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Place, pastoral and the politics of the personal: a semi genre-based exploration of D.H. Lawrence's Kangaroo

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PLACE, PASTORAL & THE POLITICS OF THE PERSONAL

A semi genre-based exploration of D.H. Lawrence's Kangaroo

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

from

The University of Wollongong

by

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Department of English

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To contemplate the social is as good a way of detachment as to retire from the world. That is why I have not been wrong to rub shoulders with politics for so long.
Simone Weil

... the pastoral tradition is primarily a tradition about a place - concretely localized within the frame of the normal world but also completely abstracted from it - which acts as a sort of laboratory where ideally natural man is anatomized in himself and in his relations to his fellow men and his world.
Walter R. Davis

If the Christian view rests on the cornerstone of creed, the pastoral ideal shifts on the quicksands of wishful thought. Wishful thinking is the weakest of all moral and religious resorts; but it is the stuff dreams, especially daydreams, are made of.
Renato Poggioli

The expectations enshrined in the conventions of genre are, of course, often violated. Their function, like that of all constitutive rules, is to make meaning possible by providing terms in which to classify the things one encounters. What is made intelligible by the conventions of genre is often less interesting than that which resists or escapes generic understanding, and so it should be no surprise that there arises, over and against the vraisemblance of genre, another level of vraisemblance whose fundamental device is to expose the artifice of generic conventions and expectations.
Jonathan Culler
ABSTRACT

The thesis argues that Kangaroo is both an unnoticed example of the modern pastoral novel and a development of those variants of the pastoral genre which Renato Poggioli has designated 'pastorals of solitude'. While another critic, John Alcorn, has previously made a courageous start in identifying Aaron's Rod as a 'pastoral travel novel', it is the primary aim of this thesis to explore D.H. Lawrence's Kangaroo as an example of Lawrence's continuing utilization and development of the pastoral conventions with which he began his career as a novelist in The White Peacock.

Its task is to examine the ways in which Lawrence, while developing a formally adventurous and politically revolutionary novel, wedded his peculiar notions of place with many of the techniques of traditional pastoral. While Lawrence may have undertaken this development of the 'form' of the novel in order to achieve an obliquely satiric critique of modern political life and democratic suburban living, along with a jaundiced exploration of the consequences of conventional political entanglement for the sensitive individual, it is a primary intention of this thesis to keep in sight the idyll he created in doing so. Moreover, because of Lawrence's 'pastoral' depiction of an actual locality in Kangaroo, an attempt has also been made to shed light on the connections between Lawrence's depiction of Thirroul as 'Mullumbimby' and his notion of the 'spirit of place'.

Rather than suggesting that Lawrence achieved a completely new literary 'form' in Kangaroo, however, the thesis argues that Lawrence really only succeeded in exploding existing forms of the political novel. In Kangaroo, this is managed in such a way that the conventions of linear narrative are re-ordered in a highly unorthodox fashion, one that enables Lawrence to accommodate such 'disruptive' and 'out of place' reminiscences as 'The Nightmare', along with various other narrative intrusions,

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in order to give the reader a stronger sense of the flux and the chaos which more closely approximates the way life is actually lived.

Furthermore, the thesis attempts to show that if Lawrence's manipulation of the device of a narrative voice which identifies itself with 'the spirit of the place' and his play with the loose set of tropes which characterize the modern pastoral novel are made the focus of the examination then Kangaroo takes on a unity, and a seriousness of purpose, which explores deeply, and in a satisfying and relatively orderly manner, the competing attractions of urban political commitment and retirement into rural-coastal solitude. In addition, the thesis stresses that it is the conventional pastoral contrasts of old world and new world, city and country, which enable this theme to be given its fullest expression.

Taking its cue from Michael Wilding's introduction to Political Fictions,3 part of the essential task of the thesis is to identify an additional tension between romance and realism in Kangaroo, thereby positing the novel as part of a tradition of personal and political pastoral romance with a strong kinship to both travel literature generally, and the imaginary utopian voyage in particular. But because Wilding appears uninterested in the way the adoption of a modern pastoral mode, as an alternative to bourgeois realism, sets up a tension within the realistic depiction of place in Kangaroo, I seek to emphasize as much as is proper the pastoral basis of Lawrence's art. Recognizing that Kangaroo is a fiction which adopts a mixed mode, utilizing vernacular picaresque, the dream vision, collage, and the techniques of realistic travel literature as well as the imaginary journey (along with even a touch of utopian/dystopian satire), the thesis attempts to highlight the way in which the hopes of pastoral romance engage with the challenge posed by documentary realism and are held in balance sufficiently well to enable Lawrence to give a strong sense of the Australian 'spirit of place', the character of Australian democracy and the very personal political decisions which dictate how life is lived.

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Throughout an attempt has been made to highlight the point that it is important to see these fictional issues, and the essentially pastoral patterning and positioning which underpins them, in the context of the non-fictional and critical work Lawrence was undertaking at the same time they were being expressed in his fiction. The wide-ranging nature of the exploration of Kangaroo which results is the product of an attempt to avoid the usual hazards of a type of genre criticism which merely offers a taxonomy of pastoral that Lawrence's Kangaroo happens to satisfy.

Part One of the thesis thus contains three introductory chapters. The first of these attempts to trace the development of the importance of place within an English tradition of political pastoral writing and to identify mutations of the genre termed the pastorals of solitude and self; the second seeks to identify those few critics who identify Lawrence's fiction as part of a living tradition of pastoral writing and who have made reference to Lawrence's handling of place and pastoral in his major novels. The third, and final, of these introductory chapters, undertakes a discursive survey of Lawrence's handling of pastoral places in his pre-Kangaroo fiction.

Part Two examines, within a series of largely discrete chapters, Lawrence's use of the loose tropes of traditional and more modern pastoral in Kangaroo, and concludes by arguing that Lawrence's pastoral art is best described as form of 'utopian pastoralizing'. In this section, only the "'Saturday Night in Arcady'" chapter is almost exclusively taxonomic in approach.

Part three of the thesis attempts to place Kangaroo in its Lawrentian, generic and political context by examining the way in which Lawrence's manipulation of both his notions of place and his emphasis on the politically revolutionary aspects of individualism impinges on the adventurous literary form of Kangaroo.

The thesis concludes by arguing that Kangaroo is a generic gallimaufry with a primarily pastoral focus.
PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is a re-submitted Ph.D thesis. The examiners of the original thesis noted numerous general faults, identified a number of substantial flaws in the argument and brought to notice an exceedingly long list of typographical errors. As a result, the revised thesis now presented does not much resemble the original study.

Since this new work is a study devoted in large measure to the pastoral genre, it seems pertinent to quote some remarks from Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia. To the version which appeared in folio in 1593, a work which amounted to an extremely large-scale revision of the Old Arcadia under the guidance of Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, Sidney attached this prefatory claim:

The disfigured face, gentle Reader, wherewith this work not long since appeared to the common view, moved [my examiners]. . . to take in hand the wiping away those spots wherewith the beauties thereof were unworthily blemished. But as often in repairing a ruinous house, the mending of some old part occasioneth the making of some new. . . .

For doing their best, mutatis mutandum, to offer constructive advice about how to repair the 'ruinous house' of the original thesis, I must first of all acknowledge my examiners, Associate Professor Bruce Steele and Dr Paul Eggert.

In this resubmitted version, Chapters 2, 3, 6, 10, 11, 12 and 13 are entirely new; chapter 1 has been expanded; chapters 9 and 10 contain additions and alterations; and chapter 14 has been re-thought, rewritten and retitled. Chapters 4, 5, 7 and 8, although essentially the same as those of similar title in the previously submitted version, have undergone a number of cuts and slight alterations in order to align them more closely with the central thesis of this revised study: that Kangaroo is a modern utopian pastoral travel novel, a veritable generic gallimaufry, displaying a wide range of literary allegiances within the superstructure of a dominant pastoral genre. In addition, the theoretical bases of the study have been brought slightly more to the fore in this resubmitted version.

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With regard to the major flaws in the original thesis, Bruce Steele's point that 'the extracted and revised parts' of my previously published work sat 'unseasily with the pastoral thesis' has been well taken. As a result, a decision was made to resist, as far as is possible, the temptation of including material from my book, *D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul*, in the resubmitted version. Nevertheless, I would request that the examiners consider my book, in its published form, as supporting material towards the degree and I now submit it as such for consideration along with the revised thesis now presented.

An attempt has also been made to address the charge that the original thesis was 'lacking not so much in substance as in breadth of coverage.' The point that both examiners made regarding the history of the pastoral genre and the, in Paul Eggert's words, necessity of establishing 'the link between that history and the immediate context, for Lawrence' has also been taken up. The most difficult and serious task, however, has been to meet Eggert's charge that in, 'the absence of a contextualizing approach...we do not get a series of telling parallels between Somers's life and earlier versions of the pastoral. The fit is not - I suspect, cannot - be close enough when the context offered is so far away from Kangaroo.' In order to answer this quite fundamental criticism I have attempted to provide as much of the context as I felt capable of achieving (as well as leaning heavily on the work of other critics) and also to offer some remarks about the extent to which Lawrence wrote consciously within the conventions of pastoral. The latter, however, is not a matter about which I feel it is possible to make absolute statements. Nevertheless, I have endeavoured to make my views about what I guess to be Lawrence's motives as clear as possible.

I thank my examiners for their advice and for the way their stringent remarks have, indirectly, forced me to be even more acutely conscious of the hazards of genre

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3 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
criticism. Fortunately, the daunting task of revision they have set me has had some compensations. It has served to increase my enjoyment of a particular area of critical practice and has also forced me to read even more widely in the area of genre theory (and not just the pastoral genre) than I had previously found necessary. Both examiners also suggested a number of books which have proved germane to the revised approach I have chosen to develop.

While nearly all of the minor points raised by the examiners have been acted upon, there remain a number of minor and not so minor points which I have been unwilling to alter. I have persisted in my 'strange reading of Marvell's "green thought" passage' and have also devoted some time to arguing with Bruce Steele's view that, in terms of the political commitment, 'Somers vacillates throughout until almost the end.'6 I have also taken issue with Associate Professor Steele's remark that to 'categorize Lawrence's 'pastoral as "wishful thinking" . . .seems quite unnecessarily reductive.'7 Such 'wishful thinking', however, seems to me to be a fundamental aspect of pastoral and I feel there is sufficient critical agreement about this for me to persist in such a categorization, no matter how 'reductive' it may be. A decision was also made not to take up Paul Eggert's suggestions regarding Lawrence's undeniably wider use of 'polarity' and I have, instead, merely stressed that the contrasts of city and country and political commitment versus retreat into solitude are the central polarities of Kangaroo. Furthermore, no attempt has been made to elaborate on the 'Row in Town' chapter, not because (as Dr Eggert was 'left wondering'8) it does not fit my argument, but because its main function in the novel seems to me to be to reveal that Jack Callcott does not possess the qualities which belong to the type of person earlier identified by the novel as 'a good Australian.'

Finally, I also wish to once again thank those I acknowledged in the original thesis. I extend my gratitude to Raymond Southall and John Ruffels for their friendship.

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6 Bruce Steele, *op.cit.*, p. 2.
over a long period and for always providing me with much food for thought; James Wieland for willingly undertaking the tedious task of reading and offering suggestions on the style and argument of the various drafts of this resubmitted thesis; Tom Thompson and Wendy Jolliffe for their continuing interest in D.H. Lawrence and Thirroul; my wife Inga Lazzarotto for the many late nights involved in proof-reading drafts of this resubmitted work, making valuable suggestions concerning my infelicitous expression and also for putting up with my general irritability; Howard Jones for helping me to struggle with the art of word-processing and Paul Eggert, yet again, for being sufficiently computer-literate to understand that, in the case of the original version of the thesis, 'lost formatting' results when someone has 'ported files from one computer to another'.

After all the help I've received, I am willing to claim sole ownership of all the faults that remain.

Joseph Davis
Thirroul.
August 1, 1992.
While contending that Kangaroo's very inconclusiveness is part of its fascination as a political novel, Michael Wilding insists that it remains 'a strange, inconclusive book.' Moreover, after remarking that it 'would not be correct to style Kangaroo as anti-political', Wilding nonetheless maintains that 'its interest comes from Lawrence's exploration of the impulse towards political commitment, and of a certain set of appeals towards political action; though the restricted nature of this set of appeals pushes Kangaroo near to the anti-political.'

The qualifications which Wilding finds necessary in introducing his long discussion of the novel in Political Fictions provide a good indication of the difficulties the novel presents for literary critics. A major part of the problem is that, on an initial reading, Kangaroo strikes the reader as both a most uneven book and one that does not fall neatly within any widely accepted genre. As a consequence, the novel has frequently bewildered literary critics and the general reader alike. Impressed only by the beauty of some of its natural description, unable to categorize it as anything more than a very limp achievement among that part of Lawrence's oeuvre sometimes termed the 'leadership novels', and often completely baffled by the inconsequentiality of its political discussion, Kangaroo has frequently been subjected to some woeful misinterpretation. But there are several things which may account for this.

Firstly, with the exception of the final chapter, Kangaroo was written in little more than six weeks in 1922, despite Lawrence becoming 'stuck' for a few days around June 20. This alone cannot explain either the novel's inconclusiveness or its unevenness in both narrative tone and generic affiliation. Indeed, such a short period of composition would, one would think, assist in creating consistency of intention and tone. After all, Lawrence does not appear to have had any difficulty achieving such consistency in a travel-book like Sea and

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1 Michael Wilding, Political Fictions, p.150.
Sardinia, a work which was written over a similarly short period. Critics thus, in my view, have little option but to give Lawrence the benefit of the doubt and allow for the possibility that any 'uneveness' and blurring of generic affiliation in the novel is intentional. Any of the novel's perceived 'inconsistencies' can then be seen from a similar to that which Michael Wilding has adopted in explaining the novel's political complexities:

It is an important political novel from its very obliqueness, its non-partisan, sceptical, questioning stance. It is a stance torn within itself: an impulse to the rejection of the political - of people, parties and apparatus; in tension with an impulse to engagement and participation - and leadership. It is a choice of the moral leadership of the writer who rejects practical power, or the political leadership of the activist. The former gets the power of a guru, a prophet, a philosopher, without having to push people around - fantasies of leadership without actually compromising the moral purity of the idea by enacting it. And the dubiousness of that 'moral' superiority is a dubiousness which Lawrence clearly sees.2

But in addition to such political complexities, an even greater critical problem is that Kangaroo is exceedingly difficult to classify as a part of any recognizable genre. Lawrence's 'dear reader' is thus 'caught in a paradox':

. . . the borrowings from the language and tone of various genres would seem to suggest something; at the same time, however, the author's repeated violations of generic convention refuse to let the reader utilize those cues confidently in interpreting the text.3

In this Kangaroo has much in common with such utopian/dystopian works as Swift's Gulliver's Travels, Samuel Butler's Erewhon and William Morris's News From Nowhere.

Like these other works, in describing the adventures of travellers in a strange lands, Kangaroo might also be called an 'imaginary voyage'. Morris's novel, for example, is clearly of this type, owning its utopian nature and intentions openly. Of course, in this respect, it is quite unlike Kangaroo, which never explicitly foreshadows the presentation of a viable and functioning social ideal and hence can only be said to be very obliquely utopian.

Nevertheless, *News From Nowhere*, shares with *Kangaroo* a most interesting and ironic attitude to its narrator, something which is clearly evident in the affectionate fun it makes of the irrelevance of old Hammond's (and Morris's) antiquarianism in the future society. And the very daring of Morris's attempt to imagine a fully human anarchistic communitarian society is akin to Lawrence's own attempt in *Kangaroo* to adumbrate a political vision of some society in the distant future capable of accommodating and cohering individuals who recognize their own innate scared separateness.

Butler's *Erewhon*, on the other hand, is recognisably closer to *Kangaroo* in that the 'imaginary voyage' presented is, in part, based on the actual travels of its author. The immediately obvious objection in making such a parallel between *Kangaroo* and *Erewhon*, however, would be that Lawrence's novel is not obviously either utopian or dystopian, and also lacks the more thorough-going satiric intent of *Erewhon*. But, as I attempt to demonstrate in the final chapters of this thesis, this is not completely the case and *Erewhon* and *Kangaroo* possess some noteworthy similarities. In addition, however, too few critics have been willing to allow that, like *Erewhon* itself, sections of *Kangaroo* are written in a mode of Romantic satire and irony usually associated with Byron and, to a lesser extent, Keats: 'that is', as Rick Rylance has shown, *Kangaroo* subverts, yet understands, its ironically conceived central character's predicament and unsteady venturing.4

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4 One of the most surprising of these, and one which is not canvassed later in the thesis, is its interest in the effects of solitude on the human psyche. Butler's sheepfarmer narrator (someone who is quite literally a pastoralist) is on several occasions given to reflect on the experience of solitude in a manner which bears some kinship to the feelings expressed by *Kangaroo* 's narrator when detailing Somers's experiences on a menacing moonlit night in the West Australian bush:

Each moment I felt increasing upon me that dreadful doubt as to my own identity - as to the continuity of my past and present existence - which is the first sign of the distraction which comes upon those who have lost themselves in the bush. I had fought against this feeling hitherto, and had conquered it; but the intense silence and gloom of this rocky wilderness were too much for me, and I felt that my power of collecting myself was beginning to be impaired. (from *Erewhon*, or *Over the Range* (1872), in Volume II of *The Shrewsbury Edition of the Works of Samuel Butler*, ed. H.F. Jones and A.T. Bartholomew, New York, 1968, p.31. See also pp. 23, 231.)

As Professor J.C. Garnett has remarked, because the 'narrator's comment on the behaviour of the topsy-turvy never-never-land seems to imply suggestions of reform, Erewhon has also been called a utopia.\(^6\) Like Erewhon, Kangaroo contains much that is non-utopian and in Kangaroo, to purloin the words Garnett has used to characterize Erewhon, 'the narrative matter is often deserted for philosophical discussions.'\(^7\) Garnett, in his excellent 1972 paper, goes on to show that 'these discussions in themselves are not unified'.\(^8\) Moreover, 'Butler himself admits, in the 1901 edition, that "there is no central idea underlying Erewhon"',\(^9\) a remark which parallels that made by the narrator of Kangaroo, who on one occasion paradoxically declares that 'Life makes no absolute statement.'\(^10\)

While in no way wishing to play down the originality of Kangaroo's literary form, a small part of the task of this thesis is to demonstrate that there is much less of the maverick about Kangaroo than is often thought. In Kangaroo, Lawrence certainly appears to have been struggling to find a form that would allow him maximum freedom. But the search for a new form, akin to what the novel describes as a political 'new show', involved leaning heavily on the forms and techniques of a number of literary genres and it is the purpose of this thesis to highlight the way in which Kangaroo participates in them: utilising elements of the travel-book, the imaginary voyage and, above all, the pastoral.

While Lawrence's Kangaroo obviously possesses some kinship with both the travel book and the 'imaginary voyage' as a literary form, and actually uses them in order to further what I see as Lawrence's primarily pastoral art, the question of whether or not the novel can be said to actively and consciously participate in such genres is one of some difficulty. But it

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8Ibid.
9Ibid.
is also a matter about which, as the novel Kangaroo itself suggests about life, it is not possible to make an absolute statement. The dilemma of choosing between pastoral withdrawal and further purposive activity within the world becomes a central one throughout both Lawrence's life and art, from about the time he commenced writing The White Peacock until his death in 1930. Indeed, by 1922, so ingrained had this dilemma become that its appearance in his fiction might well be regarded as being as much a matter of an almost habitual way of looking at the world as of overt and conscious literary practice. It may be, as Renato Poggioli has shown, that pastoral 'embraces both longing and wish-fulfillment' and that the 'pastoral fallacy and its equivalents are deeply rooted in human nature', but it seems to me that there are just too many references to, and too many glances at, the genre within Lawrence's oeuvre to countenance the view that the pastoral patterns, variants and the 'pastoral utopianinizing' evident in both Kangaroo and his other novels are entirely unconscious. Someone who could describe their first novel as 'a decorated idyll running to seed in realism' seems to me not only conscious of their working within a tradition but also simultaneously seeking to break free into a new form of fiction which is capable of balancing the decora of pastoral romance and realism less precariously. And, as the subsequent novels demonstrate, the venerable conventions associated with the contrast of both town and country (and the civilised and natural worlds) in pastoral writing proved much less of a literary straitjacket for Lawrence than one might expect from a genre once wracked by such frequent debates about decorum. Indeed, for Lawrence, much more than for the pastoral

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13 Lawrence's consciousness of the balancing act he was performing between realism and pastoral romance seems to me to be also evident in such wry chapter titles as 'Pastorals and Peonies'; a chapter which, as W.J. Keith (Regions of the Imagination: The Development of British Rural Fiction, University of Toronto Press, 1968, pp. 148-149) suggests, is 'decidedly effective' because of its 'odd mixture of natural and artificial, rural and would-be sophisticated, in the society of Edwardian England'.
prose stylists like Thomas Hardy and George Eliot who preceded him, the loose tropes of modern pastoral prose could be forged into a literary form that provided, as it had done for Sir Philip Sidney some centuries earlier, a maximum amount of freedom in terms of both style and content.

This brief preliminary discussion may seem a long way from Kangaroo's handling of place, pastoral and the politics of the personal indicated by the title of this study, but it is necessary in order to give the reader a clearer sense of the direction, circuitous thought it is, in which this thesis is heading: that is, to argue that Kangaroo is a veritable generic gallimaufry, utilising and combining elements of the authentic travel book, the imaginary voyage and utopian/dystopian dreaming and satire, within a narrative framework that is not only ordered by the patterns and variants of modern pastoral romance but is also regularly disrupted by the 'modernism' and 'politics' of Dada and the more venerable traditions of picaresque.

It is a difficult and unruly task and one that requires, at the outset, an attempt to trace the abiding political interests of the pastoral genre. It is also a risky critical business, for it is one that attempts to identify a highly original, indeed maverick, form of literary expression to which it is difficult to give an accurate label, although the term modern pastoral travel-novel is the one that I feel provides the most elegant critical short-hand. It would, of course, have been far easier to present the more manageable thesis that Kangaroo is a work that simply utilizes some of the elements (and hence advances) an ancient tradition of political pastoral. To do so, however, would have been to ignore too many of the complexities of the novel and thus to violate the spirit of a work which struggles to find a form both free and flexible enough to express a rampantly anarchistic and individualistic political philosophy: a work which, as one reviewer recognized as early as 1923,\(^{14}\) audaciously seeks to challenge both the reader and the rules.

Section One: Introductory
FROM PASTORAL POETRY TO PASTORAL PROSE FICTION
THE POLITICS OF PASTORAL PLACES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PASTORALS OF SOLITUDE AND SELF

It is still uncommon for critics to argue a case for the persistence of pastoral in the twentieth century. By general critical consent the pastoral as a genre is felt to have petered out with the onset of the 'Romantic' Movement in England. Those few critics wishing to argue a case for its persistence into the twentieth century have found it necessary to modify the more widely accepted definitions of what can properly be regarded as 'pastoral' literature. In the most well-known attempt, William Empson made his definition of the genre as wide as possible. It was, he wrote, the 'process of putting the complex into the simple'.

While there is little doubt that such a definition is a succinct and acceptable summation of the way in which pastoral literature operates, Empson's subsequent explication of his definition threatens to extend to all literature, including as it does such disparate works as Alice in Wonderland and The Beggar's Opera.

Helen Cooper - in her comprehensive study of pastoral writing in the Renaissance and Middle Ages - has provided a sagacious corrective to those seeking to identify examples of the persistence of pastoral conventions into the twentieth century when she stated:

... the term [pastoral] has nothing to do with the modern tendency to make it almost a synonym for 'idyllic' - a glance at almost any pastorialist writing before the mid-seventeenth century, Virgil included, destroys the idea. It is in the metaphorical or ironic relationship between the world created by the poet [or the writer generally] and the real world that pastoral exists.

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What is distinctive about almost all pre-'romantic' pastoral is that 'the process' of 'putting the complex into the simple', to use Empson's words, is restricted to the use of the metaphor of the shepherd. As Helen Cooper has expressed it:

The shepherd world is made the simple image of life, of a complex society, or occasionally of a complex idea. This is the only definition that can be applied with equal validity to works as different in intention and period as Sidney's *Arcadia* and that doctrinal schoolbook of the early Middle Ages, the eclogue of Theodulus; to the authoritative master-work of the pastoral tradition, Virgil's *Bucolics*, and pieces which have not been recognized as part of the tradition such as the shepherd mystery plays of the Wakefield master. All these authors set out to create a world that is the image of life but distinct from it, that has the freshness and sharp focus of metaphor whether it is explicitly allegorical or not. To take the simple life itself, as Wordsworth does, and to try to draw meanings out of it, is a different process. The shepherd world or pastoral may be realistic or not, as the poet chooses; but realism itself is used because it best serves the poet's artistic purpose. Pastoral is never the product of the particular section of society it claims to depict. It is the attempt of the court or city to find an image of life outside itself, and the simple life of the pastoral world is the opposite of the society that creates it. This could result in the eighteenth-century escape into an idyllic fairyland, but in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance it was more likely to take the form of some kind of social criticism. The pastoral of the Petit Trianon left society in order to forget it, the poets of the Middle Ages withdrew in order to comment on it.

Given such a definition of pastoral, along with the received wisdom that 'the history of the mode in the eighteenth century is an account of its decline', it would be an uphill battle for a critic to attempt to argue that a twentieth century literary work, such as D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo*, is a modern example of what Cooper terms 'pastoralist writing'. That the novel's major character, Somers, withdraws from society in order to comment on it, however, is something which most critics have chosen to ignore.

Nevertheless, even Helen Cooper remarks that:

...pastoral as a way of thinking seems to be a recurrent characteristic of the European mind, so that further traditions appear, develop and finally attach themselves to the Classical tradition.
Thus, while it is futile to attempt to argue that a twentieth century novel such as Lawrence's *Kangaroo* is a part of the classical tradition of pastoral writing, there is less futility in an attempt to argue that this novel sustains and develops some of the traditions of pastoral established during both the Renaissance and romantic periods - particularly if one takes Michael Squires's definition of a pastoral novel as one that 'fuses pastoral attitudes with realistic subject matter.'

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Though the history of traditional pastoral during and after the eighteenth century is one of decline, the same is not necessarily true for such offshoots of the classical tradition as the pastorals of solitude and self. These two Renaissance accretions were first identified in the enormously promising work of Renato Poggioli in the late 1950s and early 1960s. His researches, however, were curtailed by his early death and no-one, except Michael Squires in *The Pastoral Novel: Studies in George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence*, has done much to develop Poggioli's investigations. Unfortunately, Squires, rather like Poggioli himself, is not much interested in politics. Indeed, for many literary critics interested in genres, the pastoral is only incidentally considered as a vehicle of political criticism and discussion. Only Marxist critics have stressed the centrality of political interests to the form.

The neglect of this connection between politics and pastoral writing by conventional critics is perhaps one reason why the genre is so widely regarded as having gone into decline with the onset of the nineteenth century. As a consequence, the use of many pastoral patterns and variants in much nineteenth and twentieth century political writing has gone largely unnoticed. Of course, a thesis on a single twentieth century

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century novel cannot hope to fully remedy this situation. Yet it can give some
indication of the development of the political interests of the genre - including its
developing interest in notions of pastoral solitude - in English literature since the
sixteenth century by way of introduction to the task of unravelling and contextualizing
some of the persistent pastoral patterns and variants to be found in D.H. Lawrence's
Kangaroo.

As Robert Sayre has shown in Solitude in Society: A Sociological Study in
French Literature, place and the experience of expulsion (or voluntary retreat) into rural
solitude have not only long been entwined - at least since classical antiquity - but have
also from the outset possessed a political dimension:

In its earliest meaning, solitude designates a location. . . .
Forests, wastelands, deserted islands, open seas - the eremia
of Greek literature . . . dangerous and forlorn. It is the Scythian
wilderness in which Prometheus is bound to his lonely crag,
the isolated island upon which Philoctetes is abandoned, the
woodland haunt of the Bacchae. When a great city like Troy is
razed to the ground, it lies bereft of the men who once made it
a populous center, reduced to a desolate "solitude." Human
beings are "solitary" (eremos ) when they are obliged to live
outside society. One of the worst fates for a Greek citizen is
exile, to be cast out of the polis, far from family and friend, an
unprotected individual in the dangerous wilderness-solitude or
in another polis in which he does not have the rights of
citizenship.8

But for the Ancient Greeks (as for Somers at the beginning of Kangaroo), solitude in a
place outside of the realms of society was not 'a pleasant retreat'. Rather, it was
regarded as the bitterest of exiles and certainly not something to be wished on one's
friends. Indeed, as Sayre suggests, it was 'a potent curse to wish eternal exile upon
one's enemy.9

On the other hand, the central meaning of solitude in the Bible is the desert.
Solitude again is place outside society. But whereas in Greek literature we often see
man presented as alone and forced to wander or live in strange land, in biblical
literature the desert is often a privileged place of retreat where 'man partakes of an

8 Robert Sayre, Solitude in Society: A Sociological Study in French Literature, Harvard University
9 Ibid.
intimate community with God and his people: it is a place where the persecuted
Hebrews 'are free from the oppressive yoke of a pagan society.'

'In Roman literature, to be sure, the older meanings of solitude continue to
occur.' There is, as Sayre notes, still the 'solitudes of orphans and widows' and those
'bereaved or separated from family' and friends along with 'the solitude of exile.'
Sayre also notes that 'the wilderness-solitude' and 'the dangerous wastelands and
barbarian countries where the exile must wander' continue to appear. But, most
importantly, he identifies a new form of 'solitude outside society' emerging as a 'major
theme in Latin literature':

Indeed, on his way to exile over wintry seas, Ovid recalls not
only the urban pleasures of Rome, but the pleasant solitude of
his gardens outside Rome. The new solitude of Roman times,
then, is the country house, estate, or farm of which many Latin
writers were proprietors.

It is from within this context that Horace writes, in the *Epodes* and *Satires*, 'his classic
eexpressions of procul negotiis ("far away from business cares").

By Roman times, 'the pleasant solitude of the country estate has become' not
only a literary retreat (and hence a pastoral one) but also an actual escape for the urban
ruling and middle classes. It is a place free from the evils that Theocritus very early
viewed as an integral part of urban living: 'ambition and cut-throat competition, avarice
and luxury.' 'Over and against city life, Horace pictures the simple joys on a small
ancestral farm.'

In Horace, too, actual though his farm may have been, nearly all is nostalgia
and pastoral obfuscation. He may have genuinely hoped that with peace and prosperity
under the post-civil war rule of Augustus, Rome would return to older, happier ways.
But although, in *Epode 2*, henostalgically pictures 'the happy life of the peasant
ploughing his fields with oxen', Horace 'was not a peasant himself and did not work

13 *ibid*.
14 Horace, Epode 2 in *The Odes and Epodes*, trans. C.E Bennett, Harvard University Press, Cambridge,
his own land.' In spite of his 'nostalgia for the peasant's life', he was but one of many of the urban middle class who had obtained land,\(^{15}\) as Sayre argues, both 'for profit farming and as a retreat from city life.'\(^ {16}\) In so doing they were actively participating in dispossessing the peasantry. Virgil, in the *Georgics*, despite conjuring up a view of a Golden Age when 'the earth produced everything willingly' and without the need for human toil, still manages to practise that wishful thinking which is at the heart of pastoral by venturing to suggest 'that under Pollio's consulship' country life will once again be the experience of a Golden Age of paradisiacal agricultural abundance.\(^ {17}\)

In later Roman writers, such as Pliny the Younger and Seneca, the retreat is often to a country estate housing the most elegant of villas. The retreat is a more individualistic one and does not necessarily conjure up visions of the Golden Age. Country solitude becomes, as Sayre phrases it, 'the landowners cultivation of his own mind, free from the affairs in Rome to which he must often return.' 'What is important is the creation of a state of quietude in one's mind'.\(^ {18}\) These Roman notions of individualistic self-cultivation have their counterpart in those Christian hermits who 'expressed the individualistic trend of monasticism.' And, as Sayre explains:

> Although the hermit's retreat involves a far more complete rejection of society, impelled as it is by a total religious engagement, nonetheless it represents a parallel revolt to that of the Roman landowner-philosopher. The latter, though, as a member of the ruling classes, both escapes and participates in the social system.\(^ {19}\)

His conclusion is thus that the 'first important literary expressions of solitude - solitudes situated outside urban society and as an escape from it - are directly linked with notions of ideal community.'\(^ {20}\)

Even the earliest literary expressions of notions of pastoral solitude have almost always had a political agenda. And so when notions of pastoral solitude enter English

\(^{15}\)The famous Sabine farm, given to him by his patron Maecenas.

\(^{16}\)Sayre, *op.cit.*, p. 22. All quotations within this sentence are from this page.

\(^{17}\)Op.cit., p. 23


\(^{19}\)Ibid.

literature (more often by way of translation but also, occasionally, indigenously) at the very end of the medieval period, the genre contains nearly all of the tensions - tensions themselves the product of the stresses and strains of urban living - which today exist in an industrial capitalist world. Rural content, political involvement and intrigue, idyllic and ordered gardens and fields, and the wildest of woods and wildernesses, these figure as prominently in ancient pastoral as they do in modern mutations of the genre. Perhaps the only marked recent change has been the re-estimation of the beauties of both desert and forest wildernesses since the close of the eighteenth century. While an ordered wood might sometimes be the scene of idyllic retreat, 'the primal meaning of solitude in the medieval period', argues Sayre, is that the forest was a wild and dangerous place where one risked one's life with wild animals and robbers in 'the realm of the outlaw.'

The notions of place, pastoral and solitude thus seem to have been with the human race ever since it abandoned the primitive communism most Marxists assume was practised in the earliest stages of human civilization. In more modern times, one way men and women writers seem to have sought to atone for the guilt and strife they feel in participating, either actively or passively, in the oppression and exploitation of their fellows is by means of escape. Sometimes the escape is to a place both real and imagined. More often it is a purely literary flight. It is the persistence of this literary flight in the literature of England since the mid 1500s that occupies this chapter. But when pastoral first enters English literature it utilizes the metaphor of the shepherd and almost always conceals its political import under the goatherd's weeds and the shepherd's cloak. There is little doubt, however, that (despite the mystification and obfuscation inherent in the genre) politics is central to the form. This is not to suggest that pastoral is primarily concerned with some abstract political process, but rather to indicate that the critique inherent in the genre is concerned with politics as the business of living, a concern that is directed (in Marxist terms) at the task of overcoming our estrangement from both the world and its creatures and our fellow beings. The

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centrality of this concern within the genre is obliquely demonstrated\textsuperscript{22} by the fact that it is Marxist literary critics who predominate among commentators on the subject. Thus, as much by means of necessity as of obvious political persuasion, the following survey of pastoral literature in England since the Renaissance, draws almost exclusively on the work of Marxist critics whenever it seeks critical support.

My own feeling is that the notion of solitary retreat is part of a continuing revolt by individuals during the early development of a market economy, the beginnings of industrialism, and for the four hundred years or so of consolidation of capitalist organization. But this is hardly an original viewpoint. Writing of 'country retreat', Sayre explains that it is defined in opposition to many aspects of the new order:

\ldots trade, war, the autocratic court, even the early forms of urban ugliness and pollution. But the essence of the critique does not lie in any one specific institution. It lies in the very nature of the new social order. Country solitude is always a retreat from a society based on competition, antagonism, self-interest. Appearing under many guises, as ambition, flattery, hypocrisy, luxury, and the like, the underlying principle remains the same. In a society increasingly ruled by money, self-interest becomes a primary motive of human conduct.

Over and against this society based on antagonism and competition, retreat is a search for lost community among men. It is often associated metaphorically with mythical, ideal communities - the Golden Age, the Kingdom of Heaven - where men live united. The estate is sometimes conceived as a community more perfect than the one left behind (\ldots rule[d] beneficently), and the monastery in its purer manifestations is an attempt to create a fraternal community that does not know self-interest. Yet the theme of retreat to solitude is often informed with the ideology of the order it spurns; it is in many cases itself an expression of the new individualism. From Pliny to Seneca to Montaigne, the humanist tradition of country retreat conceives of rural solitude as a means of retreat into oneself. The new community is not exterior - the estate itself - but the interior "crowd" within oneself. The solitary is himself a community; he communes with his ideas and his readings.\textsuperscript{23}

What is thus being traced in this chapter is the development of a notion of pastoral solitude originally identified with land - that is a \textit{place} - which one owned. It is a tradition that extends almost to the close of the eighteenth century. By the time Wordsworth begins to write his greatest works this notion of solitude is becoming

\textsuperscript{22} But nonetheless convincingly, I feel.
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 45.
nostalgically linked with a native place (usually the scene of the author's childhood) from which the poet is often, imaginatively or actually, exiled. In a late Victorian, such as Hardy, solitude (both pleasant and unpleasant) becomes often identified simply with the land his characters choose, or are forced, to settle in. By the time Lawrence comes to produce the writings of his middle period, the locus of pleasant solitude has virtually become whatever place to which his characters travel.

