naked, and physical beauty "for Lawrence constituted the 'highest good,' in contradistinction to Plato's belief that the highest good is the progressive 'assimilation to God'" (Panichas, "D.H. Lawrence and the Ancient Greeks" 339). In the same way, "Lawrence felt that Christianity had overstressed the spirit and denial of the flesh" (Hoffman 415).

As Lawrence grew more critical of conventional Christianity, he found he could neither accept nor condone a religion that was not interdependent with physical life. "Religion," he writes in a letter of February 1915, "must now be lived, practised. We will have no more churches. We will bring church and house and shop together" (Letters II 272). But, increasingly for Lawrence, the church to be joined with the house and the shop could not be the Christian church. Although believing his writing was motivated from his religious feeling, he grew to reject the specifically Christian religious experience. His dislike for Christianity and idealism did not detract from the depth of his powerful religious feeling; he writes, "primarily I

am a passionately religious man, and my novels must be written from the depth of my religious experience" (Letters II 165). But as time went on, Lawrence no longer felt his novels could be written from the depth of his Christian religious experience--note his change in ideology after The Rainbow--and he had to seek a new creed to inform his work.

A new creed meant a new world for Lawrence, a "conscious effort to destroy the old, dead world and to create a new, living one" (Schneider, Consciousness of D.H. Lawrence 29). In Lawrence's mind, Christianity had reached a dead end, and, while he could respect the early beginnings and ethics of the Christian Church, he could no longer tolerate its accepted practice among the mass of men. His rejection of Christianity "was not merely an intellectual opposition; it was a passionate determination to free himself from the tribe itself, with all its massed and fixed expectations and demands" (Schneider, Consciousness of D.H. Lawrence 29). "It is a fine thing," Lawrence writes to his sister Ada in 1911, "to establish one's own religion in one's heart, not to be dependent on tradition and secondhand ideals" (Letters I 256).

But once free from the superficial ideals of the mass, having discarded the degraded tenets of Christianity, Lawrence was left with a problem. He faced an alien universe, one without a Christian God-centered reality. The

need to find a new means of understanding the cosmos became increasingly important. Jessie Chambers, Lawrence's long-time, intimate friend of his youth, recalls how Lawrence, "perplexed as he was by his own personal dilemma, . . . tried to fill up a spiritual vacuum by swallowing materialism at a gulp. But it did not carry him far" (112). Breaking up Lawrence's developing spiritual consciousness into distinct stages this way gives a deceptively arbitrary impression of the progression of the writer's thought. Lawrence did not reject Christianity wholeheartedly one day and then enthusiastically embrace materialism the next. Rather, his growing disaffection with the religion of his childhood left him open and likely to seek new ideas for explaining the universe through the works of scientists and philosophers of his era. This process of slowly discarding Christianity encouraged Lawrence's reading and brought him into contact with the treatises of scientific and materialist minds such as Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Ernst Haeckel.

These thinkers rejected or downplayed the premise that the universe is governed by a Christian God. Instead, they espoused a doctrine in which matter holds a primary position in the universe, and the mind or spirit maintains a secondary, dependent reality or "even none at all" ("Materialism" 179). Such a materialist (matter is primary)

position stands the Christian order of the universe on its head, for now matter and the natural world take precedence over concerns of spirit and divinity, allowing that the latter elements even have any claim to existence. "In a materialist theory there are no necessary beings and no supernatural interventions in the course of nature" ("Materialism" 184). Thus, the materialist doctrine could free men from the burden of religious fear and oppression. The implications of such a theory are revolutionary, both for the orthodox Christian thinker and for Lawrence. Suddenly the physical world represents the ultimate reality. The world Lawrence perceives around him and the passionate life of the flesh he desires become the world's fundamental entities. Here, for Lawrence, is an alternative to the bloodless Christian life of the disembodied spirit. Lawrence notes, in a letter of October 1907, how his reading of Darwin and Herbert Spencer "has seriously modified my religious beliefs" (*Letters I* 36-37).

In Rose Marie Burwell's thorough study of Lawrence's reading, she reports that, in his young manhood, Lawrence read Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1906, T.H. Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature* and Herbert Spencer's *First Principles of a New System of Theology* in 1907, and Ernst Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe* in 1908 (67-70). These scholarly works did much to reinforce Lawrence's questioning

of the authority of Christianity, for Darwin's book discards the notion that variety among creatures exists because each is a unique, divine creation of a Christian God. Rather, Darwin claims, variety exists because species have to struggle to survive, and, while some species die out, others evolve to ensure their continued survival. Thus, life proceeds by a process of natural selection; nature is primary. The physical matter around us conditions and controls our lives. Darwin's theory, then, lends support to Lawrence's belief in the significance of the physical world as the ultimate reality. While there could still, conceivably, be an omnipotent deity directing the process of natural selection, Darwin's work flew in the face of conventional Christian beliefs in the literal truth of creation as depicted in the Bible and the idea that the earth was only between four and five thousand years old. The type of evolution Darwin describes takes place over millions of years, an enormous block of time. The earth must be far older than anyone dreamed, certainly older than Christians claimed.

Spencer and Huxley, late nineteenth century thinkers, both apply Darwin's evolutionary theory to their own work. Their claim to the label 'materialist' lies in their questioning of an omnipotent God as the director of the universe and ultimate reality. Spencer concludes that,

since reality cannot be known apart from its effects, we are "led to a belief in some Unknowable, not necessarily God" ("Herbert Spencer" 524). Agnosticism, he decides, is the only reasonable belief for man because any assumptions we make about the reality of this Unknowable, such as its actually being a Christian God with certain known qualities, is pure conjecture and uncertain. Huxley's view is quite similar to Spencer's in that he refuses to champion materialism over a belief in a Christian God, but he does hammer "away at the inconsistencies in, and lack of evidence for, the Biblical cosmology, the creation stories, and the belief in demons, spirits, and miraculous occurrences which Christianity requires" ("Thomas Henry Huxley" 103). Such thinking would help Lawrence nurture the seed of doubt growing in his own mind about the authority of the Christian religion.

It is in Lawrence's reading of Ernst Haeckel's Riddle of the Universe in 1908 that one finds further alternatives offered to Lawrence to support his disaffection with Christianity and also certain important elements which will appear in his writing, to be later 'clarified' by his exposure to the early Greeks in 1915. Jessie Chambers notes how at the time "this rationalistic thinking impressed Lawrence deeply. He came upon it at a time of spiritual fog, when the lights of orthodox religion and morality were

proving wholly inadequate" (112). Haeckel's translation from the German original appeared in English in 1901, and this philosopher's ideas also support the theories promulgated by Darwin. For Haeckel, "the world is nothing else than an eternal evolution of substance" (Haeckel 4), a theory which denies the supernaturalism of Christianity. From a position sympathetic to Lawrence's, Haeckel criticizes traditional religions, finding "their doctrines are often intellectually wrong; that they generate unrealistic hopes and that the social, political, and educational consequences of supernaturalism are malignant" ("Ernst Heinrich Haeckel" 401). Already as a young man, Lawrence had viewed the unequal social conditions around him with horror, appalled that Christians, such as Rev. Reid, could rationalize these circumstances by assurances that God's ways are inscrutable.

Haeckel argues that the idealist systems of thinkers such as Plato and Hegel do not approach a true knowledge of reality, nor is the empiricist view adequate. In order to apprehend reality, man must combine thought and experience (Haeckel 18). In Haeckel's view, then, two realms, the material and the immaterial, combine to form the unity of the ultimate reality of the universe. Haeckel is a monist philosopher, believing in a metaphysic which stresses the oneness of reality, a fundamental unity which has two

aspects or attributes. The universe requires the two elements of the material and immaterial to complete its inherent unity. Now in Haeckel's theory, the substance of the universe has two attributes, matter and energy (material and immaterial), which fill infinite space and are in eternal motion: "This motion runs on through infinite time as an unbroken development, with a periodic change from life to death, from evolution to devolution" (Haeckel 13). Readers familiar with Lawrence's long essay Study of Thomas Hardy of 1914 will recognize here suggestions of the systolic and diastolic actions of the heartbeat of the universe, the motion from new life to dissolution and back again. In this essay, Lawrence also subscribes to the dual attribute explanation of the unity of the universe: "In the origin, life must have been uniform, a great, unmoved, utterly homogeneous infinity, a great not-being, at once a positive and negative infinity" (Study of Thomas Hardy 432).

Not only did Haeckel's work lend support to Lawrence's strident criticisms of Christianity, but the German philosopher refers directly to concepts of the early Greek, pre-Socratic philosophers. Haeckel specifically cites "the great Greek scientist Empedocles" (224) whose theory of the forces of love and hatred existing between the elements helps to explain, in metaphorical terms, how the universe functions, by way of the evolving conflict between these

elements. Haeckel goes on to discuss the hylozoism of the early Ionian philosophers in the first half of the sixth century B.C. The early Greeks believed that life or spirit and body or matter were inseparable, a conception of nature and reality as alive and animated. Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Empedocles all appear in Haeckel's treatise as conceiving of an "essential unity of the infinite universe" (289). Thus, Lawrence was briefly exposed to some of the tenets of several of the pre-Socratics prior to 1915, but, at this early stage, their ideas were clothed in the rhetoric of Haeckel's materialism.

This rhetoric disturbed Lawrence, because, despite his admiration for these nineteenth-century philosophers, "the great scientists or thinkers of the last generation, even Darwin, and Spencer and Huxley" (Study of Thomas Hardy 485), Lawrence still writes to Rev. Reid in 1907, "I cannot be a materialist" (Letters I 40). For Haeckel and other materialists relied on the primacy of reason in all things, claiming that emotion has nothing to do with the attainment of truth (Haeckel 17). Reason as the sole criterion of truth is not a position Lawrence could support. In his Study of Thomas Hardy, Lawrence writes, "What we call the Truth is in actual experience, that momentary state when in living the union between the male and the female is consummated" (460). Although Lawrence could not consider

himself a materialist, the works of these nineteenth-century philosophers certainly lent ideas and support to his own evolving cosmology.

And then in 1912 came the irrevocable break with the conventions of Christianity, the transgression of the sacred commandments. In 1912, Lawrence met and fell in love with Mrs. Frieda Weekley, wife of eminent philologist Professor Ernest Weekley and mother of three. Graham Hough, in his 1956 study of Lawrence, The Dark Sun, concludes that the moral and intellectual struggles of Lawrence's youth led him first to an impasse in his beliefs and then to the impulsive act of eloping with Frieda (55). Lawrence was already moving, by the time of his first meeting with Frieda, a good deal outside of recognised standards of Christian beliefs and attitudes, but as yet had taken no firm direction. Lawrence forced the issue of his religious stand by his act of making love to Mrs. Weekley. Because this unconventional behaviour brought Lawrence such happiness, despite his having broken rigid moral and religious codes in doing so, he could not continue to be ambivalent about the tenets of Christianity. His elopement placed him too far outside the norms of society to be able to even pay lip service to the conventional standards of right and wrong. Hough sees a perfectly natural result, then, for Lawrence to seek a "non-moral and anti-intellectual philosophy," a new faith

and code of behaviour to support his new-found experience (55-56). Frederick Hoffman concurs with Hough's assessment of the impact and influence of Lawrence's elopement with Frieda, describing how this action energised Lawrence's polemic force (408), just as it isolated him from conventional society. Lawrence had to seek alternatives; the tenets of Christianity and the norms of society no longer held any place for the pariah Lawrence had made of himself. "I am not legally married," he writes to Arthur McLeod in June 1912; "Perhaps some day the great scandal will come out. But I don't care. I have been fearfully happy" (Letters I 418).

Out of harmony with Christianity, disillusioned with materialist philosophy, and labelled a scandalous adulterer until his marriage to Frieda in July 1914, Lawrence carried his confusion about the order of the universe into his writing up to the time of the Study of Thomas Hardy in 1914 and his major novel The Rainbow, begun in 1913 and completed in early 1915. "I am just finishing a book supposed to be on Thomas Hardy, but in reality a sort of Confessions of my Heart" (Letters II 235), Lawrence writes to Amy Lowell in November of 1914. In this work, Lawrence focuses little on criticism of Hardy's writing, but looks long at the condition and destiny of humanity. Lawrence's lengthy prose work focuses on man and the future from a position still

within the context of a Christian universe. He develops his theme using terms and ideas from within the Christian doctrine. At one point, he discusses the mockery men "have made of Christ's Commandment: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,'" calling the conventional interpretation of these words "a mirror for the tears of self pity" (Study of Thomas Hardy 408). In this misinterpretation of Christ, men have led themselves to build false values. Later in the essay, Lawrence draws an analogy between his idea of the difference between Law and Love and God, the Father, and Christ: "In the Father we are one flesh, in Christ we are crucified, and rise again, and are One with Him in Spirit. It is the difference between Law and Love" (Study of Thomas Hardy 465).

In the essay, Lawrence begins to develop his new world view, one as yet uninfluenced by pre-Socratics like Heraclitus and Empedocles. "The book I wrote--mostly philosophicalish, slightly about Hardy--I want to re-write and publish in pamphlets. We must create an idea of a new, freer life, where men and women can really meet on natural terms, instead of being barred within so many barriers" (Letters II 292-293). Though the ideology informing Study of Thomas Hardy is still very much within a Christian framework, Lawrence strives to alter the traditional boundaries. He discusses "the history of humanity" as being

divided between the Absolute Law of God the Father and the Absolute Love of Christ the Son (Study of Thomas Hardy 510). He concludes his study with: "Now it remains for us to know the Law and to know the Love, and further to seek out the Reconciliation" (Study of Thomas Hardy 514). The long essay and this conclusion show Lawrence struggling with seeming contradictions in the history of Christianity and trying to find a measure of reconciliation that might still provide him with some sort of framework of belief. But even within this context, Lawrence finishes his discussion by returning to Man and Woman, earthly, physical beings as complementary parts who must seek each other, rather than God or Christ, to be whole.

This same circumstance of Lawrence struggling with orthodox beliefs appears most evident in his next major work The Rainbow. Mark Kinkead-Weekes observes how after writing Study of Thomas Hardy, Lawrence's religion and fiction begin to come together: "Only then was he able to write The Rainbow, the History, or even 'Bible,' in which that theology [of Study of Thomas Hardy] is embodied, tested, and further explored imaginatively, in terms of human relationships" (374). In The Rainbow, Lawrence attempts a creative fictional construction of the ideology of Study of Thomas Hardy from within the Christian framework. Christian religious imagery, motifs, and themes abound in the novel,

beginning immediately with the opening paragraph of the book: "a church-tower stood on a hill, the houses of the little country town climbing assiduously up to it" (The Rainbow 7). Graham Hough notes that in Lawrence's The Rainbow, the symbol of the church is just as important as that of the rainbow (59). The novel is filled with Biblical diction: "Anna looks off from her Pisgah mount" (195), while Ursula wonders if the Sons of God would "have found her fair" (276). The Christian framework remains, as does Lawrence's struggle to reconcile differences within it. Lawrence tries to demonstrate the necessary duality of the figures of Study of Thomas Hardy through the men and women of The Rainbow who can only find wholeness in each other: in the success of Tom and Lydia, the harder-won love of Will and Anna, and the unfulfilled character of Ursula. Ursula tries to reconcile herself to life through Christianity, but fails, finding "something unclean and degrading about this humble side of Christianity" (The Rainbow 285). She, like Lawrence, stands outside the norms of society, because of her lesbian affair with Winnifred and her sexual adventures with Anton. Ursula cannot live her life in conventional Christian terms.

Lawrence also shows a disaffection with Christianity through the incident of Will and Anna in the cathedral at Lincoln. Will exults and worships the lofty arches of the

Christian cathedral, while Anna finds "she hung back in the transit, mistrusting the culmination of the altar" (The Rainbow 203). Anna is able to free herself from the thrall of the Christian place of worship and easily does the same to Will: "that which had been his absolute, containing all heaven and earth, was become to him as to her, a shapely heap of dead matter--but dead, dead" (The Rainbow 205)--dead, as Christianity became for Lawrence. Man and woman in relationship became the new absolutes in Lawrence's mind, and what he needed now was a new cosmology, a new vision of the universe, in which to set the figures of his new religion into their proper motion.

