

**THE DARK MYSTERY: A STUDY OF IMAGERY IN
SELECTED POEMS OF D. H. LAWRENCE**

BY

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THE DARK MYSTERY: A STUDY OF IMAGERY IN SELECTED POEMS OF D. H. LAWRENCE

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by
Gregory C. Chase
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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Research Paper written by Gregory C. Chase entitled "The Dark Mystery: A Study of Imagery In Selected Poems of D. H. Lawrence." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a major in English.

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THE DARK MYSTERY: A STUDY OF IMAGERY IN SELECTED POEMS OF D. H. LAWRENCE

When David Herbert Lawrence left England in 1912, he embarked on a new phase in life, which in his words allowed his "demon . . . a new run for his money."¹ Throughout the next five years, he and Frieda Weekley-Richthofen would share a conflict of love and hate between themselves and the world around them. In Look! We Have Come Through! A Cycle of Love Poems we have the resolution of this conflict whereby they were lifted into a "condition of blessedness"² --the "wholeness of being" which is Lawrence's great theme throughout all his works.³ This new whole is a fusion of two opposites which complement each other rather than form a unity. Unlike the position of other dualist philosophers, Lawrence insists that the opposites retain their separate identities. Many scholars have failed to recognize and understand this dichotomous, paradoxical resolution or "the dark self, the phallic self"⁴; the few that have, with the notable exception of M. L. Rosenthal, still have not applied their interpretations to the Look! poems. In approaching these poems through a study of their images of darkness, this paper is the first attempt to show in depth the relationship between this imagery and the dark mystery that Lawrence discovered not only in his own life, but in mankind's as well. First, an examination will be made of those critical studies which have dealt with the concept of the dark mystery in his other works. Thus there will be a basis for understanding this most complex of all Lawrencian subjects.

¹D. H. Lawrence, D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, ed. Edward Nehls (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957-59), p. 82.

²D. H. Lawrence, "Argument," Look! We Have Come Through! A Cycle of Love Poems from The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence Volume One, ed. Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p. 191.

³Ronald P. Draper, D. H. Lawrence (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1964), p. 176.

⁴D. H. Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1926), p. 134.

The first study of the dark mystery in Lawrence appeared two years after his death in Anais Nin's D. H. Lawrence, an unprofessional study. At that time little attention was given to this young, unknown critic of an author who had fallen into disfavor among most literary critics. Since then, Miss Nin has gained prominence as a scholar whose pioneering study on Lawrence indeed remains a valuable critique with insights that even today escape the attention of supposedly well read explicators of Lawrence's works. Her attention to his numerous references to "dark gods" is noteworthy; she sees them being intentionally used to show "a deep subterranean connection between the instinctive, undeceived undeceivable and the sophistries of the intelligence."⁵ The mind becomes "a juggler" between these two parts of "the flow of blood life," and it is this juggler, according to Miss Nin, that opposes.⁶ There is a beautiful dignity in these gods' darkness, we are told, but still this darkness remains an unexplainable mystery to us.

Before the bulk of criticism was turned away from Lawrence's personal life to his literary genius by the crucial works of Frederick Hoffman and F. R. Leavis, only Stephen Spender would add to the interpretation of "dark gods" given sixteen years earlier by Miss Nin. "Dark gods" become a symbol for Spender of "an inescapable mystery" that implies not only a relationship between the inner self of man and the forces outside himself, but also a relationship that could create in this individual a new state of mind.⁷ This dualism Lawrence discovered in his "struggle" that embraced the "two opposite waves of darkness and light."⁸ To him, everything, even a stone,

⁵Anais Nin, D. H. Lawrence, an unprofessional study (1932; rpt. Denver: A. Swallow, 1964), p. 18.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Stephen Spender, "The Life of Literature," Partisan Review 15 (Dec. 1948), p. 1311.

⁸D. H. Lawrence, from Herman Dalesi, The Forked Flame (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1965), p. 20.

has dualistic parts: male and female.⁹ Lawrence has been termed by Spender the "most hopeful modern writer" because "he looks beyond the human to the nonhuman which can be discovered within the human."¹⁰ The meeting of man with fellow man or nature Spender calls the "dark mystery."¹¹ It is a paradox for in its fusion there is not a union of the parts into a single whole, but a retention of their separate identities. A renewal of self takes place within man.