The purpose of tracing this development is to focus on the more modern development of one of the most influential ancient genres. Although some attempt will be made to give an indication of development within the genre's conventional form in England between 1500 and the end of the eighteenth century, it needs to be noted that by this time the limits of the traditional version of pastoral had for the most part been reached. This discussion of the English world of pastoral verse may seem a long way from Lawrence and the novels of his middle period but the link between the two is less tenuous than might at first be expected. And one of the ways in which the dying traditions of pastoral could both inform the work of a small number of Romantic and Victorian poets (and also influence the modern novel) can be briefly sketched, as Blue Calhoun has done, through the figure of William Morris - an author with whom the young Lawrence was familiar. In Morris and other Romantic and Victorian poets, Calhoun notes, 'the pastoral impulse experienced a renaissance that shifted emphasis from the conventional formula to the broader concerns of theme and point of view.'24 In this way, 'the threat posed to the natural world by civilization' became a key concern of those who began to utilize various pastoral patterns, variants and mutations in their work. These writers became less interested in the purely metaphoric well-spring of the pastoral conventions - the shepherd - and much more interested in the literal implications of their concern with rural environments. It is an interest that also exposes the convulsions which these actual, rather than imagined, countrysides were experiencing as the industrial revolution penetrated deeper into the heart of agricultural

England. These broader pastoral interests have a direct connection with the early rural fiction of D.H. Lawrence and his novel, *The White Peacock*, in particular.

As Calhoun has written:

The primary motive of the pastoral is a vision of the natural world that sets it in evaluative juxtaposition with the civilized world that threatens it - the complexities of urban society in general, and in the last two centuries the problems of industrialization in particular. Every pastoral then is in some sense both "a green thought in a green shade" and an awareness of the world beyond. The pastoral also makes the green world a microcosm: a particular kind of society is implied.

In the new pastoral of the nineteenth century a primary emphasis is perception. Its optics are complicated to make it a vehicle of vision, literal and symbolic. Since the vision is double, evaluative contrast is the main purpose. It juxtaposes city and country life, complex and simple responses to human problems, and in the broadest sense, heroic and meditative activity.

Many Victorians express a preference for Theocritus, assuming his descriptions to be more realistic. Like the Romantics before them, these writers are interested in real, particular natural phenomena and the real threat of their destruction by industry; thus natural description becomes more localized and particularized. The resulting style might be called romantic, in the sense that Wordsworth uses "a selection of the language really spoken by men. . . ."25.

This applies well to the poetry of Morris and, in broad terms, has much application to the poetic vision of Lawrence in both his early verse and prose-fiction. But what is most applicable to Lawrence is that Morris sets up a similar pastoral dialectic to that which informs *Kangaroo*. From the pastoral idleness superficially evident in the 'idle singer of the empty day' of Morris's *The Earthly Paradise* (1870) emerges the political commitment of a revolutionary pastoral vision of the future, enunciated in the prose fiction of *News From Nowhere*. It may appear to be a road which for Morris, as well as for Lawrence, leads more in the direction of utopian escapism rather than materialist political commitment. But, as Calhoun recognizes, at its heart, as at the heart of Lawrence's politics, is a dialectic that is nonetheless laudable in its commitment to what each considers to be a more fully human society.

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For modern pastoral writers like Morris and Lawrence, neither simple rejection of civilization nor celebration of the garden is enough. For them, the pastoral - as both a literary technique and a vehicle of comparison - requires a double vision of both kinds of life. And both men were so deeply torn by their appreciation of the attractions and limitations of both the garden and civilization that they possess acute pastoral sensibilities. For although they are of different generations they are linked by the way in which the peculiarities of their respective class positions opened them to both the objectivity which social disengagement brings and the self-consciousness which moving out of one's class milieu imposes. They are men of contradictions, both puissant and pitiful, laughable and lovable: Morris the arty-crafty medievalist and aristocratic socialist agitator; Lawrence, the deracinated coal-miner's son, surviving as a professional writer while posing as an apocalyptic bourgeois social-prophet, and cohabitating with the daughter of a Teutonic aristocrat. Little wonder then, as Calhoun has noted in relation to Morris, that they were both capable of complicating the dimensions of pastoral comparison and contrast by creating works of art - Morris's second book, *The Earthly Paradise*, and the later *News From Nowhere*; Lawrence's first novel *The White Peacock*, and the later *Kangaroo* - utilizing narrators who combine both 'the self-consciousness of the romantic journeyer (like Wordsworth in *The Prelude*) with the classical disengagement of the idle singer (like Virgil and Spenser)'.

Some of the criticism of Lawrence's (and Morris's) escapism is understandable, but what is less understood - and it is the purpose of this thesis to demonstrate - is that in a work such as *Kangaroo* (and, as Calhoun would argue in Morris's *The Earthly Paradise*) - Lawrence has, in many ways, already achieved the distance from his life, work, and world 'that is necessary to the double vision of the pastoral'. And that achievement is 'characteristic' of the literature 'of commitment', rather than the fantasy of 'escape'.

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Instead of simply reviving the traditional 'structure of the idyll and eclogue, the rustic characters, and the artificial surface' of the pastoral conventions, the Romantics became less interested in the old metaphors and formulas of the tradition, and shifted their emphasis 'to the broader concerns of theme and point of view.' More acutely attuned to the actual (rather than purely 'literary') 'threat posed to the natural world by civilization', their natural description became 'more localized and particularized' and opened up the genre to new trends. After Wordsworth, pastoral becomes dominated by an interest in the more realistic depiction of place.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the tension which the Romantic dialogue between romance and realism set up has created a crisis in political writing. The result is the creation of the sort of effete narrator/hero found in Morris's *The Earthly Paradise* and Lawrence's *The White Peacock*. The former is the literary product of a bourgeois cultural reactionary prior to his development of a commitment to the revolutionary aspirations of the working class; the latter is the work of a writer born into the industrial working class but whose alienation expresses itself in a denial of his class through a process of drawing on his autobiographical class experiences but transferring them to a bourgeois context.

Only one critic of whom I am aware has been able to make a connection between the political import of these two great writers. That critic is Michael Wilding and in the book in which he makes that connection - *Political Fictions* - he becomes one of a handful of writers to comment intelligently, and at length, on Lawrence's *Kangaroo*. But Wilding is not much interested in pastoral. Indeed, one of his asides, hints at some aversion to the genre. This is unusual for a Marxist literary critic, but is probably a result of the frustration Marxists feel when, as Wilding phrases it, 'The Brangwens [in *The Rainbow*] are regularly interpreted as a family in ideal, pastoral, unalienated, direct contact with working the land - when in fact Lawrence establishes

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them in the specific context as prosperous farmers, very soon "gentlemen farmers", the employers of the rural proletariat we never see. Curiously, Wilding does not seem to appreciate that such obfuscation has almost always been at the heart of English pastoral writing and that Lawrence (although his appreciation of both the reality of rural labour and the dissatisfactions of rural life is uncommonly sophisticated) does not entirely break free from the wishful thinking which goes to the heart of the genre. Thus, while Wilding's *Political Fictions* has become a source of inspiration for this thesis, his lack of interest in pastoral has provided a point of departure for my own analysis.

Wilding has analysed *Kangaroo* in a way with which I find little to disagree, apart from our very slightly differing estimations of the extent of the 'newness' of *Kangaroo*’s 'new show'. So instead of focussing almost solely on the revolutionary political interests of that novel, this thesis focuses more on the pastoral impulse behind those revolutionary political interests. In one sense this means that I may appear to be engaged in that somewhat un-Marxist pursuit of being more interested in form than content. And although this may open me to charges of 'formalism' from some Marxist quarters, I am willing to risk this for I believe that in doing so I am being faithful to the thrust of Lawrence's primary interest in *Kangaroo*. In a second sense I have also been forced to re-invent the wheel, by conducting a long survey of pastoral writing in order to introduce this thesis, because the only critic to previously conduct such a survey - Michael Squires in chapter two of his *The Pastoral Novel* - has largely ignored the political interests of the genre.

Thus what follows in this introduction is a discursive survey of the political interests of the pastoral genre in England since the Renaissance, largely dealing with poetry, before I finally return to the criticism of Michael Wilding, making some remarks of how the tensions between the modes of realism and pastoral romance produced a crisis in English political writing resulting in a handful of works - like *News From Nowhere, The Rainbow, Women in Love* and *Kangaroo* - possessing

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32Ibid.
both radical content and form. But first to the survey of place, politics and solitude in English pastoral writing.

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Put simply then, the 'pastoral' is a 'genre' that deals in an idealized or conventionalized manner with the life of shepherds or with country life in general. Traditional or classical pastoral is essentially an urban view of rural life. Extant literary pastoral begins more than three centuries before Christ with Theocritus remembering his Sicilian boyhood' from the rather jaundiced 'perspective of the court of Alexandria'. Since then, until at least the onset of the 'Romantic' Movement in English Literature, pastoral writers have peopled their verses and prose with a thousand shepherds, shepherdesses, goatherds and milkmaids. These literary figures are hardly ever portrayed as rural workers. Their 'real interests', as Peter Marinelli has noted, 'are love and poetry, and they are really only the occasion for poetry.' Their purpose is to convey, explicitly or implicitly, the impression that virtue, contentment and happiness reside solely in the countryside whereas vice, ambition and unhappiness belong to the domain of the court or the city. The most important characteristic of pastoral, both traditional and modern, is that it comes to be 'written when an ideal, or at least more innocent world' or lifestyle, 'is felt to be lost, but not so wholly as to destroy the memory of it', or to make impossible some 'imaginative discourse between present reality and past' (or sometimes future) perfection.

Pastoral writing will usually conjure up, explicitly or implicitly, a vision of a golden age or, at the very least, some possibility of a better existence located in either the mythical or actual past (or, in more modern works, the future) - and only on very rare occasions in the present - where the people and creatures who inhabit the pastoral

33 Peter V. Marinelli, Pastoral, Methuen, London, 1971, p. 10. Raymond Williams, in The Country & The City, Chatto & Windus, London, 1973, p. 14, has noted that some six centuries before Theocritus, the Works and Days of Hesiod has a reference to the Golden Age 'remote and free from evil and grief. . . [mortal men] had all good things, for the fruitful earth unforced bare them fruit abundantly without stint'. Williams suggests that, 'for Hesiod', 'at the beginning of country literature', 'this myth of the Golden Age. . . is already far in the past'.
34 Peter Marinelli, op.cit., p. 4.
milieu can live lives of rural simplicity, contentment and happiness. Occasionally, this
view of the Golden Age is presented in the terms of a primitive communism as it is in
Spenser's 'Prosopopoia: Mother Hvyberds Tale':

For now a few haue all and all haue naught,
Yet all be brethren ylike dearly bought:
There is no right in this partition,
Ne was it so by institution
Ordained first, ne by the law of Nature,
But that she gaue ike blessing to each creture
As well of wordly livelode as of life,
That there might be no difference nor strife,
Nor ought cald mine or thine; thrice happie then
Was the condition of mortall men.
That was the golden age of Saturne old...36

It is a pagan view - 'the golden age of Saturne old' - that looks back to the first of
Virgil's Georgics.

In Christian societies, the association of this pastoral golden age with 'The
Garden' of Eden was an understandable, if not inevitable, development. The frequent
use of a 'garden' as both a metaphor for, and an actual site of, the literary pastoral
landscape becomes a common device of exponents of the genre. Often, too, as in the
Book of Genesis, the pastoral garden is presented as a cornucopia where labour is
either unnecessary or, at the very least, so enjoyable as to make it appear that a state of
insouciant leisure is a permanent component of the human condition.

Traditional pastoral is most commonly a joyous 'genre', though it is often a joy
the shepherds and shepherdesses recollect in sadness.37 Importantly, however, the
perspective is rarely that of the rural labourer and, as John Barrell and John Bull have
noted, even in the poetry of Theocritus 'the Pastoral is already in the process of
becoming a way of not looking at the country, at least as much as a way of looking at
it.'38 Not until Virgil produces his Georgics does any real sense of the realities of rural
labour enter the genre. This version of the genre was only to become popular in

37 Yet even Virgil's first eclogue is distinctly melancholy and sadness has been a significant component
of the genre from the beginning.
38 John Barrell and John Bull (eds.), The Penguin Book of English Pastoral Verse, Allen Lane,
England at the end of the seventeenth century when Virgil's *Georgics* began to appear in a flood of translations. The georgic pastoral tradition shows an interest in the practicalities of rural life and often, usually for ostensibly didactic purposes, displays a considerable knowledge of rural practice. As Raymond Williams has noted, in Virgil's *Georgics* what 'needs to be emphasized is not only the emergence of the idealizing tone, but also that it is not yet abstracted from the whole of a working country life.'

Virgil, apart from adopting a practical guise by offering advice on matters to do with agriculture and animal husbandry in the *Georgics*, is also able to adopt a political disguise in some of his eclogues. Many of these eclogues are quite unlike the idylls of Theocritus and are able 'under the vaile of homely persons and in rude speeches to insinuate and glaunce at great matters' and 'shewe the miserie of people under hard lords and ravening souldiers', as George Puttenham and Sir Philip Sidney, respectively, phrased it. The political realities of rural life enter the tradition very early in the pastoral singing in Virgil's Eclogues I & IX which are, as Williams has noted, 'directly related to the hopes and fears of the small farmers under threat of confiscation of their land'. The tensions sometimes found in Virgil's pastoral writing between the realistic, idealizing and political tendencies of the genre have persisted in pastoral literature to the present day.

Furthermore, writers within the classical tradition, as with the more modern practitioners of the genre, have found it almost irresistible not to identify themselves or their friends with at least one of their pastoral characters. Even Theocritus, the earliest extant pastoral poet, impersonates a young goatherd called Tityrus in his third idyll. Virgil, too, identifies himself with a young shepherd called Menalcas in a number of his eclogues. Biblical commentators, of course, regularly identify David and Christ as Christian figures for the shepherd-king and shepherd-priest. For example, in English

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42 Raymond Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
pastoral poetry 'Colin Clout' has been identified with Edmund Spenser, as Richard Lovatt Somers, in Kangaroo, has been identified by many critics with D.H. Lawrence himself. The shepherd or shepherdess of pastoral literature is thus, strictly speaking, only rarely simply a shepherd or shepherdess. More often than not he or she is a musician, a poet, a priest or a prince and it is by this device that the pastoral is able to 'glance' at the 'greater matters' to which George Puttenham refers.

Since the time of Theocritus and Virgil the pastoral has, not surprisingly, undergone many changes. The genre enters England in the mid-1500s with the 'eglogs' of Barnabe Googe and in the later Elizabethan period the pastoral lyric enjoys an extraordinary popularity in the flood of 'hymns' on the pleasures of the country and the supposed superiority of contented poverty, as in Robert Greene's:

> Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content;  
> The quiet mind is richer than a crown. . .43

Or Dekker's:

> Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?  
> O sweet content!44

Yet these are verses which have lost almost all connection with the harsh realities of rural life and labour. The 'emergence of the idealizing tone' which Raymond Williams noted in Virgil has now become almost completely abstracted from the realities of a working country life and the result is thousands of 'pretty poetic exercises' on 'an untroubled rural delight and peace.'45 Yet, as the Renaissance draws to a close, a quite new pastoral interest emerges: the pastoral idyll begins, on occasion, to be transformed into a paean of rural solitude; it amounts to an even more profound abstraction from the realities of communal rural labour.

As Poggioli has noted, this more modern pastoral world of rural solitude is unlike the conventional 'Renaissance idyll, according to which any pastoral retreat is a

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45 Raymond Williams, op.cit., p. 18
retreat into love, or at least into love's dream. For example, the strange and peculiarly modern pastoral figure of Marcella found in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, rejects love entirely, preferring, as Poggioli remarks, to 'live free' in the 'virtuous solitude of the fields'. One of the earliest English equivalents of Cervantes's Marcella, with her preference for a pastoral life of solitude and chastity, is to be found in Andrew Marvell's famous poem "The Garden". It would appear to be pre-dated, however, by two poems of William Drummond, 'Thrise happie hee, who by some shadie Grove' (1630), and 'Deare wood, and you sweet solitarie Place' which, though it expresses little interest in the joys of chastity, includes the lines:

What sweet Delight a quiet Life affords
And what it is to bee of Bondage free,
Farre from the madding Worldings hoarse Discords. . . .

These are words which find an echo centuries later in both Gray's elegy - 'Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife' - and in the title of Thomas Hardy's novel *Far from the Madding Crowd*. A more famous poet, Abraham Cowley, anticipating Marvell, writes in his 'Of Solitude' of that 'blest' 'first state of Humain-kind!' while Charles Cotton, in his well-known 'The Retirement, Stanzes Irreguliers, To Mr Izaak Walton', published with part two of the fifth edition of *The Compleat Angler* in 1676, refers to 'solitude' as 'the soul's best friend':

Lord! would men let me alone,
What an over-happy one
Should I think my self to be. . . .

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52 Because of the long delay between presumed composition and subsequent publication of Marvell's poems it is difficult to know whether Cowley composed his poem before or after Marvell.
As Marvell's verse was not collected and published (1681) until after his death in 1678, it is difficult to be certain which poet deserves the honour of being the first to introduce the pastoral of solitude into England, apart from in direct translations such as Thomas Fairfax's translation of *La Solitude* by Saint-Amant (where solitude is not found on a country estate at all, but in the wild terrain of Belle-Ile on the coast of Brittany). Be this as it may, Cowley's, Cotton's and Drummond's evocations of the 'sweet solitarie place' appear feeble in comparison to Marvell's realization of a garden of 'delicious solitude'.

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The surprisingly urbane pastoral persona of "The Garden" is a much more self-conscious and sophisticated figure than even Cervantes's Marcella, and Marvell indulges him with a wittily misogynistic and misanthropic outlook. Marvell's handling of pastoral conventions in this poem is playfully ironic but, as Renato Poggioli has noted, it is this misogyny and misanthropy which presents a problem for literary practitioners of the pastoral of solitude. Marvell handles the problem well in "The Garden" with his use of a decidedly ironic tone. Often, however, the pastoral of solitude can degenerate into an extreme form of the pastoral of self which is, in reality, the pastoral of self-love where, again as Poggioli has noted, a character retreats

... from the world of society into a world of nature so as to be less distracted from the bemused contemplation of [his or her] own loveliness. ...

In literary terms, this simply means that at such a turning point the pastoral of solitude gives way to the pastoral of the self. While the former rejects man's love for woman [and presumably woman's love for man], the second repudiates all love for any other object than the subject itself.

It is thus difficult for a modern pastoral character, just as it is for Cervantes's Marcella, to overcome the far worse pitfall of 'misanthropy' which is the negative component of excessive concern with the self. Self-love and misanthropy are, for Poggioli, two of the most important components of the pastoral of solitude. He also notes that, too

56 Renato Poggioli, 'The Pastoral of the Self', *op.cit.*, p. 54.
57 Renato Poggioli, *op.cit.*, pp. 57, 58.
often, 'self-love dons the mantle of purity, while misanthropy garbs itself all too easily in self-righteousness.'

Concurrent with this developing interest in 'pastoral solitude' emerges an increasing tendency on the part of poets such as Jonson, Carew and Herrick to locate the rural golden age in an actual social estate, specifically in the great country houses praised in Ben Jonson's 'To Penshurst' and 'To Sir Robert Wroth', Thomas Carew's 'To Saxham' and Robert Herrick's 'The Hock-Cart'. In Jonson's and Carew's laudatory pastorals, all the bounties of creation miraculously offer themselves to be eaten at the Lord's table:

The willing Oxe, of himselfe came  
Home to the slaughter, with the Lambe,  
And every beast did thither bring  
Himselfe, to be an offering. 
The scalie herd, more pleasure tooke,  
Bath'd in thy dish, then in the brooke. . . .

Then hath thy orchard fruit, thy garden flowers, 
Fresh as the ayre, and new as are the houres. 
The early cherry, with the later plum, 
Fig, grape, and quince, each in his time doth come: 
The blushing apricot, and woolly peach 
Hang on thy walls, that every child may reach. 
And though thy walls be of the countrey stone, 
They' are rear'd with no mans ruine, no mans grone, 
There's none that dwell about them, wish them downe. . . .

Because of the beneficence of 'The Lord' - and the pun is no doubt intended in both Jonson and Carew - the fruits of creation are somehow consumed without the necessity of human labour to bring them forth.

The 'heaven on earth' in 'To Penshurst' and 'To Saxham', however, is not a community of equals. It does not look back to the 'political' utopia of Virgil where:

... no peasants subdued the fields; it was not lawful even to assign or divide the ground with landmarks: men sought the common gain, and the earth itself bore everything more generously at no one's bidding.

The estates of Penshurst and Saxham operate on very clear lines of class division:

61Cited by Williams, op.cit., p. 42.
A waiter, doth my gluttony envy:  
But gives me what I call, and lets me eate,  
He knowes, below, he shall finde plentie of meate. . . .

Servants are servants, peasants are peasants and lords are lords, Jonson has explained, but the comfort is that the lord is a kind and just 'employer'. What at first might appear to be a hankering on the part of Jonson and Carew after a golden age of feudal class relationships, on a closer examination is revealed for what it is: merely praise of the less aggressively rapacious agrarian capitalists:

Let him, then hardest sires, more disinherit,  
And each where boast it at his merit,  
To blow up orphanes, widdows, and their states;  
And thinke his power doth equall Fates.  
Let that goe heape a masse of wretched wealth,  
Purchas'd by rapine, worse than stealth,  
And brooding o're it sit, with broadest eyes,  
Not doing good, scarce when he dyes.  
Let thousands more goe flatter vice, and winne,  
By being organes to great sinne,  
Get place, and honor, and be glad to keepe  
The secrets, that shall breake their sleepe:  
And, so they ride in purple, eate in plate,  
Though poyson, thinke it a great fate.  
But thou, my Wroth, if I can truth apply,  
Shalt neither that, nor this envy. . . .

The pastoral vision in both Jonson and Carew takes the form of a complimentary mystification (addressed to one or other of the poet's patrons) of the relationship between a capitalist, rural landowning class and the workers on their bountiful country estates. Only in Robert Herrick's 'The Hock-Cart' - addressed 'To The Right Honourable, Mildmay, Earle of Westmorland', one of the initiators of the pastoral of solitude in England - is there presented a sense that, to demystify the mystification of Jonson, the Lord's produce on his great country estates are 'rear'd with. . .mans ruine' and 'mans grone'; only in this poem is there a presentation of an understanding that back-breaking human labour is required to create it:

Be mindfull, that the lab'ring Neat  
(As you) may have their fill of meat,  
And know, besides, ye must revoke  
The patient Oxe unto the Yoke,  
And all goe back unto the Plough

And harrow, (though they'r hang'd up now.)
And, you must know, your lords word's true,
Feed him ye must, whose food fils you.
And that this pleasure is like raine,
Not sent ye foor to drowne your paine,
But for to make it spring againe.64

As Raymond Williams has noted, it is 'not surprising that The Hock-Cart is less often quoted, as an example of a natural and moral economy, than To Penshurst or To Saxham. Yet all that is in question is the degree of consciousness of real processes. What Herrick embarrassingly intones is what Jonson and Carew mediate.'65

It is of interest that the English notion of the country estate as moral economy only appears precisely at the time when the possibility of it providing an actual social and political model fades. Only when 'the seigneurial domain is no longer the center of real social activity' can it become the location of the pastoral ideal, creating a theme of 'pleasant solitude' on the country estate.66

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It may be too readily assumed that the pastoral genre, and the pastoral of solitude, in particular, did not recommend itself to the Augustans as readily as it did to the writers of the early seventeenth century. Yet, an examination of the writing of the Augustan period reveals that this is not entirely the case, even in an age when, at least by the standards of Restoration drama, the countryside where the retreat into pastoral solitude was to take place was often regarded by the culture of the restored court and fashionable London as little more than a rude joke:

This is more dismal than the country. Emilia, pity me who am going to that sad place - kaw, kaw, kaw - there's music in the worst cry in London.67

Alexander Pope, for example, was capable of producing at least one genuinely pastoral 'Ode on Solitude'. Yet, it should be noted that even in this poem it is possible

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65Raymond Williams, op.cit., p. 34.
66See Robert Sayre, op.cit., p. 29.
67George Etherege, Man of Mode (1676), cited by John Barrell and John Bull, op.cit., p. 223.
to sense that, for Pope, and presumably for most of his audience, the countryside was, to use the words of John Barrell and John Bull, 'a void, a place of unlife':

\[
\text{Then let me live, unseen, unknown;}
\text{Thus un lamented let me die;}
\text{Steal from the world, and not a stone}
\text{Tell where I lie.}
\]

In the opening lines of the same poem it is also possible to discern, in incipient form, something of the line of development of literary pastoral up until just before the emergence of the romantic movement in English poetry:

\[
\text{Happy the man, whose wish and care}
\text{A few paternal acres bound,}
\text{Content to breathe his native air,}
\text{In his own ground.}
\]

Here, the extraordinarily heavy emphasis on personal ownership reflected in the stress Pope places on such words as 'his', 'paternal' and 'own', makes it possible to view the poem as the product of a class and culture desperately trying to hold on to the property and privilege wrested from it during the period of the Commonwealth. This tendency finds an even fuller expression in the closing passage of Pope's 'Windsor Forest':

\[
\text{Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,}
\text{And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand;}
\text{Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,}
\text{And peace and plenty tell, a STUART reigns.}
\]

These lines, written a year before the end of Queen Anne's reign, represent something of a last ditch attempt to assert the dominance of a doomed culture by locating the golden age in an immediate political present and asserting the poet's ability to possess it wholly.

Later in the seventeenth century this task, though undertaken in the service of a different class, is taken up by James Thomson in his pastoral The Seasons. In this poem Thomson associates the golden age not with the beneficence of the restoration

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court but with the munificence of the mercantilist 'Whig ministries and the advancing agricultural revolution.'\(^{72}\) Thomson's *The Seasons* is perhaps the last poem in the history of English pastoral which locates the golden age in an immediate present. The idealization of rural life which is at the heart of pastoral writing still, of course, occurs in the above-mentioned poems of Pope and Thomson but the purpose to which it is put is avowedly political. What becomes idealized in 'Windsor Forest' and *The Seasons* is not so much rural life in general but 'Industry' and 'Property', suitably capitalized and deified. What can be seen happening during this period, as Raymond Williams has noted:

... is the conversion of conventional pastoral into a localized dream and then, increasingly, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, into what can be offered as a description and thence an idealization of actual English country life and its social and economic relations.\(^{73}\)

In Thomson's *The Seasons* many of the contradictions and ambiguities of this process are clearly on display. The idyll of pastoral retirement with a 'choice few' is invoked:

Oh! knew he but his happiness, of men  
The happiest he! Who far from public rage,  
Deep in the vale, with a choice few retired,  
Drinks the pure pleasures of the rural life\(^{74}\)

It is presented with a heightened awareness that it is the rural labourer who makes possible the affluence of the newly 'noble' country families:

Ye masters, then  
Be mindful of the rough laborious hand,  
That sinks you soft in elegance and ease.\(^{75}\)

In Thomson too the emerging strains of romanticism are present and, at times, his tone and theme are very close to Wordsworth, as the poet wanders 'the haunts of meditation':\(^{76}\)

Thus solitary, and in pensive guise

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\(^{75}\) 'Autumn' (ll. 350-252), *op.cit.*, p. 145.

\(^{76}\) 'Summer' (l. 522), *op.cit.*, p. 72.
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
And through the saddened grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain, to cheer the woodman's toil.

The desolated prospect thrills the soul.
He comes! he comes! In every breeze the Power
Of Philosophic Melancholy comes.77

The rural countryside is here undergoing the transformation into the lonely and wild
natural landscapes of romanticism; the recently depopulated landscape of rural England
where oft is heard the 'still, sad music of humanity'78 is beginning to emerge in
Thomson's verse. The melancholic and thoughtful withdrawal of the isolated
individual into an 'actual' rural landscape now begins to dominate the poetry of English
rural life. It is a literature moving towards a more 'realistic' presentation of pastoral
solitude.

The process by which insight into the real processes at work in the English
countryside of the eighteenth century are transmuted into the conventional and
supposedly apolitical terms of 'pastoral' is even more evident in the poetry of Stephen
Duck. An actual field labourer, Duck began with all the insight and passion of his
class:

No Fountains murmur here, no Lambkins play
No Linnets warble, and no Fields look gay;
'Tis a gloomy, melancholy Scene,
Fit only to provoke the Muse's Spleen.79

Having demolished the 'joys' of conventional pastoral he proceeds to address those
who employ rural labourer from the perspective of the labourer himself:

Let those who feast at Ease on dainty Fare
Pity the Reapers, who their Feasts prepare:
For Toils scarce ever ceasing press us now;
Rest never does, but on the Sabbath, show;
And barely that our Masters will allow.80

77 'Autumn' (II. 970-973, 1003-1005) op.cit., pp. 167, 168.
78 William Wordsworth, 'Lines Composed A Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey... in William
1950, p. 102.
79 Stephen Duck, 'Threshers Labour' cited by Raymond Williams, op.cit., p. 87.
Bought off by the ruling class - he was installed as 'guide' in 'a pavilion called Merlin's cave' 'designed, for Queen Caroline' - Duck's political vision of rural England descended into the conventional commonplaces of Elizabethan pastoral:

Contented Poverty's no dismal Thing,
Free from the Cares unwieldy Riches bring. . .
. . .The poor man's labour relishes his Meat;
His Morsel's pleasant, and his Rest is sweet. . .
. . .but let us stae the Case another Way:
Were Poverty so hideous as they say,
'Tis nobler cheerfully to bear our Fate,
Than murmur and repine beneath its Weight.

As so often happens within the tradition, 'murmurings' of political discontent and the recognition of class interests are mediated through the conventions of pastoral into a resigned acceptance of 'station' and 'fate', or by a poetic flight towards a utopian and unsustainable retirement into pastoral solitude. As Raymond Southall has noted:

One can well appreciate that the conditions of life in London accentuated the values of privacy and solitude and that the demands of sensibility pointed away from the filth and stench of the towns. It is not, therefore, surprising that, as the countryside became increasingly depopulated and the towns became increasingly overcrowded, the urban ideals of Augustan England gave way to new ideals, which centred upon rural life and rustic solitude.

Nevertheless, that some of the more obvious idealizations of rural life to be found in the seventeenth century poetry of writers such as Ambrose Phillips, John Gay, Stephen Duck, James Thomson and, later, in the poetry of Gray and Goldsmith, could be thought by some of their contemporaries 'to offer realistic portrayals of rural life suggests, initially, there was a considerable distance between town and country in the early eighteenth century.' As Southall notes further:

The distance involved is that between those who are and those who are not subject to the material conditions of rural life, conditions with which Crabbe was more familiar than Gray or Goldsmith.

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81 Raymond Williams, op. cit., p. 89.
83 Raymond Southall, Literature, the Individual and Society, Lawrence & Wishart, London, p. 46.
84 Southall, op. cit., p. 53. Nevertheless, in Goldsmith at least, there is some consciousness of actual processes at work in the country side: 'But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train/Usurp the land and dispossess the swain'. See The Penguin Book of English Pastoral Verse, op. cit., p. 392.
85 Raymond Southall, op. cit., p. 53.
Crabbe, however, is a very special case in the history of the pastoral genre.

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Despite the increasing, though still very hesitant, realism which is to be found in the idylls of Phillips, Gay and, surprisingly, even of Pope\(^{86}\) - as well as later, somewhat less hesitantly, in the more melancholic pastorals of Gray and Goldsmith - the real breakthrough towards a realistic presentation of rural life occurs in the poetry of George Crabbe. His 'The Village' sometimes refuses to idealize the realities of rural life and hence, on these occasions, ceases to be pastoral poetry at all. When the rural poor are presented as starving in a realistically immediate present, the pastoral genre and its 'happy labour, love, and social glee' languishes as well. Descriptions, like Crabbe's, which attempt to give a 'real Picture of the' rural 'Poor',\(^{87}\) suitably 'literary' and 'melancholic' though they may be, can only be sustained when the causes of the degradation of rural labour are located in a more or less mythological past. Later, Gray, Goldsmith and Wordsworth, despite the rural degradation they sometimes depict in their poetry, remain, in part, pastoral writers because they are deceived, or let themselves be deceived, by the genre's vision of a golden age which, as John Barrell and John Bull have noted of Goldsmith and Clare,\(^{88}\) puts:

\[
\ldots\text{forward a mythological history of the degradation of labour which, whether it occurred in 1770, 1800, or 1830, is always for them happening in the recent past.}\]

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Strong as is Crabbe's 'real Picture of the Poor' it is not able to completely break through the political limitations of the tradition it shatters in so many other respects. As Raymond Williams has noted, 'Crabbe does not flatter, when he restores the facts of labour to the idyllic landscape'.\(^{90}\) Yet his perspective is not a critically independent

\(^{86}\)Pope claimed to write idealized, 'classical', pastorals in opposition to those of Phillips. Yet there are realistic touches to be found even in his idealized depictions of the country haunts of his youth.


\(^{88}\)For Clare it is the biblical myth of Eden transplanted to the site of his youth in the village of Helpstone: 'Oh, happy Eden of those golden years' (cited by Williams op.cit., p.10); for Goldsmith it is an even more immediate past - so immediate, in fact, that it is depicted almost as if it were the present: 'E'ven now, methinks, as pondering here I stand/ I see the rural virtues leave the land (cited in ibid.).


\(^{90}\)Raymond Williams, op.cit., p. 94.
one. As domestic chaplain to an actively enclosing landowner, the Duke of Rutland, 'it is depressing', though not totally surprising, 'to find Crabbe concluding' 'The Village' with the following lines:

And you, ye poor, who still lament your fate,
Forbear to envy those you call the great;
And know, amid the blessings they possess,
They are, like you, the victims of distress.91

As Williams's commentary on the closing lines of Crabbe's 'The Village' indicates:

The insight, the indignation, the caring of the independent observer, pass by stages to an abstracted general morality and thence to a convenient and ratifying homily. . . .And then this, in a new form, is that glozing indifference to the reality of 'varied fortune' against which, when it had appeared in conventional pastoral modes, the poem had set out to act.92

Like Goldsmith's 'The Deserted Village' (and 'unlike the Pastoral of Pope'), Crabbe's achievement, as Michael Squires has noted, is that he:

. . . idealizes real peasants and an actual geographic location.
In this respect. . .[he] anticipates both the poetry of Wordsworth and the pastoral novel.93

With injections of additional verisimilitude into the genre, the depiction of pastoral of solitude thus becomes increasingly melancholic in the eighteenth century poetry of Goldsmith, Crabbe and Gray. Goldsmith's 'The Deserted Village' (1770), for example, is a pastoral of rural life but it may also lay some claim to being a sadly realistic description of an actual village depopulated by the rigours of the industrial revolution as well as a moral criticism of the forces which have wreaked such havoc upon the countryside and the lives of the people within it. The rural solitude which is presented in this and many other works of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is in many ways, as Raymond Williams has argued in relation to Crabbe's description of the rural poor, a 'real history'94 in verse of the fate of actual villages which had been depopulated by the agrarian and industrial revolutions. The

'conventional nostalgia' which this process of disruption and depopulation of rural

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91Cited by Williams, op.cit., p. 95.
92Ibid.
93Michael Squires, op.cit., p. 39.
England provoked - in the poetic placing of a pastoral golden age in either an actual or mythological past\(^{95}\) - is at the heart of all genuinely pastoral writing. Indeed, even the faintest of ironical traces of it are to be found in even such consciously anti-pastoral verse of Crabbe's 'The Village':

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Fled are those times, when, in harmonious strains,} \\
\text{The rustic poet praised his native plains:} \\
\text{No shepherds now, in smooth alternate verse,} \\
\text{Their country's beauty or their nymphs' rehearse. . .} \quad ^{96}
\end{align*}
\]

Later, in such a consciously pastoral poem as Wordsworth's 'Michael' - where the 'dissolute' life of the city is contrasted with the simpler, more wholesome world of rural labour shared by 'Michael' and his son as they build the sheepcote - after the son deserts his parents for the life of the city, a characteristically modern note of melancholic reflection upon rural life becomes dominant. The pastoral of solitude becomes an even more melancholic reflection upon rural life through the person of the 'leech-gatherer', in Wordsworth's 'Resolution and Independence'. The same pastoral vision of rural solitude explicitly becomes a 'melancholy dream' in Wordsworth's 'Lucy'. In this poem Lucy's solitude is so extreme that she becomes identified in a completely physical sense with the rural landscape itself: 'the girl in rock and plain'. At the point where Crabbe shatters the pastoral conventions, a new way of looking at the countryside and the human figures within it emerges in the poetry of Wordsworth. In this poetry the tradition and its conventional presentation of rural labourers is, as Bull and Barrell have noted:

\[
\ldots \text{demolished by a feeling of harmony with nature as a trance-like state, which can be achieved only by silence, by an annihilation of rational speech and thus arguably of one's very humanity. This is, in one sense, a return to the empty wilderness of the Sublime; but now the only figure in that landscape, the poet, would himself disappear if he could - if he could be like Lucy, without motion, force or feeling, 'rolled round in earth's diurnal course, with rocks and stones, and trees'. The aspiration is hopeless, but it destroys the possibility}
\]

\(^{95}\text{Or future in more modern pastoral works, as I have stressed before.}\)

\(^{96}\text{George Crabbe, 'The Village' (Ii. 7-10) in The Penguin Book of English Pastoral Verse, op.cit., p. 399.}\)
of any harmony with nature achieved on the terms of the habitable landscape of the pastoral.97

It is a process that parallels very closely that state of pastoral solitude described some two centuries earlier by Andrew Marvell in his 'The Garden' where 'all that's made' is annihilated into 'a green Thought in a green Shade.'98 The difference in Wordsworth, however, is that metamorphosis is not achieved with the ironic glee of Marvell's persona but is rather clouded over with an immense feeling of exhilarated melancholy.