## CHAPTER 2: THE UNLIKELY SEQUEL

"I am half way through a novel," writes Lawrence in May 1916, "which is a sequel to The Rainbow, though quite unlike it" (Letters II 606). And Women in Love is, in fact, an unlikely sequel to Lawrence's The Rainbow. The conception of the two novels originates in March of 1913 when, after writing Sons and Lovers, Lawrence begins "a new, lighter novel" (Letters I 530). This new novel first began as "The Sisters" and grew to enormous and unwieldy proportions. It was rewritten a number of times and eventually split into two volumes before final publication as The Rainbow in 1915 and Women in Love in 1920. But Lawrence could little know in 1913 of the years of struggle and change that were to follow his first references to the "new, lighter novel"--the changed face of the world with the advent of World War I and the changed man in Lawrence himself with the development of his philosophy over the course of the two novels.

Already in the very early stages of his new novel, Lawrence sensed that this work reflected a very different mode of writing for him: "I am working away at The Sisters. It is so different, so different from anything I have yet written, that I do nothing but wonder what it is like" (Letters II 82). Changes in Lawrence's fictional method normally appear with each new novel, from the earlier

autobiographical _Sons and Lovers_ to the initial attempts at the representation of the allotropic states of the ego in _The Rainbow_. Lawrence realised that his depiction of varying states of the ego in _The Rainbow_ needed refinement. He wrote to Edward Garnett in June 1914: "You must not say my novel is shaky--It is not perfect, because I am not expert in what I want to do" (_Letters II_ 183). A correspondingly significant alteration appears between what some consider his two greatest works, _The Rainbow_ and _Women in Love_. Although Lawrence managed to refine his concept of allotropic states in _Women in Love_, he drastically revised the imagery and symbols informing the later novel, casting the characters into a new fictional universe. "The writing of both books spanned several of the most eventful years of Lawrence's eventful life, a period during which his views of society and personal relationships, as well as his fictional methods, underwent convulsive changes" (Michael Ross, "More or Less a Sequel" 264-265).

H.M. Daleski sees the intention of _Women in Love_ as sequential to _The Rainbow_ but agrees that the novels differ radically (126). Differences in mood, tone, attitude, images, structure, style, and theme have all been attributed to _Women in Love_. Colin Clarke views _The Rainbow_ as merely an earlier stage in Lawrence's articulation of "paradoxical 'convictions'" (42), so that, although the novels differ

considerably, their development remains logical. Delavenay sees a whole new system of symbolism in Women in Love, unlike the Christian symbols of The Rainbow (D.H. Lawrence 514). Others, like George Ford, consider "what differences there are between The Rainbow and Women in Love do not depend on a shift of values or even on modifications of technique, but simply on a change of palette, from bright to somber" (168). Now Ford is correct in noting that the underlying reason for the differences between the two novels rests on a fundamental change in the artist's creating self, but he is wrong in suggesting that this basic alteration, resulting in the subsequent differences, does not result from a shift in values, but rests on a change of mood. In Women in Love, Lawrence does not simply present a darker view of the world, but creates a new variety of fictional universe, one no longer centered around the God of Christian theology. "There's no God," (Women in Love 64) says Birkin, and neither are there represented the accepted Christian conventions by which the characters might seek to style their lives.

The Brangwens of Women in Love inhabit a fictional universe very different from that of The Rainbow, a structure not just coloured by the destructive influence of the war, but a cosmos which operates on different principles. A Christian theology governs the universe of

The Rainbow, from the Genesis-like opening, "But heaven and earth was teeming around them, and how should this cease?" (7), to the flood motif of Tom's death and the abundance of Biblical diction throughout. The importance of the symbols of God and the church in the novel are stressed by emphasis and repetition and through the adherence and belief of the characters as they practice Christianity: "The cycle of creation still wheeled in the church year, . . . . So the children lived the year of Christianity, the epic soul of mankind" (The Rainbow 280). Such a cycle seems most alien to the characters of Women in Love. "There's no God," says Birkin, and the life of Western Christian civilisation has reached its end: "This life . . . We've got to bust it completely, or shrivel inside it, as in a tight skin. For it won't expand any more" (Women in Love 59-60). The parameters of the Christian universe of The Rainbow will no longer serve. "The old ideals are dead as nails--nothing there" (Women in Love 64).

Keith Sagar observes that the positive symbols in Women in Love, "star-equilibrium and singleness of being . . . derive entirely from Birkin's preaching which in turn derives from 'The Crown'" (197). The essay "The Crown" is the expression of Lawrence's new cosmology, validated and illuminated by his reading of the pre-Socratics. For some reason, Sagar does not make this connection between "The

Crown" and the strong influence of some of the pre-Socratics. But an expanded discussion of "The Crown" in Chapter 4 will demonstrate how the essay emerged from Lawrence's reading of the pre-Socratics and will, consequently, identify the source of the principles Birkin espouses in the novel. In _Women in Love_, Lawrence takes these new values and presents in fictional form, principles he earlier expressed in nonfiction. Granted, not all the characters in _Women in Love_ are aware of the correct principles towards which they must strive in order to live fully and in spiritual health, but Birkin's expression of these new truths and his conversion of Ursula and their resultant enduring relationship make clear the need for the acceptance of this new ideology. Christian love can no longer reign supreme. Mr. Crich, the decrepit figure of Christian charity, dies a horrible, lingering death, "decomposing into formless darkness" (_Women in Love_ 362).

New symbols, such as the river of dissolution, the streams of conscious and unconscious, star-equilibrium, and elements of opposition, duality, and change, all operate to show Lawrence using the character of Birkin to make sense of the surrounding universe through these new terms. At the end of _The Rainbow_, Ursula is left without understanding: "In everything she saw she grasped and groped to find the creation of the living God, instead of the old, hard barren

form of bygone living" (The Rainbow 495). She has abandoned the tenets of accepted Christianity: "She saw . . . the old church-tower standing up in hideous obsoleteness above raw new houses" (The Rainbow 495). And although the novel ends with Ursula seeing the gleaming rainbow and hoping that this symbol represents the coming of a new architecture for the earth, she has no certainty about what this new architecture might be. She has no direction, no doctrine or metaphysic to guide her to truth. In Women in Love, she finds her answer, but in terms far removed from the Christian framework of The Rainbow. As she looks at Birkin, she believes, "They would give each other this star-equilibrium which alone is freedom" (Women in Love 360).

Acknowledging the existence of significant differences between The Rainbow and Women in Love is readily done by most critics. Establishing any sort of consensus on the source of these changes is not. Colin Clarke sees deep influences of the Romantic poets in Women in Love, with the novel's emphasis on images of dissolution, the idea of Keats's image of dying into being (3). Brian John sees parallels between the work of the Romantics and Lawrence and considers the similarities to be "the result partly of direct influence and partly of participation in the common Romantic vitalist tradition" (241). But these critics miss a crucial difference between Lawrence's Women in Love and

the Romantic tradition. The Romantic poets seek a kind of merging between subject and object; they suggest that the subjective mind can, in contemplation, figuratively merge with an object, Keats's Grecian urn or Coleridge's stranger in the grate. Through this merging, the poet discovers and forms an integration with some greater entity in nature, like Wordsworth's discovery in "Tintern Abbey" of something "far more deeply interfused."

But Lawrence is not interested in merging subject and object. He wants the two to remain distinctly separate, a polarity of opposites, a constructive tension leading to a positive equilibrium between two elements: "[N]ot meeting and mingling . . . but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings:--as the stars balance each other" (Women in Love 164). In Lawrence's novel, rebirth is achieved once this necessary conjunction is reached, not by some mental merging with the object, as experienced by the Romantic poets. Keith Alldritt describes this issue in Women in Love as Birkin's attempt to restore the autonomy of the object (205).

John Beer offers a further perspective in addressing the difference between Lawrence and the Romantics. This critic sees Lawrence as beginning where the Romantics left off, "being willing to contemplate unafraid the fact that a full relationship between the unconscious powers in the

human mind and those in nature must take account of violence as well as calm" (70). Beer's comment suggests that the Romantics limit the scope of contemplation to the realm of peaceful, spiritual renewal, whereas Lawrence confronts all aspects of nature and the psyche, regardless of the consequences. For Lawrence, opposition and conflict, such as that between Birkin and Ursula, can be more fruitful than quiet reflection.

Correspondences that critics may see between the work of Lawrence and the Romantics are likely not deliberate on the author's part. Lawrence has, for the most part, little respect for the Romantic poets. He finds, "physical consciousness gives a last song in Burns, then is dead. Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, the Brontës, all post-mortem poets. The essential instinctive-intuitive body is dead, and worshipped in death--all very unhealthy" ("Introduction to These Paintings" 552). Lawrence criticizes the lack of physicality in the Romantics' verse and their propensity to try to move beyond what they perceive to be the limitations of the physical world and engage in some kind of merging with an unknown ideal. The Romantics, Lawrence felt, rendered significance to sensed or experienced reality only insofar as the poets could use this reality as a means to an abstract ideal. And the introspective world of the abstract is deathly, in Lawrence's mind, unlike the vibrant life of

the concrete. Lawrence writes to Amy Lowell in October 1914, "And don't talk about putting me in the safe with Keats and Shelley. It scares the life out of me" (Letters II 223).

Other critics argue that the source of the difference between the two novels lies in the ideology of the Futurism movement, a group popular in Britain and Europe during the early part of the twentieth century. Emile Delavenay notes how Lawrence's interest in the Futurists, after reading their work in 1914, may have influenced him ("Lawrence and the Futurists" 140). Lawrence makes specific reference to Marinetti's Futurist group in two of his letters on June 2 and 5, 1914, mentioning, "It interests me very much" (Letters II 180). "I want to write on futurism" (Letters II 184). The Futurist movement advocated a re- ction of traditional forms in art and an effort to d ict the dynamic energy and constant movement of mechanical processes. In Women in Love, Gerald Crich finds paintings "in the Futurist manner" (82) on the walls of Birkin's London flat, and repeated references to a flux of movement energize the novel.

But it is the emphasis on science and the mechanical which would prevent Lawrence from totally accepting the group's ideology. He writes, "That is where the futurists are stupid. Instead of looking for the new human

phenomenon, they will only look for the phenomena of the science of physics to be found in human being" (Letters II 183). Jack Lindsay notes how "Women in Love thus shows how Lawrence worked out in his own terms the problem which, in his view, the Futurists were attempting to formulate and aesthetically define" (52). Lawrence could respect the Futurist position of rejecting traditions they considered dead: "I agree with them about the weary sickness of pedantry and tradition and inertness, but I don't agree with them as to the cure and the escape" (Letters II 181). Their mistake, as Lawrence further outlines in Study of Thomas Hardy, lies in the Futurist attitude, "the scientific attitude . . . the departure of the male from the female . . . the denying of consummation and the starting afresh" (464).

An element which may have led critics to believe that the emphasis on flux and motion in Women in Love arises from the influence of Futurism is Lawrence's use of repetition. For, as Julian Symons notes in discussing the limitations of the Futurists, "If you are committed to showing the flux of movement in every painting and sculpture, it is inevitable that you must soon repeat yourself" (62). But repetition is, for Lawrence, a familiar element of his own writing style. The rhythmic, repetitive patterns of his style are certainly familiar to readers of The Rainbow, or earlier

still, his novel of 1912, The Trespasser. Lawrence, himself, knew that some found his repetition disturbing, as he explains in his justification for his personal style in the "Foreword to Women in Love":

> In point of style, fault is often found with the continual slightly modified repetition. The only answer is that it is natural to the author: and that every natural crisis in emotion or passion or understanding comes from this pulsing, frictional to-and-fro, which works up to culmination. (276)

That Lawrence's repetitive style seems reminiscent of the Futurists' is a fair comment. But to claim, then, that his style grows from a purely Futurist influence is not.

Discounting influences from the Romantics and the Futurists still leaves critics with the problem of accounting for the significant differences between The Rainbow and Women in Love. The two novels are ostensibly to be considered in sequence, with the second most unlike the first. Even the novels' very structures show formal differences which emphasize the change in Lawrence's informing ideology. "The structure of Women in Love," notes Sagar, "seems to me excessively arbitrary, especially in contrast to the highly organic structure of The Rainbow" (196). In using the term "arbitrary," here, Sagar means to convey that Lawrence made very careful choices in structuring his novel to convey the parameters of his new fictional universe: "This imagery seems to be generated by

Lawrence's search, in the abstract, outside the novel" (Sagar 197). In contrast, images and symbols in _The Rainbow_ are concrete, rooted in the organic world, and seem to emerge very naturally as the novel unfolds along chronological lines. But this dramatic change in structure is not surprising, considering how, after completing _The Rainbow_, Lawrence writes excitedly to Lady Ottoline Morrell in 1915, "I shall write all my philosophy again. Last time I came out of the Christian camp. This time I must come out of these early Greek philosophers" (_Letters II_ 367). This change in ideology prompts a whole new approach in Lawrence's writing.

## CHAPTER 3: FINDING THE PRE-SOCRATICS

Tracking Lawrence's development up to and including The Rainbow shows the writer struggling to formulate a new world view. "[T]he old order is done for, toppling on top of us . . . . There must be a new Word" (Letters II 526), he writes in 1916 in commenting on the message of The Rainbow. Finding this new Word became a quest for Lawrence, prompting him to seek out numerous sources of philosophy and ideas, and, thus, many different thinkers contributed to the store of influences upon him. Lawrence did not examine new material with detached objectivity, but actively pursued sources of information with a passionate, subjective involvement. As Jessie Chambers notes:

> In all his reading he seemed to be groping for something that he could lay hold of as a guiding principle in his own life. There was never the least touch of the academic or scholastic in his approach. What he read was to be applied here and now; he seemed to consider all his philosophical reading from the angle of his own personal need. (112-113)

And a need which Lawrence felt strongly in his life between 1910 and 1915 was his desire to formulate a philosophy based outside of the conventional Christian tradition. Despite this desire, his thinking and writing would always contain elements of Christianity, which later in his life he tried to incorporate into his personal philosophy. His last work

of fiction, *The Man Who Died*, shows a considerable softening of Lawrence's attitude towards Christ. But at this juncture, Lawrence believed that the order of society and civilization achieved through orthodox Christianity had reached a dead end. He actively engaged in his search for alternate guiding principles for his life not just by copious reading but by developing his ideas through his prose. The first major example of this activity of philosophical explication appears with the essay *Study of Thomas Hardy* in 1914. As Lawrence writes this long essay, he begins to formulate new absolutes--man and woman in relation--but the context for this work is still a Christian God-centered universe. He has not yet been able to move outside this Christian framework to elucidate his ideas. Later, after working and reworking the material of *Study of Thomas Hardy*, Lawrence reaches an interim point in the development of his philosophy, but his new world view only comes to fruition after his discovery of the pre-Socratics, and this view receives its first full explication in "The Crown" of 1915.

In the comprehensive Cambridge University Press series of Lawrence's letters, the editors note how the original idea for the book on Thomas Hardy "evolved into 'Le Gai Savaire,' or 'Le Gai Saver'" (Zytaruk and Boulton, *Letters II* 295), a study of Lawrence's ideas and philosophy. Lawrence

would never cling rigidly to one fixed set of principles for long, but allowed his ideas to develop and change as new influences entered his life. "D.H. Lawrence continued to revise his 'philosophy,' and his interim titles were 'The Signal,' 'The Phoenix' and 'Morgenrot'; this work was finally published as 'The Crown' in _The Signature_" (Zytaruk and Bolton, _Letters II_ 295). Lawrence writes to the philosopher Bertrand Russell in March 1915, "I feel very profound about my book 'The Signal'--'Le Gai Saver'--or whatever it is which I am rebeginning" (_Letters II_ 300). And to Lady Ottoline Morrell, "I am doing my philosophish book--called (pro tem) The Signal--or the Phoenix (which?)" (_Letters II_ 303).