Though Spender understood the references to light and darkness in Lawrence to represent respectively the consciousness and unconsciousness of Man, Dorothy Van Ghent takes us further in interpretation of this important concept. Seeing light and darkness as maintaining the rhythm of life, Miss Van Ghent stresses the importance of understanding darkness on three different levels. First, darkness is naturally seen as half of the rhythm of the day—that is, night.¹² Further, it may also be the unconsciousness of man's mind as opposed to the light of abstract, intellectual thought. Lastly, darkness is that other half of life that remains a mystery to us—death. From the many works of Lawrence in which light and darkness are contrasted, Miss Van Ghent chooses Sons and Lovers for special attention. Although this novel has a theme of brotherhood, the characters reject the darkness in their lives by replacing it entirely with matters of economics and reason. Describing their preoccupation as "the universal tide . . . the great sin,"¹³ she believes Lawrence's intention is to show how man becomes incapable of an action

⁹ Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁰ Spender, "The Life of Literature," p. 1311.

¹¹ Stephen Spender, World Within World (London: Hanish and Hamilton, 1951), p. 97.

¹² Dorothy Van Ghent, The English Novel (New York: Rinehart, 1953), pp. 257-8.

¹³ Ibid.

except that of a destructive nature. By negating that which is universal and natural, Man loses his own independence and sense of brotherhood. Strikingly similar to this thought is a passage from The Rainbow, a novel that appeared two years after Sons and Lovers, within the period that Lawrence was writing the Look! poems. In Chapter Fifteen, the speaker tells us about the nothingness that results from Ursula Brangwen's rejection of the darkness within:

That which she was, positively, was dark and unrevealed, it could not come forth. It was like a seed buried in dry ash. This world in which she lived was like a circle lighted by a lamp. This lighted area, lit up by man's completest consciousness, she thought was all the world: that here all disclosed forever. Yet all the time, within the darkness she had been aware of points of light, like the eyes of wild beasts, gleaming, penetrating, vanishing. And her soul had acknowledged in a great heave of terror only the outer darkness. This inner circle of light in which she lived and moved, wherein the trains rushed and the factories ground out their machine produce and the plants and the animals worked by the light of science and knowledge, suddenly it seemed like the area under an arc-lamp, wherein the moths and children played in the security of blinding light, not even knowing there was any darkness, because they stayed in the light.¹⁴

The vast darkness becomes a symbol that is "only a subjective expression—an expression of ourselves."¹⁵ The greater realm of darkness, as compared to the relatively limited sphere of light, is what we must give more attention to in order "to grasp the whole," the totality of being.¹⁶ For without the dark gods that allow this fusion, Man is left with reason alone. In expressing his thought, which is either devoid of or above his feeling, he never expresses his true self. He becomes an egomaniac, whether a Hitler or a domineering housewife. Man's only other choice in this state is in not expressing himself. In our age we are bearing witness to such passivity in mankind with his "herd ideologies, herd recreations, herd rationalizations."¹⁷

¹⁴D. H. Lawrence, The Rainbow (New York: Random House, 1915), p. 413.

¹⁵D. H. Lawrence, Collected Letters (New York: Viking Press, 1962), p. 302.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Van Ghent, p. 185.

It is this conformist world that Ursula knew and repudiated:

Always, always she was spitting out of her mouth the ash and grit of disillusion, of falsity. She could only stiffen in rejection, in rejection. She seemed always negative in her action.¹⁸

Only by rejecting the false could she embrace the true. Lawrence hoped that by turning man toward "a recognition of and the vital relationship with the rhythms men shared with the nonhuman world," man would rediscover self definition, creativity, and brotherhood.¹⁹