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By about the beginning of the nineteenth century, the depopulated countryside is becoming the empty wilderness of the romantic sublime. The isolated, the dispossessed and the lonely vagrants who populate Wordsworth's verse have a very specific function. The poet's record of the isolation, silence and loneliness of these figures serves, paradoxically, to emphasize not their private concerns - and not Wordsworth's play with pastoral notions of solitude and self - but the social basis of human nature and the importance of the human communities which epitomize it.

The emptiness of the English landscape depopulated by the advancing agrarian and industrial revolutions clearly disturbed both Wordsworth and his literary partner Coleridge. Wordsworth traces the history of this depopulation in his consciously pastoral 'Michael' from a perspective of profound melancholy at the break-up of the communal and filial bonds of Michael's family:

The Cottage which was named THE EVENING STAR
Is gone --- the ploughshare has been through the ground
On which it stood; great changes have been wrought
In all the neighbourhood. . . .99

The consciousness of the consequences of such a dissolution of familial and social bonds perhaps provides the basis for Coleridge's conversational meditations on the contrast between the 'extreme silentness' of 'solitude' and the 'numberless goings-on of life' in a 'populous village!' in 'Frost at Midnight':

The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed! So calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditations with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings-on of life,
Inaudible as dreams. 

The end result of such emotional expressions of a state of rural solitude may be the
hopeless desire to become identified with the emptiness of the landscape itself (as in
Wordsworth's 'Lucy') but it may also, on occasion, result in a moving enunciation of
the principles of human respect and human community:

...every day brought with it some new sense
Of exquisite regard for common things,
And all the earth was budding with these gifts
Of more refined humanity. ...

More sanguinely, the experience, as in Coleridge's 'Reflections on Having Left a Place
of Retirement', can result in a rejection of the private and largely hopeless concerns of
the pastorals of self and solitude in full consciousness that it is only within the struggle
of human communities - not within a romantic landscape of solitude and isolation - that
the brotherhood of man, of justice and 'Truth in Christ, can be achieved.

Lucy's melancholic identification with the landscape itself rather than with the
people within it represents a moral retreat from the position adopted by Crabbe,
however politically limited his perspective may have been. In Wordsworth these two
strands of the tradition - the pastoral of rural solitude and the pastoral of rural
melancholy - combine as the threads that go to make up the weft and warp of the
melancholic reflections upon rural life which are such an important part of the weave of
the tapestry of nineteenth and twentieth century pastoral writing. The tradition slowly
becomes characterized by melancholic reflection upon the impossibility of sustaining an
existence of rural solitude in the face of the pervasive incursions of the modern

100 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Frost at Midnight' (ll. 4-13) in The Oxford Anthology of English
101 William Wordsworth, 'The Prelude' (Bk. 14, ll. 261-264) in William Wordsworth: Selected
industrial world upon the rural landscape. Yet this is not always the case; occasionally, a writer will burst through the debilitating limitations of the tradition and its conventions of a landscape of rural solitude where the bruised and bleeding individual conscience seeks refuge from the political and economic realities of the world. In Coleridge's 'Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement', for example, is found a refusal to retreat. The poet's - or his persona's - social conscience actively prevents the enjoyment of a state of 'delicious solitude'.\textsuperscript{102} Having retreated to a 'romantic' pastoral garden, both 'abbey' and 'wood', the poem begins to question the 'morality' of such a retreat:

\begin{verbatim}
. . . Was it right,
While my unnumber'd brethren toil'd and bled,
That I should dream away the entrusted hours
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart
With feelings all too delicate for use?\textsuperscript{103}
\end{verbatim}

This is not the voice of Crabbe offering lame and supine advice as the Duke of Rutland's domestic chaplain - 'forbear to envy those you call the great' - it is the voice of an isolated and independent conscience which is as yet at one with his 'unnumber'd brethren toil'd and bled' and all too aware of the luxury of inaction: 'feelings all too delicate for use'. What is more, the persona of the poem refuses to retreat from life's struggle, preferring 'to fight the bloodless fight/of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ', postponing the joys (echoing Marvell) of 'delicious solitude' in 'The Garden' until the world has been set right.

It is a remarkable poem which views the impulse towards pastoral solitude as a moral retreat from the central concerns of political and religious life. Though apparently tainted by the intellectual gymnastics of Christian metaphysics - justice will come not through human action but through divine intervention - Coleridge's poem remains one of the few works which goes beyond the private concerns of 'the pastorals of self' and

\textsuperscript{103}\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 471.
solitude, 'and dreams of the human condition in terms of a universal brotherhood',\textsuperscript{104} albeit a very Christian brotherhood.

The tensions between the contradictory tendencies of the Romantic vision of society and solitude continue to reverberate long after the early period of Romanticism. On the one hand, there is the emergence of 'the Byronic hero' who 'despises the philistine society in which he lives shut up within himself, 'giving to others by his manner and actions only intimations', as Sayre suggests, 'of the inner life that lies beneath.'\textsuperscript{105} On the other, we have the role of the author, as enunciated in the preface to \textit{Lyrical Ballads}, who, although possessed of a 'more lively sensibility. . .and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind,' is 'a man speaking to men', 'singing a song in which all human beings join with him', 'carrying everywhere with him relationship and love', binding 'together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time.'\textsuperscript{106}

'The two poles represented by the Byronic hero and the Wordsworthian poet - proud isolation versus the attempt to re-establish human community, to speak for and to the common man\textsuperscript{107} - often coexist uneasily within individual Romantic works and authors. It is a similar 'polarity' that is taken up by D.H. Lawrence in \textit{Kangaroo}. In England, throughout the nineteenth century, early and mature Romantic poets and late Victorian and Edwardian Romantic novelists continue to vacillate between the two poles of affirmation of community and affirmation of isolation as Rousseau had done in France, though in both countries, as Robert Sayre has noted, 'the affirmation of community tends to lose ground progressively as the century advances':

\begin{quote}
Often the Romantic affirmation of community takes place purely in the realm of the spirit - as a quasi-mystical communion with the "people" or a return in imagination to the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{104} Renato Poggioli, 'The Oaten Flute', \textit{op.cit.}, p. 170.  
\textsuperscript{105} Robert Sayre, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 57.  
\textsuperscript{107} Robert Sayre, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 58.
past. And when the Romantics attempt to act toward the end of recreating fraternity among men, it is as prophet-leaders bringing their vision to the masses, an idealistic and elitist dream that is dashed in the real course of events.\textsuperscript{108}

And although elements of this are present in \textit{Kangaroo}, these issues are taken up more fully in Lawrence's other 'leadership' novel, \textit{The Plumed Serpent}. But, as this thesis will attempt to demonstrate, although Lawrence is no dialectical materialist he is sufficiently aware of his life to dramatize and fictionalize it in such a way as to set that life 'in evaluative juxtaposition with the civilized world that threatens it: the complexities of urban society in general and, in the last two centuries, the problems of industrialization in particular.'\textsuperscript{109}

Barrell and Bull, however, have put forward a strong case that the presentation of rural England in the poetry of Oliver Goldsmith and John Clare, in particular, 'although sometimes expressed in a generalized and conventional pessimism' or melancholy, was a 'perfectly justified' response to the local changes which had convulsed their respective villages of 'Auburn ('a little village, distant about 50 miles from town') and Clare's Helpston' as they underwent enclosure. In their poetry 'the conventional nostalgia of the Pastoral became the entirely appropriate expression of agricultural discontent.'\textsuperscript{110} Whether appropriate or not, this same 'conventional nostalgia, I would venture to suggest, is the great motivating impulse to be found at the heart of all serious pastoral. Moreover, this form of nostalgia has manifested itself down the centuries in a variety of ways: in the idealization of rural life, the placing of the golden age in some more or less distant past or future, and the attempt to elevate the presumed virtues of rural life over and above the known corruptions of the court or town. In more recent times, it has been manifested in the impulse to assert the virtues of country living over the often obvious dissatisfactions individuals experience when living within a modern industrial society. It is this latter impulse, in particular, which

\textsuperscript{108}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{109}Blue Calhoun, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 6.
has survived the demise of traditional pastoral poetry and has been carried through, largely in prose-fiction, into the twentieth century.

This disappearance in England of the traditional poetic forms of the pastoral genre is generally considered to have occurred sometime in the course of the eighteenth century. It is possible, however, to be more precise. The idyllic light of classical pastoral which had filtered into English poetry with the onset of the Renaissance begins to diminish in the eighteenth century and it is George Crabbe who is largely responsible for the dimming of the light. Crabbe's 'The Village' almost takes the 'realistic' tendencies which have been present, in varying degrees (and over which there has been much critical discussion) in the English genre since Googe and Barclay to their reductio ad absurdum. When English rural labourers are presented as starving to death in a realistically 'anti-pastoral' present, then the pastoral genre languishes along with them.

With the impact of Crabbe, 'realistic' description, though obviously not so 'anti-pastorally realistic' as to be inimical to the continuance of elements of the genre within romantic and post-romantic literature, begins to become a more common feature of literature dealing with rural England. Although the 'idyllic' view of rural life - now presented, more commonly, as having happened in an immediate 'English' past rather than in a 'classical' golden age - is still the essential requirement for a literary work to be recognized as containing elements of the 'pastoral', this 'idealizing' now most often takes the form of a 'conventional nostalgia' for the 'golden times' of a whole series of rural pasts which exist not just in the fantasies of the poets and their readers but also in their actual memories of a time when the rural countryside had not undergone the rigours and dislocations of the combined agricultural and industrial revolutions.

Instead of simply reviving the traditional idyll and eclogue, the rustic characters and the artificial surface of the pastoral conventions, the Romantics became interested in the old metaphors and formulas of the tradition, and shifted their emphasis to the 'broader concerns of theme and point of view.' More acutely attuned to the actual (rather than the purely 'literary') threat posed to the natural world by 'civilization', their
'natural description becomes more localized and particularized', and opens up the genre to the emerging modern notions of landscape and place.

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Pastoral does not therefore become moribund in the late eighteenth century; nor does it give out its last gasp with the emergence of what appear to be realistic figures like Michael, the leech-gatherer and others in the poetry of Wordsworth. What happens, as Michael Squires has noted, is that a 'metamorphosis' takes place. 'Pastoral, as it represents rural life, is brought from a remote and artificial world into a real world' and hence 'gradually emerges as modern or realistic pastoral, a variation of the conventional genre.'

As an example of this 'gradual development', Squires concurs with William Empson's characterization of Wordsworth's 'Resolution and Independence' (1802) as 'a genuine pastoral poem if ever there was one', demonstrating both 'the way in which realism enlarges the concept of the traditional pastoral' and the way in which Wordsworth's presentation of the 'endurance of the leech-gatherer gives the traveller the necessary courage 'to immerse himself again in urban life.'

Squires's discussion of the way in which The Prelude 'illustrates the double nature of Wordsworth's version of pastoral' illumimates the process by which pastoral develops into a form that Lawrence could adapt for his prose fiction. Firstly, it shows how 'Wordsworth's version of pastoral inclines toward both realism and idealism, directly anticipating the pastoral novel'; and, secondly, it reveals how 'the revisions for the 1850 text of The Prelude show that, with the passing of time, Wordsworth's conception of the Lake District shepherd gradually became more realistic, thus anticipating the fictional development of George Eliot and Thomas Hardy.'

What is important in Wordsworth's contribution to the development of pastoral is that, while acknowledging so many of the harsh realities of rural life, it is

111 Michael Squires, op.cit., p. 42.
nevertheless made clear in *The Prelude* that he still considers the rural life of the Lake District to be, as Michael Squires phrases it, 'the best life attainable, thereby shifting the Golden Age from the long ago of older forms of pastoral to the recent past of Wordsworth's childhood memories.' Moreover, Squires suggests that the significant change from the use of poetry to the use of prose to express the pastoral impulse was 'anticipated by Wordsworth in the prose-poetry of "Michael" and much of *The Prelude*. Squires also believes that it was Wordsworth who contributed to the 'interest less in a perfect and pure world of the imagination, and more in a world of imagined reality that depends upon verifiable local details.' He concludes:

> From Wordsworth, George Eliot took many of the ideas and situations that she used in creating her prose version of pastoral: the positive conception of the value of rural life, the remembered past re-created as a kind of Golden Age, the rural-urban dichotomy, and an insistence on work and duty. From Wordsworth and earlier pastoralists George Eliot (and Hardy and Lawrence after her) learned above all to fuse pastoral and realistic elements into a satisfying whole.

The point is also made that in 'George Eliot's early novels the use of dialect', a technique that Lawrence also utilizes in *Kangaroo*, 'cements the concrete feeling of a definite locale and tends to create the sense of an isolated, circumscribed pastoral world, like that of traditional pastoral.'

Considering the fact that the long and painful process of agricultural revolution which convulsed 'The Village' of Auburn in Goldsmith's verse has been repeated and subsumed countless times by an equally painful and even longer industrial one, it is hardly surprising that both the essentials of the genre as a whole, and the pastorals of solitude and self in particular, have survived the ravages of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed, in contemporary concerns with ecology and 'wilderness', along with the present youthful yearning for a pre or post-nuclear world, there are some grounds for anticipating a revival of interest in the pastoral genre.

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Be that as it may, the pastoral of solitude has managed to survive what has been too readily assumed to be the post-romantic holocaust. Despite the changes introduced in the poetry of Wordsworth and his contemporaries, the pastoral genre has managed to nurture the imagination of many subsequent major writers. It re-emerged in the late nineteenth century prose fiction of Thomas Hardy in novels with pastoral titles such as *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *Under the Greenwood Tree*, suffused the novels of D.H. Lawrence in the early twentieth century and also survives, in the poetic form, in such disparate works as the early pastorals of Yeats and the poetry of Robert Frost.\(^{120}\)

The melancholic, more realistic pastorals of rural solitude are thus the means by which, in the late eighteenth century, the moribund, traditional pastoral genre is able to transmute itself and survive through to the present century. Modern writers no longer entirely committed to pastoral traditions, have thus been able to use such conventions as the 'garden' or an idyllic countryside to present, whether consciously or unconsciously, a 'pastoral' view of nature which is, in many respects, as wild and boundless (although ordered by the employment of pastoral patterns and variants) as the 'romantic' view of the self. It is in this way that the offshoots of the older genre - the pastorals of solitude and self - are given new life and are able to combine with or suffuse the 'romantic' pastoral inheritance of nineteenth and twentieth century writers and thus take on a more modern form which has remained largely unrecognized and unexplored by twentieth century critics.\(^{121}\) In Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, for example, it is possible to see an example of this process at work in late nineteenth century prose-fiction.

The description of Tess's experience of the joys of communal labour as a milkmaid at Talbothays dairy is conventionally pastoral. The dairy becomes the *locus amoenus* in which is centred all the ecstasies of faithful, pastoral love and wholesome, enjoyable labour worked in the service of a kind employer\(^{122}\) - a relatively modern


\(^{121}\)One such largely unrecognized form is the 'modern utopian pastoral travel novel', which the present thesis posits D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo* as an example.

\(^{122}\)The kind 'employer' is in this instance 'Dairyman Crick', for Talbothays has 'no resident landlord'. See chapter 27 of Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Macmillan, London, 1985, p. 173.
instance of the genre's typical obfuscation of the harsh realities of rural-capitalist class relations. What is new here is that the joys of rural labour and love are not sketched in, as they would be in pre-Romantic pastoral, in impressionistically general terms. They are examined in detail through the focus of individual, egocentric experience. The joys of Hardy's portrait of rural love and labour are all the more sweet because both the protagonist and the reader experience them in full knowledge of the sadness of Tess's former life. Both Tess and Angel are not simply the generic figures of traditional pastoral poetry. They are isolated, alienated, egocentric individuals for whom 'solitude' is not so much a physical state of rural existence as a state of mind. It is in the consciousness of these isolated, alienated individuals of modern prose fiction and the deracinated, cosmopolitan 'observers' or seemingly disembodied 'personae' of modern poetry that versions of the pastorals of solitude and self surface most commonly in modern English literature. The result, in Hardy's *Tess*, is the wonderfully evoked 'anti-pastoral' vision of the landscape of Flintcombe Ash which concludes with the magnificent peroration of Hardy's 'romantic' rage at the machine which has invaded and destroyed the kind of English pastoral garden so exquisitely exemplified in his description of Talbothay's dairy. It is a late, 'Romantic' Victorian's passionate reaction to the realities of capitalist agriculture but one whose positioning, structure and treatment owes more to the traditions and conventions of pastoral literature than to 'romantic' notions of nature and landscape.

Because of the immense period of time in which the dislocations and traumas of the advancing agricultural and industrial revolutions have been experienced in different parts of the world, and in different parts of rural England (250 years or more), the idealizing tendencies of the pastoral genre rarely exist contemporaneously in such close geographic proximity as they do in Hardy's 'Wessex' landscape, and thus are not so amenable to treatment by way of so pure a 'pastoral' contrast as they are in *Tess*. Thus, these tendencies most commonly manifest themselves in terms of a conventional

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123 The pastoral contrast is usually between the city and the country, not between pleasant and unpleasant rural existences.
nostalgia for the rural past, although in many places and instances - Thirroul in 1922, for example - the nostalgia is far from being either 'conventional' or even truly 'nostalgic' at all. Fortuitously, in his realistic pastoral depiction of 'Mullumbimby', Lawrence presents a portrait of the actual town of Thirroul at precisely that time when it was in an uneasy transition from its 'aboriginal' past, its rural-mining-tourist present and its suburban/industrial future.

The traditions of pastoral literature which thus manage to survive the onset of the romantic movement - the pastorals of solitude and self, in particular - begin to turn even more gloomily melancholic (and sometimes even absolutely morbid) in the late nineteenth century and continue to do so throughout the twentieth. They do so not simply because writers are able to more sadly perceive the changed realities of rural life under the impact of the continuing capitalist agricultural and industrial revolutions but also because, as Marx and Engels noted in the Communist Manifesto, with the rise of the bourgeoisie comes the shattering of all 'idyllic and feudal relationships' and hence the shattering of the possibility of utilizing a genre - the pastoral - which had already done so much to posit an 'unhistorical relationship' between those 'who are and those who are not subject to the material conditions of rural life'. It also distracts the attention and cushions the sensibilities of readers of 'polite' literature 'from the realities of rural life', as Raymond Southall has suggested. When the countryside and the labourers within it really begin to feel the sting of the practices of capitalist agriculture, as Hardy's Tess so clearly does at Flintcombe Ash - and, as has been pointed out, this occurs at widely differing time periods both within England and in other parts of the world - it becomes more difficult for writers to invoke the traditional pastoral vision and locate it in an actual landscape when the experience of the labourers within that landscape is so subject to the whims of an individual employer.

Whether an employer 'kindly' employ milkmaids to undertake traditional pastoral tasks

126 Raymond Southall, op.cit., p. 53. 
or 'cruelly' employ turnip-gatherers and compels them to work late into the night on
new-fangled harvesting machines can really matter to particular individuals; and, in this
respect, Hardy shows clearly in *Tess* how the local practices of particular capitalist
employers in England in the last quarter of the nineteenth century can genuinely make a
difference to the lot of the rural labourer.

In the knowledge of this it becomes increasingly difficult for writers to perform
the traditional political function of pastoral writing, which, to phrase it in the more
stridently Marxist language of Barrell and Bull, is to posit:

... a simplistic, unhistorical relationship between the ruling, landowning class -- the poet's patrons and often the poet himself - and the workers on the land; as such its function is to mystify and obscure the harshness of actual social and economic organization.¹²⁸

It becomes difficult to do this after the eighteenth century, not simply because writers
no longer usually have 'patrons' but also because 'realistic' description of the life of rural labourers in this period can only go the way of Crabbe into the 'anti-pastoral' or of Swift into burlesque. The episodes at Talbothay's dairy and Flintcombe Ash, and the contrast drawn between them in Hardy's *Tess*, are surely the finest, if not the last, attempts to 'realistically' portray rural life and still invoke a 'pastoral' vision of rural labour. From this point on 'pastoral' landscapes - particularly those of the pastorals of solitude and self - tend to avoid descriptions of rural labour and focus on a 'landscape of the mind' experienced by a 'romantic', isolated, deracinated individual. The more modern pastoral vision becomes, most commonly, a mental landscape, enjoyed in solitude by an 'alienated' individual unhappy with his or her lot under capitalism or some system of government or mode of existence he or she feels to be unsatisfactory. Sometimes 'enjoyment' of the landscape is impossible because of the pressures exerted by the modern world. Often, too, this more modern form of pastoral has an overtly political and indeed, specifically proletarian dimension, although Renato Poggioli believes (and I mostly agree with him) that although 'we may have pastorals with

artisans or working men instead of shepherds', William Empson 'is wrong when he maintains that proletarian fiction is an offshoot of the pastoral.'¹²⁹

But the pastoral has almost always had at least an implicit political dimension. And this is true even for a novelist such as Thomas Hardy writing so late in the nineteenth century. The use of pastoral patterns and variants as a vehicle for social criticism continues into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. And even though it becomes well-nigh impossible to invoke a realistic idyll of rural labour (this can only be done via the utopian pastoral dream vision of Morris's News From Nowhere) given the increasingly industrialized nature of agricultural practice, modern pastoral still possesses an idealizing strand. As in Kangaroo, and as far back as the pastoral dramas of Shakespeare (and so it is not an entirely new trend), what is idealised is freedom from rural labour and the enjoyment of life in a country ambience rather than the endowing of traditional pastoral labour with a sense of its lost dignity. This is achieved by both the presentation of solitary characters who are visitors to the Arcadian milieu and thus free from the restraints of earning a living and the presentations of the Arcadians themselves predominantly in holiday mode, focussing (as in Shakesperian Comedy) on those times when the workers of the countryside are at leisure. Except in the utopian vision of News From Nowhere, after Hardy's presentation of Tess Durbeyfield at Talbothays Dairy, the pastoral place in late nineteenth and twentieth century literature becomes once again a place of retreat rather than of rural labour.

It is thus in this sense entirely appropriate when W.B Yeats announces in the opening two lines of his 'The Song Of The Happy Shepherd' that:

The woods of Arcady are dead,
And over is their antique joy. . . .¹³⁰

And it is again entirely appropriate, in his 'The Sad Shepherd' which immediately follows 'The Song' in his Crossways collection published in 1889, that the reader is

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¹²⁹Renato Poggioli, 'The Oaten Flute, op.cit., p. 173: The gist of Poggioli's argument is that: 'Proletarian novels idealize the urban masses without idealizing their way of life; while exalting the moral virtues of the common man, they protest against the social vices that condition his lot. The pastoral, however, treats that lot not as a curse to be dispelled, but as a blessing to be restored.'

presented with the story of a typically 'romantic' figure, not unlike those who people
the verse of Wordsworth:

There was a man whom Sorrow named his friend,
And he, of his high comrade Sorrow dreaming,
Went walking with slow steps along the gleaming
And humming sands, where windy surges wend. . . .

. . .

But the sad dweller by the sea-ways lone
Changed all he sang to inarticulate moan
Among her wildering whirls, forgetting him.131

This is very late in the century but Yeats's poem appears a highly conscious pastoral of
solitude - given the title and the heavy emphasis placed on the word 'lone' in the verse
quoted above. Characteristically, the 'sad dweller', like Wordsworth's Lucy, seeks
some sort of inhuman identification with the natural world. His quest for oblivion
amidst the sea's 'wildering whirls', a state where he becomes both void and voiceless,
appears particularly melancholic considering the insistence in 'The Song of the Happy
Shepherd' that 'words alone are certain good'.132

In these two poems by Yeats, the process of the demolition of the very base
upon which pastoral is built has gone even further than that of Wordsworth. Like
'Lucy', the 'Sad Shepherd' is a pitiable figure. But whereas, in Wordsworth, Lucy is
able to achieve a type of harmony with nature, inhuman though it may be, Yeats's sad
shepherd finds nothing in nature that can 'comfort him'.133 The stars 'laugh on' as if
to mock his suffering. The sea ignores him and 'the dewdrops' are preoccupied with
themselves:

. . . for they always listening,
. . . for the sound of their own dropping.134

Only in the lines:

. . . the man whom Sorrow named his friend
Sought once again the shore, and found a shell,
And thought, I will my heavy story tell
Till my own words, re-echoing, shall send
Their sadness through a hollow, pearly heart;
And my own tale again for me shall sing.

131 W.B. Yeats, 'The Sad Shepherd' (ll. 1-4 & 26-9) in W.B. Yeats: Selected Poetry, op.cit., p. 3.
133 W.B. Yeats, 'The Sad Shepherd' in W.B. Yeats: Selected Poetry, op.cit., p. 3.
134 Ibid.
And my own whispering words be comforting,
And lo! my ancient burden may depart.
Then he sang softly nigh the pearly rim. . .,\textsuperscript{135}

does the poem appear to offer any hope of comfort to the sad shepherd. Yet inexplicably:

\ldots the sad dweller by the sea-ways lone
Changed all he sang to inarticulate moan
Among her wildering whirls, forgetting him.\textsuperscript{136}

Here, there is no basis for harmony with nature, no habitable landscape of pastoral at all. There is none of the joyous 'aloneness' of Marvell's garden, just a sad dweller on an inhospitable shore, desolately alone with the inarticulate moaning of his pitiable heart. The pastorals of solitude and self have turned inward upon themselves into incoherence. This is bad enough in a world where 'words alone are certain good'. It is worse, however, in that 'The Sad Shepherd', the 'man whom Sorrow named his friend', has now forsaken his only companion, 'forgetting him'.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, then, the Romantics appear to have developed the notion of traditional retreat with a difference. The theme of inadaptation of the sensitive human being to society and consequent retreat into the wilds of nature is now developed as a retreat no longer bringing peace. For the poets now more often begin to bring their malaise with them into the garden. Inquietude now becomes part of the mood of solitary retreat, in harmony with the increasingly desolate and rugged natural surroundings which the tradition begins to depict.

Yeats's poem is thus both a fitting swan-song (if you'll excuse the very Yeatsian pun) for the traditional form of the genre and a harbinger of the mutations of the tradition of pastoral solitude which are developing. It confirms Poggioli's conjectures on the genre's tendency to descend into misanthropy and self-love.\textsuperscript{137} Significantly, in Yeats's 'The Song of the Happy Shepherd' and 'The Sad Shepherd', there is not a sheep in sight. His pastoral 'landscape' is by the sea and in the coming century when the locale most familiar to writers was often one of partial despoil, the

\textsuperscript{135}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{136}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137}Renato Poggioli, 'The Pastoral of the Self', \textit{op.cit.}, p. 54.
sea and the lonely shore become more common settings for the twentieth century equivalents of 'pastoral' literary expression.

Yeats, however, remained aware of the potential of the pastoral form at least until the onset of the twenties. In 1904, in a speech given in New York, he proclaimed:

Wherever men have tried to imagine a perfect life, they have imagined a place where men plow and sow and reap, not a place where there are great wheels turning and great chimneys vomiting smoke. Ireland will always be a place where men plow and sow and reap.138

Yeats would later revive the pastoral form for an elegy on the death of Robert Gregory in France. 'Shepherd and Goatherd', as well as being a pastoral elegy on the death of his patron's son, also heaps praise on Lady Gregory herself in a very sixteenth century pastoral fashion. With the close of the nineteenth century, very few writers utilize the figure of the shepherd to further the conventions of pastoral through poetry. Most look to other forms to utilize the conventions.

Although I do not consider proletarian literature one of these forms, William Empson in Some Versions of Pastoral makes a tantalizing remark about Lawrence: 'D.H. Lawrence's refusal to write proletarian literature was an important choice, but he was a complicated person.'139 Despite the fact that Empson subsequently has little to say about him, Lawrence is a most interesting case and, even in his most obviously 'industrial' novel, Sons and Lovers, Lawrence's perspective is indeed that of a pastoralist and not a proletarian. He is thus able to present a distinctive pastoral contrast between the degradation of life as a miner's son and the joys of rural labour and love Paul Morel experiences at Miriam's farm, 'The Haggs', rather than focussing exclusively on the squalor of proletarian family life. Yet this is not a point that Empson chooses to develop. One critic who has, however, is Anthony Burgess. Although not by way of commenting directly on Sons and Lovers, Burgess has nonetheless offered an explanation as to why so much of Lawrence's first novel, The White Peacock, is written in 'pastoral prose' and that Lawrence, even at the point in time as a writer when

139 William Empson, op.cit., pp. 7-8.
he was still physically and psychologically close to his industrial working class origins, cannot therefore be considered a 'true proletarian writer'. Burgess's contention is that even though 'Lawrence was the son of a miner working in Brinsley colliery, Eastwood, about ten miles north-west of Nottingham', the reason he did not make 'Poverty, squalor' and 'industrial degradation. . .his themes' was that 'Eastwood looks on to fields and farms, and Lawrence chose to make himself a countryman.'

Burgess has been perceptive in seeing that Lawrence did have a choice and that his sensibilities, nurtured by his reading, inclined him to a pastoral rather than a proletarian literary career. Eastwood in the early 1900s, like Hardy's Wessex, was a landscape which evidenced a pointed contrast between the horrors and encroachments of industrialism and the traditions and wholesome joys of agricultural life. The natural world of rural England meant the world to the young Lawrence, even when it was not the fields and farms surrounding his native Eastwood, as a reading of The Trespasser reveals. Yet Lawrence very early thought about what removal from his home terrain would mean, for both his life and fiction. Indeed, Lawrence constructs The White Peacock in such a way that the novel undoubtedly enact
ts John Goode's contention that, at least for Cyril, Lettie and George, 'awakening will mean separation from landscape and growth will mean uprooting.'

Lawrence went on to further his appreciation of the respective sensibilities of such lives - industrial and modern, agricultural and ancient - in the magnificent opening chapter of The Rainbow. An analysis of the presentation of such a contrast in Kangaroo will follow. Before doing so, however, it is worth pointing out that such a


141Even a glance at Rose Marie Burwell's 'A Catalogue of D.H. Lawrence's Reading From Early Childhood' in The D.H. Lawrence Review, Volume 3, 1970, pp. 191-324, is enough to indicate how much the notions of 'literary' and 'pastoral' would have influenced his thinking as to what sort of literature he himself might attempt to create. That Lawrence, according to Jesse Chambers, was actively reading Virgil's Georgics while writing The White Peacock (Burwell, op.cit., p. 216), provides another kind of evidence. Important too, perhaps, is that, on the evidence of Burwell's catalogue at least, not even such a famous 'proletarian' work as The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists appears to have been part of Lawrence's reading.

contrast is further developed in Lawrence’s final novel, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Set in the latter half of the 1920s, this novel accentuates the impossibility of continuing an ancient agricultural existence by symbolically presenting rural life as a gamekeeper’s wood hemmed in on all sides by the horrors of a coal-mining village called Tevershall and, in its own way, equally horrific estate of Sir Clifford Chatterley’s Wragby Hall.

What is distinctive in Lawrence’s earlier novels, however, is that Lawrence’s narrators do not always perceive the world of pastoral as an admirable one. In *Kangaroo*, for example, the manipulation of many of the pastoral patterns and variants established since the Renaissance focus attention on the very difficult personal political choices a character like Richard Lovatt Somers - as a representative of twentieth century man - must make. The competing attractions of fascism, socialism and domestic, rural solitude in a strange new land are put before the reader and the major character. Escape or commitment? These are the choices with which Somers is faced. And they are choices which go to the heart of the issues that matter most to the practitioners of the modern pastoral novel.

Hallett Smith, in *Elizabethan Poetry*, has argued that Renaissance pastoral always offered a criticism of life. Whereas the myth of the Golden Age provided a critique of life by contrasting it with an idealized past, pastoral ‘was a criticism of life by means of adopting the point of view of its simplest and purest elements’. The essence of this criticism for Smith was the contrast of a ‘simple, natural goodness of the pastoral ideal, self-contained and unaspiring, to the vanity and ambition of the world.’ The modern pastoral novel by affirming the life of peaceful withdrawal into a realistically depicted natural, rural landscape also offers a criticism of modern life. In the case of *Kangaroo*, this is a critique of modern urban political life.

As Michael Squires has noted in his attempt to advance Poggioli’s very roughly-sketched ideas on the survival of the pastoral ideal in modern culture, the

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143I think the same is true, *mutatis mutandum*, for Ursula in *The Rainbow*.
modern pastoral novel, appearing 'whenever metropolitan life grows hard to bear', 'rejects ambition, opposes wealth, urges a self-contained community, and tends to create an economic idyll of favourable weather, bountiful nature, and freedom from work.' And, as Walter R. Davis and Harold E. Toliver have noted, 'many pastoral works have a three part form: a withdrawal to a place apart that offers a perspective on sophisticated life, a reassessment of values and a reorientation toward society, followed by a return to the complex and active world.' Since a transcript of actual rural life might be both disturbing and unpleasant, the modern pastoral novelist always 'makes rural life palatable by softening or omitting its coarseness.'

Thus, as Michael Squires argues, the rustics or yokels who appear in the modern pastoral novel 'lie somewhere between the refined, idealized creations of traditional pastoral and coarse or gross transcripts from country life.' But, because modern pastoral chooses to depict actual landscapes, the realism which is the hallmark of the modern genre (despite the omissions and 'softenings' employed to make the landscape idyllic) still manifests itself in numerous ways: 'plausible characterization, accurate and detailed rendering of an actual locality, the use of dialect to achieve verisimilitude, and an honest acknowledgement of human suffering.' All these techniques are utilized in the modern pastoral novel to register the discontent of the civilized with civilization. And this often amounts to the development of pastoral as a form of cultural primitivism stressing not only a preference for a simpler way of life but also a striving for a state of otium characterized by states of 'mindlessness' and 'unconsciousness' similar to that depicted in such works as Marvell's The Garden, Wordsworth's 'Lucy' and Yeats's 'The Song of the Happy Shepherd'.

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146Michael Squires, op.cit., p. 7.
148Michael Squires, op.cit., p. 16
149Ibid.
150Op.cit., p. 17
It is as a novel meeting nearly all the criteria detailed in the above paragraph that Lawrence's *Kangaroo* will be categorized as an unnoticed example of the modern pastoral novel and as a development of that mutation of the genre which Renato Poggioli termed 'the pastoral of solitude'. Because of Lawrence's 'pastoral' depiction of an actual locality in this novel an attempt will also be made to shed light on the relationship between Lawrence's literary depiction of Thirroul as 'Mullumbimby' and his notion of 'spirit of place'. In short, the task of this thesis is to examine the way in which persistent pastoral patterns and variants have been developed to shape the structure of the fictional depiction of an actual place in a twentieth century novel, written in Australia, by arguably the greatest English novelist.

But what needs to be stressed is that despite the interest of this thesis in the pastoral form of the novel *Kangaroo*, the novel itself (along with Lawrence's earlier prose) provides evidence of the possession of a most complex pastoral sensibility on the part of its author. Lawrence, unlike most pastoralists, shows in a surprisingly full way both the satisfactions and dissatisfactions of a rural life. Only those who misinterpret Lawrence wilfully could view the world of the Brangwen men at the opening of *The Rainbow* solely as a pastoral idealization of an unalienated life working in direct contact with the land. Lawrence shows the intellectual limitations of a such a life and a clear understanding that the genuinely idyllic aspect of this life is that the Brangwens are prosperous farm owners and not the alienated rural labourers or gamekeepers who drink themselves to death in *The White Peacock*.

Indeed, the opening idyll of *The Rainbow* - with its fecund, incantatory, almost hallucinatory rhythms - provides a prime example of the tension in Lawrence's writing between realism and pastoral romance. The lush, deep satisfactions of the blood and the heart, in contact with the soil one loves and owns, are both idealised and juxtaposed with an acute awareness of the intellectual stultification of such a life. Lawrence gives us both the romance and the reality.

As Michael Wilding has shown, most critics who have written on the political novel are inclined to emphasize the 'naturalistic connections of political fiction' and
have made the assumption 'that the political novel is a variety of nineteenth century bourgeois realism.' But, as Wilding demonstrates, 'an equally important non-naturalistic tradition of the fable, the imaginary voyage and the utopian travel narrative leads through Swift to William Morris and on to such writers as Lawrence and George Orwell.' And, as occurs in Kangaroo, this tradition draws 'on observations of a specific reality [and often actual locality] projected into a geographically or temporarily distant context.' The imaginary voyage of Swift's Gulliver's Travels is thus, for Wilding, 'importantly part of the context and tradition' of a utopian pastoral work such as News From Nowhere and, I would add, the story of Richard Lovatt Somers fictional journey to, and subsequent experiences in, Australia. It is an important connection that Wilding has made.

When viewed simply as a novel which is part of an unquestioned tradition of later nineteenth and early twentieth century bourgeois realism, a critic would be forced to admit that Kangaroo is a failure. Its realism, on the basis of this criterion, fails because it is so frequently 'unbelievable'. But such a conclusion would be grossly unfair to Lawrence. It would be unfair because it is a judgement that does not consider the grounds on which Kangaroo's realism deliberately fails; it is a judgement which ignores the quite open dissatisfaction Lawrence's narrator expresses with the constraints imposed on an unconventional political novel by the bourgeois realist mode. As Michael Wilding shows in his Political Fictions, 'a dissatisfaction with realism can be seen throughout the fictional productions of this century' and works such as News From Nowhere, The Iron Heel, We, Brave New World, Animal Farm, Nineteen Eighty-four constitute far more than a peripheral departure from a central "realism".'