Over the winter and spring of 1915, Lawrence works on his philosophy, referring to it periodically in his correspondence. But he still writes from within a Christian framework, basing his writings on his Christian perspective of God, the universe, and the devil: "I cannot help writing about them in my 'philosophy'" (_Letters II_ 307). As yet, Lawrence had not fully formed nor affirmed alternate principles with which to construct his variant view of the universe, the new Word with the forces and driving principles within it. Without these alternate tools, Lawrence makes little headway with his writing. "[T]he time goes by," he writes to Russell, "and I haven't done enough

of the writing . . . all the time I am struggling in the dark" (Letters II 334). But suddenly, on July 7, 1915, Lawrence writes to E.M. Forster, "I left off the philosophy in the middle to think again" (Letters II 361). What triggers Lawrence to stop and think again is his encounter with the ideas of the pre-Socratic philosophers as explicated in John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy (1908). In a state of excitement, Lawrence writes to Bertrand Russell on July 14, 1915: "I have been wrong, much too Christian in my philosophy. These early Greeks have clarified my soul. I must drop all about God" (Letters II 364).

Burnet's book would be the source of the pre-Socratics Lawrence refers to, for, in September 1916, he writes to Dollie Radford: "Has Maitland got Burnet's 'Early Greek Philosophers'? If he has, I should be so glad if he would lend it me--I want to refer to it . . . I remember Margaret was reading it" (Letters II 652). Lawrence was already familiar with Burnet's book and needed to refer to the work again while he was revising Women in Love in 1916. Edward Nehls's Composite Biography provides valuable information in detailing a note from Dr. Muriel Radford, daughter-in-law to one of Lawrence's good friends, Dollie Radford. The Lawrences frequently stayed at the Radfords' cottage, and it would seem that it was here in 1915 that Lawrence discovered

a copy of Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy belonging to Dollie's son, Dr. Maitland Radford. Maitland's wife Muriel writes: "Later, in the spring of 1918, Frieda and Lawrence stayed at the Cottage for several weeks, where Lawrence found Maitland's copy of Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy, mentioned in his letter of 5 September 1916, and appropriated it" (Nehls I: 587). Dollie Radford and her family often stayed at Rackham Cottage on the Meynell estate at Greatham in Sussex, and it is from Greatham, Sussex that all of Lawrence's letters are written during the spring and first half of summer 1915. The initial excited references to the early Greeks begin appearing in Lawrence's letters in mid-July 1915. Doubtless, it was while Lawrence stayed with the Radfords in 1915 that he first came upon Maitland's copy of Burnet and read it for himself. No mention of any other source or reference to the pre-Socratics can be found in any of Lawrence's correspondence during this time. In the letter of July 14, 1915, mentioning the early Greeks to Bertrand Russell, Lawrence quotes five translations of fragments of the sixth century BC philosopher Heraclitus exactly as they appear in Burnet's 1908 second edition of Early Greek Philosophy. Now, with the discovery of the pre-Socratics in the summer of 1915, Lawrence is finally able to explicate and publish his philosophy in a form which satisfies him. This form takes shape as his essay "The

Crown."

A number of critics, including Paul Delany and George Panichas, assert that Burnet's volume of Greek philosophy was, in fact, given to Lawrence by the philosopher Bertrand Russell. "Lawrence's introduction to the pre-Socratic philosophers came in 1915, when Bertrand Russell gave him a copy of John Burnet's _Early Greek Philosophy_" (Panichas, "D.H. Lawrence and the Ancient Greeks" 340). "Russell had lent Lawrence a book that struck him like a mental lightning bolt. The volume bore the innocuous title of _Early Greek Philosophy_ by John Burnet, an Edinburgh professor" (Delany 118). It may seem, at first glance, a logical deduction that, while Lawrence associates and corresponds with a celebrated philosopher, this same thinker would give Lawrence a book on early Greek philosophy, but a closer look at the actual matters of discussion between Lawrence and Russell discourages such an assumption.

As Alldritt notes, Lawrence and Russell originally planned a lecture series in the fall of 1915 to begin a "public campaign to end the war and institute a programme of social renewal in England" (152). Cosmology was not the basis of discussion between Lawrence and Russell but rather politics and social renewal. Their discussions revolved around the governing of man and not around the principles governing the universe. Russell's lectures for this series

of public talks were later published under the title *Why Men Fight*, an area of contemporary social concern for the period. After reading Russell's outline for the proposed series of philosophical lectures that the two were to present together, Lawrence reacted critically, writing, "this which you say is *all social criticism*; it isn't social reconstruction" (*Letters II* 361). Lawrence found Russell too willing to advocate reform within the existing system, the social structure as established by the tradition and beliefs of western Christian civilization. Lawrence writes to Russell in July 1915, "In your lecture on the State, you must criticise the extant *democracy*, the young idea. That is our enemy. This existing phase is now in its collapse" (*Letters II* 365). Lawrence wanted to destroy the existing social institutions, while Russell sought to revise them.

Even in their thought processes and approaches, Lawrence and Russell differed greatly. James Jarrett notes significantly that Lawrence exercised little formal system in his thought, being stronger at assertion and declaration than conclusive logic. "Rather, he argued not in propositions, but in rainbows, phoenixes, crowns, and suns" (Jarrett 179). Lawrence's style could mark him as a symbolist. In her study of Heraclitian influence on Lawrence, Mara Kalnins explains that, for Lawrence, symbols could express actual truths about the universe and give

"coherence and meaning to the universe around us. Mere scientific data about that universe is not enough" (187). Recall that an overemphasis on science is Lawrence's major criticism of the Futurist movement: "[T]hey will only look for the phenomena of the science of physics to be found in human being. They are crassly stupid" (Letters II 183). As the formal logician, Russell would not have found the unverifiable, symbolic approach of the pre-Socratics acceptable. In one of Russell's publications, Religion and Science, he claims that "whatever knowledge is attainable, must be attained by scientific methods; and what science cannot discover, mankind cannot know" (qtd. in Jarrett 174). Since the pre-Socratics did not possess the scientific method, it is doubtful that Russell would give or recommend Burnet's volume to Lawrence. In a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell in 1935, Russell declares, there is "a long line of people, beginning with Heraclitus and ending with Hitler, whose ruling motive is hatred derived from megalomania" (Ron Clark 265). Russell deplored the views of both Lawrence and of the pre-Socratics, as he interpreted them.

What Lawrence found in Burnet prompted a whole new energy and perspective for his philosophy. "I must come out of these early Greek philosophers," writes Lawrence to Lady Ottoline Morrell on July 19, 1915, "I am so sure of what I know, and what is true, now, that I am sure I am stronger,

in the truth, in the knowledge I have, than all the world outside that knowledge. So I am not finally afraid of anything" (Letters II 367). What lay beneath Lawrence's newfound fearless attitude was the validation by the pre-Socratics of ideas that he had himself been nurturing. He found, in their thinking, a rapport with the material world similar to the tie with physical reality that he sought, while still expressing the existence of divine spirit in all things. The pre-Socratics "helped him to define his own cosmology and to articulate his understanding of humanity and the manifestations of God as he saw them revealed in the phenomenal universe" (Kalnins 174). Lawrence was not seeking material explanations for the motions of the universe; he had already rejected the materialist position. He needed a personal philosophy that would allow him to write "from the depth of my religious experience" (Letters II 165). That Lawrence sought a religious rather than a scientific perspective for his philosophy at this time appears obvious through his correspondence with Russell. On July 8, 1915, Lawrence writes with regard to their proposed series of public talks, "don't be angry with my scribbling. But above all, do do these lectures. I must lecture--or preach--on religion--give myself away" (Letters II 361).

The universe and reality as theorized by the

pre-Socratics operates without the influence of the Christian God. This early group of Greek thinkers flourished between approximately 600 and 400 BC, a period prior to the time of Plato and Socrates. The approach of the pre-Socratics to questions of philosophy differs considerably from the dialectical methods of logical argument ascribed to Plato and Socrates. The earlier thinkers have often been described as nature philosophers, for their primary area of concern lay in cosmology. They "attempted to find universal principles which would explain the whole of nature, from the origin and ultimate constituents of the universe to the place of man within it" ("Pre-Socratics" 441). The pre-Socratics' inquiries and theories suggested answers to Lawrence's questioning of reality, his plea to Rev. Reid, "where is the human harmony, where the balance, the order" (Letters I 41).

These early Greeks were among the first to propose an ordering of the universe distinct from any governing mythic origins or anthropomorphism. No mythic beasts or capricious gods were considered responsible for the way the world works. According to the pre-Socratic philosophers, the world operates according to certain fixed principles, and all forces within the universe follow these same patterns. Further qualification should be made here to distinguish among the pre-Socratic philosophers. Burnet's work covers a

significant range of thinkers, beginning with the early Milesian School of Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes. Distinct from this group stands the work of the Pythagoreans, in whom Lawrence showed little interest. He reacted most enthusiastically to the ideas of Heraclitus, and showed interest in the ideas of Empedocles and the symbols of Parmenides. At this point in his career, Lawrence makes no reference to any of the Eleatics or other groups that Burnet deals with. The pre-Socratics did not share either the same cosmologies or epistemologies. Thus, when referring to the influence of the pre-Socratics on Lawrence, one must keep in mind that the ideas affecting Lawrence most emerge from a limited group of these philosophers, primarily the early cosmologists Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Parmenides.

For Heraclitus, reality can be apprehended by our senses, and, because we see reality changing around us, there must be a rational explanation for change. Empedocles held views similar to Heraclitus', but Parmenides claimed, in direct contrast, that reality can only be reached by thought and not by an appeal to the senses. Each philosopher sought to offer a rational, intelligible explanation for reality and change in contrast to the earlier religious or mythical accounts. Many later scientific thinkers scoff at the theories offered by the

pre-Socratics, complaining that this Greek "nature-philosophy lacks two essentials of science: it never developed any method of experiential testing; and in any case its hypotheses were untestable" (Matson 257). But as Wallace Matson also points out, "observation and experiment are futile and misleading if not based on and related to an articulated conceptual scheme" (258). The civilized world at the time of the pre-Socratics had, as yet, no such articulated conceptual scheme on which to test and adapt new theories. The pre-Socratic philosophers were breaking new ground, pulling away from mythic explanations to account for all phenomena, and developing ordered approaches to the actions of the universe.

But while the pre-Socratics sought new systems and order to explain reality, they refused to ascribe purely mechanical or materialistic origins to the universe, as did the later nineteenth-century philosophers such as Darwin and Haeckel. The pre-Socratics were, in general, hylozoists, believing "all objects in the universe are in some literal sense alive" ("Panpsychism" 23). They based their theories on a doctrine that life is, in fact, a property of matter, and the two are inseparable. As Thales, one of the early Greeks, expressed it, "All things are full of gods" (Burnet 48). Some sort of divine soul intermingles in the universe with all things that have life. This hylozoist position

leads to a conception of nature and reality as intrinsically alive and animated because the original substance of the universe has, within itself, life and therefore cause for all motion and change. For Lawrence, the pre-Socratics' assignment of animate spirit to every aspect of reality was a great affirmation of the principle that the body and soul/spirit are one. For Lawrence, we live daily on the earthly plane of physical reality and cannot pretend that an ideal plane of nonsensible reality exists beyond this in the abstracted realms of Plato or the idealized example of the life of Christ. "So long as mankind exists," writes Lawrence, "it must exist in the body" (Study of Thomas Hardy 459).

The work of the pre-Socratics contained principles which Lawrence had already considered. Kalnins notes that by 1914 Lawrence "had envisaged human existence in terms of duality, of creation through opposition" (173). This duality appears most evident in Lawrence's Study of Thomas Hardy: "The two great conceptions, of Law and of Knowledge or Love, are not diverse and accidental, but complementary. They are, in a way, contradictions of each other . . . . And nothing is or can be created save by combined effort of the two principles, Law and Love" (513). Lawrence envisions, much like William Blake in his work "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," that "Without Contraries is no progression."

Some sort of creative friction, created by these contraries, is necessary for the universe to function: "Always the dual wave" (Study of Thomas Hardy 442). In Study of Thomas Hardy, Lawrence criticizes writers like Dostoievsky, Hardy, and Flaubert who "suppressed the context of the Law . . . . These have shown Love in conflict with the Law, and only Death the resultant, no Reconciliation" (513). These writers, Lawrence contends, go against the natural flow of reality in depicting only tragic results from the operation of contraries. Lawrence explains this imbalance in his discussion of the tragedy of the characters of Jude and Sue in Hardy's Jude the Obscure: "And this tragedy is the result of over-development of one principle of human life at the expense of the other; an over-balancing; a laying of all the stress on the Male . . . a denying, a blaspheming against the Female" (Study of Thomas Hardy 509). For Lawrence, these writers' tendency to emphasize only a deathly outcome of conflict and tension is false and misleading. He views the creative principles of life as contraries that must exist in a balance.

How pleased must Lawrence have been, then, to see this same view of reality as a balance of contraries expressed in Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy by the pre-Socratics, specifically Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Empedocles. Anaximander, of the earlier Milesian school of pre-Socratic

thinkers, "was struck, it would seem, by the opposition and strife between the things which go to make up the world . . . . These opposites were at war, and any predominance of one over the other was an 'injustice' for which they must make reparation to one another" (Burnet 56). Anaximander observed the physical reality around him, a reality he saw governed by the operation of contraries. For Heraclitus, the universe functions by the government of a law of strife in that matter is always made up of two equal parts "drawn in opposite directions," and this opposite tension "keeps things together," maintaining "an equilibrium which can only be disturbed temporarily and within certain limits" (Burnet 184). This law of strife, then, for Lawrence and Heraclitus underlies the hidden attunement of the universe. For Heraclitus, this balance and attunement of elements actually constitutes the concept of "justice": "[S]trife is justice, and that all things come into being and pass away through strife" (Burnet 151). The law of contraries as the proper order and balance for the universe appears also in the work of Empedocles, who claims that the forces of Love and Strife explain motion within the universe: "The function of Love is to produce union; that of Strife, to break it up again" (Burnet 268).

The pre-Socratics sought in their theories of opposites to account for change, to rationally account for and

reconcile how and why change occurs. Much of what attracted Lawrence to these thinkers was the idea that changeable reality provides a means to an understanding of truth. Truth is not relegated strictly to the realm of the ideal, as with Plato, but has a basis and an intelligible rationale in physical reality. As Burnet points out, the early Greeks "supposed themselves to be dealing with ultimate reality. That was inevitable before the rise of logic" (82). Lawrence believes that truth is attainable through an understanding of physical reality, not an appeal to a distant ideal. In addition, he sought to explain the natural order of the universe by a truth which reached beyond the doctrine of Christianity. Here, in the pre-Socratics, lay fundamental principles about the order of the universe established long before the imposition of Christianity on western civilization. Lawrence found these principles satisfying because they affirmed and expanded on his own ideas. His satisfaction with the pre-Socratics stems from his belief in their close ties with the natural, concrete world versus man's later alienation into the abstract: "Thus the ancient mind could have functioned in union with its physical and cosmic environment in ways that have been lost to peoples accustomed to the subsequent cause-effect, subject-object dualism" (Gutierrez 8).