A recent major study of the dualism in Lawrence's works is Herman Daleski's The Forked Flame. His special concern is with the male-female dichotomy, which is closely related to that of light-darkness and consciousness-unconsciousness. Citing Henry Miller, this critic sees no loss of separate identities when Lawrence brings the male-female opposites together. The new whole that is created from the male and female is not a fusion of each into the other, but a "complementing of one by the other."²⁰ Like Spender, Daleski stresses that the relation of polarities is the "only absolute Lawrence is prepared to acknowledge."²¹ In this scheme, idealism and abstraction become associated with the male principle that opposes the female principle of the real and the concrete. Lawrence called the former the "mental consciousness" and the latter the "phallic consciousness."²² Whereas critics have vaguely mentioned the transcendence of both man and woman to a creative self fulfillment or renewal in themselves, Daleski says that love is the active catalyst,

fusing together into oneness, and . . . the intense, frictional, and

¹⁸D. H. Lawrence, The Rainbow, p. 412.

¹⁹Van Ghent, p. 185.

²⁰Daleski, pp. 21-2.

²¹Ibid.

²²D. H. Lawrence, from Daleski, p. 35.

sensual gratification of being burn down, burnt apart into separate clarity of being, unthinkable otherness and separateness.²³

Interpreted further, man's love for another in woman is also the movement toward love of fellow man. Yet there is a shift back from this communal melting to self, the "clarity of being" of individuality. This cycle repeats itself so man has both the "greatest happiness" from acting in concert with fellow man and a proud individuality which he attains in "fierce passion of sensuality" and which allows him to "move for himself without reference to his neighbors."²⁴

In D. H. Lawrence: Pilgrim of the Apocalypse, Horace Gregory makes a passing reference to darkness as being the all important symbol in the Look! poems. In his essay, "New Heaven and Earth," he considers the meaning of the "sexual mystery"²⁵ in six Look! poems. Rosenthal's psychological interpretation of Lawrence goes beyond the basic idea of "phallic consciousness" in which blood and flesh are more truthful in life than man's intelligence. The realization of "phallic consciousness" is prevented by the "ego-self" which destroys any hope of true communion not only between man and woman, but also between man and society. Also, the false ego which submerges man's ego-self by "deadening his sensual life"²⁶ is just as destructive to someone seeking the essence of whole being. To achieve true communion or the "higher stage of personality," man must first experience "living death or non being."²⁷ This is the "dark mystery." By ceasing to react consciously toward life and sinking the intelligence beneath his personality, man is able to restore in

²³D. H. Lawrence, The Rainbow, p. 39.

²⁴Daleski, p. 40.

²⁵M. L. Rosenthal, The Modern Poets (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 162.

²⁶Rosenthal, p. 166.

²⁷Rosenthal, p. 168.

himself a proper relationship with the world around him. Unlike Rousseau's "noble savage" of animal instincts, the Lawrencian "noble savage" has intelligence, but it is recessive, not dominant, in life. Thus, Homo sapiens becomes a human being as he passes from the light of conscious thought through the darkness of nonbeing into the self-realization of being human.

Rosenthal thinks that while Lawrence is a leader in simplifying the issues, he is the shakiest in style.²⁸ However, this study will endeavor to show that Lawrence's skill as a literary craftsman is just as important as his ability in simplifying the issues. For in his use of specific dark images in the Look! poems Lawrence is indeed able to express with consummate artistry the complex idea of "the dark mystery." From this study, I hope that we will henceforth turn to the Look! poems with a deep admiration for D. H. Lawrence, the writer, and turn forever away from careless critics, among them Bertrand Russell, who said, "They may have come through, but I don't see why I should look."²⁹

Throughout his European journey, Lawrence looked successively to nature, to himself, to Frieda, to society, and to God for an understanding of the darkness, the Unknown, within. In this quest he was seeking to find himself by looking outside himself. This action became cyclic as it involved moving from inside himself and the immediate to the remote and infinite and then back to the present and internal. In the following three poems, as in the other poems, this pulse is seen in the shifting attitudes toward darkness. In the introductory poems, Lawrence is a man alone in nature. The moon and stars are remote reminders of beauty, life, and death. Ironically, the sea, a part of nature so accessible to us, is uncomfortable as it holds nothing for Man; it presents no tangible semblance of meaning.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Nehls, p. 310.