151 Michael Wilding, Political Fictions, op.cit., p. 4.
152 Ibid.
153 Blue Calhoun, op.cit., p. 5
154 Op.cit., p. 5. If Wilding is right to include News From Nowhere as a product 'of this century', I would add Erewhon to this list, particularly since Erewhon Revisited was published in 1901.
This dissatisfaction with realism is particularly important in the case of Lawrence. Often in more 'popular' criticism and commentary, it seems that Lawrence is estimated merely as a master of realistic description, with only dubious claims to a position as a pioneering 'modernist' writer. Furthermore, in this context, Ezra Pound's simple estimation of Lawrence's claims as a modernist - 'I think he learned the proper treatment of modern subjects before I did' - is rarely quoted.

As Pound recognized, Lawrence was an innovator and his dissatisfaction with realism becomes part of a very personal search for an appropriate expressive form for a new kind of political fiction; and in Kangaroo it becomes a search which is often conducted at the very surface of the novel's narrative voice. Much of the strength of Michael Wilding's criticism in Political Fictions stems from his positioning of Lawrence as part of a group of writers - Morris, Mark Twain, Jack London, H.G. Wells, Eugene Zamyatyin, Aldous Huxley and George Orwell - who express their dissatisfaction with realism in some of the finest political literary productions of both this century and the dying decades of the last.

The single greatest strength of Wilding's critique of Kangaroo as a political fiction, however, is his recognition of the way in which it, along with other works by the writers listed above, brings romance 'back into a relationship with realism in order to evolve a new mixed mode.' As Wilding goes on to remark:

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155 For instance, A recent TV series on the 10 great modernist writers did not devote a programme to Lawrence. For a countervailing view see John Bayley, 'Lawrence and the Modern English Novel' in The Legacy of DHL: New Essays, ed. Jeffrey Meyers, St Martin's Press, New York, 1987, pp. 15-29. Bayley argues (op.cit., p. 15) that 'Lawrence is of course one of the great Modernists' because of his attempt to use the novel in order to portray "life itself" (see op.cit., p. 29) But he tends to underestimate the complexities of Kangaroo's modernist prose when he suggests (op.cit., p. 21) that in 'the Australian suburban sequences' Lawrence is 'simply' writing 'about how he was living or had lived': 'he is at one with his writing and his writing itself does all the necessary work on us for him. This indeed is life, in the new sense in which the novel is its vessel.' An attempt is made in chapter 4 of this thesis, 'Suburbia', to show how the 'positioning' of these suburban scenes has pastoral resonances and that Lawrence's melding of the political and the topographical is far from 'simple'. As to the question of the nature of Lawrence's modernism, I feel David Lodge gets it just right when he describes Lawrence as 'a maverick modernist who had little sympathy for the aesthetic formalism of Eliot and Joyce'. See David Lodge, 'Lawrence in Love [Review of John Worthen: The Early Years, 1885-1912, Cambridge University Press]', The New York Review, 13 February, 1992, p. 30.

The pattern that recurs constantly through English language political fiction is a vision of two polar opposites of political engagement: on the one hand the romance of individualistic activity, gestures at the hero as politico, on the other hand the documentary realism of detail, researched statistics, intellectual theory and exposition. In George Meredith's *Beauchamp's Career* (1875) and D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo* (1923) they are represented as the Scylla and Charybdis of political alternatives - between which the new problematic novel steers its tentative passage.157

The result, claims Wilding, is fiction that is 'an amalgam of romance and documentary realism, two modes that create some powerful tensions between them. They are formal tensions enacting the tensions within the consciousness of the novels' protagonists'.158

The problem, as outlined by Wilding, is that in *Beauchamp's Career*, Meredith is aware that 'Romance is unrealistic' and that 'realism is unromantic. The romantic action constantly collapses into bathos; realistic recording of society becomes boring'.159

Lawrence comes out with something very similar in *Kangaroo* where his protagonist Somers likewise has romantic dreams of political activity, fantasies of leadership - and where the novel's action is indecisive, bathetic:

Chapter follows chapter, and nothing doing. But man is a thought-adventurer, and his falls into the Charybdis of ointment, and his shipwrecks on the rock of ages, and his kisses across chasms, and his silhouette on a minaret: surely these are as thrilling as most things. (15:312)

Both writers are trying to steer a course between the adventure of plot and mystery and romance, and the novel of bourgeois realism with its itemization of and concentration on the mundane - property, objects, fishing catches.

...Certainly both Meredith and Lawrence found their political material disruptive of the comfortable aesthetic that novel-reading concert-goers or concert-going novel-readers liked. Both were concerned to alter the formal possibilities of fiction so that it could represent an experience of politics without distortion of the experience. In dealing with political materials they made necessary innovations in the current conventions of the novel, they opened up the form. The changes they made were not in the direction of Joycean avant-gardeism but in the proportional allocation of space and energy to 'story', 'plot', 'documentation', 'romance' and 'ideas'. For both of them the emphasis was to be placed not on the reader's conventional expectations of plot and narrative, but on the

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158 ibid.
'clockwork of the brain', on the 'thought-adventure', the inner drama, the modification of consciousness.\textsuperscript{160}

Taking its cue from Wilding's introduction, part of the essential task of this thesis is to identify an additional tension between romance and realism in \textit{Kangaroo}, thereby positing the novel as part of a tradition of personal and political pastoral romance with a strong kinship to both travel literature generally, and the imaginary utopian voyage in particular. But because Wilding appears uninterested in the way the adoption of a modern pastoral mode, as an alternative to bourgeois realism, sets up a tension within the realistic depiction of place in \textit{Kangaroo}, I seek to emphasize as much as is proper the pastoral basis of Lawrence's art. While recognizing that \textit{Kangaroo} is a fiction that adopts a mixed mode, utilizing vernacular picaresque, the dream vision, collage, utopian projection, and the techniques of realistic travel literature as well as the imaginary journey (along with even a touch of dystopian satire), the thesis attempts to highlight the way in which the hopes of pastoral romance engage with the challenge posed by documentary realism and are held in balance sufficiently well to enable Lawrence to give a strong sense of the Australian spirit of place, the character of Australian democracy and the very personal political decisions which dictate how life is lived.

Before proceeding to this, however, it is necessary to devote the next chapter to a brief discussion of those writers who, either through their novels and prose-fiction or literary criticism, have tackled the issues of pastoral and place and highlighted both the survival of the pastoral tradition in the twentieth century and its impact on D.H. Lawrence.

PLACE, PASTORAL & LAWRENCE
CRITICAL CONNECTIONS & MISCONNECTIONS

The critical distance between the early works of D.H. Lawrence and the
tradition of pastoral (with all its patterns and variants) is not as great as it was in the
mid 1970s when I first began to formulate some fumbling notion of what I sensed to be
the primarily pastoral art of D.H. Lawrence. Then I only had Michael Squires's brief
essay on Lady Chatterley's Lover ¹ and Julian Moynahan's more wide-ranging essay
on 'Pastoralism as Culture and Counter Culture in English fiction, 1800-1928² to
comfort me.

Despite what I then presumed was an overwhelming lack of critical support, my
reading of classic Victorian fiction, later bolstered by a reading of Glen Cavaliero's
Rural Fiction in the English Novel 1900-1939,³ had brought me to the conclusion that
by the 1890s 'the country' - as it was traditionally understood - was becoming almost
exclusively 'associated with all that was desirable'⁴ in an England that was undergoing
the final phase of its transition to an almost totally industrial society.

George Eliot, as early as 1859, was setting her picture of rural England back in
the time of her girlhood (she was born in 1819) and suffusing it through the hazy lens
of memory. Adam Bede thus 'celebrates an England that was already an object of
pastoral nostalgia.'⁵ By 1868 Eliot must have been well aware of this tendency towards
rural nostalgia because she begins Felix Holt with a masterfully balanced ironic
approach to this same nostalgia.⁶

¹Michael Squires's essay entitled "Pastoral Patterns and Variants in Lady Chatterley's Lover" was
published in ELH , Volume 39, 1972, pp. 129-146. This essay was later expanded and used as the final
²Julian Moynahan, "Pastoralism as Culture and Counter-Culture in English Fiction: From a View to
a Death', 1800-1928", Novel: A Forum on Fiction , Volume 6, Number 1, Fall, 1972, pp. 20-35.
reprinted 1978.
⁵Ibid.
⁶George Eliot, Felix Holt, the Radical, ed. Fred C. Thomson, Oxford University Press, Clarendon,
1980.
In an early work like *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) Dickens 'contrasted views of town and country' living, but within a framework of 'sentimentalizing rhetoric.' Nevertheless it is clear even in the case of Dickens that the more modern pastoral concerns of the Romantic poets are already beginning to enter the novel. By 1854, with the publication of *Hard Times*, Dickens is conveying, through a much more analytical than sentimental approach, a strong sense of how town and country overlap. In replacing the simple contrast of town and country in *The Old Curiosity Shop* with the stronger social analysis of *Hard Times*, Dickens is setting the major Victorian novels on a course which diverts them away from anything which might be termed the 'purely rural sensibility' from which a poet like Wordsworth is often incorrectly presumed to suffer. This view of Wordsworth as both a 'nature poet' and as the champion of an almost exclusively rural sensibility, however, is demolished (as both Raymond Southall and Glen Cavaliero have suggested) by a reading of the 'Westminster Bridge' sonnet, the seventh book of *The Prelude* and many other less well-known Wordsworthian pieces.

That, in an earlier moral and political economy, 'the urban and country ways of life were not so out of touch with each other as they were to become' is evident from such later Victorian fiction as George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871-2) and Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), as well as the marvellous scene when the milk from 'Talbothays Dairy' is taken away by train in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891). Here, as in Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* (1854-5), the reader is made 'keenly aware of the country world surrounding the town and of their interaction with it.' The change that has taken place, as Glen Cavaliero suggests, is that the rural and urban milieus of Casterbridge and Middlemarch and of 'the worlds of Milton Northern and of Helstone'

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7 Glen Cavaliero, *op.cit.*, p. 7.
11 Hardy does not use an apostrophe in this formation. See *Tess of the d'Urbervilles, op.cit.*, p. 127.
12 See Glen Cavaliero, *op.cit.*, pp. 7-8.
in *North and South* 'are not only contrasted but are also dynamically related'. And it is this more sophisticated nineteenth century pastoral-prose tradition (works which, in a sense, look back to Shakespeare's sophisticated pastoral dramas *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*, where court and country are dynamically related) to which Lawrence was heir.

Part of the problem with Michael Squires otherwise masterly *The Pastoral Novel* is that he is limited by his desire to restrict himself to works he considers wholly pastoral. The problem here is that the fully pastoral literary work (that is prose or poetry set exclusively in an arcadian milieu) is usually one in which the rural and urban worlds are certainly contrasted but are only very rarely dynamically related. In short they are most often, in the Victorian period at least, either over-sweet, sentimental or whimsical. The work which, in Squires's terms, is wholly pastoral is thus in my view more likely to fall exclusively within what Cavaliero identifies as a rural rather than a pastoral tradition. Such works are usually of a much lesser artistic order than those works of prose-fiction which take up, like the pastoral romances of William Morris and D.H. Lawrence, the complex matter of rural living in a modern industrial world.

Squires's criticism is fortunately not completely limited by his concern with the wholly pastoral work. Yet my suspicion that there is something slightly awry in his appreciation of precisely what constitutes pastoral writing is perhaps confirmed by the fact that although he wisely chooses as his pastoral texts *Adam Bede* and *Silas Marner* in the case of George Eliot, when it comes to Hardy and Lawrence he ignores both *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* on the one hand and *The Rainbow* and *Kangaroo* on the other. This decision to concentrate on a number of relatively

13 Squires appears to have chosen to ignore the view of Marinelli (*Pastoral*, Methuen, London, 1971, pp. 49-50) who argues that 'it is possible for a work not set specifically in the original Arcadia to be infinitely more Arcadian in spirit than one which, like Sidney's *Arcadia*, is. Arcadia is perpetually being renewed...[and] it will of necessity wear a different look in different times and places.' He also appears not to have heeded Renato Poggioli's view ('The Oaten Flute', *op.cit.*, p. 184) that: 'The pastoral fallacy and its equivalents are deeply rooted in human nature: this explains the recurrence or permanence of their manifestations, and the survival of pastoral make-believe even in such an age as ours. One could say that there is a pastoral cluster in any form of poetry: and so we find "pastoral oases" even in non-pastoral writing.'
'safe' pastoral texts (novels replete with song-matches, piping shepherds, love-sick swains, mourning nature and a generally refined 'arcadian' atmosphere) is probably based upon a desire not to alienate the large number of critics who, in 1974, would probably have considered that the very notion of 'the modern pastoral novel' (let alone a book devoted to its identification) was itself a highly contentious one. Julian Moynahan, however, had earlier adopted a more confident, controversial, yet ultimately more helpful, approach by using Empson's phrase 'the permanent tradition of the country' to trace the emergence of:

... a kind of novelist whose attachment to the primary values associated with "the permanent tradition of the country" causes him to conceive his task as a sort of rescue operation of these values, and whose poignant sense of cleavage between the insensate aims of society and the permanent truths of life and nature lead him to compose pastoral fictions the themes and values of which run deliberately counter to the projects and values of society at large.14

Unburdened by the notion that a novel must be wholly pastoral to be worthy of consideration as an important part of the genre, and that pastoral is (as Empson recognized) 'a queer business',15 Moynahan traces the persistence of 'an essential, reciprocal, nourishing relationship between the Country and the country, between culture and agriculture if you will'.16 He then goes on to argue that 'when this relation or pact appears to someone to be severely damaged, owing to corruption or blundering in the general society, then for him the country, that is the country of pastoral, dies, disappears, ceases to be imaginable.'17 Moynahan also argues that this same phenomenon is repeated throughout nineteenth century and early twentieth century literature.

Opposing Empson by arguing 'that not so much child-cult as maiden cult best focuses the pastoral theme', Moynahan utilizes classic texts such as Jane Austen's *Emma*, George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* and *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on The Floss*,

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Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, Henry James's *A Portrait of a Lady*, Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, and George Moore's *Esther Waters* before arguing that Lawrence - in *The White Peacock*, *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, *The Lost Girl* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* - is both heir to, and the last great practitioner of, this particular tradition of pastoral. 'To conclude and sum up', writes Moynahan:

... after Hardy and Lawrence we get no more English novels about country matters where the simple and complex intertwine in the notion of a community that mediates between the inexhaustible, unregenerate energies of primary nature and the powerful, abstracted orders of general civilization, and where the health and prospects of the community can be satisfyingly dramatized by focusing upon the adventures and misadventures of maidens.\(^{18}\)

Although not alert to alternative pastoral patterns and variants present in Lawrence's other novels (*Kangaroo* in particular), Moynahan is alive to the importance of the First World War for both Lawrence and pastoral generally:

It seems to me that the holocaust of the Great War, much more than the changes in English society and culture that were set going or accelerated by the war experience, actually burned out of the English literary imagination all those illusions of an ultimate harmony between the aims of simple private life and of general society upon which the rich tradition I have been tracing depended. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), wherein two war-devastated adulterers approaching middle-age cohabit secretly in a fragrant forest which has supplied timber for the English trenches in Flanders and France from 1914 onwards, is surely the essential post-war English pastoral novel.\(^{19}\)

Since the publication of Moynahan's article in 1972, the terms 'pastoral' and 'Lawrence' have become more frequently associated, although usually only by way of passing remarks within the astounding mass of Lawrence criticism and biography which daily accumulates. Today, such major critics as Anthony Burgess, Paul Fussell and John Alcorn can also be added to the increasing number of critics who would no longer dismiss out of hand the notion that Lawrence has played a significant part in continuing the tradition of pastoral writing.

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\(^{18}\) *Op.cit.*, p. 34.

Moreover, although Michael Squires is still the only critic who places Lawrence firmly within a continuing pastoral tradition, two other important critical works have done much to position Lawrence as heir to a tradition of rural and nature fiction which spans the entire nineteenth century, both in England and America. These two works are John Alcorn’s *The Nature Novel From Hardy To Lawrence* (1977) and Roger Ebbatson’s *Lawrence and the Nature Tradition: a theme in English fiction 1859-1914* (1980): works which were apparently undertaken without knowledge of what the other was attempting.20

Alcorn’s is by far the superior work, wearing its vast grasp of literature since the Renaissance sufficiently lightly to be able to illuminate the Edwardian interest in nature and the zest for travel literature as the logical culmination of Thomas Hardy’s positioning of place and pastoral in an age when Alcorn believes nearly all literature reeled under the impact of Darwin’s *The Voyage of the Beagle*. Ebbatson, on the other hand, while steeped in the literature of the period, and possessing a good grasp of a wide range of general philosophical material, only manages a series of relatively unilluminating and hesitant connections between the work of Lawrence and writers such as Meredith, Hardy, Richard Jefferies, Forster and W.H. Hale White. Only in his discussion of Jefferies - and particularly in his discussion of the connection between Lawrence’s and Jefferies’s gamekeepers21 - does he do much to advance the work undertaken by Alcorn.

Ebbatson argues his case for ‘The development of a fiction centring in Nature’ as a ‘complex body of thought and feeling about nature’ whose main elements are identified as ‘the Romantic treatment of Nature’, ‘New England Transcendentalism’, ‘the Victorian literature of the ‘open road’ and ‘the debate about evolution.’22 As can be


22 Roger Ebbatson, *op.cit.*, p. 4. What he terms ‘the nature tradition’ in the title of the book is described (*op.cit.*, p. 26) as ‘a tradition of great variety and complexity’ which he believes ‘culminates in the work of D.H. Lawrence.’
imagined this spicy mixture threatens, like some definitions of pastoral, to extend to all literature. Not surprisingly, with a net cast as wide as this, Ebbatson has little difficulty, despite the hesitancy of most of his 'connections', turning any interest in 'Nature' displayed by the novelists he discusses into evidence of card-carrying membership of his 'Nature Tradition'. Having presumably foreseen such difficulties of definition and terminology long before Ebbatson even put pen to paper, Alcorn - in a study which examines a different set of authors and texts: Hardy, Butler, Norman Douglas, W.H. Hudson, H.M. Tomlinson and Lawrence - asks: 'Are these writers "late Romantics," "primitivists," "naturalists," "social realists," or ""evolutionary utopians"? He then goes on to invent the term 'naturist', defining it to suit the evidence he has amassed by expressing the definition, 'not in abstract language', 'but in terms of the concrete effect of the novels themselves.'

But Alcorn is much more subtle than Ebbatson. Instead of becoming befogged in mass of philosophy and occasionally tedious quotation, Alcorn takes, quite literally, a simpler road. In an impressive piece of criticism, Alcorn identifies 'a human figure moving along a highway' as 'the characteristic opening of a Hardy novel': 'Hardy's

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23 A good illustration of the difficulty of formulating a definition of 'rural literature' (or works deemed to be part of a 'rural tradition' in English Literature) which successfully distinguishes itself from the kind of writing most critics would term 'pastoral' is provided by W.J. Keith's *The Rural Tradition: William Cobbett, Gilbert White And Other Non-Fiction Prose Writers Of The English Countryside*, Harvester Press, Great Britain, 1975. After admitting that the texts he chooses 'will admittedly be a loosely knit confraternity' (op.cit., p. 12), Keith later suggests (op.cit., p.16) that 'once again it is important to distinguish the pastoralists, whose works make no pretensions to literal truth, from the genuinely rural writers.' It is a definition that clearly clashes with Michael Squires contention in *The Pastoral Novel* (op.cit., p. 5) that the pastoral novel is one that 'fuses pastoral attitudes with realistic subject matter.' Despite having earlier declared (op.cit., p. 4) that the 'basic distinction between rural and pastoral literature is clearcut', Keith is forced within the same sentence to admit that 'by virtue of a common setting the two share certain characteristics, and even overlap to some extent.' In his opening chapter, on Izaak Walton (and in subsequent chapters as well), Keith then goes on to demonstrate that his distinction between rural and pastoral literature is much less than 'clearcut'. Keith has gone on to produce three books in his rural tradition series and, despite the undoubted worth of some of the material in each book, has maintained throughout a very fluid definition of his 'rural tradition'. One can only agree with the quibble raised by Craig White who, in his review (The *DILL Review*, Volume 21, Number 1, 1989, pp. 215-217) of Keith's most recent book, *Regions of the Imagination: The Development of British Rural Fiction*, has remarked that 'Scholars may also question whether Keith's aims have not already been met by Michael Squires's *The Pastoral Novel: Studies in George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, and D.H. Lawrence* (1974).'

24 John Alcorn, *op.cit.*, pp. ix-x.
"great Western road" is a road out of entrapment, a pilgrimage toward freedom.\(^{25}\)

Alcorn then goes on to remark:

During the next two decades Hardy's "Western road" reappeared continually in the English novel as a symbol for man's "struggle to become complete." From Hardy's ancient via branched roads and paths over land and sea which took Butler's Ernest to London; James' Strether, Joyce's Stephen, and Bennett's Sophia to Paris; Forster's Lilia, Douglas's Keith, and Lawrence's Aaron to Italy; Kipling's Kim and Forster's Mrs Moore to India; Conrad's Jim to Malaya and Lawrence's Kate to Mexico; Hudson's Abel repeated Angel Clare's voyage to Brazil, to be followed years later by Evelyn Waugh's Tony Last, who disintegrated in the same Amazon country which provided a saving vision for Tomlinson. The sturdy legs which transported Tess and Jude gave way to the conveniences [a very Lawrentian word from both Kangaroo and Lawrence's letters from Thirroul] of ships, trains, and automobiles; and Wells's two Ponderevos found perhaps the most rapid transit of all from the lunatic world of Tono-Bungay: a balloon.

Hardy's road eventually took English travellers to every corner of the earth: Hudson and Tomlinson to South America, T.E. Lawrence, Cunningham Graham and Wilfred Scawen Blunt to Arab lands; D.H. Lawrence to New Mexico and Australia; Forster and Durrell to Alexandria. Like Hardy's Mrs Yeobright, Gabriel Oak and Tess Durbeyfield these modern pilgrim were enthusiastic bird-watchers, cow-milkers, butterfly-chasers, and students of nature in general. More significantly, the new pilgrims, unlike Hardy's, always arrived, for better or worse, at a destination.

Hardy's "old vicinal way" marked a beginning. It can hardly be claimed as a "cause" of travel literature; it is rather a symptom of a new direction in English fiction. For Hardy's novels introduced the genius loci, "spirit of place, "as the predominant symbol of human experience in the new novel.\(^{26}\)

Yet, despite two chapters devoted to 'Spirit of Place' - one on the novel, one on the travel book and even a chapter entitled, 'Lawrence: A version of Pastoral', as well as a chapter on Hardy and Lawrence and a masterful "Epilogue: Is Great Pan Dead" - Alcorn never quite makes a direct and unambiguous connection between place and pastoral, presumably in order to place the authors he discusses more safely within the parameters of his self-styled 'naturist' tradition. But he does get extremely close.

In his opening chapter on Hardy, Alcorn remarks that:


\(^{26}\) Op.cit., pp. 19-20
Landscape in the Renaissance pastoral romance of Poliziano or Tasso, Spenser or Sidney, was deliberately enamelled and two-dimensional. Surface colour and design provided a static frame, a background for the conventionalized action of the protagonists. Renaissance pastoral poets were not interested in recapturing the vivid concreteness, the tangibility of Dante's "Inferno" or "Purgatorio," or of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. But in Hardy's "pastoral tragedy" landscape comes alive. No longer a backdrop, it becomes, to use Aldous Huxley's phrase about Lawrence, a "principal personage" whose presence is felt in terms of a new sensuous grasp of space.27

Earlier in the same chapter Alcorn explained that Hardy's 'humanizing of Egdon Heath is more than a convenient metaphor: it is the very soul of the novel, the source of both character and plot. The "lonely face" of Egdon suggests the "tragic possibilities" that will become actual in the plot. But the metaphoric face of Egdon is only a prelude; as the novel progresses, metaphor yields to direct description of the organic life which springs from the heath. In his last novels, Tess of the d'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure, Hardy discards metaphor: his landscape becomes literal and stark, as if to suggest that the traditional device of metaphor has become inadequate for his purposes, creating, as it does, too wide a poetic distance between the thing itself and the writer's sensibility. We are made to feel Tess's physical movement across the land from the beginning of the story until her final moments at Stonehenge, and in her movement is her story.'28 Alcorn also suggests that, from 'the detailed map of Wessex, which first appeared at the front of Madding Crowd, Hardy moves toward that sensuous immediacy of landscape characteristic of the later novels. The naturists inherit this exuberant awareness of the earth from Hardy. Hudson, Tomlinson, Douglas, Forster and Lawrence continually suspend the action of their characters to study the shape and contours of the landscape on which they move.'29

Alcorn then makes the important observation that it 'can hardly be claimed that Hardy and the naturists were responsible for this renewed attention to landscape and the world of nature in modern English literature. Clearly such credit belongs to their

forbears, the Romantic poets, and especially to the poems of Wordsworth', before he moves on to a consideration of the impact of Freud on the 'naturists'. But even this seeming digression is not entirely unconnected with the relationship between Lawrence, place and pastoral, for in an important concluding paragraph Alcorn writes:

The naturist rejects all ideals, including the Romantic ideal of nature. When Lawrence shudders at Shelley's lines, "Hail to thee, blithe Spirit! / Bird thou never wert," he was rather heartlessly articulating this naturist aversion to spiritualizing and idealizing of natural phenomena. Where Wordsworth seeks to assimilate meaning out of nature into mind, Lawrence reverses direction, allowing nature to draw back into itself the contingent mind: "...the mind has no existence by itself, it is only the glitter of the sun on surface waters." Wordsworth might have accepted this statement as apt metaphor; but for Lawrence it is not metaphor. He means it literally. In the same way, Hardy's personification of Egdon Heath is misunderstood if it is taken as an example of the Pathetic Fallacy. He is referring to an actual wisdom literally present in nature, though unfathomable to the mind of man. This sea-change in the traditional use of metaphor signals a radical redefinition of the place of human beings in the world of nature; and it is this new and quite original view of nature which identifies and distinguishes naturism as a departure within the larger context of the Romantic movement of the nineteenth century.

It is only here that Alcorn and I at all begin to part company, though I must stress that I admire and am impressed by most of The Nature Novel From Hardy to Lawrence and will later detail those aspects of Alcorn's criticism which indirectly help illuminate the positioning of place and pastoral in Kangaroo. While I fully agree that with the Romantic Movement comes a 'sea-change' in the traditional use of metaphor, particularly pastoral metaphors (and rural/nature metaphors generally), I see the departure as simply being the by-product of an increasing tendency on the part of writers of both novels and travel books to locate the pastoral locus amoenus in an actual place.

30 Op.cit., p. 3
31 John Alcorn, op.cit., pp. 4-5. Alcorn does not cite the source of Lawrence's remarks on Shelley. They are from a passage in Lawrence's critical/philosophical work on Thomas Hardy; see DHL, 'Study of Thomas Hardy' (chapter VII) in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of DHL, op.cit., p. 459. See also Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays (ed. Bruce Steele), Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 72 and the note on p. 263.
32 By this I mean that the modern travel-book begins to lose much of its former 'imaginary voyage' quality.
By 1800, the debate concerning the decorum of realistic versus idealized yokels and landscapes in pastoral literature has disappeared and, as I have shown in the introductory chapter, disappearing too is almost any use of the 'shepherd' metaphor. As I have also suggested earlier, the portrait of 'Talbothays Dairy' in Hardy's *Tess* is perhaps the last time it is possible for a major English novelist to present a genuinely idyllic pastoral of a working rural life. After *Tess* there appear to be only four possible turnings for the novelist/travel writer to take once he leaves the road to 'Talbothays Dairy'.

Firstly, there is the all too realistic horror of an actual working life at a place like Flintcombe Ash: and down that road there is no pastoral at all. There is also the counterpoint to this tendency, the completely Utopian path of William Morris's *News From Nowhere* which attempts to make pastoral possible by transplanting the joys of fourteenth century rural labour to an English future where Marxism has triumphed and produced a strangely de-populated form of agricultural anarchist co-operativism. Then there is the road out of England to places where the industrial revolution has not destroyed the possibility of an idyllic working rural life. And, lastly, there is that other road where a deracinated, economically free 'observer' - within or without England - can commune with a nature as wild and free as the romantic view of the self. Such observers often fall into the pastoral fallacy of mistaking the invigorating effects of a holiday (a short and sweet brush with nature) for the reality of rural living. They usually become, in the new fiction and travel-writing, 'personas' often modelled closely on the authors themselves (and usually possessing none of the omniscience granted by Hardy to his narrators). For many such personas, Douglas's Keith for example, is not even a fallacy, for he is perpetually on holiday. Indeed, because it is possible for such personas to ignore the realities of rural living altogether, the very inhospitability of these new wild, free and exotic natural landscapes is all part of their appeal to these new writers. Notions of 'wilderness' and the Romantic sublime merge

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33 Mr Keith is a character in Norman Douglas's *South Wind*, 1917, Martin Seeker, 14th impression, 1925. He is an ardent, ageing hedonist (rather like Douglas himself) whose principal belief seems to be that people ought to do as they wish.
in this new literature, and it becomes clear that Thomas Hardy was not far short of the mark when he suggested in *The Return of the Native* that 'the new Vale of Tempe may be a gaunt waste in Thule'.

Surprisingly, Paul Fussell is one of the very few critics to have seen that those whom Alcorn and Ebbatson identify as 'Nature' or 'naturist' novelists and travel-writers, emerging in the period 1890-1930, are authors who are also heirs to much older and continuing traditions of pastoral and romance within English literature:

If as a form of prose fiction a "romance" is more likely than a novel to be set abroad or in an exotic place, then romance, whether "quest," picaresque, or pastoral, will suggest itself as a term to designate an indispensable element of the travel book. One could ask: aren't travel books really romances in the old sense, with the difference that the adventures are located within an actual, often famous, topography to satisfy an audience which demands it both ways - which wants to go adventuring vicariously, as it always has, but which at the same time wants to feel itself within a world declared real by such up-to-date studies as political science, sociology, anthropology, economics and contemporary history?. . .

But travel books are not merely displaced quest romances. They are also displaced pastoral romances. If William Empson is right to define traditional pastoral as a mode of presentation implying "a beautiful relation between rich and poor," then pastoral is a powerful element in most travel books, for, unless he's a *Wandervogel* or similar kind of layabout (few of whom write books), the traveller is almost always richer and freer than those he's among. He is both a plutocrat *pro tem* and the sort of plutocrat the natives don't mind having around. Byron and Waugh and Greene hire drivers and porters and bearers and pay outrageous prices for decrepit horses and cars; Lawrence pays bus and steamer fares; Norman Douglas keeps employed numerous waiters and *sommeliers*. If the cash nexus can be considered "a beautiful relation," the behaviour of these characters is like the behaviour of the court class in Renaissance pastoral, and there's a closer resemblance between Sidney's *Arcadia* and a modern travel book than is obvious on the surface. Consider the Lawrence of *Twilight in Italy*, attended by his aristocratic consort.34

In spite of his many merits and often quite scintillating insights, what Alcorn has failed to see (and what Fussell has seen all too clearly) is that the 'new road' of what Alcorn terms the 'naturists' is really just a further setting out on what is a very

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long highway. It seems to me that scholars like Alcorn are only forced to invent new terms for the central concerns linking groups of writers because of the relative unpopularity of pastoral writing as a subject for criticism this century, along with the repeatedly premature announcements of the genre's demise which have echoed down the last two hundred years. Only critics who are genuine eclectics like Fussell (and possibly also genuine eccentrics like Empson) appear to have had sufficient knowledge of the long tradition of pastoral romance to be willing to make seemingly surprising connections with the literature of the early twentieth century. Hence, despite appearing to grasp the nettle in his chapter 'Lawrence: A Version of Pastoral', and despite highly illuminating remarks on the pastoral nature of Aaron’s Rod, Alcorn studiously avoids Lawrence’s most obvious travel novel, Kangaroo. He makes only two mentions of the title of Lawrence’s Australian novel. But if he and other critics, particularly Fussell, had decided to devote more attention to this work, they may have been able to make some sense of the words found in one of Lawrence’s earliest letters from Thirroul, words which so puzzle late twentieth century literary sensibilities: 'I’m going to try to write a romance - or begin one - while I’m here and alone'.

Whether they call it ‘pastoral’, ‘romance’, ‘Nature’ or ‘naturist’, what Ebbatson, Alcorn and Fussell all recognize is the new concern with landscape evidenced in the novels and travel books of the period. As Lawrence’s Kangaroo is one of the twentieth century novels in which the travel book and the novel are most difficult to disentangle, it is instructive to examine the ways in which the work of Alcorn on the ‘naturists’ can be used to illuminate the connection between place and pastoral within it.

In establishing his group of writers as ‘naturist’, Alcorn places great stress on their equation of a particular landscape with ‘the myth of Eden’. Even when the landscape described by authors is stridently un-Arcadian - whether it be Hardy’s ‘gaunt

36 Alcorn, op.cit., p. 59.

Hudson’s attempt to find in bird-song a symbol of the wisdom of nature - which culminates in the character of Rima, in Green Mansions - is a key link between Hardy’s “language of nature” and Lawrence’s continual search for a non-verbal and non-visual musical symbolism. For Lawrence will share Hudson’s ornithological impression of man’s genesis in Eden: "In the beginning," Lawrence will write in Etruscan Places, "was not a Word, but a chirrup" (53).

The chirrup which resounds from the pages of [Hudson’s] Idle Days [In Patagonia] and becomes the crucial experience for Abel in Green Mansions may be taken as a symbol of the continuity between the travel book and the naturist novel. This continuity extends beyond questions of theme to matters of narrative style, descriptive technique, characterization, and story structure. . . .

Lawrence’s travels have a profound effect upon the structure of his stories: after he begins his personal pilgrimage in 1915, his novels take on the leitmotif of place which characterizes Women in Love, Aaron’s Rod, Kangaroo, and The Plumed Serpent. . . .

These travelogues have provided an apprenticeship in landscape description; have created a new point of view identified with the genius of place; have brought to the novel a tradition of escape from mechanized time and industrialized place; have introduced a modern, Darwinian version of the myth of Eden. Lawrence gave the rallying cry for all naturist novelists, in his travelogue Sea and Sardinia: “Comes over one an absolute necessity to move. And what is more, to move in some particular direction. A double necessity, then: to get on the move, and to know whither” (1). The plot and the setting of the naturist novel was born out of the travel book.39

All I would wish to change in these statements, and particularly the suggestion that ‘the naturist novel was born out of the travel book’, is to substitute the word ‘pastoral’ for ‘naturist’ and to argue that the myths being employed are far older than the phrase ‘modern, Darwinian version’ indicates. The ‘myth of Eden’, like that of the ‘Golden Age’, has a close relationship with pastoral romance, much in the way that Fussell

37 The list is from Alcorn, op.cit., p. 6.
suggests there is far more resemblance between Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* and a modern travel-book than is obvious on the surface."\(^{40}\)

Alcorn's great merit as a critic of Lawrence, however, is that he is so widely read in the literature of the period 1880-1922 that he is able to trace, and to flesh out with copious quotations, the traditions and the influences which link the pastoral novels of Hardy and the pastoral fiction and travel writing of W.H. Hudson to the writings (both fiction and non-fiction) of Lawrence. Here Alcorn posits Lawrence as heir to a living tradition of pastoral, and is actually willing to use the term *pastoral* alongside his all-encompassing 'naturist' tag.

Hudson's *Green Mansions* \(^{41}\) is the work that Alcorn posits as the means by which the idea of the pastoral novel as a living tradition is passed from Hardy to Lawrence:

Hudson's most significant contribution to naturist fiction, and to Lawrence in particular, was his recasting of the pastoral novel of Hardy. Hardy's woodlanders are forever English; Hudson moves his woodlanders out of England into a brave new world. Hardy's stories are pervaded by a mood of impending catastrophe, Hudson's by a mood of idyll. Hardy's poetry of organicism plays ironically against his geometry of doom; Hudson's botanical imagery dominates his fragile plot. Hardy's reader is left with an image of darkness, Hudson's with an image of light. Hardy's characters move physically at cross purposes within a confined circle; Hudson's Abel reaches his destination. In each respect, *Green Mansions* constitutes an important link between the novels of Hardy and those of Lawrence.\(^{42}\)

Alcorn also makes it clear that *Green Mansions* is not a pastoral work which springs from nowhere, from the void left by a genre thought either dead or moribund for a hundred years or more; he places it very firmly as part of a centuries old tradition of English pastoral which looks back to the Elizabethans:

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\(^{41}\)W.H. Hudson, *Green Mansions: A Romance Of The Tropical Forest* (1904). The edition I have used was published by J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd, London, 1951. Christopher Brown in his article, 'Lawrence, Hudson, and Cornwall' (*The DHL Review*, 16, 1983, pp. 211-217), makes a connection between *Kangaroo* and Hudson's *The Land's End*. He appears to be unaware of both the importance of *Green Mansions* or the existence of Alcorn's excellent book, claiming that Ebbatson is the 'one critic to perceive Hudson's influence of Lawrence...'. (*op.cit.*, p. 211).

Hudson’s Abel is a modern version of Spenser’s Colin Clout, and Rima is a naturist Faerie Queene. *Green Mansions* revives both the mood and structure of Spenser’s great pastoral epic. Both works are blends of social criticism and rural romance; both evoke a nostalgia for the lost Eden. . . . Both *Green Mansions* and *The Faerie Queene* tell stories of shepherds who meditate sadly upon the corruption of city life, and who search for a lady who will bring salvation through love; both involve plots based upon an endless wandering in a green world, a becoming lost and found and lost again. Both works represent a relaxing of the formal pressures of plot unity, an episodic freedom, a delight in digression; for in both, plot follows the accidental variations of landscape as the hero moves across it; in both, plot has the *non-sequitur* quality of accidental encounter. Landscape in both is a source of plot, and the reader has the feeling that there is no beginning or end, that the plot represents a continuous process. There is a loss of suspense, but there is also a new quality of intensity.43

That Alcorn is right to devote so much attention to *Green Mansions* is borne out by the fact that much which critics have viewed as innovative and surprising in Lawrence’s *Kangaroo* looks much less startling after a reading of Hudson’s neglected novel. In brief, *Green Mansions* is a striking ‘romance’ - to use the word that Lawrence himself chose for *Kangaroo* - of the South American forest in which the central figure, Rima, becomes the semi-human embodiment of the continent’s ‘spirit of place’.