Lawrence used the affirmation of his principle of

duality to bring an unusual insight to his understanding of Christian theology. In a letter of October 1915, he explains his new understanding of the relation between God the Father and Christ the Son: "not a relation of love, which is specific and relative, but an absolute relation, of opposition and attraction both" (_Letters II_ 408). As Lawrence applies this concept of the opposition of fundamental elements to the Christian doctrine, he concludes:

> Can you not see that if the relation between Father and Son, in the Christian theology, were only _love_, then how could they even feel love unless they were separate and different, and if they are divinely different, does this not imply that they are divine oppositions, and hence the relation _implied_ is of eternal opposition, the relation _stated_ is eternal attraction, love. (_Letters II_ 408)

Thus does Lawrence rewrite Christian dogma to fit his interpretation of a pre-Socratic perspective. The stated relation between Father and Son as love is actually a misrepresentation. In Lawrence's mind, God and Christ are, in actuality and of necessity, in opposition.

Other principles and ideas of the pre-Socratics as expressed in Burnet struck sympathetic chords in Lawrence. Some of the fragments of Heraclitus concern the weak character of the common man. "[O]ther men know not what they are doing when awake, even as they forget what they do in sleep" (Burnet 146), writes Heraclitus. "For what thought

or wisdom have they?" he continues in another fragment; "They follow the poets and take the crowd as their teacher, knowing not that there are many bad and few good. For even the best of them choose one thing above all others, immortal glory among mortals, while most of them are glutted like beasts" (Burnet 154). Heraclitus' views on government and the common man accord closely with Lawrence's own ideas about mob mentality and democracy. In his letters to Bertrand Russell and Lady Ottoline Morrell, written just after his first reading of Burnet, Lawrence expresses his political viewpoint in terms not unlike those of the fragments of Heraclitus. He writes to Lady Ottoline, "I don't believe in the democratic electorate. The working man is not fit to elect the ultimate government of the country. And the holding of office shall not rest upon the Choice of the mob: it shall be almost immune from them" (Letters II 367). And to Bertrand Russell: "And the idea is, that every man shall vote according to his understanding, and that the highest understanding must dictate for the lower understandings" (Letters II 366). For Lawrence, as for Heraclitus, the common man was fit to neither govern nor to elect those who would govern overall. In Lawrence's first letter referring to the pre-Socratics, he writes to Russell about the common working class, quoting Fragment 111 of Heraclitus: "For what thought or wisdom have they? . . .

most of them are glutted like beasts" (Burnet 154 and _Letters II_ 364-365).

Lawrence does not stand alone in having found affinities and support for his theories in the pre-Socratics. In his study of the pre-Socratic philosophers and Freud and Jung, Garfield Tourney indicates, "there is some evidence suggesting that the ideas of both Freud and Jung were influenced by these ancient Greeks, perhaps even directly" (109). Freud refers specifically to Empedocles' basic principles of Love and Strife as "nominally and functionally the same as the two primal instincts postulated by psychoanalysis" (Tourney 109). In addition, "Jung in his broad scholarly studies, makes frequent mention of several pre-Socratic philosophers, particularly Empedocles, Pythagoras, and Heraclitus" (Tourney 110).

The pre-Socratics made an impression on other significant thinkers through the centuries. Nietzsche discovered material for discussion in their writings; he felt the early philosophers "picture life in a richer and more complex way" (qtd. in Tejera 35). Nietzsche considered the pre-Socratics' approach to philosophy as quite different from the later analytic positions. In commenting on Heraclitus, Nietzsche notes that "reason in the Archaic age had not yet come to mean _only_ abstract or calculative

reasoning" (Tejera 43). For Lawrence, this comment would apply appropriately to both his own view of the pre-Socratics and his ideas about the role of reason, in that reason must be somehow grounded in concrete, physical reality. Schneider comments that Nietzsche argues, "Christianity signifies a will to nothingness, a will against life" (Consciousness of D.H. Lawrence 60), thus supporting Lawrence's view that Christianity leads only to a dead end. Lawrence was already familiar with works by Nietzsche for a number of years prior to his reading of Burnet. In considering the pre-Socratics, Lawrence was not simply resurrecting the work of some ancient and obscure philosophers but rather touching on a stream of thought considered by various thinkers. As Tourney notes, "In the pre-Socratic philosophers of ancient Greece, one finds a wealth of scientific hypotheses as well as metaphysical formulations, which appear correlated, directly or indirectly with the conceptualizations of current scientific and philosophic thought" (109). The works of several of the pre-Socratics were the first to suggest atomism and evolution as interpretations of nature (Tourney 109). Moreover, it would seem that Heraclitus' and Empedocles' division into dynamic oppositions carries relevance when discussing principles of human psychology.

"[H]e was a rather arrogant and aristocratic person,

and his peculiar writing style--aphoristic, obscure, and replete with apparent contradictions--is often attributed to his deliberate desire to obscure his views from 'the many'" (Hyland 160). Such a description may seem to many readers to be a pointedly accurate account of Lawrence and his writing, but the quotation actually applies to Heraclitus. Many critics have accused Lawrence of producing obscure, contradictory writings, a point of criticism he shares with Heraclitus. Similarities of style, thought, and presentation connect Lawrence with this ancient Greek thinker. In his History of Greek Philosophy, W.K.C. Guthrie notes that Heraclitus used a prophetic rather than dialectial mode of expression, with imagery and double meaning being a mark of his style (413-414). Lawrence would find the prophetic mode of Heraclitus very satisfying, as many of his own works are written in just such a style. This style results in some criticism of Lawrence for hectoring his audience rather than seeking to convince them by an appeal to reason or emotion. He writes as though his premises were already proven, inspired revelations which require no justification only proclamation. When Bertrand Russell spoke of Lawrence in 1915, he noted, "He is like Ezekiel or some other Old Testament prophet, prophesying" (Gathorne-Hardy 276). Lawrence preaches in his writing. "Heraclitus' language definitely puts him on the side of the

inspired: poets, prophets and the teachers of mystery-religions who like him spoke in symbols not to be understood by the _profani_" (Guthrie 415). Recall Jarrett's observation that Lawrence "argued not in propositions, but in rainbows, phoenixes, crowns, and suns" (179). Lawrence meant to deliver--or preach--his public lectures on religion, using images and symbols, rather than matching the logical, social discourses of Russell.

Other interesting points of similarity exist between these two writers which would serve to attract Lawrence to the writings of the pre-Socratics, Heraclitus in particular. Just as Heraclitus complained of men's blindness to the inner significance of their own nature and everything around them, so too did Lawrence seek to alert men to the wonder of their very selves: "It needs that a man shall know the natural law of his own being, then that he shall seek out the law of the female, with which to join himself as a complement" (_Study of Thomas Hardy_ 515). Man must know himself before he can begin to know others. Burnet discusses how Heraclitus' arguments "were not to be understood in a logical sense" (160). The theories of the pre-Socratics predated the strict structure of logical deduction introduced by Aristotle and the dialectics of Plato and Socrates. Lawrence would find this lack of strict deductive logic an appealing element of the early Greeks,

for logic exists in the realm of the abstract. Critics often call Lawrence to account for his failure to adhere to a rigorous structure of deductive reasoning. In his study "D.H. Lawrence and the Ancient Greeks," George Panichas concludes that "Lawrence was a modern Heraclitus, except that he had the dialect of the English Midlands" (341).

Lawrence felt strong affinities with the pre-Socratics because their ideas accorded with other philosophies and approaches outside of recognised Christianity. Lawrence had begun reading in oriental thought and religion before finding Burnet (Burwell 83) and felt some sympathy with these eastern ideas. Donald Gutierrez observes, "Some remarkable similarities of idea and statement may be found between the early Taoist thinkers and the Milesian and Ionian philosophers. Many of the declarations attributed, for instance, to Anaximander and Pythagoras could be applied to Tao" (9). Each source, either Greek or Taoist, speaks in the same sort of aphoristic voice, producing for Lawrence images and symbols that he felt expressed truth. Donald Schneider concurs with the view that reading the pre-Socratics helped Lawrence affirm principles he began developing while in contact with other approaches to reality and the universe. When Lawrence read the Greek philosophers, "he found that their ideas could be wedded to the insights of Herbert Spencer and Schopenhauer, so that

the opposition of fire and water, of dry and moist, of day and night, assumed a kind of scientific validity for Lawrence, not just a poetic coherence" (Consciousness of D.H. Lawrence 66). Schneider considers that the insights of the scientific materialists conjoined with the principles of the pre-Socratics gave Lawrence sufficient support to consider his new world view as one expressing a true picture of reality--a picture in which symbols such as the lion and the unicorn in "The Crown" not only represented, but themselves contained, the creative contraries necessary for the proper functioning of the universe.

The validity Lawrence felt belonged to this viewing of the universe in symbols, a kind of symbolic seeing, caused problems for his critics and readers because Lawrence would sometimes demand equal value for both the literal and symbolic truth of his writing. That the lion and the unicorn in "The Crown" must always fight remained true for Lawrence on both the literal and figurative levels. They must fight because it is their nature and because they represent the friction between the forces of opposition in the universe. Kalnins notes that Lawrence relished Early Greek Philosophy for the wealth of metaphors and symbols it provided, "especially that part of reality which is inaccessible to logic and discursive language, that is, the realm of inner subjective experience, the life of feeling

and emotion" (175). That Lawrence needed access to symbols which would provide a door to this realm of inner experience becomes obvious when one considers his insistence on the existence of a form of knowledge in the blood, a view expressed by Empedocles. Burnet explains Empedocles' position: "The chief seat of perception was the blood, in which the four elements are most evenly mixed and especially the blood near the heart" (288). As Empedocles expresses it in a remaining fragment of his work, "for the blood round the heart is the thought of men" (Burnet 254). In his essay "The Crown," Lawrence uses the metaphor of the blood to express in a literal sense how one may attain knowledge: "It is the way of the blood, the way of power. Down the road of the blood . . . I come to the Almighty God" (377). Lawrence claims to be able to come to a knowledge of power through a knowledge in the blood. He further explains this concept in a letter to Bertrand Russell in December 1915: "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" (Letters II 470). So, for Lawrence, one gains knowledge through the usual channels of the brain and nerves, but another method of attaining knowledge exists, by some means of a blood-consciousness which readers might relate to as the proverbial gut-reaction or intuitive feeling that seems to

go against the voice of reason.

In the same way as many criticize Lawrence, critics scoff at the theories of the pre-Socratics for expressing their principles in such organic, concrete terms which many deem unscientific. But to describe an element as warm or moist, as did these early Greeks, is to still use an abstraction, which is the parlance of modern science. For what is "warm," how do we see it or describe it? Modern science has, of course, developed far more complex and technical means to express these abstractions, but we still cannot actually see "warm" or know it is true. Lawrence simply tried to express what he believed to be true in terms meaningful to him. Because these same terms proved meaningful to the pre-Socratics, Lawrence believed that his symbols carried real truth value. In any case, to apply the criteria of modern science to the interpretation of Greek philosophy or to a literary work of Lawrence's seems a misplaced exercise in criticism, as neither Lawrence nor the Greeks sought to work within standards dictated by science.

"[T]he early Greek philosophers confirmed much of what Lawrence had already accepted" (Schneider, *Consciousness of D. H. Lawrence* 101). Part of what Lawrence believed was that human life had come to depend too much on the abstractions of scientific thought. George Panichas notes that Lawrence liked the pre-Socratics because they seemed

very similar to the early culture of the Etruscans, concerned with a way of life based on the logic of action versus the logic of reason, a life based on physical reality before the intrusion of what Lawrence saw as the "lies and abstractions of Plato's ideals" (Panichas, Adventure in Consciousness 181). Lawrence felt the Etruscans had not "the slight element of abstraction, of inhumanity . . . [t]hey are just dancing a dance with the elixir of life" ("Making Love to Music" 164-165). Lawrence saw the Etruscans as a culture accepting of human imperfections in physical reality. "[W]henever art or any expression becomes perfect, it becomes a lie. For it is only perfect by reason of abstraction from that context by which and in which it exists as truth" (Study of Thomas Hardy 475). Because of his dislike of abstraction and the ideal over concrete, physical reality, Lawrence felt no affinity with the work of Plato. Lawrence had long been exposed to Plato's writings, having made numerous references to the philosopher in his Study of Thomas Hardy in 1914. "Lawrence saw in the philosophy of Plato an escapism that ended in the annihilation of all vital human experience through an ecstatic flight to some celestial region" (Panichas, "D.H. Lawrence and the Ancient Greeks" 338). Beyond the work of the early pre-Socratics, as outlined in Burnet's book, Lawrence no longer felt a rapport with the philosophy of the

ancient Greeks. "Plato was the real end of Greece," complains Lawrence, for with Plato came "the Abstraction, the geometric conception of life" (*Study of Thomas Hardy* 458).

## CHAPTER 4: PROSE BEGINNINGS: "THE CROWN"

Upon his encounter with the pre-Socratic world view, Lawrence felt his personal philosophy take solid shape. Once his ideas received validation and he believed in their strength, he actively sought to publish them. The consequent result of his effort at philosophical explication appeared in the fall of 1915 as a long essay called "The Crown," in the journal _The Signature_. Lawrence's contemporaries and friends remained baffled by both the approach and the content of the work: "Already it had begun to seem to me," writes David Garnett, "that [Lawrence] had taken a wrong turning, for how could the author of _The White Peacock_ and _Sons and Lovers_ write such turgid nonsense as The Lion and The Crown in Murry's _The Signature_?" (qtd. in Nehls 302). Richard Aldington notes, "'The Crown' itself is a fascinating little book written in a style so symbolical and fantastic as to suggest the wildest rhetoric of Ruskin, de Quincey's dream figures and even poor Gérard's mad Aurélia" (164). Most found "The Crown" to be impenetrable. Even today, the essay receives somewhat puzzled attention. Critic P.N. Furbank refers to "The Crown" as an instance of Lawrence's epistemology, but finds Lawrence's thought as a whole in the essay difficult to grasp (148). In his criticism, Furbank includes a comment, attributed to Philip

Hobsbaum, that overall, "The Crown" is somehow "curiously contextless" (145).

Readers and critics struggle with "The Crown" because they lack any suitable context with which to make sense of this exposition in prose of Lawrentian principles. Part of the problem of interpretation stems from the difficulty Lawrence has expressing himself as a philosopher, eschewing conventional philosophical terms, definitions, and procedures when explicating his doctrine. "At the back of every philosophy is a vision, but the philosopher's claim is that the vision has been corrected--checked for internal consistency and for consistency with the reports derived from other modes of experience than his own. Lawrence could make no such claim, what he offers is a Weltanschauung, his own vision of life" (Hough 218). Lawrence's vision is particular to his own experience of life and, as such, can be difficult for another to penetrate and appreciate to any great extent. The fact that Lawrence's vision changes as his life changes only compounds the difficulty in comprehension. Tools for interpretation which may have been quite serviceable when applied to his earlier works no longer serve. Over the length of his career, his writings contain various and differing terminologies and symbolisms (Hough 219); therefore, to interpret his work, the critic must keep abreast of the changing language and vision of

Lawrence.

"The Crown," as Graham Hough points out, demonstrates a widening of Lawrence's metaphysical range (220). Michael Ross concurs with Hough here, seeing "The Crown" and its context as "almost certainly, an elaboration of the 'philosophy' [Lawrence] had been trying out on Russell and Lady Ottoline Morrell during the summer of 1915 ("Myth of Friendship" 301). The striking development for Lawrence during the summer of 1915 was his reading of the pre-Socratics and finding the close affinity his views shared with these early, pre-Christian thinkers. This discovery clarified his perspective on his personal philosophy, providing validation and further context for his new cosmology. The critic must turn to the pre-Socratics to find the underlying principles and assumptions that inform "The Crown." The ideas of Heraclitus and Empedocles and the symbols of Parmenides provide the context through which Lawrence's essay can be read and made, at least to some degree, intelligible. Daniel J. Schneider observes, "In writing the essay, Lawrence was obviously drawing heavily on . . . John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy" (Consciousness of D.H. Lawrence 101). David Gordon notes how, in "The Crown," Lawrence "fused bits of pre-Socratic philosophy and romantic tradition into a picture of life" ("D.H. Lawrence's Dual Myth of Origin" 83). Lawrence certainly did fuse bits

of philosophy, joining together views and symbols of diametrically opposed pre-Socratics, Heraclitus and Parmenides. Whether he knew or cared that conjoining these ideas results in inconsistencies remains an open question.