Appropriately, in the first poem, "Moonrise," Lawrence introduces us to the basic contrast that is developed and refined throughout the Look! poems. Indeed, it is this contrast that forms the cyclic pattern in Look! We Have Come Through! A Cycle of Love Poems. This contrast is between the worlds of darkness and of light. The night of the moonrise is described as a masculine quantity, "the chamber of finished bridegroom."³⁰ Out of this chamber, the moon, identified in feminine gender, rises to beam her "delight upon . . . the waves." While she is indeed beautiful she is also a reminder that this beauty will be there when we are in the grave. Paradoxically, although it is an experience that only we mortals can give existence and meaning to, it is also a "perfect bright experience that never falls/to nothingness." The last lines give particular support to this idea:

. . . and time will dim the moon
 Sooner than our full consummation here
 In this odd life will tarnish or pass away.
 (p. 193)

In this poem, Lawrence does not ask for the infinite or eternal state of being, but for its "incarnate moment, the immediate present, the Now."³¹ Thus, suitably, the basic dark-light contrast is begun in the first Look! poem. From this, there are developed the underlying, important male-female and death-life relationships.

A further insight into the Lawrencian world of nature is provided by the poem "Elegy" in which a parallel is made between the death of Lawrence's mother and the setting of the sun. As her eyes "closed . . . for ever" (p. 193), his days become a living death of hopelessness and despair—"day wearies me with its ostentation and fawnings." Yet, in the darkness of the

³⁰ Lawrence, The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence, p. 193, hereafter cited by page at the conclusion of each passage.

³¹ Lawrence, The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence, pp. 181-186.

night comes a starlight display making the dark void a "glittery window." A⁹
now "empty existence" is circled by a "bubble" of lights. From suffering the
agony of death within himself, there is a momentary release from his darkness
to the light of beauty which is present, but unattainable.

Like a breath in a bubble spinning
Brushing the stars, goes my soul, that skims the bounds
like a swallow!

(p. 193)

His spirit, free "like a swallow," is still contained within his real world.
Unable to enter into the realm of death, the darkness of space, he is com-
forted as "through the film" he "can almost touch" her. The starlight serves
as an everlasting reminder of his mother's beauty.

Where Lawrence had felt some communion with distant elements in nature,
the sea forever obscures their meaning on earth for Man and, for all its im-
mediate availability, offers no value of its own. The present light of the
moon's loveliness and the symbolic light of his mother's past beauty disperse
among ocean waves. "The Sea" is described as "single" and "alone."

Without playmate, or helpmate, having no one to cherish,
No one to comfort, and refusing any comforter.
(p. 197)

Where the land nurtures life, the sea appears "fruitless," as neither man's
love nor labor can change its "purposelessness." Yet it assumes a majesty
over mortal man since it remains eternally present "brooding and delighting
in the secret of life's goings." Lawrence regards the sea as the truly "free"
and "sophisticated" manifestation in nature. It is the sea that gathers,
sorts, and spreads the moonlight "flake by flake" over the ocean to man. The
stars are rolled by its waves "like jewels" in its "palm." Even the sun's
light is filtered to a lessened brightness. For man, who had previously given
meanings to natural phenomena, the sea presents a "dark mystery," forever pres-
ent that no longer allows man permanence in the meaning of his symbolisms.

Sea, you shadow of all things, now mock us to death with
your shadowing.

10

(p. 197)

With no resolution found in nature, Lawrence turns to himself in seeking to resolve life's problem. It is a personal struggle that he experiences rather than a mutual one. In "And Oh—That The Man I Am Might Cease To Be—," he first wishes that darkness, "falling" and "rising," would obliterate everything. Without an awareness of being, symbolized by the "sunshine," there seems comfort in the "thick black dark for ever." "Sleep" would only offer "grey . . . dreams"; it neither helps nor alters his present situation. "Death" is not the answer either since it is a mystery that "quivers with birth" as both are irreversible. By losing his own identity, both "inside . . . and out" and becoming part of the "dark everywhere," Lawrence forsakes his own humanity for nothingness.