Just as Lawrence would attempt in *Kangaroo* in 1922 - fittingly the year of Hudson’s death - *Green Mansions* links the form of pastoral with the notion of ‘spirit of place’. As Alcorn argues:

>The scene [of *Green Mansions*] is Eden: the form, a pastoral epic in prose. The hero, Abel, recalls the pastoral shepherd, victim of the first crime after the Fall. Yet Hudson’s Abel lacks [like Somers in *Kangaroo*] the innocence of the Renaissance pastoral hero: Abel [like Somers] has been bitten by the snake of civilization.44

But Abel knows that Rima, the bird-girl, dwells within the forest. Rima, as Alcorn argues, ‘symbolizes place’, for though *Green Mansions* is, unlike *Kangaroo*, written in the first person, Abel’s point of view is as ‘peripheral’ as Somers’s. It is Rima’s vision - a vision of ‘the spirit of place’ - that is the focal point of the novel. Alcorn’s

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fine conclusion is that 'Hudson, then, is feeling his way toward establishing place as a point of view', 45 something which it is part of the purpose of this thesis to argue that Lawrence comes close to achieving in Kangaroo. Moreover, as Alcorn recognizes in his analysis of Green Mansions, one of the ways in which this was attempted (and largely achieved in Kangaroo) was by utilizing the traditions of the pastoral genre:

Hardy had removed the traditional setting of the Victorian novel from the drawing-room into the open air of fields and woods, creating a kind of pastoral tragedy in prose. Hudson continued both Hardy's pastoral setting and his sad ending, but with a vast difference. Though Rima dies, the final effect of Hudson's tale is not tragic: the reader remembers, not Rima's death, but Abel's romance. This change of emphasis is crucial.

Green Mansions reflects a broad tendency to utilize elements of pastoral romance to tell the story of liberation. 46 And this story of liberation (a tale told by means of a notion of place and a tradition of pastoral) is, I believe, the key to almost the entire oeuvre of D.H. Lawrence and to his novel, Kangaroo, in particular.

Importantly, such a view, as Alcorn himself recognized in quoting the remarks of E.M.W. Tillyard, places Lawrence very squarely within one of the most enduring of native English literary traditions: the pastoral of solitude. In Alcorn's paraphrase, Tillyard, in his Myth and the English Mind from Piers Ploughman to Edward Gibbon (1961), suggests that 'the myth of retirement':

... is one of the rare indigenous mythic conventions in an English culture which has borrowed its mythology largely from the ancient Greeks. Tillyard traces the myth from Horace and Virgil through Marvell's "The Garden" to Robinson Crusoe and Cowper's The Task; in modern times Tillyard suggests,"the classic example of the same process is D.H. Lawrence, whose life from one side could be called a series of attempts to find the right place to retire. . . ." Lawrence's unending search for Ranim suggests that the myth was all too real for Lawrence the man. 47

It remains to briefly trace this myth of retirement, and the ways in which the myth is tied to the spirit of actual places, in Lawrence's pre-\textit{Kangaroo} fiction before turning to a more detailed examination of Lawrence's Australian novel itself.
THE PLACES OF D.H. LAWRENCE'S PRE-KANGAROO FICTION
A PASTORAL READING OF THE EARLY NOVELS

Beneath its overt superficialities and banalities, the pastoral genre, modern and ancient has almost always included highly charged (though often indirect) comments on political, social or economic issues. Again, Hardy's *Tess* is perhaps one of the best

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1This thesis is not inclusive. Only the work of a lifetime's devotion could hope to deal with all of D.H. Lawrence's literary output. The focus of the thesis is *Kangaroo*, in the context of the major pre-*Kangaroo* novels and travel books. It does not devote its attention to Lawrence's post-*Kangaroo* novels.

It has nothing to say about *The Boy in the Bush*, *The Plumed Serpent* is mentioned only in order to give the slightest of indications of the trajectory of Lawrence's thought and literary practices and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* receives a few mentions in passing, largely in the context of quotations from other critics. The shorter fiction, with the exception of "The Man Who Loved Islands" and a brief mention of "St Mawr", is ignored. There is some comment on Lawrence's essays, criticism and some brief mentions of his translations of Verga, along with a single quotation from his final prose-work, *Apocalypse*. The rest of Lawrence's output is eschewed, despite this author's very high estimation of Lawrence's poetry, a fondness for particular short stories and a considerable regard for *Mornings in Mexico* and *Etruscan Places*.

Only one critic has attempted a brief synopsis of Lawrence's pastoral art entire. Paul Delany, in an essay entitled "Lawrence and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit" (in *The Challenge of DHL*, ed. Michael Squires and Keith Cushman. University of Wisconsin Press, p. 86), argues that Lawrence began as a traditional 'soft' pastoralist, became a 'hard' primitivist in his middle period, and tried to reconcile the two modes in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. He contends (ibid.) that *The White Peacock* and *Sons and Lovers*, along with the depiction of Will and Anna's life at Cossett in *The Rainbow*, are faithful to both older pastoral renditions of 'country house' ideal and 'the Edwardian "country cottage" ideal'. He not only perceives Lawrence is pitting the pastoral ideal against the encroachments of modernity but also that Lawrence's early literary struggle is 'conducted within gradualist and indigenously English terms.' In the latter parts of *The Rainbow*, he sees (op. cit., p. 87) Lawrence using a far more 'radical opposition between the 'pastoral...and industrial worlds'. He quite plausibly sees that the movement of Lawrence's pastoral art stretches from an early work like *Sons and Lovers* where 'the Leivers farm represents a complete and credible alternative to the industrialism of Bestwood' to the last novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, where 'the alternative has shrunk to the cramped and vulnerable space of the gamekeeper's hut, wedged precariously between the ugliness of the mining village of Tevershall and the equally horrifying sterility of Wragby Hall. All this is a fine, two page, summary of Lawrence's pastoral art. Perhaps its only fault is that while Delaney deals adequately with the issue of pastoral retreat, he ignores the important issue of pastoral flight in Lawrence - not to the English garden, but out of England and then Europe altogether. He is probably right (ibid.) to see Clifford Chatterley as 'post-war England personified' and certainly correct to see that 'Connie and Mellors have no viable social agenda; they can only plot their escape to the virgin forests of British Columbia.' But Delany does not capitalize upon this insight and hence does not see that so many of the works, from the period of the writing of *The Rainbow* through to *The Plumed Serpent*, also lack a viable social and political agenda and can only posit utopian pastoral escape as the answer to what Delany terms '"the condition of England" novel'. Delaney thus underestimates the complexity of Lawrence's utopian pastoral impulses - the tensions in his thought and writing between social criticism, political commitment and pastoral retirement, or utopian pastoral escape when his despair about the prospects of society periodically overwhelm him.

These tensions are the hallmarks of 'The Nightmarc' chapter in *Kangaroo* and, despite the strengths of Delaney's synopsis of Lawrence's pastoral art, the task of other critics is to be alive to the complexities of Lawrence's pastoralism, particularly in the novels (such as *Kangaroo*) which Delaney's conspectus ignores.
more modern examples. This story of 'A Pure Woman' utilizes pastoral themes and settings to provide a strong sense of opposition between Hardy's conception of natural social relations and the rigidities of class, heredity and convention in Victorian England. It is Hardy, too, who is really the first to connect the notion of the 'spirit' of an actual place with the bitterest of criticisms of institutionalized property, morality, and Victorian life generally. As John Alcorn suggests, it is Hardy's novels which introduce 'the genius loci, "spirit of place", as the predominant symbol of human experience in the new novel':

... [The] sense of oneness between man and his physical environment brings about a revival of the plot of physical pilgrimage built upon "spirit of place." Place, in turn, symbolizes the hope of building a society more responsive to human nature, a society that in time will emerge, not through abstract dogma, but from "things themselves" - from the body of the earth and the creatures which grow upon it.

Or in another sense, again as John Alcorn has phrased it, "The literature of place represents a search for Freud's "elsewhere" " . Each of the novels and travel-books which make up the body of what might be termed 'place' literature:

... is built upon a journey from an environment of "neurosis" to one of "normality"; each is constructed around an informing vision of a sane or healthy society; each suffers the artistic flaws that result from the struggle to create a background where "no such background could exist." Each of these works is an attempt to face a new challenge: imaginatively to create, through images of flora and fauna, morphology and topography, a climate of utopia - not in terms of the Platonic philosopher's concept of the Good, but in terms of the biologist-physician's concept of health. Each work is a diagnosis.

Above all else, pastoral has always been this: a diagnosis (albeit not always a correct one) of what has happened to or is wrong with society.

If the political and social critiques of some older versions of pastoral had very little to do with actually becoming a shepherd or shepherdess, so too do the more modern examples produced by pastoral novelists and travel-writers. For all their avowed concern with the spirits of actual places, these writers usually show very little

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2John Alcorn, op. cit., p. 20
interest in actually living in the country for any extended period of time. Indeed, such have been the ravages of industrialization in particular places during the twentieth century that this is often virtually impossible anyway. The issue for these writers interested in place, pastoral and utopia is: if we cannot go to the country, then can we bring the spirit of the country to the very heart of the city, to the heart of the business of daily living for all?

It is perhaps for this reason that Lawrence’s novels somehow never quite end, even though the protagonist may have found the perfect place, the ‘country’, as Lawrence (and Hudson before him) put it, ‘of my heart’. For Lawrence’s characters are always off somewhere else, endlessly searching, questing. For them, getting there is always the best part of it all: though nature may be perfect, it is man and woman’s lot to strive to reach this state, to create a better world everywhere and not just in a particular place, impossible though this (and Lawrence, as he revealed in his review of Tomlinson’s Gifts of Fortune, felt it was) may well be.

Lawrence’s pre-Kangaroo pastoral art is thus the story of a personal movement from an England wracked by industrial capitalism and a correspondingly mechanized morality; from a doomed English countryside and its tight enclosures to the freedom of a kind of frontier world of nature which is soon thought to be found only outside of Europe altogether. It is, to utilize the words of John Alcorn in a different context, a ‘story of liberation - geographical and spiritual - embodied in a loosely woven plot and relaxed style which closely resembles the form of pastoral romance’.

Perhaps it is for this reason that all of Lawrence’s novels begin with a pastoral idyll which is some way skewed and later shattered. In each we are presented with the idyll of a landscape which either is, or is about to be, destroyed. Each novel is then concerned with the journey which must be made (just as Adam and Eve were forced to travel and travail) in order to get back to the Garden of Eden in every sense but the religious one. For, strangely, the literature of place and pastoral, despite often

possessing 'spiritual' concerns, and often drawing upon biblical allusions, is almost exclusively social in outlook. It wants to diagnose what is wrong with modern society, and it wants to find a cure for it as well - even if the only way to get back to the garden is by getting away from society itself. Few such writers, not Samuel Butler, not W.H. Hudson, not Richard Jefferies, not Norman Douglas (not Lawrence himself) are afraid of exploring the myth of social retirement which is at the heart of the pastorals of solitude and self. Personal liberation, the achievement of freedom in nature and society is so important a quest for these writers that they are not afraid to question, as did Rousseau before them, whether or not the freedom of the individual can actually be one of the accompaniments of civilization.

The answer, of course, is one that can only be tested by experience, both in life and in art. And the pastoral art is one in which it has always been understood that it is only from the vantage point of the simple country life and the unspoilt joys of the natural world that we can gain the perspective on our civilization necessary to ask such questions, for they are our only source of sanity. If this was true for the Elizabethans and the Romantics, it is perhaps, as Lawrence himself certainly realized, even more true in the twentieth century when our disregard for these primal testing grounds of life are the cause of both the spoliation of our planet and the sterility of our lives as well as much of our art.

So it is that in Lawrence's first novel, The White Peacock, the narrator's enjoyment of bucolic indolence in a meadow bordered by woods is marred by George's killing of a bee. This act becomes a symbol of Lawrence's ritual killing of country in his first major literary work. Within six short chapters, in this same landscape, a cat is caught in a trap, to be released and then drowned by George. Some rabbits are then hunted down and either killed or captured in the midst of corn harvest, baby mice are mercilessly trampled under foot and, finally, after reports of 'the harrying of sheep by strange dogs', 'three sheep lay soaked in blood when the labourer
went to tend his flocks.\textsuperscript{7} And then, with a characteristically industrial mining touch, all these morbid happenings in paradise are imbricated with the symbol of Father Time's scythe adding a final, perhaps fatal, touch to sunset on the pastoral heartland of Lawrence's Merrie England:

His father took another scythe from the hedge, and together they soon laid the proud, quivering heads low. Leslie and I tied up as they mowed, and soon all was finished.

The beautiful day was flushing to die. Over in the west the mist was gathering bluer. The intense stillness was broken by the rhythmic hum of the engines at the distant coal-mine, as they drew up the last bantles of men. As we walked across the fields the tubes of stubble tinkled like dulcimers. The scent of the corn began to rise gently. The last cry of the pheasants came from the wood, and the little clouds of bird were gone.\textsuperscript{8}

In this passage the reader is given an intimation that we have started on a novel which, as late as the first decade of the 20th century, is about to sound the death-knell of the old agricultural order which has sustained the pastoral imagination for more than 2000 years.

That such a description precedes, by just a few pages, one of the most touchingly elegiac description of 'corn harvest' in all of pastoral literature is an indication of the mood of Lawrence's first pastoral work:

I was born in September, and love it best of all months. There is no heat, no hurry, no thirst and weariness in corn harvest as there is in the hay. If the season is late, as is usual with us, then mid-September sees the corn still standing in stook. The mornings come slowly. The earth is like a woman married and fading; she does not leap up with a laugh for the first fresh kiss of dawn, but slowly, quietly, unexpectedly lies watching the waking of the new day. The blue mist, like memory in the eyes of a neglected wife, never goes from the wooded hill, and only at noon creeps from the near hedges. There is no bird to put a song in the throat of the morning; only the crows voice speaks during the day. Perhaps there is the regular breathing hush of the scythe - even the fretful jar of the mowing-machine. But next day, in the morning, all is still again. The lying corn is wet, and when you have bound it, and lift the heavy sheaf to make the stook, the tresses of oats wreathe round each other and drop mournfully.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 486.
Lawrence's love-affair with the English countryside is thus almost over before it has begun:

When the poor, bleached sheaves are lifted out of the hedge, a spray of nodding wild raspberries is disclosed, with belated berries ready to drop; among the damp grass lush blackberries may be discovered. Then one notices that the last bell hangs from the ragged spire of foxglove. The talk is of people, an odd book; of one's hopes - and the future; of Canada, where work is strenuous, but not life, where the plains are wide, and one is not lapped in a soft valley, like an apple that falls in a secluded orchard.10

The spectre of Thomas Hardy's new Vale of Tempe - 'the gaunt waste in Thule' - is already before us.

Already the thoughts of Lawrence's protagonists are of escape; Cyril, Lettie, George and Emily are already (or are about to become) refugees from the English 'Garden of Eden' which surrounds Strelley Mill. Like Adam and Eve, they are about to begin their quest for liberation. But Lawrence, unlike the authors of The Bible, makes it clear that the cause of their going away is purely political. Surveying an abandoned farmhouse, George bitterly reflects that this 'is what the mill will come to';11 and in the ensuing conversation with Cyril, George lays the troubles and tragedy of a renting farm-labouring family squarely at the feet of 'the squire' and his subservience to the heartless economic doctrines of Adam Smith:

'My time - my time. I shall never have a time. And I shouldn't be surprised if Father's time isn't short - with rabbits and one thing and another. As it is, we depend on the milkround, and on the carting which I do for the council. You can't call it farming. We're a miserable mixture of farmer, milkman, greengrocer, and carting contractor. It's a shabby business.'

'You have to live,' I retorted.

'Yes - but it's rotten. And Father won't move - and he won't change his methods.'

'Well - what about you?'

'Me! What should I change for? I'm comfortable at home. As for my future, it can look after itself, so long as nobody depends on me.'

'Laissez-faire,' said I, smiling.

'This is no laissez-faire,' he replied, glancing around. 'This is pulling the nipple out of your lips, and letting the milk run away sour.'

This theme of dispossession (and subsequent deracination) recurs frequently in the modern pastoral novels of George Eliot and Thomas Hardy and provides a tangible link with one of the earliest mutations of Theocritus's Idylls, when Virgil (in his first eclogue) has Meliboeus and his goats driven from the land so that Tityrus, a soldier to whom the state has presented Meliboeus's patrimony, can enjoy the bucolic life. Denunciation of the usurpers is an important tradition in English pastoral. It has been handed down through Milton's Lycidas and its attack on the corrupt Anglican Clergy who 'Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold', the attacks upon enclosure found in Goldsmith's The Deserted Village, the dispossession which threatens the Poysers in George Eliot's pastoral novel Adam Bede and then on to that similar situation faced by Gabriel Oak in Hardy's Far From The Madding Crowd. Like the farm after the death of the old couple in Wordsworth's Michael, the Saxton's farm in The White Peacock 'went into a stranger's hand'.

What is surprising in the novel under discussion is the savagery of Lawrence's denunciation of the tragedy of this particular rural labourer: the opening chapters of The White Peacock are larded with symbols of brutality and death. It is not a military force marching against the powerless farm labourer, however, but an army of rabbits, nurtured by the greed of a withered aristocracy grasping at any straw to save its ancient estate:

Now the squire of the estate, head of an ancient, once even famous, but now decayed house, loved his rabbits. Unlike the family fortunes, the family tree flourished amazingly; Sherwood could show nothing comparable. Its ramifications were stupendous; it was more like a banyan than a British oak. How was the good squire to nourish himself and his lady, his name, his tradition, and his thirteen lusty branches on his

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12 Ibid.
15 William Wordsworth, 'Michael' (l. 475) in William Wordsworth: Selected Poetry, op.cit., p. 442; Also see Squires, op.cit., especially chapter two, which has provided some of the ideas in this paragraph.
meagre estates? An evil fortune discovered to him that he could sell each of his rabbits, those bits of furry vermin, for a shilling or thereabout in Nottingham; since which time the noble family has subsisted by rabbits.

Farms were gnawed away; corn and sweet grass departed from the face of the earth; cattle grew lean, unable to eat the defiled herbage. Then the farm became the home of the keeper, and the country was silent, with no sound of cattle, no clink of horses, no barking of lusty dogs.

But the squire loved his rabbits. He defended them against the snares of the despairing farmer, protected them with gun and notices to quit. How he glowed with thankfulness as he saw the dishevelled hillside heave when the gnawing hosts moved on!16

Other forces are also at work in the shattering of Lawrence's idyll. In Part II of The White Peacock the plight of the industrial labourer also receives some attention, but curiously his tragedy is also presented in terms of its effect on the countryside:

The men in the mines of Tempest, Warrall and Co. came out on strike on a question of the rearranging of the working system down below. The distress was not awful, for the men were on the whole wise and well-conditioned, but there was a dejection over the face of the country-side, and some suffered keenly.17

It is winter and the miners are beaten by the same forces that destroys the field worker. The miners, at least, mount a rear-guard action, but only at great cost:

Determined poaching was carried on in the squire's woods and warrens. Annable [the gamekeeper] defended his game heroically. One man was at home with a leg supposed to be wounded by a fall on the slippery roads, but really by a man-trap in the woods. Then Annable caught two men, and they were sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

At last, however, winter began to gather her limbs, to rise and drift with saddened garments northward.

The strike was over. The men had compromised. It was a gentle way of telling them they were beaten. But the strike was over.18

And when winter snow comes over one of Lawrence's landscapes, as is powerfully symbolized by the ice and snow at the end of Women in Love,19 there is no possibility of pastoral. There will be no joyous spring for the miners.

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In *The White Peacock* the scene is thus set for the unwinding of Lawrence's pastoral art entire. It is a journey in which the inhabitants of Nethermere will be hurtled towards a future from which, although not itself pastoral, they will always look back longingly to the garden - the English countryside itself - which was formerly their home. Importantly, however, even as early as *The White Peacock*, Lawrence's attitude towards pastoral is not a completely favourable one. Like Shakespeare in *As You Like It*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*, Lawrence fails to give the pastoral life his full support. The bucolic life has its attractions (and Lawrence would later epitomize these in the masterful opening chapter of *The Rainbow*) but it is a way of life that also has its crippling limitations - limitations which are only too evident in the portrayal of the longings and dissatisfactions of the Brangwen women in the same novel. Lawrence clearly does not want a fully human being to feel, as Cyril does, 'like an apple that falls in a secluded orchard.' Yet, in *The White Peacock*, even contemplation of the act of setting out on the road to freedom is as painful for George and Cyril as it is for the dozens of other characters whose lives Lawrence makes chart a similar course in his subsequent novels. The pain is beautifully realized in the elegiac qualities of Lawrence's language after Lettie marries Leslie and they leave for France:

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\ldots \text{everywhere was a sense of loss, and of change. The long voyage in the quiet home was over; we had crossed the bright sea of our youth, and already Lettie had landed and was travelling to a strange destination in a foreign land. It was time for us all to go, to leave the valley of Nethermere whose waters and whose woods were distilled in the essence of our veins. We were the children of the valley of Nethermere, a small nation with language and blood of our own, and to cast ourselves each one into separate exile was painful to us.} \]

21 *Op.cit.*, p. 611. A related, although slightly more expectant, sense of pain is sensitively realized in George's comparison of himself to the tree his father has lopped (*op.cit.*, p. 603): 'You see that sycamore,' he said, 'that bushy one beyond the big willow? I remember when Father broke off the leading shoot because he wanted a fine straight stick, I can remember I felt sorry. It was running up so straight, with such a fine balance of leaves - you know how a young strong sycamore looks about nine feet high - it seemed a cruelty. When you are gone, and we are left from here, I shall feel like that, as if my leading shoot were broken off. You see the tree is spoiled. Yet how it went on growing. I believe I shall grow faster. I can remember the bright red stalks of the leaves as he broke them off from the bough.'
The fusion of place and pastoral in this, Lawrence's first novel, is so extreme that merely the shared locality of a handful of pastoral inhabitants is seen as determining nationality, rather than the much wider ties of community, race and place which are normally deemed to determine nationhood. It is a fusion - seen in its extreme form so early here - that characterizes Lawrence's distinctive contribution to pastoral. A shared, secluded, rural place - in *The White Peacock, The Rainbow, Women in Love, The Lost Girl, Kangaroo*, and in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* - becomes the only place where love (despite the vicissitudes to which all romantic and sexual relationships are subjected in Lawrence's fiction) can really grow. Out of such language grew Lawrence's real-life delusion of a pastoral 'Rananim', where a few friends retreat to some rural outpost in Florida or in Palestine or wherever such illusory hopes could be momentarily sustained.

But pastoral narrative is an art of perspective. And in *The White Peacock*, as Michael Squires remarks:

> ... perspective is achieved by placing the valley of Nethermere in the larger context of cultured urban life: the sophisticated allusions to literature, art, and music suggest a framework through which to see the simple rural beauty of Nethermere and the simplicity of life at Strelley Mill farm. Because Lawrence lets us see both sets of values [as he also later does in *The Rainbow*], he shows us the strengths of both "urban" and "rural" and so uses, as often in pastoral, one way of life as a premise for criticising the other. Only after we have a firm sense of this perspective do we see that the novel is prorural and antiurban, even anticultural, in its denouement and conclusion. Like Grace Melbury in *The Woodlanders*, the characters are led down the road of disillusion toward sophistication. They see then (as we do) the past through the perspective of the present.22

What holds Lawrence's curious fusion of place and pastoral together is the most shaky and excitable of vibrating electrons. In *Cymbeline* (arguably Shakespeare's most sophisticated pastoral drama) there is an extraordinarily firm awareness that 'most miserable/ Is the desire that's glorious'23 - that the reality of rural life is really pretty awful and that only the shock treatment of a brief retreat (a sort of moral cold shower

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in a mountain fastness and the salutary experience of a rock for a bed while observing the simple innocence, faithfulness and honesty of the rustics) will be sufficient to heal and salve the corruptions of an infected courtly life. But Shakespeare's perspective on rural living is a steadfastly pro-courtly (city) view. The pastoral life, as a *modus vivendi*, is simply never a real consideration. Lawrence (the country boy whose landscape looked out over fields and mines) is not nearly so sure, however, and his pastorals are held together by a quivering, gaping ambivalence. Michael Squires, in his detailed analysis of the pastoral nature of *The White Peacock* has encapsulated the complications of this ambivalence well:

The creation of a pastoral world is complicated, then, by characters living in a pastoral world but ultimately adhering to the cultured views of the urban world. The pastoral world is also complicated by the dissatisfaction and unrest that the culture of Lettie and Cyril brings to George, a figure fully immersed in rural life. George says to Lettie: "things will never be the same - You have awakened my life - I imagine things that I couldn't have done"... And to Cyril: "But you see, you and Lettie have made me conscious"... In this respect, Cyril and Lettie function, paradoxically, as antipastoral figures. Although Cyril and Lettie inhabit a beautiful pastoral world ("We have lived between the woods and the water all our lives") and although they are free from responsibility, like traditional pastoral figures, they also create unrest with their cultural values. They inhabit a pastoral world but their allegiance to its values is only partial. They praise, often ecstatically, the world and life of Nethermere, yet with their sophistication they place this world and its life in the perspective of the urban world. It is such a perspective that classical and Renaissance pastoral had always accomplished.  

Much of the ambivalence, and consequent ambiguity, which lies at the heart of both Lawrence's life and art is thus prefigured early in *The White Peacock* when Cyril asks George why, since the farm is all but lost, he hasn't already emigrated, and George appears to answer off-handedly. Yet in doing so he enunciates with surprising force precisely those ties of place which go to the heart of Lawrence's pastoral art:

'Oh, I don't know. There are a lot of little comforts and interests at home that one would miss. Besides, you feel somebody in your own countryside, and you're nothing in a foreign part, I expect.'  

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How prophetic then for Lawrence himself that these words were written well before he became a refugee from the woods near Sherwood Forest. Yet, uncannily, George does seem to be speaking for the future Lawrence when he goes on to voice the constraints that a country life imposes:

'What is there to stop here for? The valley is all running wild and unprofitable. You've no freedom for thinking of what the other folks think of you, and everything round you keeps the same, and so you can't change yourself - because everything you look at brings up the same old feeling, and stops you from feeling fresh things. . . .'26

But the fear this sets off in the Lawrentian persona, Cyril, is both the fear of the break-up of the bonds of family and community and the sundering of the individual's ties with place. And rarely before has a pastoral writer made a locus amoenus so real, so actual. Even the places of Hardy's Wessex seem to lack the apogees of verisimilitude - despite the vast local historical research and personal experience on which they are based - that Lawrence's brings to the literary depiction of his places. In The White Peacock, and also in many of the later novels, the reader is almost made to participate in the exile of the characters for the simple reason that Lawrence's natural description (despite its very conscious stylizing) has such an overwhelming visual, tactile (and occasionally olfactory) quality that the reader feels almost to have experienced rather than read about the landscape Lawrence is conveying. The threat of George's emigration, for example, causes Cyril (and the reader) to reflect on what being torn from one's native place really means. The possibility of expansion of the potentialities of a single individual which departure opens up may leave the lives and the locale of both the community and its remaining individuals much diminished: 'My heart clung passionately to the hollow which held us all',27 announces a reflective Cyril at the thought of the imminent departure of Lettie and George. The pastoral world is a safe one because it is the 'hollow' which contains and protects. But it cannot do so forever,

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26 Ibid.
despite the novel's later puns ('Nevermore'/Evermore\textsuperscript{28}) on Nethermere and the fact that it is is hemmed in by woods on three sides:

We had lived between the woods and the water all our lives, Lettie and I, and she had sought the bright notes in everything... Lately, however, she had noticed again the cruel, pitiful crying of a hedgehog caught in a gin, and she had noticed the traps for the fierce little murderers, traps walled in with a small fence of fir, and baited with the guts of a killed rabbit.\textsuperscript{29}

'The People of Nethermere' might live in a place apart, they may be nurtured, unconsciously, by a landscape which is both their mother and their lifeblood, but adulthood, coming into age (to echo one of Lawrence's chapter titles), is inescapable: awakening, coming to consciousness (to use Lawrence's peculiar phrasing from his 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside'\textsuperscript{30}), will certainly mean separation from landscape and growth will definitely mean uprooting, as John Goode has suggested.\textsuperscript{31}

Lawrence thus creates a situation in which the unconscious joy of the pastoral world of the early sections of \textit{The White Peacock}, like the hedgehog caught in a gin, is about to be murdered by process of simply 'coming to consciousness' in the twentieth century. This was the pastoral diagnosis with which Lawrence began; and it was the quest of D.H. Lawrence to find his way back, or forward, to the 'garden' which, as a young man roaming the Nottinghamshire-Derbyshire borders, he saw evanescing before his pale blue eyes, much like 'the sun disappears behind the bank of milky mist, purple like the pale blue on blue plums',\textsuperscript{32} in the closing line of his justly praised eulogy to corn-harvest.

In what I take to be a reference to \textit{The White Peacock}, Lawrence incisively dismissed his first novel as 'a decorated idyll running to seed in realism.'\textsuperscript{33} Many of

\textsuperscript{29}Op.cit., p. 481.
\textsuperscript{30}See 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside' in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers, op.cit. See also DHL, \textit{The Rainbow}, Penguin, 1970, where Brangwen is said to have (op.cit., p. 209) 'waited for the child [Ursula] to come to consciousness.'
\textsuperscript{32}DHL, \textit{The White Peacock}, op.cit., p. 492.
the extracts quoted earlier will give an indication of the extent of the decoration of the idyll; the realism (often extending to naturalism) is largely concentrated in the description of the walking trips outside the vale of Nethermere and in the final 'city' chapters:

We came near to the ugly rows of houses that back up against the pit-hill. Everywhere is black and sooty; the houses are back to back, having only one entrance, which is from a square garden where black-speckled weeds grow sulkily, and which looks on to a row of evil little ash-pit huts. The road everywhere is trodden over with a crust of soot and coal-dust and cinders.34

In short, the world beyond idyllic Nethermere is irredeemably bleak. This is reflected well in the way Lawrence utilizes an anti-pastoral metaphor of the pool in Cyril's reportage of George's reaction to the city world outside Nethermere:

For him the world was all East End, and all the East End was a pool from which the waters are drained off, leaving the water-things to wrestle in the wet mud under the sun, till the whole of the city seems a heaving, shuddering struggle of black-mudded objects deprived of the elements of life.35

Even if one supported (which I certainly do not) the dismissive remarks of Dr Leavis, Keith Sagar and Elisio Vivas,36 they would be forced to admit that while the novel may lack formal perfection, the pastoral contrasts of city and country are particularly fine. As Ford Madox Ford shouted to Lawrence on a London bus after reading The White Peacock: 'It's got every fault the English novel can have', but 'you've got GENIUS'.37 Lawrence was young when he wrote it and pastoral, after all, is often the beginner's art: the Eclogues before the Aeneid; The Shepheardes Calendar before The Faerie Queen; Lycidas before Paradise Lost; Michael before The Prelude and The White Peacock before Women in Love.

In other ways, too, *The White Peacock* is firmly within the tradition of the modern pastoral novel:

The link between *The White Peacock* and the early pastoral novels of George Eliot and Thomas Hardy is stronger than we might at first imagine. They... reveal the same structural pattern, the same kind of human conflict: a young woman living in the country is forced to choose between two dissimilar suitors, one rural and one urban. In each novel the motivation for much of the action lies in the conflict that this double attraction ignites in the lives of the characters. In *The White Peacock* Lettie Beardsall, cultured and lovely must choose between Leslie Tempest, son of a wealthy industrialist, and George Saxton, a farmer's son. The conflict, which follows the vagaries of courtship and culminates both in Lettie's marriage and in George's decline, forms the essence of the plot. In Hardy's pastoral novels, Fancy Day in *Under the Greenwood Tree*, Bathsheba Everdene in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, and Grace Melbury in *The Woodlanders* face exactly the same kind of choice. Hetty Sorrel in *Adam Bede* must choose between Arthur Donnithorne and Adam Bede. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Connie Chatterley chooses between her husband, Sir Clifford, and his gamekeeper, Mellors. These fictional conflicts between urban and rural connect the novels and represent, moreover, the actual class conflict at the center of much nineteenth century social history - the conflict between the working class and the nobility or landed gentry.38

And as Michael Squires has concluded in his detailed examination of Lawrence's first novel as a modern pastoral:

It is not "a giddy little pastoral - fit for old Theocritus," as one character says. Instead it is a modified or modern pastoral novel characterized by its lyrical landscapes, its circumscribed pastoral valley, its pointed contrast between city and country modes of life, its tensions between rural and urban values, its full representation of a pastoral picnic, its inverted pastoral conclusion, and its nostalgic backward look to the valley that once functioned for the characters as a Golden Age.39

There is also much in this pastoral novel that is purely Lawrence. The catalogues of flowers,40 so finely observed, detailed throughout *The White Peacock* are raised above the level of pastoral convention. Although such floral descriptions are symbolic of the quality of life in Nethermere, they are here established as one of the tools by which Lawrence evokes the specific qualities of actual places. As occurs in the

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38 Squires, *op.cit.*, p. 176.
40 Something which Thomas G. Rosenmeyer regards as the 'single most effective and congenial literary device in the pastoral lyric'. See his *The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969, p. 258.
later novels, and especially in *Kangaroo*, landscape description - minute and often botanically detailed - functions, almost effortlessly, on both a symbolic and realistic level. Not only does it nurture the pastoral qualities which are a prime source of *The White Peacock's* charm but it is an integral part of Lawrence's evocation of Nethermere's particular 'spirit of place'.

There is also Lawrence's slight, though distinctive, contribution to the development of the pastoral of solitude in his first novel. Although *The White Peacock* is perhaps more an idyll of friendship than a pastoral of solitude, in the depiction of Annable, and also in the strangely shadowy and lonely narrator Cyril, can be found a touch of the cancers of misanthropy and primitivism that will, on occasion, become considerably less benign in some of Lawrence's later fiction. For, despite his bonds to the 'hollow' of Nethermere, Cyril is most often a solitary, almost disembodied, observer who clearly exalts in the lonely beauty of the rural world - Lawrence's sunny, though essentially non-human world of birds, beasts and flowers:

..."On the other side of the valley I could see a pair of horses nod slowly across the fallow. A man's voice called to them now and again with a resonance that filled me with a longing to follow my horses over the fallow, in the still, lonely valley, full of sunshine and eternal forgetfulness"...  

However, precisely because *The White Peacock* is essentially a pastoral of friendship and community in the rural milieu, Lawrence occasionally employs passages of description which function as anti-pastorals of solitude in order to highlight the way in which the pressures which are being brought to bear on 'The people of Nethermere' will shatter the idyllic relationships that have been established at Strelley Mill Farm. This can be seen in the reply offered when Cyril asks George, 'What's up with you?':

'I dunno,' he answered. 'I'm like this sometimes, when there's nothing I want to do, and nowhere I want to go, and nobody I want to be near. Then you feel so rottenly lonely, Cyril. You feel awful, like a vacuum, with a pressure on you, a sort of pressure of darkness, and you yourself - just nothing, a vacuum - that's what it's like - a little vacuum that's not dark, all loose in the middle of a space of darkness, that's pressing on you.'  

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41 Cited by Squires, *op.cit.*, p. 184. The double inverted commas are his.
A similar version of anti-pastoral solitude can be seen in the description which depicts, as a kind of pathetic fallacy, Cyril's return to Nethermere after the rural idyll has been completely shattered:

I wandered around Nethermere, which had forgotten me.

I, wandering alone, felt...the anguish of the bracken fallen face down in defeat, the careless dash of the birds, the sobbing of the young wind arrested in its haste, the trembling, expanding delight of the buds. I alone among them could hear the whole succession of chords.  

The presentation of the character of Annable, however, indicates a darker, and more unusual, variant of Lawrence's interest in pastoral solitude, something that Lawrence would not always look upon so unfavourably as he does in his first novel:

He was a man of one idea: that all civilization was the painted fungus of rotteness. He hated any signs of culture.... He was a thorough materialist - he scorned religion and all mysticism. He spent his days sleeping, making intricate traps for weasels and men, putting together a gun, or doing some amateur forestry, cutting down timber, splitting it in logs for use in the hall, and planting young trees. When he thought, he reflected on the decay of mankind - the decline of the human race into folly and weakness and rotteness. 'Be a good animal, true to your animal instinct,' was his motto. With all this he was fundamentally unhappy - and he made me also wretched.

There would come a time when Lawrence would strive, fictionally, to enshrine such attitudes as a version of pastoral - to exalt in the life of a primitive man who would despise all consciousness and culture and strive only to 'be a good animal'.

Occasionally, however, in The White Peacock, as in Marvell's The Garden, we get a sense that both nature and landscape are almost a misogynistic substitute for human sexual companionship. At times, in The White Peacock, as occurs at intervals

43 Something which Renato Poggioli thinks may be a variant of the pastoral fallacy. See 'The Oaten Flute', op.cit., p. 184.
46Such a stage had not yet been reached in The White Peacock; Annable is killed off and other characters in the novel glance at more benignant notions of the idyll of solitude (op.cit., p. 592):

'Ah!' she said. 'I thought I was all alone in the world - such a splendid world - it was so nice.'