Why did Lawrence feel compelled to publish his vision of life? What prompted him to take the trouble of actually helping to start up a small journal, The Signature, and peddling subscriptions to his friends simply to ensure that his picture of life could reach others? Lawrence writes to Lady Cynthia Asquith on September 5, 1915, about The Signature, which he plans to publish in conjunction with John Middleton Murry: "You must subscribe and find one or two people who care about the real living truth of things . . . . I am going to do the preaching--sort of philosophy--the beliefs by which one can reconstruct the world" (Letters II 385-386). Middleton Murry and Katherine Mansfield were the two other contributors to the journal, he providing articles about man as a social being and she writing short stories under the pseudonym Matilda Berry. Lawrence believed his new rhetoric, published serially in six parts in The Signature as "The Crown" could actually effect change. His friend Richard Aldington writes how Lawrence came to believe his own words were action and could change the course of the war and of the world (158). Once the publication venture was launched, Lawrence mentions, at

least twice, his hope that influential statesman and former Prime Minister Arthur Balfour would read the essay: "It may mean something to him, in truth" (Letters II 399). One of Lawrence's primary aims, then, was to publish his philosophical work on the nature of man and the world in the hopes of revivifying western civilization and ending the destructive course of the war. Lawrence felt his work would explicate the true nature of the fundamental forces in the world and in man, and, once others understood these forces, they would be able to change society. These principles would allow individuals to reconstruct the world along the lines of "the real living truth," instead of "christian religiosity" which is, in Lawrence's terms, "only a muddiness" (Letters II 365). Understanding of these principles was to be afforded to mankind by means of Lawrence's philosophy.

However, despite Lawrence's high hopes, The Signature proved to be unpopular and short-lived, with only three issues appearing in 1915, and, consequently, only the first three parts of "The Crown" were published. Few found his attempts to replace the "muddiness" of Christianity successful; rather, they considered the explication of his solution as considerably more turbid than his view of the problem. The remaining three sections of the essay finally appear, in 1925, in Lawrence's Reflections on the Death of a

Porcupine. Emile Delavenay suggests that the last three parts of the essay were actually written much later in Lawrence's career, and, thus, they bear a greater relation to different influences in the later part of his life (D.H. Lawrence 328). But in a letter to Lady Asquith on October 2, 1915, Lawrence indicates that he has "done my 6 papers" (Letters II 405) for The Signature already. More than likely, Lawrence, with his strong penchant for extensive revision of his work, would have considerably revised and reworked the last three parts of the essay before their appearance in Reflections. In such an instance, the last half of the essay would certainly reflect additional influences from later in his life that are not pre-Socratic. Bearing this qualification in mind, it would seem that the first three parts of the essay project more strongly the influence of the pre-Socratic doctrine Lawrence explored in 1915.

So, the problem of establishing a context for "The Crown" need not be as difficult as some suggest; however, a clear understanding of Lawrence's vision of life still proves problematical. In her study Language and Self in D.H. Lawrence, Diane Bonds characterizes the difficulty of understanding "The Crown": "So baffling are the transformations of the metaphors in 'The Crown,' at points, that one is tempted to read it as an allegory of

nonreferentiality, that is, any attempt to read it referentially is repeatedly thwarted by Lawrence's shifting terms" (27). Examining Lawrence's terms within their recently formulated pre-Socratic philosophical context may still only provide a partial view of the author's view of life, but one still accessible to the investigator.

As a sidelight to the question of the context of "The Crown" is one area that merits attention, the influence of the world war, well underway in 1915. As Michael Ross notes, "The Crown" "has little overt relevance to the war itself but substantial bearing on what Lawrence considered its ultimate spiritual causes" ("Mythology of Friendship" 289). Never before had so many nations engaged in horrendous conflict on such a large scale as in World War I. Lawrence tries, in his essay, to analyse the principles underlying man's actions in this conflict, "to lay bare the deep unconscious motives acting in the war--the unconscious lust for cruelty, destruction, and death" (Schneider, _Consciousness of D.H. Lawrence_ 100). Lawrence felt the war brought out the very worst in men and women, and he hoped to use his philosophy as the basis to construct a new society built on a new understanding, a new world view, one which would never again delude people and impel them into a state of war. "The Crown" could serve as the prose manifesto for Lawrence's Rananim, "my pet scheme. I want to gather

together about twenty souls and sail away from this world of war and squalor and found a little colony" (<u>Letters II</u> 259).

Lawrence opens his philosophical essay by depicting the principles of duality and opposition symbolically in the forms of a lion and a unicorn fighting beneath a crown. But why do they fight? Lawrence answers, "Is not the unicorn necessary to the very existence of the lion, is not each opposite kept in stable equilibrium by the opposition of the other?" ("The Crown" 366). In positing this view, Lawrence, in effect, paraphrases the law of strife governing the universe proposed by the philosopher Heraclitus. Recall that Heraclitus claimed matter is always made up of two equal parts "drawn in opposite directions" in an "opposite tension" (Burnet 184). The opposite tension maintains a balance, an equilibrium among elements which can be disturbed to only a limited extent. Because Lawrence believed that both the natures of the world and of man share similar characteristics, his principle of opposition or necessary strife applies universally to forces within the cosmos, light and darkness or good and evil; to forces between individuals, men and women; and to forces within the psyche of the individual, the lust for wealth versus the desire to share with others. The tension of opposition is vital, "[f]or we are two opposites which exist by virtue of our inter-opposition. Remove the opposition and there is

collapse" ("The Crown" 368). In one of the remaining fragments of Heraclitus' works, the early philosopher observes, "Homer was wrong in saying: 'Would that strife might perish from among gods and men!' He did not see that he was praying for the destruction of the universe; for if his prayer were heard, all things would pass away" (Burnet 150).

The elements which must be held in this creative tension in "The Crown" are polarised between the symbols of the lion and the unicorn. The lion embodies the flesh developing "in splendour and glory out of the prolific darkness" ("The Crown" 369). The lion is the body, the physical, the darkness, the unconscious, and the will to power. But these elements do not rest in a static state; they move, "travelling towards the wise goddess, the white light, the Mind" ("The Crown" 369), or in other words the elements represented by the unicorn. The unicorn, in its turn, strives towards the lion. The lion and the unicorn, the flesh and the spirit: "They are equally perfect, equally supreme, the one adhering to the infinite darkness of the beginning, the other adhering to the infinite light of the end" ("The Crown" 370). The beginning and the end, the two opposites are "the eternal night and everlasting day" ("The Crown" 368). Stability in the universe is maintained by the existence of the dual polarised elements. As Burnet

interprets Heraclitus, each form of matter exists as a measure: "Man is subject to a certain oscillation in his 'measures' of fire and water, and this gives rise to the alternations of sleeping and waking, life and death" (169). Thus, although a measure of "fire" may be lost in a change or oscillation, no vacuum results because the same amount of "water" replaces it. This process continues for each change, so a constant balance remains, despite the movement in the measures of the opposites. Change results in a healthy balance. In just such a way do the lion and the unicorn in Lawrence's essay experience periodic oscillations in their measures; part two of "The Crown" is entitled "The Lion beat the Unicorn And drove him out of town" (374). And thus, in the fluctuation of the measures, night follows day, or physical lust overcomes spiritual quiet for a time. Overall, however, a relatively stable state exists as the measures alternate but are kept united in a harmony of opposing tension.

Lawrence stresses that his view differs from the perspective of Christian love, wherein love as an element is to reign supreme: "It is wrong to try to make the lion lie down with the lamb. This is the supreme sin, the unforgivable blasphemy of which Christ spoke. This is the creating of nothingness, the bringing about, or the striving to bring about the nihil which is pure meaninglessness"

("The Crown" 373). For it is only "when the opposition is complete on either side, then there is perfection" ("The Crown" 370). Thus, the idea of a necessary balance in the universe emerges, for the "lion and the unicorn are not fighting for the Crown" ("The Crown" 371), but rather beneath it. The crown represents the balance, the relation governing the struggle. If either the lion or the unicorn were to triumph, or if their struggle were to cease, then chaos or nothingness would result as the critical balance is lost. George Zytaruk concludes that, in Lawrence's mind, Christians believe the Absolute lies with sacrifice in a struggle, while, in actuality, the Absolute is the clash itself (127).

"The Crown," then, expands on the theory of opposition Lawrence introduced in Study of Thomas Hardy. The supreme relation he expressed earlier now moves from the limited scope of that held between man and woman to encompass cosmic principles within the entire universe. But now, in "The Crown," he drops the element of the Reconciliation, opting instead for the state of balanced tension as the optimum goal. In "The Crown," Lawrence presents his theories outside of a Christian framework. The symbols--the lion, the unicorn, and the crown--he chooses for the essay are not entirely new, comprising as they do part of the British coat of arms, but they are, unfortunately, understood in a

different context by most. For example, critic Graham Hough suggests that the lion and the unicorn fight _for_ the crown of victory, but also, at the same time, the crown serves as a symbol of eternal balance (226). In this instance, Hough has himself introduced the contradiction and confusion in the interpretation of Lawrence's essay. Western civilization conditions people to think of a struggle as having victory and vanquishing the opposition as its object or end. Wars are fought to be won, sides are taken so that one may triumph over the other. But Lawrence clearly states, "The crown is not the prize of either combatant. It is the _raison d'être_ of both. It is the absolute within the fight" ("The Crown" 373). The crown is the unifying balance or equilibrium between the opposing elements. Conflict, in the form of political tension or competition, is inevitable, but armed conflict is not. Recognizing this inevitability can lead one to seek ways of working constructively within the limits of the struggle, rather than using bigger bombs or guns in a vain effort to eliminate the tension. Glossing over important details like this last, as does Hough in suggesting the crown will be the fruit of victory, invites critical misinterpretation of the text.

Bonds's concern about the nonreferentiality within "The Crown" stems from Lawrence's having changed his standards of reference to differ from his earlier ones common to the

conventional Christian reader. "So we have to learn a new kind of language" to read "The Crown," says critic Mark Kinkead-Weekes, "respond to a new kind of symbolism, very different from anything in Study of Thomas Hardy or in The Rainbow" (397). To use the language of the modern critical theorist, one must assert that, in the essay, Lawrence does not refer to the intertext common to most readers, and, thus, referential failure ensues when the reader cannot make sense of "The Crown" based on appeals to his standard framework of reference, which is alien to Lawrence's context. In suggesting that the crown serves as both a victory prize and a symbol of eternal balance, Hough does not seem to realize that he tries to force the symbol of the crown to carry the weight of two contradictory meanings based on two standards of reference, a Christian and a pre-Socratic. Little wonder that readers, perplexed by their first consideration of "The Crown," would be further confused and frustrated by such misleading critical commentary.

Within the essay itself, the symbol of the crown as the balance or point of relation doubtless arises from the symbolic terms of Parmenides' theory or view of the cosmos, wherein he refers to the heavenly bodies as crowns, "made up of light and darkness. That which surrounds them all was solid like a wall, and under it is a fiery crown . . . the

central circle of the mixed crowns is the cause of movement and becoming to all the rest" (qtd. in Burnet 215). The central circle would express the supreme relation that governs the motion of all the other elements in the universe. Parmenides holds that the mixed crowns are made of light and darkness, and Delavenay notes how Lawrence equates the lion with night and power and the unicorn with love and day (D.H. Lawrence 329). Now, although Lawrence seems to appropriate Parmenides' terminology here, he does not go on to illustrate a Parmenidean world view in which change is merely an illusion. In "The Crown," Lawrence weds the terminology of Parmenides with the substantive views of Empedocles and Heraclitus. This fusion of contrasting principles results in some disturbing tensions later in Women in Love. Love and power (hate in the 1915 edition) in Lawrence's essay can be equated with Empedocles' explanation of the presence of Love and Strife: "And these things never cease continually changing places, at one time all uniting in one through Love, at another each borne in different directions by the repulsion of Strife" (Burnet 241). And in "The Crown," Lawrence writes, "Love and Power, light and darkness, these are the temporary conquests of one infinite by the other" (370).

In "The Crown," Lawrence makes several references to the flowing of two streams and the flux of corruption (370,

383-384), while Heraclitus' basic doctrine insists on the universe being in a constant state of flux, with reality being at once many and one (Burnet 159), and Empedocles' view insists on the immortal streams of Love and Strife (Burnet 246). For Heraclitus, "reality is like an ever-flowing stream . . . nothing is ever at rest for a moment" (Burnet 162). Heraclitus, like Lawrence, considers observation and perception to be the ways to knowledge, and, because man sees all things as being in flux, no permanent state of being exists, only a flexible state of becoming or process. "We step and do not step into the same rivers; we are and are not" (Burnet 153). But Heraclitus also saw an internal harmony of intention in the flux: a Logos, a divine principle of unity and cause of orderly change. "God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, surfeit and hunger; but he takes various shapes" (Burnet 149).

Lawrence accepts Heraclitus' view that life and the universe are composed of a flowing stream of change. The lion as darkness and the unicorn as light stand against each other: "And there is no reconciliation, save in negation. From the present, the stream flows in opposite directions, back to the past and on to the future" ("The Crown" 370). Just as Heraclitus considers the conflict of opposing tensions between the polarised elements to be the unifying harmony in the order of the universe, "there is no One

without the Many, and no Many without the One. The world is at once one and many, and it is just the 'opposite tension' of the Many that constitutes the unity of the One" (Burnet 159); Lawrence declares the crown above the combatants to be the supreme relation, "This holy spirit between the opposite divinities, this is the Absolute made visible between the two infinities, the Timelessness into which are assumed the two Eternities" ("The Crown" 373).

Part three of "The Crown" is entitled "The Flux of Corruption," but in this section Lawrence discusses the flux of creation as well as the flux of corruption. "The flux is temporal. It is only the perfect meeting, the perfect interpenetration into oneness, the kiss, the blow, the two-in-one, that is timeless and absolute" ("The Crown" 383). Man and his ego are merely cohesions "in the flux of time" ("The Crown" 384). But this cohesion will break down with the atoms returning to the flux of the universe: "The soul that has not come into being has no being for ever" ("The Crown" 384). There is no permanent being, only mere changes in the flux, process and becoming. The flux of changing reality appears prominently with Heraclitus' cosmology. Burnet notes how Heraclitus "appears to have worked out the details of the perpetual flux" (163), while, in one of his fragments (number 39), Heraclitus describes the flowing stream or flux of change: "Cold things become

warm, and what is warm cools; what is wet dries, and the parched is moisted" (Burnet 150).

The fragments of Empedocles refer to "a soft, immortal stream of blameless Love" (Burnet 246), which rushes in to replace a flowing out of a stream of Strife. The alternating streams of opposites cause temporary changes in the status of the polarized elements, like Heraclitus' oscillations in the measures. "[T]hose things become mortal which had been immortal before, those things were mixed that had been unmixed, each changing its path" (Burnet 246). Lawrence's point is that this alternation of opposite elements via the Absolute, or harmonising relation between them, is what is so vital. For if the creative tension is absent and man follows only the flux of creation--light--or only the flux of corruption--dark--rather than living with the creative strife, then, the individual will never reach the consummation necessary to give birth to the being of the soul. "The soul does not come into being at birth. The soul comes into being in the midst of life" ("The Crown" 384). The danger comes in "the flowing-apart of the two streams" ("The Crown" 388). The streams must flow one towards the other; the lion and the unicorn must strain toward each other: "This is the life of man. In him too the tide sweeps together towards the utter consummation, the consummation with the darkness, the consummation with the

light, flesh and spirit, one culminating crisis, when man passes into timelessness and absoluteness" ("The Crown" 376).