In the "jungle darkness" of "She Looks Back" (pp. 205-208), Lawrence has his wish for oblivion (p. 205) with Frieda in the "long, lush under-grass" (p. 206) of a secluded spot where "darkness . . . revelled in darkness." Yet with a kiss, "a touch of bitterness . . . like salt" to Lawrence's lips, he realizes that he cannot escape from the ego by merely wishing for nonbeing. She has retained the "mother-love" for her children she had left behind in England. It is this "demon" that now draws her away from him and prevents the oblivion that could be found in a complete love relationship. Returning to their lodging, they are vividly reminded of her divided loyalties when both hear

. . . frogs in the pool beyond thrilled with exuberance,
Like a boiling pot the pond crackled with happiness,
Like a rattle a child spins round for joy . . .
(p. 206)

Though in "joy" (p. 207) in her relation with Lawrence, "stronger than fear or destructive mother-love," Frieda still experiences the "sorrow" of the

loss of her children and the "dry, sterile, sharp, corrosive salt" of her tears drop through the darkness onto his "defenceless nakedness." No longer can he escape from existence; he wishes for the time

. . . when the curse against you will
have gone out of my heart.

(p. 208)

In spite of the hate he feels toward her, he remembers that "it is also well between us." With those other women who "fortify themselves in motherhood," a husband's relation can only become "devastated." The result is like a "deep, deep burn" that darkens one's life with "a curse." Lawrence ends this poem with the "wish" that their relationship "was better" though the burn is there.

Where in "She Looks Back" the night meant comfort for him, in "Mutilation" he now holds "the night in horror" (p. 212) when he leaves this woman of his love alone. This poem tells of Lawrence's grief in thinking that without her he is "a cripple" (p. 213). Also, she must suffer too, but there is the chance that in her suffering she will choose someone else. In the first stanza, he comes to realize that only the "dark Gods," the "powers of Night," will bring about any resolution to his problem. However, let there be no doubt that Lawrence selfishly wants them to decide in his favor. "Leave her no choice, make her lapse me-ward"

Similarly in "Quite Forsaken" (p. 220) and "Forsaken and Forlorn" (pp. 220-221), Lawrence again finds himself apart from his wife. At dawn's light, a hunter's "bunched-up deer" that he sees from his room terrifies him into thinking of the danger his helpless wife might be in "down the half-obscure road." Ironically, this is perhaps a cruel reminder that a man that seeks after answers of his own making will receive what he least expected and did not want. The "dark gods" keep their mystery hidden and Lawrence regrets that he "wanted the night to retreat" to such a horrible sight as this. "At

night," he is again lost in endless "darkness that annihilates" him. Sym- 12
bolically, man cannot willfully impose an order or effect a force to change
the way things are at the present moment.

In this struggle, Frieda has a voice too that is apart from his. "The
pain of loving" (p. 215) in "A Young Wife" describes the awareness of love
she found in Lawrence. Like the sun, who used "to shun/the shadow," Frieda
regards him with fear because he represents an overpowering, unknown force
in her new life with him.

I walk in fear of you.
The darkness starts up where
You stand, and the night comes through
Your eyes when you look at me.

(p. 215)

Where before she was happy and could "sing and dance," her life is now changed
because she cannot negate his presence. Therefore, the fear remains within
her like death to the wildflower and the skylark. Her fear of him and his
hate for her become entangled as they move from an individual isolation to
a mutual relationship in the next period.

Before, his conscious thought had interrupted their love like "the lit-
tle lights" (p. 203) that flicker in the darkness of the river in "Bei Hennef."
Like the sea, the river symbolizes the eternal present "that will last for-
ever." With only the twilight and the "soft sh" of the river, Lawrence real-
izes the love he has for Frieda. Having the "answer" and "fulfillment" in
love that they had never had till now, he wonders "how we suffer in spite of
this." Thus, it is not as "perfectly, complete" as the darkness of the night
had led him to believe. The answer to be given for their suffering is in the
poem immediately following, which is entitled "First Morning." Realizing
"the night was a failure" (p. 204), Lawrence attributes the "confusion" and
"horror" in their love to the restraints of the past now entering their lives.
After the "darkness" of the night comes a beautiful scenic morning of "sunshine."