"Like Eve in a meadow in Eden - and Adam's shadow somewhere on the grass," said I. This is a theme which is redolent of Marvell's treatment of 'that happy garden-state/ While man walked there without a mate' - something which was to exercise Lawrence's mind, along with the some of the darker notions expressed by Annable, more fully in Kangaroo.
throughout Lawrence's fiction, nature takes on a sexual role and seems almost about to seduce the individual attempting to enjoy a presumably chaste experience of rustic solitude. In *The White Peacock* this occurs in the artfully constructed *locus amoenus* of the quarry where Annable's body is later found:

It was warm in the quarry: there the sunshine seemed to thicken and sweeten; there the little mounds of overgrown waste were aglow with very early dog-violets; there the sparks were coming out of bits of gorse, and among the stones the coltfoot plumes were already silvery. Here was spring sitting just awake, unloosening her glittering hair, and opening her purple eyes.47

Lawrence often uses the metaphor of the wood and a catalogue of flowers to evoke a strangely incongruous, though often highly sexually charged, glance at the world of ancient pastoral with its fauns and satyrs:

The wood was high and warm. Along the ridings the forget-me-nots were knee deep, stretching, glimmering into the distance like the Milky Way through the night. They left the tall, flower-tangled paths to go in among the bluebells, breaking through the close-pressed flowers and ferns till they came to an oak which had fallen across the hazels, where they sat half-screened. The hyacinths drooped magnificently with an overweight of purple, or they stood pale and erect, like unripe ears of corn. Heavy bees swung down in a blunder of extravagance among the purple flowers. They were intoxicated even with the sight of so much blue. The sound of their hearty wanton humming came clear upon the solemn boom of the wind overhead. The sight of their clambering riot gave satisfaction to the soul. A rosy campion flower caught the sun and shone out. An elm sent down a shower of fresh-tinted sheaths upon them.

'If there were fauns and hamadryads!' she said softly, turning to him to soothe his misery. She took his cap from his head, ruffled his hair, saying:

'If you were a faun, I would put guelder roses round your hair, and make you look Bacchanalian.'48

A similar incident, although more sinister and within a suburban setting, later appears in *Kangaroo* and will be discussed in the next chapter.

Retreat has always been at the heart of pastoral, but in his first novel Lawrence has hounded his characters out of the garden; outside influences, the impact of a more rapacious capitalism and the yearning for money and success, are like weeds which

choke his localized pastoral haven. Once one has tasted the fruits of urban experience it is not so easy to regain the state of mind, the *otium*, that makes the experience of a pastoral paradise possible. But George *does* want to bite the apple that Cyril and Lettie dangle before him, and he wants it precisely because it's a fruit not found in the 'Garden of Nethermere'. To Lettie, George says: 'Do you know, I'm going to get pretty rich, so that I can do what I want for a bit. I want to see what it's like, to taste all sides - to taste the towns.' And as Michael Squires has remarked:

... Lettie and Cyril stimulate George to develop "the aspiring mind" so antithetical to pastoral happiness. Earlier, George had been unaware and unconscious in his "good living and heavy sleeping", that he possessed the ideal pastoral condition of the contented mind. But ambition and what Lawrence later called "prostitution to the bitch-goddess, Success" destroy that innocent contentment.

In real life, Lawrence himself, knowing (like the characters in *The White Peacock*) that he couldn't get back to his own Vale of Nethermere - the woods around Eastwood, or 'Bestwood' as he called it - began to seek pastoral gardens in other climes. Sometimes, briefly, Lawrence finds them, before they too are destroyed or seen to be chimeras. But in seeking a new garden, a new Nethermere, a new 'Bestwood' via literature, Lawrence is also seeking that state of mind, that pastoral *otium*, in which human beings could be *unconsciously* happy. It is a state of existence in which people, such as George Saxton in the early sections of *The White Peacock*, are unaware that in 'good living and heavy sleeping', they possess the ideal pastoral condition. It is this search for an instinctive state of 'blood-consciousness' rather than of 'mental-spiritual consciousness' which becomes part of Lawrence's later quest, both in life and art, to get back to the garden from which his education and his literary 'success' have expelled him. As *The White Peacock* expresses it, 'the bewildering pageant of modern life' has siren-like led the characters out of their paradisal garden. Only Emily, by

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49'Dangling The Apple' is the title of chapter 2 of *The White Peacock*, op.cit., p. 459.
50 Squires, op.cit., p. 193.
marrying a young farmer and returning to the rural world, 'had escaped from the torture of strange, complex modern life.'\textsuperscript{52}

Lawrence emerged from his first novel as a pastoral writer deeply ambivalent about the relative merits of rural and urban living, of the merits of joining in with the business of living as a part of Western European democracy and culture as opposed to the attractions of living a more 'natural' life of rustic solitude and intellectual primitivism. These tensions and their playing out, first developed in the rural environs of Nethermere, were to occupy Lawrence, both artistically and as part of the business of living, for the rest of his life. It remains to trace, briefly, how these essentially pastoral themes are developed in the rest of Lawrence's major pre-\textit{Kangaroo} fiction.

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George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence, according to Michael Squires, all wrote pastoral novels early in their writing careers then turned away from the rural world as a pastoral world. The exception, of course, as Squires notes, is Lawrence in \textit{Lady Chatterley's Lover}, which returns to earlier themes. But in making just one exception for Lawrence, Squires errs on the side of caution. Admittedly, he claims to be interested only in novels which he perceives to be wholly pastoral and thus excludes even such works as Hardy's \textit{Tess} and Lawrence's \textit{The Rainbow} from his detailed discussions of modern pastoral novels.

As I have tried to show in the introduction to this thesis, even though a work such as \textit{Tess} is not wholly pastoral, the pastoral and anti-pastoral interludes within it are the structural fulcrums on which both the movement of the novel and the development of the characters rest. It is Squires's underestimation of the importance of the journey in the pastoral tradition (and hence of physical movement - sojourning - and the 'progress' this brings about in development of character) that causes him not to see that Lawrence's movement away from 'the decorated idyll' of \textit{The White Peacock} to take up the depiction of 'modern, urban, industrial life' is a variant of the

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 665; both this and the previous quotation from are also cited by Squires, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 192.
Renaissance traditions of pastoral romance. Lawrence’s *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* are therefore, in this sense, truncated pastorals in that they trace the journeys of characters away from the landscape of pastoral in order to explore the dissatisfactions of modern living. The rural world is always the moral touchstone of such works and Lawrence, even in these works which are not wholly pastoral, utilizes many traditional pastoral patterns and variants. It is Lawrence’s way of charting more fully and more diversely the urban experience of a character like George in *The White Peacock*. For such characters, the pastoral experience is truncated because there can be no return once they have set out from the pastoral *locus amoenus* Lawrence establishes in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. Lawrence’s naturalistic approach to the description of urban England, and his increasingly pessimistic view of the realities of rural life in England after World War One begins to destroy, in these novels, much of the ground on which an English version of pastoral can be built. After *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, Lawrence’s characters set out to look for the pastoral heartland in distant foreign climes and the Renaissance pastoral journey is thereby transformed into the modern pastoral travel novels, *Aaron’s Rod* and *Kangaroo*.53

Sidney’s *Arcadia* (1593), Robert Greene’s *Pandosto* (1588) and *Menaphon* (1589; reprinted as *Greene’s Arcadia*, 1599) and Thomas Lodge’s *Rosalynde* (1590), like other pastoral romances, have intricate, digressive and episodic plots. As Walter R. Davis has suggested, the ‘action of the pastoral romance is simply the progress of the hero through the various areas of the setting: from the outer circle into the inner circle, hence to the center, and out again.’54 Such works regularly feature a journey as a structural means of contrasting two opposed worlds, urban and rural, and thus of implying a criticism of sophisticated or, in Lawrence’s case, industrialized life. As Davis argues, ‘the heroes of the Renaissance pastoral romances are always sojourners in the Arcadian preserve, never native shepherds.’55 This is similar to the role that

53 The phrase ‘pastoral travel novel’ is Alcorn’s (op.cit., p. 101) and is quoted later in this chapter at footnote 140.
Richard Lovatt Somers takes on during his Australian sojourn in Kangaroo, a work that Michael Squires fails to incorporate within his pastoral schema.

It is strange that Squires chooses not to incorporate Kangaroo into his argument because, in the introduction to his discussion of Lady Chatterley's Lover as a modern pastoral novel, he overlooks the very date - 1922 - which he calls to the attention of his readers:

Lady Chatterley's Lover is more than sexual: it is pastoral. D.H. Lawrence wrote to Catherine Carswell in [February] 1922, "I think one must for the moment withdraw from the world, away toward the inner realities that are real: and return, maybe, to the world later, when one is quiet and sure." In this letter Lawrence, perhaps unconsciously struck upon the pastoral pattern he was to embody imaginatively in Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928). Because critical interest in the pastoral seemed once to have languished, it is hardly surprising that critics have never attempted to analyze the pastoral patterns and pastoral variants in Lawrence's last novel. The novel has for to long been thought a fictionalized treatise on morality or a guidebook to sexual freedom or a work prophetic of an emancipated society. We should, instead, see the novel in its proper perspective: as a pastoral that embodies the attitudes, techniques, and patterns of traditional pastoral romance.

While Kangaroo is not quite so thoroughgoing a pastoral work as Lady Chatterley's Lover, it is (for similar reasons) unsurprising that critics have never attempted to analyse the pastoral patterns and variants within it.

But it is not just Kangaroo that Squires has overlooked in his study of the pastorals of Lawrence. While neglecting Kangaroo, Squires has also remained insensitive to the wider pastoral nuances of Sons and Lovers and has also largely ignored the pastoral patterns in The Trespasser and Women in Love. This occurs despite the fact that he recognizes that 'Lawrence...shows a strong predilection for pastoral in novels as different as Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, The Lost Girl, The Fox, and The Plumed Serpent.'

Like so many of Lawrence's novels, The Trespasser begins with an idyll that is already withering in the bud. The interior of Helena's sitting-room, 'in a mean house

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56 Squires, op.cit., p. 197.
57 Op.cit., p. 21. Squires goes on to argue (ibid.): 'If Marsh farm is a pastoral haven to the early Brangwens, Alvina retreats from a sterile English town to the mountains of Italy, March and Banford to an isolated farm, and Kate from the sophistication of Europe to the Aztec rituals of Mexico.'
standing in line with hundreds of others of the same kind', is depicted as some bizarre sort of agricultural oasis holding out against the seasons:

It was Helena's room, for which she was responsible. The walls were of the dead-green colour of August; the green carpet, with its border of polished floor, lay like a square of grass in a setting of black loam.58

While the natural metaphors of seasons and trees are developed as emblems of the characters of Helena and Siegmund - "You can't [help being yourself]," he protested, "any more than a tree can help budding in April - it can't help itself, if it's alive; same with you."59 - the reader quickly learns that the root cause of Helena's troubles is that she is "...too tired to bud."60

We also learn in the first chapter that Cecil feels that solitude - something which Helena seeks because of 'revulsion from life' - is not the balm Helena needs in order to recover from the tragedy she has experienced after the escape to the island with her lover:

"Folk are good; they are good for one. You never have looked at them. You would linger hours over a blue weed, and let all the people down the road go by. Folks are better than a garden full of blossom ----."61

But the expression of this viewpoint, by Cecil Byrne, so early in the novel does not prevent Lawrence from spending most of The Trespasser evoking an idyll of beaches and flowers. In subsequent chapters, page after page is devoted to descriptions of sand and blossom and in the second chapter Helena herself is depicted by Siegmund as a flowery, if slightly salty, idyll of solitude:

Helena, with her blue eyes so full of storm, like the sea, but, also like the sea, so eternally self-sufficient, solitary; with her thick white throat, the strongest and most wonderful thing on earth, and her small hands, silken and light as wind-flowers, would be his to-morrow, along with the sea and the downs. He clung to the exquisite flame which flooded him. . . .62

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60 Ibid.
62 Op. cit., p. 13. With her 'thick white throat' she appears to have stepped straight out of a Pre-Raphaelite painting.
farther than Sicily, and more than twenty centuries from us - I wish it weren't."69

It also clear that the experiences of the lovers when they retreat to the idyllic landscape of the Isle of Wight will, whether they wish it to or not, change them forever. Helena asks:

"But will you be able to take up the old life, happier, when you go back?"
"The old life will take me up, I suppose," he said.70

Yet, deep inside himself, Siegmund knows that the landscape of the island is active not passive, in its influence:

And there, exhaustless in the night, the white light shook on the floor of the sea. He wondered how it would be gathered up. "I gather it up into myself," he said. And the stars and the cliffs and a few trees were watching, too. "If I have spilled my life," he thought, "the unfamiliar eyes of the land and sky will gather it up again."71

Indeed, landscape becomes a reverse metaphor of Siegmund's solitary predicament:

He looked wistfully out again. Like neighbours leaning from opposite windows of an overhanging street, the headlands were occupied one with another. White rocks strayed out to sea, followed closely by other white rocks. Everything was busy, interested, occupied with its own pursuit and with its own comrade. Siegmund alone was without pursuit or comrade.72

As so often in Lawrence, in this passage it is place that evokes the feelings of solitude, whether idyllic or terrifying, experienced by the characters.

The fusion of place and pastoral is so subtly achieved in this delicate novel that, like Helena's musings, the tenor of Lawrence's natural description often has a quality of modern 'faerie' about it. This is perhaps best illustrated in chapters XVIII and XIX where, after Siegmund is described as a 'swain',73 Helena declares ' "This is one of the few places that has ever felt like home to me" : ' "One of the few places where everything is friendly," she said. "And everybody." 74 We are then transported back into the world of flowers which Lawrence delights in cataloguing:

69 Ibid.
71 Op.cit., p. 91.
And a similar theme, expressed in a long line of descriptive variations,\textsuperscript{63} echoes throughout the novel.

Curiously, just prior to the departure of Helena and Siegmund for the Isle of Wight, the novel evokes the world of medieval and early Renaissance romance. Siegmund is depicted as being as 'elated as a young man setting forth to travel' and 'When he had passed Portsmouth Town everything had vanished but the old gay world of romance.'\textsuperscript{64} Eventually, Siegmund journeys to the centre of his idyll - his refuge from domestic strife - in the little bay that is 'inaccessible from the land.'\textsuperscript{65} Though it is a watery refuge, it too blooms very much like the traditional gardens of pastoral:

\begin{quote}...
... the lovely little rock-pools, dusky with blossoms of red anemones and brown anemones that seemed nothing but shadows, and curtained with green of finest sea-silk.\textsuperscript{66}
\end{quote}

Indeed, the Isle of Wight (as depicted in \textit{The Trespasser}) bears a strong resemblance to the rural-coastal world of the Arcadian idyll Lawrence would later depict in \textit{Kangaroo}. On occasion, it too is depicted as a landscape the lovers can experience 'alone somewhere together':

"How full the sky is!" Siegmund dreamed on - "like a crowded street. Down here, it is vastly lonely in comparison. We've found a place far quieter and more private than the stars, Helena. Isn't it fine to be up here, with the sky for nearest neighbour."\textsuperscript{67}

Even if we do not quite meet the shepherds of ancient pastoral on the Isle of Wight we do encounter the odd sheep dipping scene, something that Helena finds

"... really a very quaint and primitive proceeding. ...cruder than Theocritus."\textsuperscript{68}

Indeed, the landscape makes Siegmund wish that he and Helena could be transported back two thousand years to the landscape of the father of pastoral:

"Don't they seem a long way off?" he said, staring at the bucolic scene. "They are farther than Theocritus - down there is

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 34, p. 77, p. 81, p. 82, p. 111, p. 170.}
\footnote{\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 14.}
\footnote{\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 46.}
\footnote{\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 51.}
\footnote{\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 57.}
\footnote{\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 75.}
\end{footnotes}
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69 Ibid.
71 Op.cit., p. 91.
The air was warm and sweet in the little lane, remote from the sea, which led them along their last walk. On either side the white path was a grassy margin thickly woven with white convolvuli. Some of the reckless little flowers, so gay and evanescent, had climbed the trunk of an old yew tree, and were looking up pertly at their rough host.

Helena walked along, watching the flowers, and making fancies out of them.

"Who called them 'fairies' telephones'?' she said to herself. "They are tiny children in pinafores. How gay they are! They are children dawdling along the pavement of a morning . . . They won't be here in the morning, shrivelled and dowdy . . . If only we could curl up and be gone, after our day. . . ."75

Siegmund's silent response to Helena after this incident reveals that, in Siegmund's view, Helena's idyll of flowers is also one of solitude:

"What is she thinking?" he asked himself. "She is sufficient to herself - she doesn't want me. She has her own private way of communing with things, and is friends with them."

"She can't translate herself into language. She is incommunicable; she can't render herself to the intelligence. So she is alone and a law unto herself: she only wants me to explore me, like a rock-pool, and to bathe in me. After a while, when I am gone, she will see I was not indispensable. . . ."76

And so, in language reminiscent of the inarticulate communing with nature undertaken by Somers in *Kangaroo*, Lawrence prepares us for the hopeless shattering of the idyll: ' "It is impossible it is gone!" . . . "It can't be gone",77 cries Siegmund in pathetic disbelief. Lawrence then proceeds to the final unfolding of the tragedy we have been told about in the opening chapter.

Amid all of this high tragedy and soul-searching, a fine contrast has been made between the domestic suburban hell of familial life in London and the 'mist-curtain' which divides it from the paradisiacal Isle of Wight: the heart of the pastoral world is always a place apart. On their return voyage from the island, Helena declares: ' "I can't say I smell the smoke of London. The mist-curtain is thick yet. There it is -" she pointed to the heavy, purple grey haze that hung like an arras on a wall, between the

sloping sky and the sea. She thought of yesterday morning’s mist-curtain, thick and blazing gold, so heavy that no wind could sway its fringe.\textsuperscript{78}

However, with the shattering of the island idyll, brought about by the lovers' departure, the protagonists do not, as in traditional pastoral, return to London refreshed by the sojourn in their rural-coastal Arcadia. The 'budding', the growth, which one presumes Siegmund would gain from his retreat withers immediately he returns to his family:

> Everything he suggested to himself made him sicken with weariness or distaste: the seaside, a foreign land, a fresh life that he had often dreamed of, farming in Canada.\textsuperscript{79}

But despite the fact that the primary idyll of the novel has been shown to be not only unsustainable but also fatally tragic in its consequences, \textit{The Trespasser}, in the final chapter, suggests that love’s place (this time a secondary pastoral \textit{locus amoenus}) may at last be found within the city, and with Cecil Byrne instead of Siegmund, down 'a road leading up-hill off the highway'.\textsuperscript{80}

> He stooped under the low boughs of a very large yew tree that stood just back from the path. She crept after him. It was really a very good shelter. Byrne sat on the ledge of a root, Helena beside him. He looked under the flap of the black branches down the valley. The grey rain was falling steadily; the dark hollow under the tree was immersed in the monotonous sound of it. In the open, where the bright young corn shone intense with wet green, was a fold of sheep. Exposed in a large pen on the hillside, they were moving restlessly; now and again came the "tong-ting-tong" of a sheep bell. First the grey creatures huddled in the high corner, then one of them descended and took shelter by the growing corn lowest down. The rest followed, bleating and pushing each other in their anxiety to reach the place of desire, which was no whit better than where they stood before.

> "That's like all of us," said Byrne whimsically. "We're all penned out on a wet evening, but we think, if we could only get where someone else is, it would be deliciously cosy."\textsuperscript{81}

In this way, the moral of Lawrence's tragic romance is expressed at the end by way of a curiously pastoral metaphor - and one, moreover, which would appear to anatomize the essentially illusory, yet no less desirable for all that, goal of the pastoral travel

\textsuperscript{78} Op.cit., p. 102.
\textsuperscript{79} Op.cit., p. 137.
novel. Thus *The Trespasser* (despite the fact that Lawrence's second novel remains ignored by both Alcorn and Squires) is, like *The White Peacock*, in its fashion, also a surprisingly pastoral 'quest romance'. It traces, however, not the expulsion of its central characters from the garden but the journey of Helena and Siegmund (their, finally futile, 'quest' if you like) for a place where love can grow. Their retreat into love's dream on the Isle of Wight may have proved unsustainable, but Lawrence, in his second novel, maintains at least one constant of the pastoral version of truth. While the novel appears unrelentingly conscious that the grass is not always greener on the other side - that even in the metaphoric shepherd's arcadia the 'place where someone else is' is not necessarily 'deliciously cosy' - it still holds firmly to the pastoral notion that if you seek, as does Helena, 'rest and warmth', it will not be found in a suburban sitting-room. Characteristically, in yet another of his virtual non-endings, Lawrence perversely expects that the reader will accept that, despite everything that has occurred, all may yet be well now that Helena can snuggle up with Cecil Byrne in a country lane.

Weak as the ending may be (with Lawrence feebly contriving to have Cecil casually re-enter the novel), *The Trespasser* does at least take up the issue of how lovers can achieve *otium* in idyllic rural-coastal environments. In doing so, Lawrence's second novel looks forward to the parable of 'the good bark *Harriett and Lovatt*' in *Kangaroo*. Indeed, it is in *The Trespasser* that Lawrence first utilizes the metaphor, which would later form the basis of the chapter dealing with the marital troubles in paradise which are so important to the structure of *Kangaroo*, in an outburst of Siegmund's about his relationship with Beatrice:

"And some men would have made a better job of it. When it's come to sticking out against Beatrice, and sailing the domestic ship in spite of her, I've always funked..."^84

There are thus far more pastoral elements in *The Trespasser*, along with more correspondences with *Kangaroo*, than either Alcorn or Squires have attempted to

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82 Curiously, there is a reference to 'white peacocks' in *The Trespasser*, op.cit., p. 92.
83DHL, *Kangaroo*, op.cit., p. 196. A related metaphor was earlier used in *The Rainbow*, op.cit. p. 174: 'He [Will Brangwen] asserted his position as captain of the ship. And captain and ship bored her.'
84DHL, *The Trespasser*, op.cit., p. 81.
chart. Yet there are also other omissions and contradictions in Squires’s remarks concerning the pastoral elements in Lawrence’s writing - apart from the two primary texts (The White Peacock and Lady Chatterley’s Lover) he chooses to examine in detail. His remark, for example, that ‘Though artistically more mature, Sons and Lovers treats with less detail and less atmosphere of idyll roughly the same rural experiences as The White Peacock’ is at odds with the view of John Alcorn who is more alive to Lawrence’s use of notions of pastoral solitude in Sons and Lovers:

Paul...seems finally to escape...from the confinement of Nottinghamshire; yet the tight little industrial town, the suffocating interior of the working-class dwelling, are images which dominate Sons and Lovers. These “tight little houses” will remain a favourite Lawrentian image, for his characters’ continual pilgrimage, like his own, seem less a search for Rananim than an escape from the psychic smoke and soot of industrial England. Jude’s tortured cry at the opening of Hardy’s novel (“How ugly it is here!” 10) will be taken up by Paul Morel, and indeed by all Lawrence’s central characters. Jude will seek the sanctuary of the Gothic; Paul will find Wordsworthian refuge in the loneliness of landscape.

Squires also seems strangely contradictory, and numb to his own insights, when he describes The Rainbow as containing only ‘a brief pastoral interlude’, but then goes on to characterize the novel as a ‘a rewritten and expanded version of The White Peacock, especially of its final chapters’. In doing so he fails to draw upon the strength of his initial insight and to see the novel as a truncated pastoral, full of pastoral interludes, but exploring what happens to the refugees from a pastoral environment once they begin to journey away from an exclusively bucolic existence. Squires simply does not seem to understand that Lawrence remains a pastoral novelist even when he does not necessarily find the world of pastoral an admirable one and hence when he does not always present a simple confrontation between the country and the city. Just because Ursula does not undergo a straightforward degeneration as she moves, in stages, from the country to the city does not therefore mean that Lawrence is not employing pastoral themes.

85 Squires, op.cit., p. 20.
87 Squires, op.cit., p. 192, note 20.
Lawrence's portrayal of the dependence of the Brangwens' growing agricultural prosperity upon the 'machine world' which both enriches and enslaves Tom Brangwen is a major advance upon the more simplistic contrast of country and city which Lawrence produced in *The White Peacock, The Trespasser* and *Sons and Lovers*. In *The Rainbow*, however, it is made abundantly clear that, in the words of Michael Wilding, 'the country has its destructive and deadening qualities as strikingly as does the city.' But Squires largely avoids addressing such pastoral complexities, preferring to deal with more limited, though 'wholly' pastoral prose-fictions. His belief that pastoral persists in the form of the pastoral novel is a perceptive one, but his avoidance of complexities suggest that a work such as Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop*, in which both rural peace and industrial squalor as presented in a conventionally sentimental manner, is more to his critical taste than novels like *The Rainbow* which stretch the boundaries of the genre.

However, as Michael Wilding has expressed it, the strength of the pastoral contrast in *The Rainbow* is such that:

... whatever deadening and disintegrating qualities industrialism is shown to possess later in the novel, they are possessed simultaneously with other qualities which the country cannot offer - a wider scope, range and freedom, a political world of complex social organization and interaction - cities and governments. ... Lawrence, however, is sceptical of the values of the rural life; and however hideous he finds modern urban life, it is only through this wider, urban, political world of cities and governments and active scope of man that the possibility of a better life is to be reached; and if that means blowing up the cities, fine; but that is not an idea that could ever be thought out and carried through from the country, without ever having the experience of urban life.

And although I feel that Wilding slightly underplays the extent of the interaction and interdependence of the presentation of the country and city in works such as George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, he is nonetheless correct in suggesting that she appears to believe (as does William Morris in *News From Nowhere*) that an 'ideal organic country life', limited though it may be, contains all that men and women could require. In at least

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88 Wilding, *op.cit.*, p. 129.
one sense then, both George Eliot and William Morris, for all the radicalism of both the
form and the content of their fiction, are reactionary utopians, because at the time they
were writing it was simply not possible for everyone to take up the rural life again.

Lawrence, on the other hand, advances the development of the modern pastoral
novel through his anti-pastoral evocation of a place, Wiggiston, whose streets are 'like
visions of pure ugliness'. Indeed, the place is so ugly it is is simply outside the
comprehension of Ursula. But where Lawrence is an innovative pastoralist in The
Rainbow is in his presentation of Ursula's visionary solution to the horrors of
industrial urban life. When Ursula asks Tom Brangwen, 'But is this place as awful as
it looks? ', the reply powerfully indictes Tom's plain, realistic, rationally unromantic
acceptance of the inhumanity of industrial capitalism:

'It [Wiggiston] is just what it looks,' he said, 'It hides nothing.'
'Why are the men so sad?'
'Are they sad?' he replied.
'They seem unutterably, unutterably sad,' said Ursula, out of a passionate throat.
'I don't think they are that. They just take it for granted.'
'What do they take for granted?'
'This - the pits and the place altogether.'
'Why don't they alter it?' she passionately protested.
'They believe that they must alter themselves to fit the pits and the place, rather than alter the pits and the place to fit themselves. It is easier,' he said.

Ursula comes to understand that:

...her Uncle Tom perceived what was going on. But she knew moreover that in spite of his criticism and condemnation, he still wanted the great machine. His only happy moments, his only moments of pure freedom were when he was serving the machine.

Like so many post eighteenth century pastoral works, The Rainbow is an attack on the 'machine society'. But Lawrence's originality lies in the extreme nature of the response he gives to Ursula: not pastoral flight but Romantic pastoral fight. Her uncle has been turned into a machine by a machine society and so:

Hatred sprang up in Ursula's heart. If she could she would smash the machine. Her soul's action should be the smashing of the great machine. If she could destroy the colliery, and make all the men of Wiggiston out of work, she would do it. Let them starve and grub in the earth for roots, rather than serve such a Moloch as this.\footnote{Ibid.}

Ursula wants to force the miners to destroy their attachment to the machine world by experiencing once again the naturalness of their former contact with the soil, grubbing in the earth for roots. It is a Romantic dystopian pastoral response to the horrors of capitalism and Michael Wilding is one of the few critics to have understood its significance:

\ldots to destroy the colliery so that the miners have to starve and grub in the soil may seem an irrational and impractical response to the problems of industrial capitalism. But Lawrence's point is that the practical, intellectual responses will achieve nothing either. Since rational, mechanical, clear, hard-headed thinking created the system, those sorts of approaches will never destroy it.\footnote{Wilding, op.cit., p. 135.}

Ursula's is a political attack on capitalism but, as Wilding has noted, Lawrence offers 'no evidence, no theory, no argument' to help support her position because 'theory and argument are the things that she is rejecting':

Ursula rejects intellectual analysis for the soul. 'Her soul was busy, infinitely busy, in the new world.' And it is a new world she seeks out, she is not making a return to an old world. Similarly in Kangaroo Somers is looking for 'a new show' of political possibilities. There is no suggestion that the old forms of life offer any answer. Ursula does not return to the farming world; that is never put up as a possibility.\footnote{Wilding, op.cit., p. 145.}

As Raymond Williams notes in The Country and The City,\footnote{Raymond Williams, op.cit., p. 319.} Lawrence does not oppose the deadness of the industrial machine society with a pastoral idyll of an idealized farming community. Rather, The Rainbow's culminating assertion of hope, that a rainbow (simultaneously real and metaphoric) will arch in the blood of the Wiggston miners and 'quiver to life in their spirit',\footnote{DHL, The Rainbow, op.cit., p. 496.} is a completely new form of
symbolic pastoral vision which subsumes the traditional shepherd metaphor of the
city/country contrast entirely.

Knowing that the traditional pastoral retreat has been made impossible by
industrial capitalism, Lawrence refuses to make that traditional retreat in *The Rainbow.*
But he knows equally that to engage in a non-revolutionary, 'rational', dispassionate
analysis of the evils of the industrial capitalist system, like Tom Brangwen, is
tantamount to accepting that system. A conventional party political programme is
therefore, to use the words of Simone Weil, 'as good [or as bad] a way of detachment
as to retire from the world'.

The final paragraph of *The Rainbow* is thus a version of the utopian Romantic
pastoral vision. Eugene Goodheart explains:

The utopian character of the society of *The Rainbow* can be
seen at once when we compare it with *Adam Bede,* a novel to
which *The Rainbow* bears resemblance. When George Eliot
describes realistically the detail of life on the Poyser farm, she
is imagining the hard, resistant facts against which the
characters must define themselves. The tragedy of Hetty and
Arthur is not the result of a violation of natural law as George
Eliot would have us believe; it is rather in their failure to do
their duty by the facts of social life. George Eliot begins with
society and imagines characters within it. Lawrence, on the
other hand, begins with the individual and imagines his
fulfilment. Society is ideally one opportunity for self-
fulfilment.

As a version of pastoral, *The Rainbow* is thus something of a completely 'new show'.

In Michael Wilding's words, 'It is a vision that rejects currently accepted means of
change (progress, reformism), alongside an apocalyptic assurance that change is
necessary and change will come'. This vision and these issues (and their political
consequences) are later to be dramatically re-enacted via Somers’s Australian
experiences in *Kangaroo.* Ursula's vision proved unrealisable for Lawrence in
England. So, having given up on the old world, in his first novel written outside
Europe, he goes back over the same ground covered by Ursula's experience and

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100 Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace,* cited in Damien Coleridge, "A Radical Grace", *24 Hours
101 Eugene Goodheart, *op.cit.*, p. 27.
102 Wilding, *op.cit.*, p. 149.
explores both the impulses to pastoral retirement and political commitment in a new place and in a literary form that is an even newer departure than *The Rainbow*. In doing so, as Wilding has argued, Lawrence 'formally superseded the old George Eliot-Thomas Hardy novel'.

Less interested in political writing than Wilding, Squires contends that 'the essential difference' between *The Rainbow* and *The White Peacock* is simply 'that in *The Rainbow* the couples represent three generations rather than one and are connected by family ties.' 'In both novels', Squires argues, 'the dominant impression is one of lyrical intensity: in *The White Peacock* the stimulus for lyrical intensity is nature; in *The Rainbow*, the emotion of love.'

Squires thus shows little interest in the advances Lawrence is making in the form of the political pastoral novel. As Wilding has noted:

*The Rainbow* demonstrates a shift from the almost pastiche George Eliot-Thomas Hardy opening chapters to the more schematic, argumentative, less 'realized' open form in the latter part, looking forward to *Women in Love* and *Kangaroo* - marking a major shift in life values, life possibilities.

And it is only a sensitive Marxist critic like Wilding who seems capable of getting past waffling about 'lyrical intensity' and thereby understanding the way in which Lawrence's symbolic pastoral realism begins to work after the completion of his first two novels.

Marxists like Arnold Kettle and Jack Lindsay are capable of seeing that in *The Rainbow* the destructive nature of industrialism is expressed symbolically in the drowning of Tom Brangwen by the bursting of the canal bank, but only Michael Wilding has to date identified the realistic pastoral symbolism of the death of Tom's father by falling off a hayrick as symbolically expressive of the destructive nature of the old rural life. So few critics have been able to see that Lawrence's view of the experience of living in the older rural communities of pastoral England was always

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105 Wilding, *op.cit.*, p. 11.
highly ambiguous.\textsuperscript{107} It is true that Lawrence shows the emerging industrialism of \emph{The Rainbow} and \emph{Women in Love} as deadening and disintegrative to human personality, but he always recognized that these qualities of modern life co-exist 'with other qualities that the country cannot offer - a wider scope, range and freedom, a political world of complex social organization...cities and governments', to repeat Wilding's phrasing.\textsuperscript{108} The one pastoral myth that Lawrence is always capable of shattering, no matter how idyllically he describes country living, is that it could ever hope to offer \textit{all} that humans require. Expression of such a myth is nearly always the hallmark of lesser pastoral writers and Lawrence is hardly one of those.

Novels like \emph{Sons and Lovers}, \emph{The Rainbow} and \emph{Women in Love} retain the strongest of links with Lawrence's early pastoral writing because characters like Paul Morel and Ursula Brangwen, in their unwillingness to accept the limitations and narrowness of both the pre-industrial and emerging industrial worlds, do not escape in a single movement to newer worlds providing greater possibilities. The allure of the rural world as morally superior to the industrial is always recognized, but the magnificence of Lawrence's pastoral art is that he can simultaneously illuminate the peerless natural beauty of the pastoral world along with a marvellous metaphysical projection of a very personal insight into the crippling (indeed, at times, deathly) limitations of a rural way of life. He sees both sides of the coin, the flaws in both the pastoral and industrial glasses, and hence never \textit{uncritically} idealizes the allure of the pastoral retreat.

The greatness of Lawrence as a politically revolutionary writer of pastoral is that while always furthering his critique of industrial capitalist society, often by way of pointed pastoral comparisons, he never presents an absolute case for withdrawal into rural retreat. As Wilding and nearly all other Marxists believe (except perhaps for Pol

\textsuperscript{107} The description of the drowning of Tom Brangwen, and the way in which the waters rush through 'The Marsh' farmhouse (\emph{The Rainbow, op.cit.}, p. 250), may well be also symbolic of the death of the paradisal pastoral country-house ideal in English Literature. Lawrence's burlesque of this same ideal can be seen in the depictions of Garsington in \emph{Women in Love} and finally, and most bitterly of all, in the depiction of Clifford Chatterley's residence in \emph{Lady Chatterley's Lover}.

\textsuperscript{108} Wilding, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 129.
Pot with his 'Year Zero' option and William Morris in the utopian dream vision of *News From Nowhere*), 'a retreat is historically impossible, and would be a retreat merely to other limitations'. Rather, in *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, Lawrence dramatizes through Ursula 'the search for a breakthrough into something else, some other form of social possibility.' And the search continues, as in the case of Richard Lovatt Somers in *Kangaroo*, even when the experience of a largely new world like Australia opens up within Lawrence's novels the possibility of a withdrawal back to the country. Even then, Lawrence is at pains to stress the limitations of such a retreat because it lacks the possibility of genuine (that is non-parliamentary) political action in the world of men.

Conservative critics of pastoral, and even Old Left Marxists like Christopher Caudwell, misunderstand the nature of the city/country contrast Lawrence employs because they do not attentively read the consequences of the pastoral retreat in novels like *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *Kangaroo* or the symbolism in which the 'retreat' is expressed. The famous ending of *The Rainbow* which F.R. Leavis disliked so much provides a case in point.

Leavis's complaint that there is 'No real conclusion of the book, only a breaking-off is possible. . . .There is something oddly desperate about that closing page and a half. . . .that confident note of prophetic hope in the final paragraph - a note entirely unprepared and unsupported, defying the preceding pages' fails to understand, as Wilding has noted, that Lawrence is deliberately breaking, as he continues to do in *Kangaroo*, all the 'conventions' and 'rules' of the novel. It is not

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110 Christopher Caudwell, *Studies and Further Studies in a Dying Culture*, intro. Sol Yurick, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1971, paperback edition, 1972. However, Caudwell does seem, contrary to Wilding's assertion (op.cit., pp. 146-147), to understand the real pastoral bases of Lawrence's primitivism: 'The world to which Lawrence wished to return is not really the world of primitives who are in fact bound by more rigid relations than those of bourgeois Europe. It is the old bourgeois pastoral heaven of the "natural man" born everywhere in chains, which does not exist.' Wilding thus seems to me a little unfair when he mentions Caudwell and then states that Lawrence was never advocating a return to the primitive.' Caudwell would not seem to be suggesting that he had.
a 'non-ending' as such, but rather an expression of hope against astounding odds. It is a revolutionary dream-vision as strong, though much briefer, than that of Morris's *News From Nowhere*. It is, as is the novel *Kangaroo*, a retreat only from conventional political programmes and solutions. It is 'a vision that rejects currently accepted means of change (conventional education, industrial progress and reformist capitalist politics) alongside an apocalyptic assurance that change'\(^{113}\) - a transformation that will *restore naturalness* to the proletariat ('new clean, naked bodies would issue to a new germination, to a new growth, rising to the light and the wind and the clean rain of heaven')\(^{114}\) - is absolutely necessary. It is a vision that is expressed in the language of rural pursuits, a 'new germination' emerging amid the naturalness of the soil, the light, and the wind and rain. Its utopian, paradisal qualities are also captured here in the use of the word 'heaven'.