For Lawrence, then, the two streams in a tension together lead to this ultimate passing away, a letting go of the old temporal being and a coming into a new awareness and a new state of being with the birth of the soul, once flesh and spirit achieve the necessary balance. Now Lawrence expresses these concepts in symbolic and metaphoric terms only, making it difficult for the reader to understand just how this desired state and new birth can be achieved. Presumably, the theory will feel right when tested against the intuition, as Lawrence does with his own beliefs. The application of intuition rather than intellection needs to be the deciding factor in accepting Lawrence's view. His theory must be taken on faith, for he will not offer sound logic to support it. The "absolute timelessness and absoluteness" reached in the "culminating crisis" bears no relation to the principles of Heraclitus or Empedocles. This aspect may stem from Parmenides' view that reality is actually a permanent state of being, with the change visible to our senses being merely an illusion. Thus, in Lawrence's new world view, once man understands the true nature of the universe, he understands reality as an absolute state of being, not a changing state of becoming. If this is so,

then Lawrence tries to conjoin two contradictory positions in fusing Heraclitus' cosmology with Parmenides'. But, in his other novels, The Trespasser and The Rainbow for example, Lawrence's characters often achieve a sense of ultimate passing away through sexual union. Lawrence, then, may be using his earlier description of an extremely heightened state to demonstrate the positive value of the state of balance in his new ideology. Recall how in Study of Thomas Hardy, man and woman in relationship expressed the absolute value in the universe, so perhaps in "The Crown," the absolute will now be expressed in the terminology used to explicate Lawrence's earlier conception of the ultimate. Since Lawrence makes very little use of Parmenides' substantive concepts outside of the symbolic terms, the latter explanation seems the more likely.

How would this new rhetoric create for Lawrence a new understanding in the minds of individuals? He ties his symbolic representations into the actual events of the war: "So that now, in Europe, both the lion and the unicorn are gone mad, each with a crown tumbled on his bound-in head" ("The Crown" 371). Lawrence suggests that each element or faction in the war has come to see itself as the absolute in a state of extreme self-consciousness: "Now the unicorn of virtue and virgin spontaneity has got the Crown slipped over the eyes, like a circle of utter light, and has gone mad

with the extremity of light: whilst the lion of power and splendour, its own Crown of supreme night settled down upon it, roars in an agony of imprisoned darkness" ("The Crown" 371). Each polarized element is isolated; the unifying harmony is lost, as each faction remains conscious of only itself as the absolute, the supreme. In just such a way, claims Lawrence, did the nations of Europe lose sight of the necessary creative tension and competition between them. Each side in the war had come to view itself as the absolute right, and neither side could acknowledge the necessity of the continued existence of the nations which stood in opposition. According to Heraclitus and Empedocles, the tension between opposing elements, ideas, or principles is what necessarily keeps the universe in balance. "The 'strife of opposites' is really an 'attunement' . . . . From this it follows that wisdom is not a knowledge of many things, but the perception of the underlying unity of the warring opposites" (Burnet 158). In Lawrence's view, once mankind acknowledged and lived in accordance with this fundamental unity, individuals would become newborn, no longer susceptible to the impulse to go to war and annihilate the opposition, as they recognized the need for and the inevitability of this creative tension in the form of competition, political differences and so on. Lawrence writes to Lady Asquith about The Signature, "please do get

the other people who care, to have the paper. It is really _something_: the seed, I hope, of a great change in life: the beginning of a new religious era" (_Letters II_ 399). Lawrence would be the prophet of this new religion, a doctrine which urged individuals to recognize the necessary unifying harmony in a tension of opposites, oppositions either between nations or within the self.

Lawrence's attempt in "The Crown" to dress these principles in the language of symbol and metaphor was not, perhaps, very successful, even on first publication. Lawrence writes to Lady Asquith between December 13 to 15, 1915, concerning _The Signature_: "I see you are also rather hostile to what I say, like everybody else" (Huxley 292). But his intention to convey his new cosmology remains clear, as he adds, "And the lion and the lioness [unicorn in the actual essay] are at any rate better than 'the universe consists in a duality, but there is an initial element called polarity, etc. etc.'" (Huxley 292). Lawrence felt expressing his new world view in symbolic terms would be "better" than stating them in standard scientific abstractions. He believed the language of metaphor and symbol to be broader and more meaningful than the language of science. Many later readers and critics remained just as hostile to the essay as Lady Asquith. W.Y. Tindall describes "The Crown" as "the second stage in the

development of his [Lawrence's] private religion . . . but Lawrence's philosophy at this stage is significant only of his confusion" (20).

But "The Crown" was just the beginning, the first step in Lawrence's philosophical explication of his new cosmology. The next significant stage was to present these ideas in fiction, for "Lawrence's fiction lives his vision of life" (Balbert 13). Handling this new world view successfully in a work of fiction would demonstrate whether Lawrence had truly integrated these principles into his own belief system. The next major work of fiction Lawrence embarked on was his novel Women in Love, ostensibly the sequel to the earlier The Rainbow. But too much had changed within the author for him to produce the later novel from within the same fictional universe as the first. In The Rainbow, Ursula feels herself in conflict with the world around her, and this conflict is seen as causing a lack or a want in her life. But then, Julian Moynahan notes how, in "The Crown," Lawrence "defined wholeness of being as a conflict" (65). Then finally, in Women in Love, "the conflict has been resolved into system and order, and it is a chaos from the human standpoint" (Moynahan 65). The system and order appear as the constant flux of change, the oscillation of the measures from creation to dissolution and back again. Rigid social or religious forms can no longer

provide the ordering principles to live by, and, for many, of course, this view of constant change can only be considered chaos, not a means to achieving wholeness of being. In keeping with this view, Stephen Miko observes how "The Crown" "has more affinities with Women in Love than with The Rainbow" (204).

Lawrence uses his essay as a vehicle by which to state his new philosophy, relying heavily on the early Greeks. But presenting the ideas in a formal essay remains a very different project from incorporating them convincingly into a work of fiction, such as his next novel. However, Lawrence determined to put his principles into fiction: "It seems to me it was the greatest pity in the world, when philosophy and fiction got split . . . the novel went sloppy, and philosophy went abstract-dry. The two should come together again--in the novel" ("Surgery For The Novel--Or A Bomb" 520). Women in Love would be a prime example of his attempt to wed philosophy and fiction again in the novel. Because Lawrence uses Women in Love to render the cosmology of "The Crown" into fictional form, an examination of the two and "a scrutiny of the similarities will enable the reader to interpret the novel with much more certainty and assurance" (Beker 254). Since Lawrence claims "every novel must have the background or the structural skeleton of some theory of being, some metaphysic" (Study of

Thomas Hardy 479), then using "The Crown" as an interpretive tool should give greater access to the workings of his metaphysic in Women in Love.

## CHAPTER 5: INFLUENCE IN FICTION: WOMEN IN LOVE

Lawrence continued to work with the tenets of his new cosmology of "The Crown," creating the structural metaphysical skeleton informing Women in Love. Making this step from philosophical explication in the expository essay to integrating a new doctrine into a creative work of fiction is a significant one. For in Women in Love, readers see "a novel embodying the insights of a treatise in a richer and more complex world of human relationships, and a growth beyond 'The Crown'" (Kinkead-Weekes 400). The reciprocal light noted by Balbert cast between "The Crown" and Women in Love shines through the symbolic evocation of the pre-Socratic principles.

Since Lawrence's vision of life reached its fullest explication in his fiction, his next novel would play out more fully the pre-Socratics' fundamental ideas. He found their principles to be psychologically valid in that they enhanced his understanding of life, even if the ideas proved unscientific in modern terms (Kalnins 82). Lawrence did not care what modern science might think of his ideas. He would demonstrate how, in John Keats's terms, "axioms in philosophy are not axioms until they are proved upon our pulses: We read fine things but never feel them to the full until we have gone the same steps as the author" (Keats

1214). "My beliefs," says Lawrence in "Introduction to These Paintings," "I test on my body, on my intuitional consciousness, and when I get a response there, then I accept" (575). Readers would do this testing of Lawrence's principles on their own pulses, following the progress of his new novel. Lawrence's method of proving his philosophical axioms already marks a difference between his approach and that of the pre-Socratics, who would have found this way of testing alien to their rational position. The early Greeks believed truth and reality to be intelligible to the intellect, in contrast to Lawrence's decision to test against his intuition. But then, Lawrence assimilates selectively, so the critic cannot expect the author's view to be fully consistent with the rationale of his sources.

Lawrence had long conceived of the sequel to _The Rainbow_, the new novel being still considered under the title _The Sisters_. In the spring of 1916, just a few short months after his composition and publication of "The Crown" in _The Signature_, Lawrence writes from Zennor in Cornwall, "And I began a new novel" (_Letters II_ 599). Work on the new novel proceeded quickly, for, by June 30, 1916, Lawrence writes, "I have finished 'The Sisters' in effect" (_Letters II_ 619). To E. M. Forster, Lawrence writes, on May 30, 1916, "I am writing another novel, sequel to _The Rainbow_ but _quite_ different. Here in this book I am free at last"

(Letters II 612). Lawrence knew that the fictional universe he created for his characters in this new novel differed greatly from the Christian framework of The Rainbow, and he felt an invigorating freedom in writing in this new context, this new ideology. He had already shown in "The Crown" how, in his view, the old order of civilization was dying through the bloody conflict of the world war and an obsession with will and scientific abstractions, like the Forms or Ideas of Plato. Howard Harper sees Women in Love as Lawrence's warning to civilization about its impending demise: "Its symptoms were the atrophy of sensual awareness and psychic openness" (205). So, one sees in Women in Love a destruction of the old order with the demise of Thomas Crich and his Christian ideals and the bizarre death of Gerald, affecting his empire of machines: "The old ideals are dead as nails--nothing there" (Women in Love 64). In place of these defunct ideals, Lawrence raises a new ideal with his new cosmology. He could dramatically depict this scenario of exchange through the fictional world of Women in Love, adding to the concept of "The Crown" "the urgent reality of hatred and violence as an element in the process" (Hochman 104) through the convincing means of human character.

"I believe that Lawrence changed while Women in Love was actually being written" (134), writes John Middleton-Murry, one of Lawrence's close friends during the

period between 1910 and 1920. Gone was the frustrated Lawrence of the winter and spring of 1915, who struggled unsuccessfully for months to complete his unpublished, ongoing philosophical work that he left off to "think again." With *Women in Love*, Lawrence wrote freely: "It comes very quickly and I am well satisfied" (*Letters II* 607). He had, of course, sketched out the lines--plot, characters, and so on--earlier, when writing the unwieldy first drafts of *The Sisters*, but, unlike the previous year, the course of his work now ran smoothly. And, as Murry noticed the change in Lawrence, so too did the structuring principle of Lawrence's novel change.

In Pierre Vitoux's detailed examination of the "Excurse" chapter in *Women in Love*, he notes how the original description of Birkin driving the car at one point was simple and clear, but that in the final version in the novel, the earlier simple notations were expanded and complicated by images and metaphors from "The Crown" (825). Birkin is described in the original: "His mind was relaxed, the life flowed through him like a creative sleep . . . a pleasure also to guide the car like this" (qtd. in Vitoux 825). And in the novel, Lawrence writes, "His mind was sweetly at ease . . . he was as if born out of the cramp of a womb . . . he had just come awake, like a thing is born . . . an egg, into a new universe" (*Women in Love* 351). In

the new version, both Birkin and Ursula must now be reborn into new being via a process described in the essay. One of the governing metaphors of "The Crown" is the womb in which the oppositions of light and darkness are enclosed: "They come nearer and nearer, till the oneness is full grown within the womb . . . it must move out" ("The Crown" 389). From this womb emerges the reborn soul recognising and achieving the necessary equilibrium between the oppositions in the universe. In "Excurse," after a dramatic conflict with Ursula, Birkin feels full of new life, "he was as if born out of the cramp of a womb" (Women in Love 351). And after Birkin and Ursula's strong opposition, they embrace passionately at the Saracen's Head, and Ursula finds in "her an essential new being" (Women in Love 354). She too is reborn.

In Lawrence's 1917 essay "The Reality of Peace," he outlines in prose how from the tension of opposition of conflicting forces emerges an "equipoise . . . in perfect conjunction," and from this state "I pass from the limitation of a relative world into the glad absolution . . . I find the peace of my orbit" (693). Finding the balance or equilibrium between oppositions brings about a rebirth into a higher state of being for Lawrence. "It is not of love that we are fulfilled, but of love in such intimate equipoise with hate that the transcendence takes place"

("Reality of Peace" 693). In "The Crown," the rebirth cannot yet take place in our withered era of world war as there is no healthy balance of oppositions, only a wearying self-consciousness: "For the stiffened, exhausted, inflexible loins of our era are too dry to give us forth in labor" ("The Crown" 371).

Lawrence not only rewrote _Women in Love_ in the spring of 1916, but he continued to revise it until the final draft of the novel in 1919. What Vitoux notes as the simpler version of "Excurse" was likely produced either before Lawrence's encounter with the pre-Socratics or before his deliberate revisions to incorporate obvious signs of his newfound cosmology as clarified by the early Greeks. On September 5, 1916, Lawrence writes to Dollie Radford asking for Maitland's copy of Burnet's _Early Greek Philosophy_: "If he has, I should be _so_ glad if he would lend it me--I want to refer to it" (_Letters II_ 652). Thus, Lawrence refreshed his memory on the pre-Socratics while revising _Women in Love_. In his "Foreword to _Women in Love_," Lawrence writes, "It was altogether re-written and finished in Cornwall in 1917. So that it is a novel which took its final shape in the midst of the period of war, though it does not concern the war itself" (275). Just as "The Crown" did not discuss the war directly, _Women in Love_ also examines the destruction brought about by the self-conscious egos of the

old order of society without actually touching on the events in Europe itself.

To see just how closely Lawrence originally paraphrased the principles of the pre-Socratics, and Heraclitus especially, one need only look to earlier versions of the novel itself. In one of the early revised versions of the "Water Party" chapter, Birkin makes a dogmatic speech to Ursula and Gudrun: "All is two, fire and water, as Anaximander or Herakleitos or somebody says" (qtd. in Charles Ross 143). Recall that Burnet explains Heraclitus' philosophy in that all things are subject to oscillations in the measures, and, in man, the oscillation of fire and water "gives rise to the alternations of sleeping and waking, life and death" (169). Burnet notes, "In a soul where the fire and water are evenly balanced, the equilibrium is restored" (171). Lawrence later revised Birkin's speech to read, "Everything, both physical and spiritual is passing upwards or downwards, as Herakleitos or somebody says" (qtd. in Charles Ross 144). Again, a look at Burnet clarifies the source of these words as he presents an account by one ancient commentator concerning Heraclitus, who "called change the upward and the downward path, and held that the world comes into being in virtue of this" (Burnet 164). In the earlier version of Women in Love, Lawrence adds details from "The Crown" concerning the flux of corruption and the

swans and waterlilies ("The Crown" 389 and 403) at this point in the chapter, but he later excises these elements in the published version and incorporates them into the flux of water and flux of corruptive fire in "Breadalby." Even in the final version of "Water Party," Lawrence presents an allusion to one of Heraclitus' fragments, number 74 in Burnet. "You know," says Birkin, "Herakleitos says 'a dry soul is best.' I know so well what that means" (Women in Love 193). Unfortunately, Birkin does not go on to detail exactly what Heraclitus' dry soul does mean in this context. Burnet suggests that in Heraclitus' terms an excess of the measure of water in a soul brings a sadly corrupt death; therefore, the dry soul is best (171-172). The published novel contains the one reference to Heraclitus by name, on page 193, while the other references from the earlier draft versions have been dropped.