Before them there are "mountain-walls/. . . of blue shadow," "myriads of
13
dandelion pappus," and "dark green grass." The harmony of nature seems
"balanced" in its present state like themselves who are now in love regard-
less of their past night's experience.

"On The Balcony" shifts the pleasant, scenic panorama of sunshine and
natural beauty to one of "lightning," "thunder," and "gloom" (pp. 208-209).
No longer does nature seem "balanced." It is now in chaos. Still they
"have each other!" As the storm subsides, a "dark boat," plying the waters
of a "glacier river," appears and disappears from their view. This boat sym-
bolizes man's life which comes from the darkness of the womb to the light of
existence and back to the darkness of the tomb. It is "a man in a boat" (pp.
222-223) of "Song Of A Man Who Is Not Loved" that is frightened by "the space"
of the vast sea that isolates him "in the universe." He feels "infinitely/
small" in the darkness that surrounds him. In "A Bad Beginning," a ship from
Austria (p. 231) steams to some destination in the world. Watching the steam-
er from a bank, he wonders which direction in life they will take. Whatever
direction they do take, Lawrence again asks, as in "On The Balcony," "what
have we but each other?" (p. 209)

In their various ways which "stepped across . . . people" (p. 209), they
have "met at last" in this room whose balcony overlooks the human activities
and natural splendor of the village of Frohnleichnam. Here, Lawrence feels

At last I can throw away world without end, and meet you
Unsheathed and naked and narrow and white:
At last you can throw immortality off, and I see you
Glistening with all the moment and all your beauty.
(p. 210)

As in their private chambers, they dance "out of sunshine into the shadow" and
back again his love, indifference, and hate for her is taken in so that she
sees him "in full." Now there is "triumph of being together" where in the
past these differences had separated them. The differences remain, but

their "communication" seems to create a "heaven" of their own. It is a heaven which Frieda reminds Lawrence in "In the Dark" needs both their efforts to continue to exist. The trees and "restless river," like ourselves, may be lost in the darkness of sleep to Lawrence, but Frieda wants to be herself, "not a river or a tree" (p. 212). His reaction is immediate:

Kiss me! How cold you are!--Your little breasts
Are bubbles of ice, Kiss me!

(p. 212)

In this darkness there is now a reaffirmation of love. Where sleep "keeps/ all the rest" in a mysterious darkness, they have each other.

From their mutual relationship, there comes a new relationship between themselves and society. Street lights appear in "People" like "great golden apples of night" (p. 252) which light-up the people's faces that seem to "drift and blow." Appearing out of the darkness and disappearing again, the faces seem endless to Lawrence, but also they are

Without meaning or reason why
They ever should be.

(p. 252)

Yet he soon realizes that "the skies . . . flowers . . . / people . . . machines/ . . . war . . . peace-talking" (p. 256) are there because man gives them existence. Through a series of dark images in stanza four of "New Heaven and Earth," Lawrence brings us a harsh realization of another aspect of the dark mystery--the darkness of death brought about by civilized Man.

It is good, I can murder and murder, and see them fall,
the mutilated horror-struck youths, a multitude
one on another, and then in clusters together
smashed, all oozing with blood, and burned in heaps
going up in a foetid smoke to get rid of them
the murdered bodies of youths and men in heaps
and heaps and heaps and horrible reeking heaps
till it is almost enough, till I am reduced perhaps;
thousands and thousands of gaping, hideous foul dead
that are youths and men and me
being burned with oil, and consumed in corrupt thick
smoke, that rolls
and taints and blackens the sky, till at last it is dark,
dark as night, or death, or hell.

(pp. 257-258)

Perhaps no other modern writer, besides Rilke and Mann, it has been said, 15
has better illuminated the one hundred and fifty years of "rationalism and
industrialism and progress" that perverted man to an "abject worship of death
and to holocausts such as that of Hiroshima."²⁹ Unlike those who have no
"meaning or reason" in life like those faces that sweep by him in "People,"
Lawrence knows that he is just as much "a murderer" for giving meaning in
life as those that actually kill. However, as with his involvement with
Frieda, Lawrence feels a brotherhood with these "youth and men" who are being
slaughtered. In his realization of the tragedy of war from the outside look-
ing in, he is also on the inside suffering the agonies of the dying and the
mystery of the darkness in their deaths. Lawrence becomes aware not only of
himself and Frieda, but also of mankind as well.