Curiously, those few other critics who have shown some interest in Lawrence's handling of pastoral are also surprisingly unilluminating when it comes to Lawrence's *Women in Love*. On this novel they have virtually nothing to say. Strangely, both Squires and Alcorn ignore Birkin's remarkable idyll of solitude, so reminiscent of Marvell's misogynistic *The Garden*, in the 'Breadalby' chapter of *Women in Love*:

> He was happy in the wet hill-side, that was overgrown and obscure with bushes and flowers. He wanted to touch them all, to saturate himself with the touch of them all. He took off his clothes, and sat down naked among the primroses, moving his feet stiffly across the primroses, his legs, his knees, his arms right up to the arm-pits, lying down and letting them touch his belly, his breasts. It was such a fine, cool, subtle touch all over him, he seemed to saturate himself with their contact.

> ... To lie down and roll in the sticky, cool young hyacinths, to lie on one's belly and cover one's back with handfuls of fine wet grass, soft as a breath, soft and more delicate and more beautiful than the touch of any woman...Nothing else would do, nothing else would satisfy, except this coolness and subtlety of vegetation travelling into one's blood. How fortunate he was, that there was this lovely, subtly, responsive vegetation, waiting for him, as he waited for it; how fulfilled he was, how happy!

It was quite right of Hermione to want to kill him. What had he to do with her? Why should he pretend to have anything

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\(^{114}\) *DHL, The Rainbow, op.cit.*, p. 496.
to do with human beings at all? Here was his world, he wanted
nobody and nothing but the lovely, subtle, responsive
vegetation, and himself, his own living self.

It was necessary to go back into the world. That was
true. But that did not matter, so one knew where one belonged.
He knew now where he belonged. This was his place, his
marriage place, the world was extraneous.

As for the certain grief he felt at the same time, in his
soul, that was only the remains of an old ethic, that bade a
human being adhere to humanity. But he was weary of the old
ethic, of the human being, and of humanity. He loved now the
soft, delicate vegetation, that was so cool and perfect. . . .

What a dread he had of mankind, of other people! It amounted
almost to horror, to a sort of dream terror - his horror of being
observed by some other people. If he were on an island, like
Alexander Selkirk, with only the creatures and the trees, he
would be free and glad, there would be none of this heaviness,
this misgiving. He could love the vegetation and be quite happy
and unquestioned, by himself.115

I am at a loss to explain why the fusion of this pastoral retreat into solitude with
Lawrence's paradisal notions of the perfect place, of a solitary 'Rananim', have gone
unremarked by either Alcorn or Squires. The understanding displayed here by Birkin
that the pastoral place (in this case the locus amoenus is extended to the entire natural
world, to all its 'creatures and trees') can only be a temporary retreat, but one that, once
it is recognized as the 'place' to which 'he belonged', provides the necessary healing to
enable Birkin 'to go back into the world', goes to heart of Lawrence's notions of
pastoral and place. In Kangaroo, this recognition, instead of taking place in a
generalized natural everywhere, is returned to a specific locality, the rural-coastal
environs of Mullumbimby and the pastoral garden of the Australian bush which blooms
at the close of that novel.

Yet, apart from developing the convention of pastoral solitude (as Lawrence
would continue to do in Kangaroo and Lady Chatterley's Lover), Women in Love
also does much to advance the ways in which Lawrence utilizes the techniques of
pastoral romance within the structure of a modern travel novel - a development also
with much relevance for Kangaroo. The pastoral heart, rather than the pastoral interlude
described above, of Women in Love is found in Chapter XXIII, 'Excurse'. In a

and pleasant land'. In *Women in Love* itself the utopian pastoral place becomes literally a 'no-place' as Birkin expresses the desire to '...wander away from the world's somewheres, into our own nowhere' . Increasingly, however, Lawrence turns (especially in a novel like *Kangaroo*) to an experiment with the form of the novel to achieve these utopian romantic pastoral journeys 'away from the world's somewheres'. He starts to utilize plot vacuums deliberately and, as in *Kangaroo*, utilizes the device of journeys to exotic locations by characters with no real destination in mind. Suspense is built up, and then left hanging with no development, as in the case of Jaz and his late-night meetings with Callcott in *Kangaroo*. *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo* thus develop very much as a 'series of accidents - like a picaresque novel'. Indeed, the related questions asked in *Women in Love* - 'Why bother! Why strive for a coherent, satisfied life? Why not drift on in a series of accidents - like a picaresque novel? Why not?' - may well find a literary answer in both the form and content of *Kangaroo*. Behind it all, however, there is still Lawrence's attempt to develop in his readers a sense of his utopian faith that there is a locality, a place, for both lovers and individuals who recognize the dark god within themselves - 'somewhere we can be free' with 'one or two people'. Such a faith, however, must always struggle with the countervailing belief Lawrence sometimes gives to his characters:

'. . .At the very last, one is alone, beyond the influence of love. There is a real impersonal me, that is beyond love, beyond any emotional relationship. So it is with you. But we want to delude ourselves that love is the root. It isn't. It is only the branches. The root is beyond love, a naked kind of isolation, an isolated me, that does not meet and mingle and never can.'

It is a version of pastoral solitude with some kinship to that of Marvell's 'The Garden'

and in *Women in Love* it is expressed in roughly similar terms: 'Oh yes. Adam kept

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120Not even in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* where, at the end, the lovers do not find a farm in England, but will presumably flee to a farm in the Canadian wilderness.
123*Ibid*.
Eve in the indestructible paradise, when he kept her single with himself, like a star in its orbit." ¹²⁶

In *The Lost Girl*, Lawrence shows Alvina Houghton attempting to find somewhere she can be free by running away to 'The Place Called Califano', to her lover's primitive home on the edge of the Abruzzi. I concur with Julian Moynahan in believing that *The Lost Girl* 'is relatively minor as Lawrentian pastoral because it sets the actual bristling complexity of modern society and civilized consciousness too much at a remove'.¹²⁷ Yet where it holds a significant place in the development of Lawrence's pastoral art is in its demonstration of the possibilities of the malign influence of the spirit of place on human character:

> There is no mistake about it, Alvina was a lost girl. She was cut off from everything she belonged to. Ovid isolated in Thrace might well lament. . . .
> At Pescocalascio it was the mysterious influence of the mountains and valleys themselves which always seemed to be annihilating the Englishwoman. . . .
> At first she did not realize. She was only stunned with the strangeness of it all: startled, half-entranced with the terrific beauty of the place, half-horrified by its savage annihilation of her. But she was stunned. The days went by.
> It seems there are places which resist us, which have the power to overthrow our psychic being. It seems as if every country had its potent negative centres, localities which savagely and triumphantly refuse our living culture. And Alvina had struck one of these, here on the edge of the Abruzzi.¹²⁸

We see, in *The Lost Girl*, Lawrence experimenting with some of the notions of the spirit of place he had gleaned from his study of 'Classic American Literature'. And although 'The Place Called Califano', like the Australia later presented in *Kangaroo*, sometimes is depicted as a flowery idyll¹²⁹ it also possesses the equivalent of *Kangaroo*’s 'long black arm' in the bush, waiting, 'biding its time', watching the 'myriad intruding white men':¹³⁰

¹²⁶*Op.cit.*, p. 167. In *The Rainbow* (*op.cit.*, p.103), 'The Marsh Farm' itself is a community of pastoral isolation, housing 'a curious family, a law unto themselves, separate from the world, isolated, a small republic set in invisible bounds.'
¹²⁷Julian Moynahan, "Pastoralism as Culture and Counter-Culture in English Fiction, 1800-1928", *op.cit.*, p. 34.
¹²⁹See *op.cit.*, pp. 314-315, 331-333.
How unspeakably lovely it was, no one could ever tell, the grand, pagan twilight of the valleys, savage, cold, with a sense of ancient gods who knew the right for human sacrifice. It stole away the soul of Alvina. She felt transfigured in it, clairvoyant in another mystery of life. A savage hardness came in her heart. The gods who had demanded human sacrifice were quite right, immutably right. The fierce, savage gods who dipped their lips in blood, these were the true gods.

The terror, the agony, the nostalgia of the heathen past was a constant torture to her mediumistic soul. She did not know what it was. But it was a kind of neuralgia in the very soul, never to be located in the human body, and yet physical.131

As The Lost Girl suggests, Lawrence's hopes that the ideal locality could ever be found either within or without England were never strong. For although the spirit of place - that daimon Lawrence sometimes believed he encountered in the demi-paradisal localities to which he periodically travelled - could be soothing (like the spirit of the landscape readers encounter in St Mawr),133 such spirits like the one Alvina encounters can also be pitilessly menacing.

While making a connection between Gulliver's Travels and St Mawr, Eugene Goodheart, in his The Utopian Vision of D.H. Lawrence, remarks that Lawrence's 'horse is conceived with an unsatiric seriousness that contrasts him sharply with the Houyhnhms'. For Goodheart:

The wild spirit that descends on Lou and takes possession of her is an exclusive spirit. Lou alone of the little human world in which she has lived has the courage and the imagination to embrace it, for to embrace the spirit one must reject the world of men. The secret of the spirit of the landscape is its inhumanity, its terrible unconcern with, or even open hostility to, the lives of men.

So it was, when you watched the vast and living landscape. The landscape lived, and lived as the world of gods, unsullied and unconcerned. The great circling landscape lived its own life, sumptuous and uncaring. Man did not exist for it.134

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132 Although it is outside the scope of this study, I feel that The Plumed Serpent tends to confirm this.
133 "There's something else even that loves me and wants me. I can't tell you what it is. It's a spirit. And it's here on the ranch. It's here, in this landscape. It's something more real to me than men are, and it soothes me, and it holds me up". DHL, St Mawr, in The Short Novels, Volume II, Heinemann, London, p. 47.
134 The indented passage within the quotation is from DHL St Mawr, in The Short Novels, Volume II, p. 137; cited by Goodheart in The Utopian Vision of DHL, University of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 60.
The man or woman who embraces the spirit gladly must suffer the consequences of its humanity. (Lou says, "It's something wild, that will hurt me sometimes and will wear me down sometimes.") Yet to renounce this spirit is, in the Laurentian view, to renounce life itself. The spirit...is, according to Lawrence, the creative source of every form of life. Whatever dangerous energies it contains, and danger attends every creative act, there can be no genuine being unless one avails oneself of the spirit. And it is the final recourse when the human world has lost its vitality. Despite the terrible and inhuman character of the natural spirit that Lawrence has invoked, it serves, or at least Lawrence means it to serve, the human interest.

Lawrence's great utopian hope is that, as a final recourse when the human world fails us, 'the spirit of place' may be the only thing that can help human beings to re-establish both their human nature and their human naturalness. But it will clearly only be achieved at the risk of exposing ourselves to the 'dangerous energies' of this spirit.

After The Lost Girl, it is only in his final novel, Lady Chatterley's Lover, where the locus amoenus of the gamekeeper's wood tenuously holds out against both the menacing ugliness of the mining village of Tevershall and the emotional and sexual sterility of Wragby Hall which surround it, that Lawrence presents a particular locality without also giving some sense of the menace of its spirit. Briefly, Mellors enjoys a pastoral of solitude within this refuge and, finally, there he and Connie snatch their moment pastoral of happiness before they are separated and prepare to set out on a new life literally pregnant with possibility. Indeed, as Julian Moynahan has suggested, it is the very frailty of the idyll presented which makes Lady Chatterley's Lover (with its forced, and uncertain, 'stock family-on-the-farm-to-be semiaffirmative ending' indicating a genuine utopian-pastoral desperation) 'the essential post-war English pastoral novel'.

In the novels written between the publication of Women in Love and Lady Chatterley's Lover, Lawrence imaginatively seeks the pastoral heartland in other locales than the English Garden by means of the modern utopian pastoral travel novel. As

137 Kingsley Widmer, op.cit., p. 15.
138 Julian Moynahan, op.cit., p. 35.
Squires notes, 'Lawrence's characters, initially rooted in the early novels, begin to move from one house or one area to another, escaping what Birkin calls the "horrible tyranny of a fixed milieu"'. Yet this is an insight into an aspect of Lawrence's development of pastoral that Squires, apart from the fleeting reference to *The Plumed Serpent* quoted above, does not develop. He shows no interest in the development of the form of the modern pastoral novel which Lawrence undertook in both *Aaron's Rod* and his first novel written outside Europe, *Kangaroo*.

But if Squires's interest had extended to *Aaron's Rod* he would have recognized, as John Alcorn so brilliantly detailed some three years after the publication of Squires's book, that:

The most sustained example of Lawrence's use of . . . pastoral convention occurs in *Aaron's Rod* (1922). It is one of Lawrence's most uneven and ill-organized works; yet it illustrates, perhaps more dramatically than any other of his books, both Lawrence's doctrine and his method as a practitioner of the pastoral travel novel. It also indicated the pervasiveness of Lawrence's debt to naturist conventions. For Hardy's Gabriel Oak and Hudson's Mr Abel had provided a pattern for Lawrence's Aaron Sisson: the Old Testament shepherd, the pastoral nomad, the oaten pipes. But in *Aaron's Rod*, Lawrence gave a new expression to the myth of pastoral retirement, and a new meaning to its musical symbolism . . .

Lawrence never admitted his "borrowing" from Hardy in *Aaron's Rod*, but then Lawrence never admitted borrowing anything from anybody. In the case of *Aaron's Rod* and *Far from the Madding Crowd*, the influence is perceptible not only in terms of the obvious "coincidence" of pastoral symbol, but also, and more importantly, in terms of the specific use of the flute as an emblem of the insufficiency of verbal communication.

Just like *Aaron's Rod*, where politics is little more than an explosion on the edge of the narrative (something that never really makes a real claim on the consciousness of the novel's main character) *Kangaroo*, although superficially a much more political work where an explosion actually does enter the consciousness of the main character, is a modern pastoral travel novel.

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The story of Lawrence's pre-Kangaroo fiction is thus the story of a movement away from the depiction of characters who are rooted in actual English pastoral environments in *The White Peacock* and the opening chapter of *The Rainbow*. It is the story of characters who feel the pressures of both urban and industrial experience upon their actual pastoral idyll (as George in *The White Peacock*, Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers* and the protagonists of *Women in Love*) and of characters who flee the claustrophobic social hell of the stultifying social relations of both Victorian notions of courting specifically and bourgeois and working class family life generally. They flee the pressures of Victorian capitalist industrialism and its social relations with mixed success; often they seek refuge on surviving islands of nature - little pastoral oases - they find in the varied landscapes to which they flee. Prior to *Women in Love*, these characters most frequently commune with nature in exclusively English pastoral gardens; but after the debacle in the ice and snow outside Basel in *Women in Love*, Lawrence's characters begin to look to Italy to experience something akin to Virgil's Golden Age in the 'land of Saturn', thereby recapturing the now frosty joys of an English agricultural spring in the warmth of the south.

While it is in *Women in Love* that a Lawrentian character first enunciates the notion of the 'horrible tyranny of a fixed milieu', Lawrence's work in what might be termed the travel-novel genre really only begins in earnest with the publication of *The Lost Girl* and *Aaron's Rod*. It is not coincidental that the gestation of these novels begins during the war and their birth occurs after the cessation of hostilities. For an arcadian response to the horrors of the first great international trade war was not uncommon, as Paul Fussell has remarked when noting the re-emergence of pastoral elements in the literature of World War One in his book entitled *The Great War and Modern Memory*. Lawrence's experience of harassment during the war was thus an

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141 As Siegmund in *The Trespasser*, Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers*; the main characters of *Women in Love*: Alvina Houghton in *The Lost Girl*; Aaron Sisson in *Aaron's Rod*; and even Gilbert Noon in the first half of 'Mr Noon'.

142 In the case of *The Lost Girl*, publication was actually delayed because of the war, in that Lawrence had left the original manuscript in Germany before the outbreak of hostilities.

143 See *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1975, especially chapter 7, "Arcadian Recourses"; in contrast, Julian Moynahan contends (wrongly I think) that the
essential part of his real-life pastoral impulse to escape. England's fields and meadows may have been a prelapsarian idyll to a boy who saw first the ugliness of his father's industrial experience and, later, the straightjacket of his mother's Victorian morality and lower middle class self-consciousness. But it was World War One which, for Lawrence, destroyed nearly all hope of that original idyll ever being regained, at least in England. And as this thesis will argue, out of this shattered English idyll, Lawrence was able to eventually cobble together his battered notions of place, pastoral and politics to create, in his first work written outside Europe, a formally adventurous and politically revolutionary pastoral travel novel. But the struggle to achieve this new form took a great deal of effort, as is indicated by the immensely prolonged struggle he had with the composition of Aaron's Rod.

While John Alcorn has made a courageous start in identifying Lawrence's Aaron's Rod as a modern political travel novel utilizing pastoral conventions, the aim of this thesis, rather, is to explore Kangaroo as an example of Lawrence's continuing utilization and development of the pastoral conventions with which he began his career as a novelist in The White Peacock. Its task is to explore the ways in which Lawrence has, while working within the structure of a formally adventurous modern pastoral travel novel, wedded his peculiar notions of place and many of the techniques of traditional pastoral. While Lawrence may have undertaken this in order to develop both a jaundiced critique of both modern political life and democratic suburban living, along with an equally jaundiced exploration of the consequences of conventional political entanglement for the sensitive individual, it is a primary intention of this thesis to keep in sight the idyll he created in doing so.

holocaust of the Great War... actually burned out of the English literary imagination all those illusions of an ultimate harmony between the aims of the simple private life and general society upon which the rich tradition [of pastoral as culture and counter-culture in English fiction] I have been tracing depended. (op.cit. pp. 34-35) This seems to me, yet another premature announcement of the genre's demise. However, the impulse to pastoral seems to me to be a perennial one that survives most critics' wishes to extinguish it at certain points. It extinguishes itself in the work of certain authors perhaps (and perhaps Lawrence is a case in point), but seems continually to be taken up and enveloped in new ways by successive literary generations.
This may seem paradoxical, but then paradox is both inherent in and central to the dialectic of modern pastoral. It was Heraclitus who first contended that things could only be understood in their contradictions (an idea taken up by both Hegel and Marx) and most modern pastoral requires similarly perverse exegesis. Renato Poggioli is therefore right, I believe, to read the pastoral novel as a modern, 'inverted', form of pastoral, presenting a bucolic aspiration only to deny it.144 So often in the modern pastoral novel, as even Squires's study of some less adventurous pastoral novels shows, 'a picture of beauty and loveliness is created, then destroyed; an idyll is transformed into ugliness'.145

This is true of Lawrence's The White Peacock, along with many of the pastoral interludes in his other novels. Indeed, if a wider conspectus of the major novels is taken, it is possible to witness an encroaching sense of hopelessness in Lawrence's depiction of the English landscape. The opening chapter of The White Peacock is entitled 'The People of Nethermere' and at this early stage of his career it was still possible for him to envisage a living rural community existing in the years over which it was being written, even though Lawrence (writing a generation later than Hardy) knows that rural community is in irrevocable decline. 'The whole place', we learn in the third sentence of the novel, 'was gathered in the musing of old age.146 And even though the first sentence of Sons and Lovers - "The Bottoms" succeeded to "Hell Row" - appears to ominously centre the novel firmly in the industrial/suburban landscape, the initial paragraph as a whole lays stress on the rural aspect of the area:

There lived the colliers who worked in the little gin-pits two fields away...And all over the countryside were these same pits...little black places amid the corn-fields and the meadows.147

Lawrence here, more faithfully than in The White Peacock, presents his own experience of the industrial revolution, and keeps the rural idyll firmly in sight. Even the Paul-Miriam-Clara triangle has pastoral dimensions, in that one aspect of the

144Renato Poggioli, "The Oaten Flute", op.cit., p. 177.
triangle is that Clara belongs to the town and all that it represents. She is thus able to lure Paul from the rich rural traditions embodied in the lives of Miriam and her family on the farm. By the time Lawrence uses the words 'this defaced countryside' to characterize the landscape of the opening chapter of *Women in Love*, we are in a landscape radically different from that of farming Brangwen generations. Even in *Sons and Lovers* the whole countryside was not defaced, for even the pit-tops only punctuate the pleasing rural scene; but in *Women in Love*, however, the landscape is depicted as an 'ugliness' only occasionally 'overlaid with beauty'.\(^{148}\) 'Coal-Dust', the title of chapter 9, is everywhere in England's once green and pleasant land. By the time of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence's attitude to the England depicted in his earlier novels has darkened: 'It was as if dismalness had soaked through and through everything'.\(^{149}\) Rural England becomes, in chapter 11 of Lawrence's final novel, 'the hopeless countryside', not only because, as W.J. Keith points out, 'of the oppressive ugliness but because of a total collapse of regional awareness.'\(^{150}\) The 'younger generation', writes the narrator of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, 'were utterly unconscious of the Old England. There was a gap in the continuity of their consciousness, almost American: but industrial really.'\(^{151}\) The vast majority of the inhabitants of the despoiled English garden are deformed individuals because their link with the natural world of pastoral pursuits is no longer within living memory. As Keith notes, 'The only connection discoverable between environment and human society is bleakly negative: "The people were as haggard, shapeless, and dreary as the countryside, and as unfriendly"'.\(^{152}\) The idyll of the Brangwen generations farming forever in an English garden embodied in the opening of *The Rainbow* has turned into a nightmarish image involving the 'utter negation of natural beauty, the utter negation of the gladness of life, the utter absence of the instinct for shapely beauty which every bird and beast

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\(^{150}\)W.J. Keith, *Regions of the Imagination: The Development of British Rural Fiction*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto and Buffalo, 1988, p. 156. I am indebted to pages 150, 151 and 156 of Keith's book for many of the ideas in this and the preceding paragraph.


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has, the utter death of the human intuitive faculty... It is the condemnation, from
the standpoint of Lawrence's pastoral art, of English civilization entire.

What is distinctive about Kangaroo as a modern pastoral, however, is that a
series of idylls are successively shattered, restored, and then finally destroyed. And
then, even when the central idyll is unequivocally fractured, Lawrence - in yet another
of the many non-endings to his novels - has his protagonist walk away from the new
idyll of the bush in bloom which Lawrence ecstatically evokes at the novel's close.
Michael Squires would thus appear to have identified one of the hallmarks of the
modern pastoral novel when he writes of the 'ambiguous and ironic ending' which
characterizes Lawrence's first foray into the art of the pastoral novel. This insight is
but one of Squires's strengths (and, in his analysis of the modern pastoral novel, he
does have many) but I cannot close this chapter without stressing his major weakness.

Squires's hesitancy, as I have noted earlier, is probably a reflection of the
trepidation experienced by a conservative, that is non-Marxist, literary critic whose
insights are pioneering but who would appear to be most reluctant to weather the
critical storms to which pioneers are often initially subject. As a consequence, although
he clearly follows in the footsteps of Poggioli, Squires does not fully take up
Poggioli's crucial point that the modern pastoral novel is an 'inverted' form of pastoral
which pursues 'the bucolic aspiration only to deny it.' And following on from this
omission he does not make the connection - one which I believe has driven Marxist
critical interest in the genre - between pastoral and utopianism. As a result, Squires is
unable to place Lawrence's pastoral novels firmly within a continuing tradition of
pastoral political writing. It has taken until 1990 for a critic of Lawrence to place any of
his novels firmly within an English political tradition of pastoral writing which looks
back at least as far as Ben Jonson's 'To Penshurst'.

That critic is Rick Rylance: and if ever critical support was needed to bolster the
contention that Lawrence wrote novels that were part of a living tradition of political

153 DHL, Lady Chatterley's Lover, op.cit., p. 158.
154 Michael Squires, op.cit., p.193. Squires is referring, of course, to the ending of The White
Peacock.
pastoral, it is to be found in his discussion of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*.\textsuperscript{155} In attempting to trace the trajectory of Lawrence’s politics in the 1920s, Rylance remarks that the ‘argument and narrative direction of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* . . . takes its protagonists away [as does *Kangaroo* ] from mainstream society’. But in making this point, Rylance maintains that *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* is ‘engagedly political’ nevertheless. It is, contends Rylance:

\dots a critique of English intellectual-political life in the mid-1920s during conditions of heightened industrial militancy, on the one side, and the temptation among the owners of land and industry to reach for ultra-rightist solutions to the crisis on the other. Frequently, referred to as ‘pastoral’ (having in mind the elegant eroticism of the woodland scenes), in fact the book seems a pastoral reversed, an English country-house poem written from outside the estate at one of England’s fiercest political moments. It identifies country house, and the culture it supports, as a leading element in the damaged politics of the 1920s.\textsuperscript{156}

It is the aim of this thesis to show that Lawrence, even in a novel like *Kangaroo* which has moved way from depiction of that landscape which nurtured its author,\textsuperscript{157} was making a highly original contribution to what a small, but increasing, number of critics are coming to see as Lawrence’s primarily pastoral art of the modern novel: an essentially political art informed by (despite its peculiarly Lawrentian twists, turns and inversions) a centuries old English vision of the dialectics of town and country. On a more diffuse level, it is also an attempt to show how Lawrence ‘preserved essential pastoral values while fully accepting the burden of civilized consciousness which the developed society and culture of his time imposed’,\textsuperscript{158} even as he fashioned the adventurous new literary form of *Kangaroo*.

\textsuperscript{155}It should also be noted that Northrop Frye, in his “Varieties of Literary Utopias” (in *Utopias and Utopian Thought*, edited by Frank E. Manuel, U.S.A., 1965, reprinted, Souvenir Press, London, 1973) places Lawrence within a pastoral tradition, arguing (op. cit., p. 47) that ‘The attempt to see the sexual relationship as something in itself, and not merely as a kind of social relationship, is something that gives a strongly pastoral quality to the work of D.H. Lawrence.’
\textsuperscript{157} A landscape with which he would again become increasingly preoccupied in the period after the writing of *The Plumed Serpent*.
\textsuperscript{158} Moynahan, *op.cit.*, p. 34.
Section Two: Some Pastoral Elements of *Kangaroo*
The opening paragraph of *Kangaroo* provides an idyllic description of Australian workmen 'in the dinner hour'. It captures the sense of relief and relaxation which the midday break presumably brings to most working people. Although the description has its traditional counterpart in that of shepherds at ease upon the green sward, Lawrence's idyll is distinctly modern and urban, both in its setting and its characters:

A bunch of workmen were lying on the grass of the park beside Macquarie Street, in the dinner hour. It was winter, the end of May, but the sun was warm, and they lay there in their shirt-sleeves, talking. Some were eating food from paper packages. They were a mixed lot - taxi-drivers, a group of builders who were putting a new inside into one of the big houses opposite, and then two men in blue overalls, some sort of mechanics. Squatting and lying on the grassy bank beside the broad tarred road where taxis and hansom cabs passed continually, they had that air of owning the city which belongs to a good Australian.¹

These are not the bush workers of Furphy's and Lawson's stories, the convicts of Clarke's *For The Term Of His Natural Life*, the lumpen-proletarians of Louis Stone's *Jonah*, nor the larrikins of C.J. Dennis's *The Sentimental Bloke*. This is perhaps obvious, but there are significant similarities as well as differences between Lawrence's Australian workmen and those of the Australian writers who preceded him. The contemporary urban taxi-drivers Lawrence presents have their rural counterparts in the bullock-drivers, often nostalgically described, in Furphy's stories.

What is different about the workmen in the opening paragraph is that they are seen as having 'that air of owning the city which belongs to a good Australian.' This distinguishes them both from their European counterparts and their forerunners in Australian literature. Only Stone's *Jonah* had previously presented an image of working-class Sydneyites who, if not quite comfortable with their city, at least were secure in the feeling that they belonged there. In the case of Stone's characters,

however, the feeling of belonging only establishes them as urban Australians, it does not confer upon them, as Lawrence does upon his Australian workmen, 'that air of owning the city' which attests to what Furphy would have called their democratic temper.

Although the opening of the novel is idyllic, its idyllic character is heavily qualified. The workmen 'lying on the grass of the park' in the warm sun may bring to mind images of shepherds at ease upon the green sward, but the 'grassy bank' is placed squarely 'beside the broad tarred road where taxis and hansom cabs passed continually'. Furthermore, it is 'the dinner hour', which is to say that the workmen are enjoying only a brief respite from toil, from ferrying passengers, 'putting a new inside into one of the big houses opposite' and tending machines. The view presented, that is to say, is not of a workingman's paradise, nor of a land of the long lunch-hour, but of workmen relaxing for an hour on a pastoral island lapped by a busy thoroughfare. This placing of the idyll within the work-a-day world has its traditional counterpart in Herrick's 'The Hock Cart', with its reminder to the rustic holiday-makers who, once the festivities are over:

\[ ... \text{must revoke} \]
\[ \text{The patient Oxe unto the Plough...} \]

The idyllic overtones of the opening are entirely dispelled in the second paragraph of the novel, when the principal character, Richard Lovatt Somers, and his wife Harriett appear upon the scene to 'the faintest squeal of singing from out of the "fortified" Conservatorium of Music.' As the response of one of the mechanics reveals, their appearance is as discordant as the singing which accompanies them. They had a 'quiet self-possession which is almost unnatural nowadays' and 'looked different from other people'. In the eyes of the mechanic, the woman 'might have been Russian' and:

\[ \text{Seeing the strange, foreign-looking little man with the beard and the absent air of self-possession walking} \]

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unheeding over the grass, the workman instinctively grinned. A comical-looking bloke! Perhaps a Bolshy.⁴

With the mechanic's response to the sight of Richard and Harriett, the novel takes up one of its central considerations, the political attitudes of Australians, a topic already mooted in its reference to 'that air of owning the city which belongs to a good Australian.' In this instance the attitude of the mechanic, which the 'Bolshy' stereotype (a comical, foreign-looking man with a beard) suggests is general, is that of someone assured of his own country's way of life. At the time Lawrence was writing, such an assurance was common amongst Australian workers, the majority of whom were inclined, as they still are, to look for their well-being to the Constitutional politics of the Australian Labor Party and the procedures of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court.

The complacency of the workmen, which has already been intimated in the opening paragraph of the novel, assumes a socio-economic implication in the mechanic's response to the strangers. This implication is further developed in the exchange which takes place between another of the workmen, one of the taxi-drivers, and 'the comical looking bloke', Somers, who seeks to hire him and enquires about the charge for baggage:

'Shilling apiece, them bags,' said the driver laconically:
'Oh no. The tariff is threepence,' cried the stranger.
'Shilling apiece, them bags', repeated the driver. He was one of the proletariat that has learnt the uselessness of argument.
'That's not just, the tariff is threepence.'
'All right, if you don't want to pay the fare, don't engage the car, that's all. Them bags is a shilling apiece.'⁵

Although the narrator refers to the taxi-driver as 'one of the proletariat that has learnt the uselessness of argument', there is nothing peculiarly proletarian about his refusal to argue with the stranger. He simply evinces a regard for the cost of his services and is no more prepared to haggle over the price of them than a baker would be over the price of a loaf of bread. The driver may be trying to 'rook' the stranger, as

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⁴Ibid.
⁵Op.cit., p. 3
Somers, Harriett and Jack Callcott, one of the mechanics, later suggest, but he does so with proprietary insouciance:

'. . . I don't want to pay so much.' [says Somers]
'Oh, all right. If you don't you won't. But they'll cost you a shilling apiece on a taxi, an' there you are.'
'Then I don't want a taxi.'
'Then why don't you say so. There's no harm done. I don't want to charge you for pulling across here to look at the bags. If you don't want a taxi, you don't. I suppose you know your own mind.'
Thus saying he pushed off the brakes and the taxi slowly curved round on the road to resume its previous stand.6

In this exchange the taxi-driver manifests the assurance implied in the narrator's remark about the air of the workmen and in the mechanic's response to the sight of the two strangers.

The taxi-driver displays a robust and good tempered independence as well as a 'genuinely tolerant nature', 'both of which', as the narrator observes later, 'Australians seem to have in a high degree'.7 His remarks and general demeanour are so commensurate with the air of 'a good Australian' that he appears to embody 'the instinct of the place', later described by the narrator as 'absolutely and flatly democratic'8 and to be the character in view at the end of the chapter when the narrator personifies the political mood of Australia as that of Demos:

Demos was here his own master, undisputed, and therefore quite calm about it. No need to get the wind up at all over it; it was a granted condition of Australia, that Demos was his own master.9

Not all Australian workmen are, in the narrator's sense, 'good Australians', a point that is made when the taxi-driver returns to his station and Somers is solicited by the driver of a hansom cab:

'Want a cab, sir?'
'Yes, but I don't think you can get the bags on.'
'How many bags?'
'Three. These three,' and he kicked them with his toe angrily.

9Ibid.
The hansom-driver looked down from his Olympus. He was very red faced, and a little bit humble.

'Them three? Oh, yes! Easy! Easy! Get 'em on easy. Get them on easy, no trouble at all.' And he clambered down from his perch, and resolved into a little red-faced man, rather beery and henpecked looking. He stood gazing at the bags. On one was printed the name: 'R.L. Somers.'

'R. L. Somers! All right, you get in, sir and madam. You get in, sir and madam. You get in. Where d'you want to go? Station?'

'No. Fifty-one Murdoch street.'

'All right, all right, I'll take you. Fairish long way, but we'll be there under an hour.'

This exchange is clearly complementary to that between Somers and the taxi-driver. The hansom-driver, 'a little bit humble' with his repeated 'sir and madam', his red face, beery and hen-pecked appearance, is positively Dickensian, a creature of the old world not the new. His manner contrasts sharply with the easy-going egalitarianism of the taxi-driver and in the depiction of the two the sympathies of the narrator clearly lie with the 'good Australian' rather than the displaced European. The distinction drawn between the demeanour of the two drivers is of importance because it points to a more fundamental one between the narrative point of view and that of Somers and his wife Harriett and in doing so undermines the too common assumption that Somers is Lawrence's fictional alter ego.11

Contrary to the impression created by the narrative, the workmen lying on the grass, and the taxi-drivers in particular, are found offensive by Somers, the bearded stranger, and his wife Harriett, whilst they are pleased with the hansom-driver, so pleased, in fact, that they fail to enquire about the fare:

The group of workmen were still lying in the grass. But Somers did not care about them. He was safely jogging with his detested baggage to his destination.

'Aren't they vile!' said Harriett, his wife.

11A typical example of such an assumption is provided by Anthony Beal (DHL, Oliver & Boyd, 1961, p. 81) when he states: ‘In... Kangaroo, the setting is Australia; Frieda is with Lawrence again and the two appear practically undisguised as the Somers and Harriet of the novel.’ Others to make that assumption include Richard Aldington, in the introduction to the Penguin Edition (Harmondsworth 1975, p. 9) of Kangaroo; H.T. Moore, Life & Works of DHL, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 211; A. Alvarez, "DHL: the single state of man", in The Shaping Spirit: Studies in Modern English and American Poets, Chatto & Windus, London, 1961, p. 153; and the Italian critic Sandro Melani in his DHL, La Nuova Italia, Firenze, 1982, p. 110.
'It's God's Own Country, as they always tell you,' said Somers. 'The hansom-man was quite nice.'

'But the taxi-drivers! And the man charged you eight shillings on Saturday for what would be two shillings in London!'

'He rooked me. But there you are, in a free country, it's the man who makes you pay who is free - free to charge you what he likes and you're forced to pay it. That's what freedom amounts to. They're free to charge, and you are forced to pay.'

Though these responses to the workmen by Somers and Harriett are indicative of their social outlook, which differs from that of the narrator, they are, nevertheless, commonplace tourist grumbles and cannot be taken too seriously. They do not, for instance, acknowledge the considerable difference in cost of living between London and Sydney, something of which Lawrence himself was well aware, writing to Else Jaffe that 'everything except meat is exorbitantly expensive, many things twice as much as in England.'

Jack Callcott, one of the workmen lying on the grass, later supports the complaint against Sydney taxi-drivers, whose charges are alleged by Harriett to be four times, not twice, as high as those in London:

'Yes, [he says to Somers and Harriett] they'll do you down if they can - that is, if you let 'em. I have a motor-bike, so I can afford to let 'em get the wind up. Don't depend on 'em, you see. That's the point.'

These remarks, however, do not conform to the reader's own impression of the taxi-driver, which is much closer to the narrator's view of Demos as someone who does not 'get the wind up'. Callcott, in any case, is ideologically ill-disposed towards the temper of Australian workmen, including the taxi-drivers, and his comments offer reinforcement to Somers's social prejudices rather than impartial testimony to the justness of his grievance. For, despite his concern at being 'rooked', Somers prefers the hansom-man to the taxi-driver not because his fares are 'just' but because his manner is servile. That this is so is borne out by the observation that whereas his conversation with the taxi-driver had been entirely devoted to the tariff, when he

engages the hansom this contentious matter is never mentioned. Unlike Somers, Harriett and Callcott, the narrator looks benignly upon the workmen, including the taxi-drivers, who, far from being 'a little bit humble', have an 'air of owning the city', and there is no hint of irony in the narrator's remark that such an air is that of 'a good Australian'.