But these few references in the earlier draft manuscripts and Brikin's final version of the speech represent only a small sample of the correspondences between Lawrence's Women In Love and the principles of the pre-Socratics. He actually incorporates their ideas into both the formal and the ideological structure of the final version of the novel. Like Heraclitus, who views life as a process of becoming, Lawrence's vision enacts a process. The exposition and demonstration of the new metaphysic

unfolds over the developments of the novel. By manipulating the structural form of his novel, as well as depicting the growth and validation of his new cosmology through character development, Lawrence shows how the new individual should be reborn through the process of achieving equilibrium between opposing forces, as mentioned in "The Crown" and "The Reality of Peace." How, then, is Lawrence able to incorporate the pre-Socratic principles into the form and ideology of the novel?

Formally, the idea of Heraclitus' strife of opposites stands evident in Lawrence's use of the two couples; each balanced in a tension of opposition, Ursula in opposition to Birkin's conception of their relationship and Gudrun in opposition to Gerald's consuming need of her. The couples are also in opposition with regard to the success of their respective relationships. David Gordon notes how "[t]he form of _Women in Love_ can also be described as a tension of opposites" ("_Women in Love_ and the Lawrencean Aesthetic" 51), but he does not seem to recognise the pre-Socratic influence motivating this tension. Structurally, Lawrence frequently employs balanced and contrasting clauses to illustrate duality and the forces of opposition. He writes, "Gerald's face was lit up with an uncanny smile, full of light and rousedness, yet unconscious"; his hands "were animal and yet very shapely and attractive" (_Women in Love_

74). Later in the novel, Hermione is "convulsed with pleasure yet sick" (Women in Love 100). Looking at Birkin, Ursula finds him "priggish and detestable. And yet, at the same time, the moulding of him so quick and attractive" (Women in Love 144). The constant balancing of qualities, one against the other, lends a tension to Lawrence's descriptions. He attempts to show the balance of the Heraclitian measures or the equilibrium of the lion and the unicorn striving toward one another through his grammatical structures. Nothing can ever be of only one quality. The elements of the universe, of character, and of the sentence balance in opposition, as do Love and Strife in the cosmology of Empedocles. Hayles describes this to and fro prose style as Lawrence's attempt to break the purely linear flow of language, as he tries to break ordinary perception and effect "a direct apprehension of reality" (97), Lawrence's vision of reality. Hayles notes Lawrence's attempt to convey a reality accessible to the senses, but makes no mention of the underlying pre-Socratic metaphysical framework.

Diane Bonds argues for a formal pairing of chapters on Lawrence's part to show up the importance of the conflicts between the couples (105). For example, she concludes that "Mino" and "Water Party" have parallel love scenes where "conflict leads to admission of love" (105). Ursula's

indignation over Birkin's approbation of the Mino's treatment of the stray cat and Gudrun's annoyance at Gerald's interruption of her private, ritual dance bring the women into sharp conflict with the men. The conflicting tensions seem a necessary preface to the intimacy of the couples that follows. Bonds sees a similar pairing between the chapter "Rabbit" and "Moony"--this time with a character in each section struggling first with an element of nature, the rabbit and the moon's image on the water. Again, from the occasion of conflict arises a closer communion between the couples. The signs of the pre-Socratic influence emerge again and again in Women in Love, but once more the critic, in this instance Bonds, does not trace the true source of the symbols of opposition, conflict, equilibrium, and so on.

Stephen Miko sees a series of oppositions in Women in Love in the patterns of light and dark imagery alternating throughout. He describes this phenomenon as a dialectical movement of passages (222). In the chapter, significantly titled in terms of opposition, "Death and Love," Gerald moves from the dark clay of his father's grave to "the big lighted window" of Gudrun's home and is drawn to the "door left open, shedding a soft, coloured light" (Women in Love 384). Gerald again plunges into darkness until he finds the light of Gudrun in her dark room. She lights a candle, and "the light rose in the room" (Women in Love 386). The

measures of light and darkness repeatedly alternate, first one dominating and then the other. In his discussion of Women in Love, Miko does note a connection between "The Crown" and the novel, recognizing the concept of star equilibrium as coming into the work of fiction from the essay. And, in his examination of the essay, Miko casually remarks on the introduction of the flux and the perfect relation in Lawrence's writing, "Now, perhaps as a result of reading Heraclitus" (210). But to say "perhaps" is to accord far too little weight to the strong influence of Heraclitus.

Lawrence continues his examination of the idea of opposing forces balancing in a universe of dualities and the principle of eternal flux in the development of the novel. Through his characters, he explores the principles of opposition. For example, in the relationship between Hermione and Birkin, Lawrence writes, "The more she strove to bring him to her, the more he battled her back" (Women in Love 18). Like the lion and the unicorn in "The Crown," the opposition is eternal. Lawrence notes of Gerald and Birkin's relationship, "They always kept a gap, a distance between them, they wanted always to be free each of the other" (Women in Love 109). The opposition fosters a certain singleness, which precludes a union, while including a tension of attraction. As Burnet phrases it for

Heraclitus, "It is just the 'opposite tension' of the Many that constitutes the unity of the One" (159). Thus, there exists an underlying unity in the opposing tensions; because they strain apart, they share a relation, like the crown over the lion and the unicorn. And in Gerald's relationship with Gudrun, he initially finds that "[h]e seemed to balance her perfectly in opposition to himself, in their dual motion of walking" (Women in Love 371). It is through these oppositions that Lawrence tries to introduce the symbolic harmony of balance, the unity of the One, into his novel, for, as Heraclitus notes, "what is at variance agrees with itself. It is an attunement of opposite tensions, like that of the bow and the lyre" (Burnet 150). Miko observes in writing of Women in Love, "For Lawrence the mystic word harmony must refer, if it refers to anything, to the transcendence achieved by opposing forces which the crown symbolised" (252).

The most obvious formulation of Heraclitus' law of strife appears in Birkin's metaphysical approach to a relationship with Ursula: "What I want is a strange conjunction with you . . . not meeting and mingling . . . but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings:--as the stars balance each other" (Women in Love 164), or as do the lion and the unicorn in "The Crown." Now for Birkin, and presumably for Lawrence, the relationship between man

and woman receives recognition as having some sort of primary status, which is not the case with Heraclitus or the other pre-Socratics. Lawrence's new absolute--man and woman in relationship--from Study of Thomas Hardy is cast in fictional form here in Women in Love. He adopts Heraclitus' cosmic principle of the law of strife but elevates one set of oppositions above the rest, according to his own beliefs. "The world," Birkin says, "is only held together by the mystic conjunction, the ultimate unison between people--a bond. And the immediate bond is between man and woman" (Women in Love 169). Birkin, here, chooses to describe this new conjunction as a unifying bond which, again, runs contrary to the principles of the law of strife. In order to convey the sense of a tension of opposites, Birkin probably needs to say that the primary relation is between man and woman, rather than describing the conjunction as a bond. So, in Lawrence's view, unity in the world must grow from this fundamental relation. The significant reason behind Birkin's claim follows soon after: "If you admit a unison, you forfeit all the possibilities of chaos" (Women in Love 169). Birkin still seeks an ordered universe, but not one structured around a Christian understanding.

As a couple, Birkin and Ursula do not reach this symbolic conjunction easily; however, they first attract and recoil from one another in a period of critical opposition,

he distrusting her insistence on love, and she arguing passionately against his dogmatic free, proud singleness. This idea of necessary opposition was obviously very much on Lawrence's mind when composing Women in Love, for he writes, in reference to a poem, in a letter to Catherine Carswell in July 1916, "the poem is (. . .) good--but of death, too deathly. There is not enough of the opposition of life to give it form" (Letters II 638). Lawrence considers the principle of opposition as necessary to both the content and structure of a work. Without opposition in the matter of a piece, the form is deficient.

Birkin and Ursula seem to come to an agreement on this star equilibrium--Ursula later quotes the metaphysic to Gudrun (Women in Love 493)--and Lawrence demonstrates the correctness of this approach by causing Birkin and Ursula's relationship to succeed. Gerald and Gudrun, however, do not strive to maintain the balance. Eugene Goodheart sees this counterpointing as necessary, claiming the success of Ursula and Birkin's relationship appears only as a result of the contrast with Gerald and Gudrun ("Lawrence and Christ" 166). Gudrun believes, "One of them must triumph over the other" (Women in Love 465). And because Gudrun triumphs over Gerald in her rejection of him, the balance and tension are destroyed, and, consequently, Gerald is destroyed. For, as Lawrence notes in "The Crown," "Either lion or unicorn,

triumphant, turns into a sheer beast of prey: Foe it has none: only prey--or victims" ("The Crown" 381). When Heraclitus' law of strife is violated, chaos and destruction return. The novel suggests the corruption and destruction of Gudrun as well in her desire to stay with Loerke. In a Christian view, good would necessarily triumph over evil, love would overcome hate, and the spiritual would certainly dominate the coporeal. But such a world view does not inform the fictional universe of _Women in Love_. Lawrence adopts a pre-Socratic position in urging that the opposites be maintained.

But even the preferred state of balance and relatedness can only be maintained within a state of flux. Colin Clarke notes how Hermione suffers a ghastliness of dissolution and decomposition as she refuses to dissolve her ego to fluidity and yield to the flux (99). She isolates herself. Even her Breadalby home stands "silent and forsaken" (_Women in Love_ 91). Lawrence employs characters like Hermione and Gerald as symbols to illustrate the danger of stasis, of trying to remain fixed and unchanging in a universe in flux. Birkin, looking about Breadalby, sees "what a snare and a delusion, this beauty of static things--what a horrible, dead prison Breadalby really was" (_Women in Love_ 108). With Hermione, "her indomitable will remained static and mechanical" (_Women in Love_ 110). Ursula realises that the body can manifest

the spirit in opposition to the rigid will: "Unless I set my will, unless I absolve myself of the rhythm of life, fix myself and remain static, cut off from living, absolved within my own will" (Women in Love 216). In the same rigid posture stand the lion and the unicorn factions of the war in Europe in "The Crown," fixed in static self-consciousness, cut off and blinded by their own wills. Just before Gudrun and Gerald's dramatic breakup, they are "in perfect static unity" (Women in Love 472), a very dangerous state that leads only to destruction. The unity or relatedness joining the opposing forces must, for Lawrence, be in a healthy state of flux. Without this fluid balance, characters are incomplete. Gerald, suffering as his father dies, feels, "his will held his . . . outer being broken and unchanged. But . . . he would have to find something to make good the equilibrium. Something must come with him into the hollow void of death in his soul" (Women in Love 363).

Lawrence's use of balanced clauses and phrases of opposites gives an impression of flux, as characters and objects possess both positive and negative qualities. Birkin feels "satisfied and shattered, fulfilled and destroyed" (Women in Love 210). Gerald's father, Thomas Crich, suffers in the fluctuations of his illness, "the great pain tearing him at times, and then being silent"

(Women in Love 87). While Ursula travels to visit Birkin, she "was palpitating and formless within the flux of the ghost life" (Women in Love 160). Birkin's letter, which a mocking Halliday reads aloud in the Cafe Pompadour, refers specifically to "uniting the dark and the light--and the Flux of Corruption" (Women in Love 432). These are elements Lawrence examines both in the "The Crown" and Women in Love, and these issues refer to a view of constant flux that Heraclitus posits between the measures of fire and water or night and day, neither being possible without the other.

Flux, of course, results in change and dissolution but not death in the way that is commonly thought. Death entails a terrible finality, to many people's thinking, a complete cessation of life and consciousness, a nonexistence. In trying "to define the world of change from life to death, Heraclitus had argued that life arises from the delicate balance of fire and water in the soul," so that death does not mean non-existence but an alteration of the balance (Kalnins 179). Heraclitus' fragment number sixty-seven explains: "Mortals are immortals and immortals are mortals, the one living the others' death and dying the others' life" (Burnet 152). In Women in Love, death does not mean nonexistence but a modification in the flux, a change which is part of the balanced oscillations. Ursula considers death after her discussions with Birkin: "To die

is to move on with the invisible. To die is also a joy, a joy of submitting to that which is greater than the known; namely the pure unknown" (216). Once she and Birkin have achieved their equilibrium, Ursula feels as if she has just emerged as "a new birth without any recollections or blemish of a past life. She was with Birkin, she had just come into life" (Women in Love 460). So, change and dissolution can also mean the "death" of a form of consciousness, an oscillation which brings about the birth of a new state of awareness.

Death, dissolution, and the flux, as Birkin describes them, come about when the balance shifts: "when the stream of synthetic creation lapses, we find ourselves in the inverse process, the blood of destructive creation" (Women in Love 193). The processes alternate, their measures redistributing, while the equilibrium shifts. Lawrence's use of the term "creation" to refer to the action of the flux demonstrates how both streams have a positive value, not that dissolution must always bear negative results. The change in the balance can be seen as moving in one of two directions, towards one of two polar opposites. Birkin refers to the two alternating streams, like Empedocles' streams of Love and Strife, "the silver river of life" and "that dark river of dissolution" (Women in Love 192-193). Both streams are necessary elements of life, and, although

mankind generally tries to deny the reality of the dark river of dissolution, it is, nevertheless, an essential part of creation. Birkin sees in life "only about two great ideas, two great streams of activity remaining" (Women in Love 343).

While both the form and content of Women in Love reflect the influence of the pre-Socratics, there yet remains much critical controversy as to whether Lawrence successfully integrates his new metaphysic into the novel. "One does hit bottom in reading this novel," comments Bonds (93). Most suggest that, with Women in Love, Lawrence does not succeed in healing the disjunction between philosophy and fiction as he determined to do: "The two should come together again--in the novel" ("Surgery For The Novel--Or A Bomb" 520). "Lawrence's attempt to portray Birkin and Ursula's achievement of 'the pure duality of polarization' is as unsatisfactory and unconvincing as the 'doctrinal' passages in which he makes a frontal attack on our credence and as the 'symbolic' scenes in which he presents external support for his position" (Daleski 174). The problems Lawrence struggles with in trying to integrate his new doctrine successfully into the novel fall into four broad, overlapping categories. These groupings include the difficulty of integrating the philosophies of several divergent philosophers into one coherent whole expressed in

symbolic terms and the problem of conveying this new doctrine in conventional language. In addition, further difficulties arise with the emergence of Lawrence's new metaphysic in such a psychic, inner life kind of novel from within the early twentieth-century tradition of realist fiction. Finally, one faces the final and consequent problem of interpreting _Women in Love_ in light of the difficulties already noted.

Within the numerous doctrines presented to him in Burnet, Lawrence could pick and choose among the principles that most appealed to him from the fragmentary classical Greek tradition prior to what he considered as the logical constraints of Plato. Some tension in _Women in Love_ doubtless arises from Lawrence's having chosen selectively from the cosmologies of several philosophers. Although these thinkers share the distinction of being called pre-Socratics, vital differences yet exist between their basic ideologies. Heraclitus, for example, claims that the principle of change governs the universe. All things fluctuate in a constant state of becoming. For Parmenides, however, becoming or change is impossible; the Heraclitian view of reality must be mistaken. Parmenides urges that one disregard the suggestion of change garnered by information from our untrustworthy senses and realize that all things are in a permanent state of being. His view of knowledge

and reality comes from a redirection of focus to things intelligible to reason and not to perception. In Parmenides' terms, one must understand change as meaning to become what is not, and, since one cannot say of what is that it is not, then the only thing that can be made sense of in reality is being, because change, meaning not-being, cannot exist: "If it came into being, it is not; nor is it if it is going to be in the future. Thus is becoming extinguished and passing away not to be heard of" (Burnet 199). Nothing can both be and not be at the same time. Thus, although Lawrence seems to have borrowed from Parmenides when writing "The Crown," what is of primary interest to him is Parmenides' symbol of the crown, the role of which lay in governing the motion of all the other heavenly bodies. Now again in Women in Love, Lawrence wants to assert the supreme relation of the crown, in the form of the star equilibrium which will keep the balance and tension of opposites in the novel. But the metaphysic Lawrence promotes in the novel is alien to Parmenides' position. Lawrence claims that Birkin and Ursula become reborn and pass away into a new state of being. Parmenides' philosophy would deny this possibility of change.