God does not provide any resolution of the dark mystery for man. In our
world God is described as "you great, you patient Effort, and you Sleep" (p.
194). We and everything else are His dreams which form the "rhythmic move-
ment of all time" about the still center of His being. In "Why Does She
Weep?" Lawrence tells his wife not to be afraid of the wrong they have done
in the past for in love they begin to do right. Besides, God is passive in
their world—"God will keep hidden; he won't come forth" (p. 232). "Para-
dise Re-Entered" describes them as returning back to Eden leaving the "Lord
of Hosts and the Devil" (p. 243) on "Eternity's level." They are the "vic-
tors" in life for transcending through love beyond "good and evil" into what
Lawrence has termed "some condition of blessedness" (p. 191). In life, the
ever presence of being, we must look to ourselves and not to God.

Images of darkness in nature, self, marital relationship, society, and
religion represent the all encompassing symbol, "the dark mystery." The "con-

²⁹Van Ghent, p. 186.

clusion" (p. 121) they reach about this mystery in their lives and the world¹⁶ about them is that after the darkness of night, subconsciousness, hate, war, and Godlessness comes the light of day, self awareness, mutual love, brotherhood, and spiritual fulfillment. Without the "dark mystery" there would not be any passionate assertion by them of life in any spectrum. Lawrence now proclaims to the world in the concluding Look! poems that "We Have Come Through!"

"New Heaven and Earth" describes the "new world" (p. 259) that Lawrence has found. Famous explorers like "Cortes, Pizarro, Columbus, Cabot . . . are nothing" compared to this man who out of the darkness touched the "flank" of his wife and "was . . . touched" by her. As they near death, there remains the mystery which is not only momentarily a part of their lives, but also forever a part of Mankind's as well:

The unknown, strong current of life supreme
drowns me and sweeps me away and holds me down
to the sources of mystery, in the depths,
extinguishes there my risen resurrected life
and kindles it further at the core of utter mystery.
(p. 261)

Thus, the hope of a new life that the Lawrences found may be found by others. In "Manifesto" Lawrence tells how they did it.

Clearly the love of a woman has given him the strength to bring about this realization of life.

All the rocking wheat of Canada, ripening now
has not so much the strength as the body of one woman.
(p. 263)

On her side, she must understand, says Lawrence, that the belief that in love "we are all of one piece . . . is painfully untrue" (p. 266). Each has "separate being" and so "real liberty." When she knows the "other flesh, ah, darkness unfathomable" (p. 267), then there will be "no laws" to condition

We shall love, we shall hate,
.....
We shall not look before and after.
We shall be, now.
We shall know in full.
We, the mystic Now.

(p. 268)

The Dark Mystery brings about the realization of life, "the mystic Now" that not only exists in the present, but also will continue to recur in the future so long as man is free.

Appropriately, "Craving For Spring," the last Look! poem, is Lawrence's reaffirmation of life. No longer contemplating the question of "to be, or not to be" (p. 265) where death is symbolized in this poem by the winter's night and cold, he wishes that "the living darkness of the blood of man," "Death the Unconquerable" (p. 273), be purpled with violets, symbolizing passionate assertion of life. For

If you catch a whiff of violets from the darkness of the
shadow of man
it will be spring in the world,
it will be spring in the world of the living.

(p. 274)

Thus the all encompassing symbol, the dark mystery, is comprised of images from nature, personal life, and society. It must be accepted by modern man if he, like the Lawrences, desires to find the free spirit—the truthful dignified nature in himself. For if the dark images are not perceived, man has only the light of his own emotional ignorance and rational thought to guide him into despair, hate, and destruction. Because nature and self provide no answer in a realization of life, one must lovingly turn to another, as Lawrence did to Frieda, to give meaning in life or "some condition of blessedness." God will not provide this meaning for earthly man; only man can provide it for himself. And in providing it for himself, he will bring forth the brotherhood of man as well.

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