But for Lawrence, the senses are tremendously important and are often to be trusted over the intellect. Parmenides would argue that the new state of being Birkin and Ursula

believe they have achieved is just a pretence because perceptions of becoming and change are an illusion. Because they rely on their senses, this couple have no true perception of reality in Parmenides' terms. But, for Heraclitus, Birkin and Ursula reaching their equipoise of star equilibrium would be a valid reflection of the changing reality they perceive with their senses. So, with the incompatibile ideologies of each philosopher informing the metaphysic of the novel, which reality is real in Women in Love? Readers reflect this tension by not being able to discern whether Ursula and Birkin really do undergo some transfiguring change.

Empedocles, whom Lawrence also draws from, asserts that the monism of Heraclitus is false and must be abandoned in favor of a pluralistic view of the cosmos. Heraclitus stresses a oneness or a unity of reality, despite an apparent multiplicity, although "there is no One without the Many" (Burnet 159). Thus, even though things change, the balance is maintained; motive, cause, and motion are all one. But, for Empedocles and other pluralists, reality is no longer a unified whole or a single principle. The forces of cause and motion are material and separate. Empedocles assigns the four ultimate and eternal roots of all things as the basis of reality, a plurality. "Hear first the four roots of all things" (Burnet 240), Fire, Air, Earth, and

Water. Now, in Empedocles' explanation of Love and Strife, also corporeal forces like the four roots, he notes that these elements go through four periods in a cycle. In each period, one element or the other dominates, much like the give and take of the lion and the unicorn in "The Crown." But if these elements move through a series of predetermined cycles, how can a Heraclitian balance of opposites be maintained? How can individuals achieve a Lawrentian rebirth through a Heraclitian change in a monist universe if they must adhere to the predetermined cycle of Love and Strife in a pluralistic conceptual framework? Birkin and Ursula need to address some serious metaphysical inconsistencies in their fictional universe. This mixing of elements of disharmonious cosmologies cannot help but be translated into tensions and inconsistencies within the novel.

And not only are there inconsistencies among the philosophers' views, Lawrence has difficulty fitting their viewpoints in with his preconceived notion of the eventual result he wants for his characters. For example, consider how Lawrence makes use of Parmenides' mixed crowns of light and darkness presided over by the crown of the central circle which causes the movement of the rest. This idea appears in "The Crown" with the crown balancing the strife between the lion and the unicorn and in _Women in Love_ with

the conjunction of star equilibrium which is to balance the relationship between Ursula and Birkin. Now, in Parmenides' view, "becoming extinguished and passing away [is] not to be heard of" (Burnet 199). But extinguishing the old self and passing away into a new state of being is precisely what Lawrence advocates and promotes in both his essay and the novel. Little wonder that readers have trouble understanding clearly just how this passing away is to be accomplished when the process is derived from a model that promotes a fixed state of being, not fluid becoming. How do Birkin and Ursula achieve their transfiguring passing away at the Saracen's Head? Lawrence chooses an awkward means of demonstrating this concept of passing away into new being when he borrows his model from Parmenides.

Lawrence seems to disregard Heraclitus' premise that the primary substance of the universe is Fire, yet he still borrows the application of principles assigned to Heraclitus' cosmology, adding his own associations such that fire and the upward path signify consciousness and the male principle, while water and the downward path represent unconsciousness and the female principle. With Gerald, Minette "seemed to flow back, almost like liquid, from his approach, to sink helplessly away from him" (Women in Love 88). Ursula "was like a strange unconscious bud of powerful womanhood" (Women in Love 102). Gerald's body is described

as "like the marsh-fire," while he lives "[i]n his world, his conscious world" (Women in Love 133). Lawrence also amends or constrains Heraclitus' cosmology by having Birkin declare that the primary bond in the universe is the one between man and woman. Heraclitus' conception of opposites in relation requires no such preeminent conjunction.

Some of the tension in the novel may arise from the nature of Lawrence's sources. Only small fragments of the pre-Socratic philosophers' works have been found, leaving their theories incomplete, despite later investigations. In some instances, no original work has been discovered, but rather, later philosophers have written commentaries or made references to these earlier thinkers. Even if Lawrence looked to sources other than Burnet, none could offer a complete discussion of the pre-Socratic cosmologies. None, therefore, could offer Lawrence a full and coherent discussion of the principles he chose to base his own metaphysic on. But then, Lawrence would still likely have chosen to assimilate only those points which appealed to him rather than opting for logic and consistency in his position. Lawrence likely found the fragmentary nature of his sources appealing; this tenuous and fragile origin suggests scraps of oracular revelations or mysterious truths, rather than rigorous philosophical systems. Moreover, both Parmenides and Empedocles composed their

philosophy in verse, another appealing, aesthetic element to a literary artist. As Hough notes, Lawrence is not truly a philosopher in the accepted sense of the word, one seeking correction and validation from the professional views of other philosophers (218).

To an extent, Lawrence himself seems to disagree with some adopted ideas after he first tries to establish the balance of the star equilibrium between Birkin and Ursula. By the end of the novel, Ursula appears as merely a satellite of Birkin, who needs relation with a man beyond his relation with woman in order to be whole and in balance. John Stoll complains of this lapse on Lawrence's part: "Since Birkin and Ursula do not realize star equilibrium in Women in Love but do predicate future actions upon it, Gerald is condemned on behalf of a principle that is not dramatically embodied in the novel" (168). Stoll's concern is that Lawrence merely tells and does not show this principle of conjunction. Gerald dies in the Alps, destroyed by his failure to live by a principle whose realization has not been demonstrated. Again, this inconsistency causes problems in trying to reach a correct interpretation of the character's death. Tindall's treatment of the event shows how little Gerald's demise is understood. Gerald "slips a cog one day on an Alp" and dies (Tindall 33). This comment offers no help in trying to

discern the meaning of Gerald's death. Daleski questions Lawrence's awkward use of the cats as clumsy symbols of star equilibrium. Mino's cuffing of the stray cat is "hardly illustrative, as he (Birkin) maintains, of a desire to bring the female cat into 'a pure stable, equilibrium, a transcendent and abiding rapport with the single male'" (Daleski 173-174). Lawrence tries, in the "Mino" chapter, to force his symbols to fit his philosophical doctrine and fails.

Of course, the problem of trying to convey Lawrence's new doctrine in symbolic terms leads to the question of whether conventional language can adequately express his meaning. The answer is probably best and most concisely expressed by Michael Black, who claims that Lawrence's language has to be learned (20). "His medium as language, must be figures of speech or forms of symbolism; for only in them can [Lawrence] escape the limited scope of the logical intellect, which he conceives as a living death" (Black 12). Lawrence will have no truck with logical principles such as non-contradiction; in the Lawrentian universe, something can be both 'P' and not 'P' at the same time. As the repeated revisions of Women in Love show, Lawrence was still at a developmental stage in the formulation of his new doctrine, and the process in his novel reflects the process of his attempting to clarify his new doctrine in intelligible

terms. So Lawrence himself was still learning his new language even while writing Women in Love.

"Lawrence requires us to enter into his 'creative struggle'; where we cannot or will not do that, the difficulties are unlikely to be merely local and contained" (Bradshaw 32). Lawrence's language of symbols becomes, at times, "a deliberate defence against communication," argues Salgādo (104), while Goodheart complains that Lawrence's "riot of language" in the scene at the inn offers no clue as to the male-female polarity connection that the reader is to recognise between Birkin and Ursula (Utopian Vision 36). Lawrence has trouble expressing in conventional terms how one is to feel the conflicting tensions and opposition in Women in Love. He notes in a later essay that he tests his beliefs on his body and tries in the novel to replay the process of proving on the pulses the effect of his new metaphysic. But readers of Women in Love are as handicapped as readers of "The Crown" in not having the appropriate frame of reference to read Lawrence's symbols in the terms he needs them to be understood. Readers need the connotations of Lawrence's philosophical vocabulary to reach his meaning. Hayles, not recognising the connection with the pre-Socratics, sees this concern as a problem with the nature of language itself, because Lawrence tries to convey an ineffable reality in written terms--a mystical,

unspeakable reality meant to be experienced rather than rationally understood (95). But the Greeks held reality to be intelligible and rational, a position Lawrence has trouble conveying in his assimilation of their principles.

Lawrence wrote Women in Love in 1916, a period accustomed to the conventional literary modes of the early twentieth century and to the realist fiction of writers like Arnold Bennett. Much of the interaction in Lawrence's novel takes place on the inner, psychic level, and combining this type of development with Lawrence's abstract and unfamiliar symbols through supposedly realistic characters creates a formidable work of fiction for many. Bersani remarks that there are "difficulties, for realistic fiction, in this mingling of mystical intuition with prosaic details of modern life" (163). Readers bring certain expectations to any piece of writing. Current reader reception theory suggests that readers share a major portion of the responsibility of interpretation in determining just what the final product of a reading experience will be. Given the constraints of reader expectation of the early twentieth-century realist mode, a reader unschooled in Lawrence's new language would not likely be able to perceive much of Lawrence's intended meaning from the reading experience. Even for the reader familiar with the changing modes in fiction, the abstract symbolism of the novel still

proves a barrier. Lawrence's characters in Women in Love are in process, passing away from one state of being to another on a psychic level, and readers expecting the standard early twentieth century realist narrative will be confused by the matter they find. The cloak of the conventional realist novel, dealing with a conventional, fixed external reality, is not a garment suited to Lawrence's Women in Love.

Leo Bersani recognizes this problem in the novel, as he notes the "risks involved in this enterprise of deliberately superimposing on realistic character a view of the individual as a kind of nonindividualized, or a-psychological mass of life and death energies" (166). Picture the dinner table at Breadalby. How could one character simply ask another to pass the marmalade without some deep psychic interaction taking place. The everyday world of ordinary trivia has no place in Women in Love. "At present my real world is the world of my inner soul," writes Lawrence in May 1916; this "reflects on the novel I write. The outer world is there to be endured, it is not real--neither the outer life" (Letters II 610). The outer life Lawrence refers to encompasses the conventional surface of social reality, the workings of democracy, etiquette, Christianity, and so on. What is important to Lawrence, at this time, revolves around his introspective thinking about

the true workings of reality, the actual metaphysics, rather than an appeal to the outer life of convention. Mark Schorer summarizes the problem: _Women in Love_ "begins by seeming--a realistic novel--but as a drama of primal compulsions, a psychic symbolization, it will be seen to have its own kind of coherence" (169). The coherence, belonging as it does to Lawrence's clarified yet evolving doctrine, may still evade readers who cannot penetrate the abstract symbols. They cannot prove Lawrence's philosophical axioms on their pulses because they cannot decipher the axioms.

Finally, in light of the difficulties outlined, how does one approach the question of interpreting _Women in Love_? With Lawrence's attempt to incorporate his new metaphysic into his fiction, the critic must be concerned as to whether this new philosophy or vision is actually intelligible, or does it simply confound reader expectations? Lawrence writes of _Women in Love_, "The book frightens me--it is so end-of-the-world. But it is, it must be, the beginning of a new world too" (_Letters III_ 25-26). Has Lawrence succeeded in demonstrating the end of the old order and the inception of a new in _Women in Love_? For many, as Adamowski points out, a major weakness lies in Lawrence's failure "to _demonstrate_ the successful 'equilibrium' he claims is attainable" (331). Granted that

the limits of language may negate a complete revelation of the ineffable, as Hayles claims, but Lawrence could have chosen more convincing figures to demonstrate his point. To convince in both symbolic and dramatic terms, Lawrence needed to both recraft Mino's actions with the stray cat and portray Ursula and Birkin interacting as equal elements in Birkin's starlike conjunction, rather than showing Ursula as Birkin's satellite. Birkin's first act, after their supposed transfiguring conjunction at the inn, is to dictate to Ursula her own letter of resignation. And even their supposedly supreme relation does not prove sufficient for Birkin, who feels, "to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too" (Women in Love 541).

Despite insisting on the value of the equilibrium Ursula and Birkin are to share, Lawrence uncharacteristically brings in the God of Christianity, in Biblical language strongly reminiscent of The Rainbow, at a crucial passage in Women in Love. At the inn, Ursula feels that in Birkin "[s]he had found one of the sons of God from the beginning, and he had found one of the first most luminous daughters of men" (Women in Love 353). She refers again and again to these two expressions. Such emphasis on these terms suggests a valuation incongruent with the achieving of star equilibrium. It is the duty of the daughters of men to worship the sons of God, not live in a state of opposition

with them. Lawrence notes in a letter to Katherine Mansfield in December 1918, "I do think a woman must yield some sort of precedence to a man, and he must take this precedence" (Letters III 302). So, despite his attempt to portray a balanced equilibrium between Ursula and Birkin to fit the precepts of his new world view, at heart, Lawrence does not accept the basic principle of equality. Because Lawrence, himself, does not truly accept this star equilibrium between the sexes, Birkin's discussion of it seems mostly academic, since the novel does not present a convincing depiction of this balanced state.

Elements which Lawrence claims to be oppositions often turn out to be simply variants, argues Salgádo (99). Lawrence seems to use the same terms to characterize individuals indiscriminately. For instance, both Loerke and Birkin mistrust love and modern life, yet, in Birkin, the reader is to recognise these qualities as healthy, whereas in Loerke, they indicate a state of diseased and infectious corruption. Even F.R. Leavis, one of Lawrence's staunchest defenders, finds weakness in Women in Love: "Lawrence betrays by an insistent and overemphatic explicitness . . . that he is uncertain--uncertain of the value of what he offers; uncertain whether he really holds it" (177).

In the final analysis, Lawrence may have made some strides in depicting his conception of the weakness and

sterility of the old conventional Christian era, through Thomas Crich, and of the industrialised era of the machine, through Gerald and Loerke, but too many difficulties stand in the way of accepting the claim that Lawrence has successfully depicted his new doctrine with its attendant beginning of a new world in _Women in Love_. That the plot of the novel remains inconclusive and in tension need not be a major drawback; in fact, this very tension demonstrates well the unity in a Heraclitian structure of opposites, although this point is lost on most readers. Primarily, where the novel fails is in asserting the positive value of Lawrence's new world view without demonstrating it. _Women in Love_ tells readers one thing but shows them another. The novel may well be a growth beyond "The Crown," as Kinkead-Weekes observes, but Lawrence's difficulty in successfully integrating his new philosophy into his fiction detracts from the strength of this new growth. "But we can at least try to clarify the nature of the vision that is operating, and why the 'logic' of the imagination creates [such] particular kind of difficulty" (Kinkead-Weekes 407). For trying to understand the fundamental principles informing _Women in Love_ brings both a greater appreciation of this powerful novel and provides a useful interpretive tool for examining Lawrence's future work.

Lawrence's use of the early Greeks in his own writing

shows how he wondered about the conception of the universe--a universe outside of a Christian God-centered one, such as forms the framework for The Rainbow. John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy offered Lawrence a rich source of principles, elements, and symbols from which to construct a new world view. That the pre-Socratics provided the framework for his new philosophy becomes apparent through Lawrence's letters and his essay "The Crown." But that he still had not fully formulated or resolved the tensions and inconsistencies within his new metaphysic becomes evident in his novel Women in Love. Lawrence did not drop his connection with the pre-Socratics in his later writings. Their ideas and principles continued to inform his later works, in poems such as "Strife"--"conflict is a communion" (Complete Poems 714)--and "Anaxagoras," and in essays like "Two Principles." Even in his final work, Apocalypse, Lawrence stresses the importance of the pre-Socratic philosophers, reflecting the profound impact they made on his writing career since his encounter with their work in the year 1915. "Virtually everything he wrote, thought and did derived from the conclusions he had drawn in that crucial year. To ignore these, therefore, is tantamount to ignoring the man" (Lea 163).

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