Somers, on the other hand, is being ironic when he refers to Australia as a free country and obviously disapproves of the kind of freedom illustrated in his encounter with the taxi-driver. Just as the mechanic's reaction to the strangers is grounded in certain social assumptions, so Somers's reactions to the taxi-drivers and the hansom-man rest upon a belief that workmen should be deferential and hence that some people (those who ought to be deferred to, the masters) should be set over others (those who ought to defer, the men). At the end of the chapter this belief is made explicit. The narrator informs us that the 'granted condition of Australia, that Demos was his own master', was 'what Richard Lovatt Somers could not stand'. Somers substantiates this charge in his reflections upon the 'necessity of rule' and in doing so spells out his belief that a society should consist of rulers and ruled. It is this opinion that inclines the man who looks like a bolshy towards the political views of Kangaroo and its validity is a matter about which the narrator leaves the reader in no doubt:

... Richard was wrong. Given a good temper and a genuinely tolerant nature - both of which Australians have in a high degree - you can get along for quite a long time without 'rule'. For quite a long time the thing goes by itself.

In the course of the first chapter of Kangaroo, then, it becomes apparent that the narrator and the principal character agree on the political temper of Australia but respond to it quite differently. The narrator's view of it has an 'Australian' tolerance and good humour whilst Somers looks upon it as 'a true Englishman, with an Englishman's hatred of anarchy, and an Englishman's instinct for authority'. The narrator's appreciation of the Australian ethos is manifest on a larger scale in the free,
some would say rambling, narrative. Many critics have failed to consider the narrative as an expression of the narrator's sympathy for the 'instinct of place' and, as Alastair Niven noted, have accused the novel of shapelessness and incoherence, maintaining, as did Middleton Murry, that 'internally it is a chaos.' They have, that is to say, overlooked the connection between the nature of the narrative in which the character of Somers is embedded and the ethos in which Somers finds himself. In doing so, critics have assumed an attitude towards narration more in keeping with the 'true Englishman' Somers's instinct for 'authority' than with the narrator's view of 'anarchy' and the 'instinct of place'.

For Lawrence, as for Thomas Hardy, place was crucial. In his writing, as Mark Schorer has commented:

> Often it becomes the major character, as it were, Lawrence's arbiter, disposing of human destinies in accordance with the response that the human characters have made to itself, the non-human place. Or one may say that Lawrence's people discover their identities through their response to place, and that, having come upon their true selves, mark out their fate and are able to pursue it to another place - factory or farm, city or country, north or south, England or Italy, Europe or America, death or life.

What kind or place constituted the real Australia, therefore, was an important consideration for Lawrence. He had already claimed that:

> Every continent has its own great spirit of place. Every people is polarized in some particular locality, which is home, the homeland. Different places on the face of the earth have different vital effluence, different vibration, different chemical exhalation, different polarity

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20'The Spirit of Place' is the title of one of the first essays in his very important critical work, *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1924).
This spirit of place, Russel Ward's 'national mystique', was something which manifested itself, Lawrence believed, not in people *per se*, nor in what Schorer calls 'the non-human place', but in the relationship between people and their natural habitat.

Up to the time Lawrence was writing *Kangaroo*, the 'natural' habitat of Australian literature was the outback, for Australian authors seemed to believe, as Russel Ward persisted in doing more than fifty years later, that it was on 'the Western plains beyond the mountains', where the 'nomad tribe' of bush workers lived, that the real Australia was to be found. Some authors found inspiration in the city, of course. In 1888 Lawson wrote a poem, 'Faces In The Street', which conjured up a view from a window 'where the nearest suburb and the city proper meet' and William Lane, in 1892, included some glimpses of inner-city Sydney in the ironically entitled *The Workingman's Paradise*. Yet even Dennis, although he writes of the suburbs, has an eye to the outback, like the persona in Paterson's 'Clancy' sitting in his 'dingy little office in the city', and when Dennis' Digger Smith comes home from war 'arf a man', he seeks a place close to Bill and Doreen's farm in the bush.

In calling upon mid-suburban Sydney as a prime source for his image of Australia, an important feature of that image is that which presents itself to Somers and Harriett as they travel through Sydney in the hansom cab and see 'the low wooded tableland reddened with suburbs'. The vision is of a rash or burgeoning infection such as Lawrence had earlier described in *The Rainbow* as a 'red-brick confusion rapidly spreading like a skin-disease.' A second feature of it is that remarked by

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27 C.J. Dennis, *Digger Smith*, Angus and Robertson Ltd., Sydney, 1918, p. 35.
Somers as he stands upon the top of a summer-house shortly after arriving in Murdoch Street and looks upon 'the original streets of bungalow places [which] remained almost untouched, still hinting at the temporary shacks run up in the wilderness.'

The 'old sort of suburb' with its 'corrugated iron roofs, painted red' has an air of impermanence, leading Somers to reflect upon Sydney as representative of an Australian superficiality, which is the third feature of suburbia in Kangaroo:

> It wasn't like a town, it was like a whole country with towns and bays and darknesses. And all lying mysteriously within the Australian underdark, that peculiar lost weary aloofness of Australia. There was the vast town of Sydney. And it didn't seem to be real, it seemed to be sprinkled on the surface of a darkness into which it never penetrated.

A similar view of suburbia is found in The Rainbow, in which it is remarked that:

> The whole place was just unreal, just unreal. Even now, when he had been there for two years, Tom Brangwen did not believe in the actuality of the place. It was like some gruesome dream, some ugly, dead, amorphous mood become concrete.

Lawrence's attitude towards suburban sprawl, then, was formed well before he arrived in Australia and his attention to it in Kangaroo is an expression of new Australia as a poor imitation of old England.

The comparison between Australia and England is made explicit a little later by Somers, when, in appraising Sydney, he is 'forced to admit that there were fine streets, like Birmingham, for example, that the parks and the Botanical Gardens were handsome and well-kept; that the harbour...was an extraordinary place', but concludes that:

> It was all London without being London...a substitute for the real thing. Just a substitute - as margarine is a substitute for butter.

Sydney then, with its suburban blight, its air of unreality and its fine, Birmingham-like streets, strikes Somers as a 'monotonous and sad' ersatz England.
A ferry-ride by Somers and Harriett to Manly reveals a different aspect of Australian suburbia. The initial impression of Manly is pleasant enough:

It was Sunday, and a lovely sunny day of Australian winter. Manly is the bathing suburb of Sydney - one of them. You pass quite close to the wide harbour gate, The Heads, on the ferry steamer. Then you land on the wharf, and walk up the street, like a bit of Margate with sea-side shops and restaurants, till you come out on a promenade at the end. . . .34

However, at the sight of 'the wide Pacific rolling in on the yellow sand', 'the bathing suburb' becomes simply another piece of 'built-over land' which 'the wide fierce sea' causes to 'dwindle into non-existence.'35 Lawrence thus qualifies the pleasantness of the scene, as he does that which opens the novel, and then proceeds to darken the mood, much as he did in the opening chapter.

In an incident similar to that which causes Somers and Harriett to complain that they had been 'rooked' by a taxi-driver, Harriett's yellow scarf is lost, presumed stolen, in one of Manly's restaurants. They then leave Manly in a tram, as they earlier left Macquarie Street in a hansom-cab and in a similar mood. The scenery through which they travel is even more depressing than that of their journey to Murdoch street: 'They sat on the tram-car and ran for miles along a coast with ragged bush loused over with thousands of small promiscuous bungalows. . . .'36 The narrator's use of the word 'loused' here, as later his adoption of Harriett's 'chicken-houses' to describe outer-Sydney's collection of bungalows, serves to endorse Somers's view of the suburban landscape.

When Somers and Harriett alight from the tram at the terminus some five or six miles from Manly, they find themselves amidst 'fly-blown shops with corrugated iron roofs' and 'bits of swamp or "lagoon" where the sea had got in and couldn't get out'. After 'a drink of sticky aerated waters in one of the "stores"', the 'happy couple', as the narrator ironically refers to them, set off along 'a wide sand-road dotted on either side with small bungalows, around the backs of which lay a whole aura of rusty tin

35Ibid.
cans chucked out over the back fence. Harriett had been the first to take exception to the Australian litter of tin cans, which were also scattered at the back of the houses in Murdoch street. Somers and the narrator now share her disgust for them and the ramshackle bungalows and Somers is no longer inclined to excuse them as he had done earlier.

As they come once more into view of 'the pure, long-rolling Pacific', Harriett declares that she loves the sea and Somers, more militant than the narrator who had earlier remarked that 'the wide fierce sea made the built-over land dwindle into non-existence', replies:

'I wish... it would send a wave about fifty feet high round the whole coast of Australia.'

This outburst, provoked by the 'contrast', as Somers calls it, between 'the pure, long-rolling Pacific' and the 'built-over land', is justified as Somers and Harriett view the houses along the 'improvised road'. Some of them, the narrator observes, are 'really nice', 'in themselves', but stand 'like so many forlorn chicken-houses, each on its own oblong patch of land with a fence between it and its neighbour' and altogether have 'something indescribably weary about' them. 'The very ground the houses stood on seemed weary and drabbled, almost asking for rusty tin cans.' Other dwellings made no attempt to be 'nice':

... the effort had lapsed. The tin shacks were almost a relief. They did not call for geraniums and lobelias, as did the pretty Hampstead Garden Suburb 'cottages'. And these latter might call, but they called in vain. They got bits of old paper and tins.

Mention of 'pretty Hampstead Garden Suburb "cottages"' here offers a different contrast to the 'forlorn chicken-houses' from that provided by 'the pure, long-rolling Pacific' and although drawn by the narrator it is one that serves as a reminder that 'Somers was a true Englishman, with an Englishman's hatred of anarchy.' The scene

37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
at the tram terminus some five or six miles from Manly stirs this hatred, hence the wish
Somers expresses that the sea would swamp the coast of Australia. With all the
evidence it offers of a lack of effort, of nobody bothering, what Somers sees at the
tram terminus supports his earlier cogitations upon the tendency to anarchy in Australia
and his reflection that, in Sydney:

> Everything was very easy, and there was no fuss. Amazing how little fuss and bother there was - on the whole. Nobody seemed to bother, there seemed to be no policeman and no authority, the whole thing went by itself, loose and easy, without any bossing. No real authority - no superior classes - hardly even any boss. And everything rolling along as easily as a full river, to all appearances.⁴²

The whole episode of the trip to one of Sydney's outer coastal suburbs exemplifies the manner in which topographical and political interests combine in *Kangaroo*. In his description of the outer suburbs of Sydney, then, Lawrence epitomises a view of Australia as a place in which the European ethos has been superseded by a freedom bordering upon anarchy and in which, consequentially, European civilization has petered out in 'a litter of bungalows and tin cans'. As Somers and Harriett sit on the sand at the end of the 'improvised road', the narrator presents Somers's reflections upon the feeling of freedom in Australia.

> There is a great relief in the atmosphere, a relief from tension, from pressure. An absence of control or will or form. The sky is open above you, and the air is open around you. Not the old closing-in of Europe.

> But what then? The vacancy of this freedom is almost terrifying. In the openness and the freedom this new chaos, this litter of bungalows and tin cans scattered for miles and miles, this Englishness all crumbled into formlessness and chaos. Even the heart of Sydney itself - an imitation of London and Birmingham, without any core or pith of meaning. Business going on full speed: but only because it is the other end of English and American business.⁴³

The last two sentences suggest that the condition of suburbia is felt as typical of the
inanity of white Australia.

The spiritual emptiness and anarchy of white Australian civilization are thus emphasized in different ways in these early chapters of the novel:

The absence of any inner meaning: and at the same time the great sense of vacant spaces. The sense of irresponsible freedom. The sense of do-as-you-please liberty. . . . Great swarming, teeming Sydney flowing out into these myriad bungalows, like shallow waters spreading, undyked. And what then? Nothing. No inner life, no high command, no interest in anything, finally.

. . .

As soon as night came, all the raggle-taggle of amorphous white settlements disappeared, and the continent of the kangaroo reassumed its strange, unvisited glamour, a kind of virgin sensual aloofness.

. . .

The inland sea of the harbour was all bustling with Sunday morning animation: and yet there seemed space, and loneliness. The low coffee-brown cliffs, too low for cliffs, looked as silent and as aboriginal as if white men had never come.44

At the same time there is, in the second and third quotations above, an awareness of the primordial, aboriginal Australia waiting to claim its own, the sense that the 'continent of the kangaroo' may return the Australian suburban landscape to a state 'as silent and aboriginal as if white men had never come.' It is an awareness that lurks behind much of the novel's presentation of the physical landscape of suburbia. It is as if the bush is 'biding its time with a terrible ageless watchfulness, waiting for a far-off end, watching the myriad intruding white men'45 - waiting to reassume the land much as the sand does in Shelley's Ozymandias.46

The narrator suggests that the presence in the bush which is responsible for Somers's terror is 'the spirit of the place.'47 And this spirit is clearly quite different from the white men's 'sense of 'do-as-you-please-liberty.'48 It seems, therefore, that Australia, the place, has, as it were, two spiritual conditions: that of 'the myriad intruding white men', whose amorphous settlements louse up the land and who are without 'inner meaning' and 'inner life', and that of the aboriginal continent, which,

47 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 10.
like Blake's 'Tyger', is felt as a terrible presence 'In the forests of the night'. The distinction which is drawn here becomes central to 'Quetzacoatl', Lawrence's next novel, in which, as James Cowan has remarked, 'his divergent responses, on the one hand, to the organicism of the American continent and, on the other, to the mechanism of the materialistic society which was exploiting it' are resolved as he comes to recognize in 'the redeeming qualities of the dark consciousness, which aboriginal America embodied for him.'

For the moment, however, the landscape of suburban Sydney remains 'loused over' with bungalows that are like 'chicken-houses' surrounded by an aura of rusty cans. The narrator goes to some lengths to re-emphasize the sense of physical disorder, of disease, of a rash afflicting the ancient land by referring to the rats which have invaded suburban 'Toorestin':

It was a period when Sydney was again suffering from a bubonic plague scare: a very mild scare, some fifteen cases to a million people, according to the newspapers. But the town was placarded with notices 'Keep your town clean'...
The battle was against rats, fleas, and dirt. The plague affects rats first, said the notices, then fleas, and then man.

Somers sets traps:

And almost every morning he had the nauseous satisfaction of finding a rat pinned by its nose in the trap, its eyes bulging out, a blot of deep red blood just near. Sometimes two rats. They were not really ugly, save for their tails. Smallish rats, perhaps only half grown, and with black, silky fur. Not like the brown rats he had known in the English country.

But big or little, ugly or not ugly, they were very objectionable to him, and he hated to have to start the day

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50 James C. Cowan, *DHL's American Journey: A Study in Literature and Myth*, Case Western University Press, Cleveland, Ohio, 1970, pp. 126, 141. Lawrence's Australian novel is called *Kangaroo* and his Mexican novel was originally entitled 'Quetzacoatl' (the title was changed on the advice of his publisher). We naturally assume that the title of the Australian novel alludes to the character called 'Kangaroo', but the expression 'the continent of the kangaroo', which occurs in it, suggests a different allusion, namely to aboriginal Australia, as 'Quetzacoatl' alludes to aboriginal America. Lawrence may well have been aware of this allusion in the title *Kangaroo*, since (as will be demonstrated later) he was aware of the importance of the dark, aboriginal 'spirit of place' before he arrived in Australia, and not only after he arrived in New Mexico and set about writing *The Plumed Serpent* - to which he insisted on affixing the sub-title *Quetzacoatl*.
51 *DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit.*, p. 50.
by casting one or more corpses gingerly, by the tip of the tail, into the garbage tin. He railed against the practice of throwing cans and everything promiscuously on to any bit of waste ground. It seemed to his embittered fancy that Sydney harbour, and all the coast of New South Wales, was moving with this pest... the words 'new country' had become like acid between his teeth. He was always recalling what Flinders Petrie says somewhere: 'A colony is no younger than the parent country.' Perhaps it is even older, one step further gone.52

The implication is that, for Somers, the disease and detritus of suburbia in Australia is even worse - 'one step further gone' - than in England.

The litter of tin cans and 'the practice of throwing cans and everything promiscuously onto any bit of waste ground' is thus interwoven, in the early chapters of the novel, with the image of suburbia as a blight left by the 'myriad intruding white men.' The chapters thus convey a strong sense of a land vandalized, where the suburbs are horrible, temporary violations of the 'continent of the kangaroo'.

iii

A description of the physical appearance and the 'instinct' or 'spirit' of the suburbs leaves out of account the inward or social life of suburbia, what the novel refers to as 'neighbouring' and the experiences of which it provides in the depiction of the Somerses' relations with the Callcotts, their neighbours in Murdoch Street. Lawrence, of course, spent most of his time in Thirroul and had only a brief experience of suburban living in Australia. However, social life in a street of suburban Sydney in the nineteen twenties would have been much the same as that in Thirroul and nearby Bulli, on the evidence of which Kangaroo provides a reasonably accurate, if not very sympathetic portrait. It seems to have consisted of evenings spent with neighbours over dinner, playing games (cards usually, but chess in Kangaroo), with musical evenings at home (as, in Kangaroo, Victoria plays the piano whilst Harriett sings) and weekend trips or visits to friends living at a distance (such as the outings of Somers and Harriett and the Callcotts' visit to the Trewhellas).53

53Interview with E. James conducted by N. Crux 15/7/84 cited in W. Mitchell and G. Sherrington, Growing up in the Illawarra, Wollongong University Press, p. 72; the letters of Fergie King to his girlfriend (and future wife) in possession of Elizabeth Minns, Windang, and written from Thirroul in the years 1926-1928 confirm such reminiscences. The details of the life of the future Mrs King
As with the presentation of the physical environment of suburbia, Lawrence uses his narrator to play off the different responses of Harriett and Somers to their suburban neighbours. When Harriett goes 'nosing around for flowers' in 'the hedge between number fifty-one and number fifty, she calls out to Somers:

'Oh, but these dahlias are marvellous. You must come and look,' . . .

'Yes, I know, I've seen them,' he replied rather crossly, knowing that the neighbours would hear her. Harriett was so blithely unconscious of people on the other side of hedges. As far as she was concerned, they ought not to be there: even if they were in their own garden. 54

Somers is annoyed at being called to peer through the hedge because he knows that, in doing so, they are likely to encounter their neighbours, since it is their hedge too and despite Harriett's opinion to the contrary had a perfect right to be there.

When Harriett and Somers are 'seen peeping':

Somers then behaved as usual on such occasions, just went stony and stared unseeing in another direction; as if quite unaware that the dahlias had an owner with a motor-cycle: any other owner than God, indeed. Harriett nodded a confused and rather distant 'good morning.' The man just touched his cap, very cursory, and nodded, and said good morning across his pipe, with his teeth clenched, and strode round the house with his machine.

'Why must you go yelling for other people to hear you?' said Somers to Harriett.

'Why shouldn't they hear me!' retorted Harriett. 55

Somers is clearly embarrassed at what he feels to be an intrusion upon his neighbours, as though he had been caught peering in at their window. Harriett has none of his reserve and feels no 'unease' at the proximity of the neighbours and enthuses over the flowers.

The difference between the two is that Harriett, aristocratic European that she is, has had no experience of 'neighbouring' and Somers has. The novelty of it appeals to

(Dearest Janet) in suburban Sydney indicate that, apart from going to parties with workmates more frequently, her social life in the suburbs of Sydney appears to have been much the same as that of Fergie in the mining village of Thirroul. Thirroul even had an open air picture theatre in 1922. Silent films were also shown indoors in the School of Arts and Thirroul was to get its own picture palace - 'The Arcadia' - the year after Lawrence left the town.

54DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 12.
55Ibid.
Harriett and she is impervious to its subtle impositions. Like Lawrence himself, who captures the oppressive social mores of neighbouring in the description of 'The Bottoms' in the first part of Sons and Lovers, Somers is aware of the social demands it makes and his feelings about it are clearly expressed by the narrator:

The Somerses now had neighbours: somewhat to the chagrin of Richard Lovatt. He had come to this new country, the youngest country on the globe, to start a new life and flutter with a new hope. And he started with a rabid desire not to see anything and not to speak one single word to any single body - except Harriett, whom he snapped at hard enough.

In keeping with the novel's presentation of the shifting attitudes of the protagonists, Harriett eventually comes to dislike her new-found neighbourliness - 'she had never in all her life had "neighbours", and she didn't know what neighbouring really meant. She didn't care for it, on trial' - and Somers, by the beginning of the chapter 'Jack and Jaz', has perversely become drawn to his neighbour, Jack, after his initial feelings of loathing. This attraction becomes obvious while the two are playing chess:

The game of chess was a very quiet one. Jack was pale and subdued, silent, tired, thought Somers, after his long day and short night. Somers, too, played without any zest. And yet they were satisfied, just sitting there together, a curious peaceful ease in being together. Somers wondered at it, the rich, full peace that there seemed to be between him and the other man.

Nevertheless, despite these shifting attitudes of the protagonists and the accuracy and skilful economy with which the novel's portrait of suburbia is drawn, the image presented of the social life of suburbia does not have quite the same balance, the same

56 That Somers is likely to have some understanding of an environment similar to that of 'The Bottoms' in Sons and Lovers is indicated in 'The Nightmare' chapter of Kangaroo where the narration recalls Somers taking a ride in a bus 'full of young miners, more or less intoxicated' (op.cit., p. 265) and the narrator remarks (op.cit., p. 267), 'these were the collier youths Somers had been to school with - approximately... .He was more at one with them.' Earlier in the novel, the narrator has indicated (op.cit., p. 43) that 'Somers was of the people himself, and had that alert instinct of the common people'.

57 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 15.


59 Lawrence probably chooses chess rather than draughts or cards for Jack and Somers to play because, unlike cards, chess is usually considered an intellectual's game. If the habits of my Thirroul grandfather are anything to go by, draughts was the more popular game in Thirroul in the 1920s.

60 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 56.
illusion of even-handedness, as the novel’s presentation of the suburban landscape. This is largely because the narrator is here less a critical foil and more a vehicle for the thoughts and feelings of Harriett and Somers.

The narrator, as has been remarked, presents Somers as someone who is familiar with neighbourliness. He is someone who is aware of its demands and wishes to avoid them. Harriett, on the other hand, is eager to enter into such a relationship with the Callcotts, but as the narrator explains, even in her ‘most gushing genial moments’ she is, in a sense, only slumming, ‘only masquerading inside her class - the "upper" class of Europe.’ In the absence of any corrective observation from the narrator, the reader, therefore, is presented with only two very biased views of suburban life in Australia, that of someone who is thankful to have ‘raised’ himself from the similar environment of his childhood and that of someone from an upper-class, European background who is whimsically ‘masquerading’ as a suburban housewife.

The conviviality of suburban life is illustrated in the evening meal at ‘Torestin’ in chapter two and the musical evening at ‘Wyewurk’ in chapter three. Somers remains aloof from the entertainment at ‘Wyewurk’ and is depressed during the meal at ‘Torestin’:

To Somers it was like being back twenty-five years, back in an English farm-house in the Midlands, at Sunday tea. He had gone a long way from the English Midlands, and got out of the way of them. Only to find them here again, with hardly a change. To Harriett it was all novel and fun. But Richard Lovatt felt vaguely depressed.

The pleasant heartiness of the life he had known as a boy now depressed him. He hated the promiscuous mixing in of all the company, the lack of reserve in manner. He had preferred India for that: the gulf between the native servants and the whites kept up a sort of tone. He had learned to be separate, to talk across a slight distance. And that was an immense relief to him, because it was really more his nature. Now he found himself soured again in the old familiar ‘jolly and cosy’ spirit of his childhood and boyhood, and he was depressed.

Lawrence’s own experience of ‘an English farm-house in the midlands’ twenty-five

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years earlier had been of Jessie Chamber's home, 'The Haggs', which he had drawn upon in writing of Wiley farm in *Sons and Lovers*. The implication is that for Somers the heartiness of suburban life in Australia has a slightly pre-suburban, semi-rural 'feel' about it.

A similar heartiness is comically and contemptuously observed in Jack's encounter with his neighbours, when he and Somers walk to the Trewellas' home one Sunday morning:

Jack strode along: Somers seemed to hover along. There was decision in both of them, but oh, of such different quality. And each had a certain admiration of the other, and a very definite tolerance. Jack just barely tolerated the quiet finesse of Somers, and Somers tolerated with difficulty Jack's facetious familiarity and heartiness.

Callcott met quite a few people he knew, and greeted them all heartily. 'Hello, Bill, old man, how's things?'- 'New boots pinchin' yet, Ant'ny? Hoppy sort of look about you this morning- Right 'o! So long, Ant'ny!'- 'Different girl again, boy! go on, Sydney's full of yer sisters. All right, good-bye, old chap.' - The same breezy intimacy with all of them, and the moment that they passed by, they didn't exist for him any more than the gull that had curved across in the air. They seemed to appear like phantoms, and disappear in the same instant, like phantoms. Like so many Flying Dutchmen the Australian's acquaintances seemed to steer slap through his consciousness, and were gone on the wind.63

Earlier the narrator informed the reader that 'a good temper and a genuinely tolerant nature' were qualities 'Australians seem to have in a high degree'64 and they are presumably two of the traits which, along with 'that air of owning the city', belong to a 'good Australian.' That 'Jack just barely tolerated the quiet finesse of Somers' and that 'Somers tolerated with difficulty Jack's facetious familiarity and heartiness' suggests they both lack the qualities that go to make up a 'good Australian.' This is hardly surprising in the case of Somers, who is, after all, English and, as the novel has indicated, somewhat ill-tempered at times, but telling in that of Jack.

Following the illustration of Jack's 'facetious familiarity and heartiness' the narrator reflects upon Jack's 'breezy intimacy':

The only consecutive thing [in Jack's feelings] was that facetious attitude, which was the attitude of taking things as they come, perfected. A sort of ironical stoicism. Yet the man had a kind of passion, and a passionate identity. But not what Somers called human. And threaded on this ironical stoicism.65

Here the clue to Jack's character, as Somers has come to understand it, is revealed, just as earlier the narrator had revealed the 'thread' of Somers's own character in explaining the Englishman's attitude towards authority and anarchy. Jack's facetiousness and 'taking things as they come' are of a piece with the soullessness of the city and the indifference evident in a suburbia littered with tin cans, but between these traits and the 'good temper and genuinely tolerant nature' the narrator has ascribed to Australians there is a considerable difference, as the reader comes to realize and as is brutally brought home towards the end of the novel in 'A Row in Town'.

The most thorough rejection of the social life of suburbia, as epitomized by the Somers's relationship with the Callcotts, however, occurs towards the end of the musical evening at 'Wyewurk'. Harriett teaches 'Victoria to pronounce the words of a Schubert song' and Somers is called over from 'Torestin' at the last moment to have a beer with Jack. As they are about to say goodbye:

> Victoria went over to her husband and stood close at his side, ruffling up his brown, short, crisp bright hair. 'Doesn't he talk nonsense, Mrs Somers, doesn't he talk nonsense,' the young wife crooned, in her singing, contralto voice, as she looked down at him.
> Harriett started at the sudden revelation of palpitating intimacy. She wanted to go away, quick. So did Somers. But neither Jack nor Victoria wanted them to go.66

The Callcotts' behaviour here has sexual undertones and presumes upon a considerable intimacy between them and the Somerses. It could even be interpreted as 'an invitation to an orgy', as Michael Wilding67 has suggested, and that an orgy of some sort appears to be intimated is borne out when the narrator goes on to liken Jack to a lecherous faun in Greek pastoral drama:

> Jack was looking up at Victoria with a curious smile, touched with a leer. It gave his face, his rather long,
clean-shaven face with the thick eyebrows, most extraordinarily the look of an old mask. One of those old Greek masks that give a fixed mockery to every feeling. Leering up at his young wife with the hearty leer of a player masked as a faun that is at home, on its own ground. Both Harriett and Somers felt amazed, as if they had strayed into the wrong wood.\footnote{DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 49.}

For all his earlier forebodings, not even Somers is prepared for the degree of familiarity with their neighbours the Callcotts assume in behaving as they do before Harriett and himself. Harriett now experiences some of the revulsion Somers feels at being sucked back into the kind of intimacy, which is also a kind of behavioural straitjacket, of the suburban social life he had previously known.

The intimacy suggested here, however, is something of a smokescreen. Neighbourliness clearly involves being sociable towards those who live around you; in Australian suburbia it means 'dropping in' for a game of cards, a musical evening, a meal, a trip out together on Sundays. It is this which repels Somers and attracts Harriett. This neighbourliness, epitomized in the evening meal at 'Torestin', is not at all the same sort of thing as the libertinism hinted at the conclusion of the evening's entertainment at 'Wyewurk'. It is Jack's behaviour, likened to that which might be encountered in classical pastoral, which repels Harriett, although his behaviour might also be cited as evidence of that 'freedom' and 'do-as-you-please liberty' which Somers so much dislikes. Jack's 'hearty leer' gives to neighbouring a sexual intimacy which revolts Harriett, who had already discovered that she didn't care for neighbouring and who comes to entertain thoughts of escaping 'from neighbours to a quiet house by the sea'.\footnote{Op.cit., p. 72.}

They both now see it for the 'wrong wood' with which the narration compares it. The use of the image 'as if they had strayed into the wrong wood' is a surprisingly pastoral simile and one that obliquely suggests that there is, perhaps, a chance that Harriett and Somers may yet stray into the 'right' wood. This is confirmed later in the novel in the descriptions of 'Mullumbimby' (Thirroul) and 'Wolloona' (Wollongong) where - minus the claustrophobic familiarity of suburban living next door to the
Callcotts in Sydney - Somers, Harriett and the narrator all affirm the friendliness, gentleness and trust of 'a good Australian.'

In the present chapter, however, the incident at the close of the evening's entertainment at Wyewurk serves as a vindication of Somers's instinctive feelings about Jack Callcott - feelings powerfully indicated by the disgust evident in Harriett's exclamations:

'Really, it was if he'd got his arm round all the four of us! Horrid!' said Harriett resentfully.70

The narrative then turns to the subject of suburban Torestin's infestation with rats. In this way, the ground is prepared for Harriett's and Somers's flight from suburbia.

iv

In the first four chapters of Kangaroo, the novel's political concerns and its presentation of topographical details are interwoven. The suburban scene, for instance, provides an image of 'modern democracy' in the narrator's description of Murdoch Street:

And there went the long street, like a child's drawing, the little square bungalows dot-dot-dot, close together and yet apart, like modern democracy, each one fenced around with a square nailed fence.71

It is in descriptions such as this that Lawrence is able to enmesh the political concerns of the novel with an interest in the Australian landscape.

Lawrence also has Somers express his hatred of Australian democracy in terms of commonplace items of contemporary life:

'Oh how I detest this treacly democratic Australia,' he said. 'It swamps one with a sort of common emotion like treacle, and before one knows where one is, one is caught like a fly on a flypaper, in one mess with all the other buzzers. How I hate it! I want to go away.'72

It would be difficult to imagine two more appropriate symbols of suburban Australia in the 1920s than flypaper and treacle. Even Lawrence's use of the word

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70 Op.cit., p. 50
71 Op.cit., p. 5
72 Op.cit., p. 71
'buzzers' has something characteristic of the idiom of Australian speech about it. If only Lawrence had referred to golden syrup instead of 'treacle' there would be absolutely nothing to suggest that this description was not by someone intimately familiar with the daily experience of Australian suburban life at this period. Examples such as these contribute much to the success of Lawrence's attempt to capture the spirit of suburban Sydney.

The first four chapters of the novel create a holistic image of Australian suburbia from the varied impressions of Somers, Harriett and the narrator. In the process they allude to the pastoral tradition at key points. If the opening scene of the novel is reminiscent of shepherds relaxing on the green sward, Harriett's response to the view from the summer-house at Torestin calls to mind the ideal garden which is a feature of so much pastoral writing. There is, in addition to these two allusions, reference to the pastoral, more precisely to Greek pastoral drama, in the episode in which Jack leers at Victoria, seeking to crown the intimacy that has grown up between the Callcotts and the Somerses by making the latter privy to the 'love-making' of himself and his wife. The allusion to pastoral writing in this passage is significant because it establishes that, whatever feelings of pleasant ease may accompany the allusion to it in the novel's opening paragraph, the narrator does not necessarily perceive the world of the pastoral as an admirable one.

Jack's facetiousness and ironical air are captured in the likening of his face to 'One of those old Greek masks that give a fixed mockery to every feeling.' The reader encounters this passage before that in which Jack greets 'quite a number of people he knew' on his Sunday walk with Somers. It thus gives weight to the narrator's suggestion that Jack's 'breezy intimacy' is specious: a mockery of the real thing. Thus, in each instance, these intimations of the pastoral serve to sharpen the

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73 No doubt it was Lawrence's recent West Australian experience that led him to use the word 'treacle' here, for there, I am told, Golden Syrup is often referred to by this more generic name.
74 The word 'leer' echoes through the passage quoted earlier in this chapter (DHL, *Kangaroo*, op.cit., p. 49). Jack's smile is 'touched with a hearty leer' and he is described as 'leering up at his young wife with the hearty leer of a player masked as a laun that is home, on its own ground.'
75 DHL, *Kangaroo*, op.cit., p. 49.
focus upon the social realities of Australia as these are expressed topographically and in the attitudes and mores of Australians. The urban idyll which opens the novel, as has been shown, is dispelled in the first paragraph. Harriett's enthusiasm for the flowers in the garden - the centrepiece of most pastoral writing - at the back of suburban 'Torestin' is also immediately dampened by her references to 'tin cans', 'dog kennels' and 'chicken houses'. Similarly, the apparent intimacy achieved between the Somers and Callcotts quickly turns sour and is recognized by the Somers as a straying into the 'wrong wood.' Nevertheless, the language and imagery of these three idylls, however quickly they may be shattered, is redolent of both the language and conventions of pastoral writing. Despite this fact, any interest the novel displays in the conventions of pastoral literature in the opening chapters is tangential, and clearly subordinated, to the novel's primarily political focus.

Indeed, the discontinuities with the traditional pastoral genre are manifold. The men in the novel's opening scene, for example, are urban workers taking a short break. The grassy bank upon which they lie is beside a busy thoroughfare. Their music isn't that of the oaten reed but the faint squeal of singing from the conservatorium. The taxi-drivers are not the simple, honest rustics of yore, but men who have an 'air of owning the city' and are, according to Somers and Callcott, out to make a dishonest quid. In addition, the suburban gardens Harriett admires in the novel's second little idyll are far from Edenic - 'Look at those tin cans!' and, except for Harriett's enthusiasm for dahlias, give an impression hardly more delightful than suburbia as a whole.

Towards the close of chapter four, however, when Somers proclaims his rejection of 'trecaly democratic Australia', Lawrence, through narration and dialogue, presents Harriett entertaining visions similar to those which inspired the very traditional desire to escape into the solitude of the countryside:

Harriett wanted to go down to the South Coast, of which she had heard from Victoria.

78Ibid.
'Think,' she said, 'it must be lovely there - with the mountain behind, and steep hills, and blackberries, and lovely little bays of sand.'

... In her heart of hearts she said she wanted to live alone with Somers, and know nobody, all the rest of her life. In Australia where one can be lonely, and where the land almost calls to one to be lonely - and then drives one back on one's fellow-men in a kind of frenzy. Harriett would be quite happy, by the sea, with a house and a little garden and as much space to herself as possible, knowing nobody, but having Lovatt always there. And he could write, and it would be perfect.

... 'And why couldn't we be happy in this wonderful new country, living to ourselves. We could have a cow, and chickens, and then the Pacific, and this marvellous new country. Surely that is enough for any man. Why must you have more?' [she asks Somers]

'Because [Somers replies] I feel I must fight out something with mankind yet. I haven't finished with my fellow men. I've got a struggle with them yet.'

There are elements of both pastoral and romantic notions of solitude here. The 'mountains behind, and steep hills', and the idea of a solitary existence by 'the Pacific' in 'this marvellous new country', perhaps owe something to Romantic notions of rustic simplicity, while the 'house and a little garden' and 'a cow, and chickens' strike a note of rural - if not pastoral - domestic felicity.

In his essay on 'The Spirit of Place', Lawrence wrote that 'every people is polarised in some particular locality' and that a 'different polarity' is found under 'different stars'. 'Polarity' is a central concept in Lawrence's thought and the use of 'polarities' an important device in his writing. Just as the structure of his last novel, Lady Chatterley's Lover, rests on the polarities of Wragby Hall, Gamekeeper's Wood and Tevershall, and realizes its themes in the way in which the spirit of each location is contrasted, the opening four chapters of Kangaroo rest on the structural poles of new country, city, bush and suburbia and the realization and contrast of their respective spirits of place. Indeed, as Rick Rylance has recognized, the novel functions by holding an entire range of 'options', or polarities, 'in tense opposition until none appears finally attractive':

... sprawling suburban democracy is opposed to the beautiful natural world (though the natural world itself also appears frighteningly empty and unsolacing); unionist socialism is opposed to rightist authoritarianism; commitment to freedom; marriage to male bonding; love to violence and the pursuit of political power'.

Nevertheless, the idyll of solitude Harriett wistfully yearns for towards the close of chapter four, and Somers's need for some greater struggle with his fellow men intimated in the quotation above, signal both a change of scene and the emergence of a new structural polarity in the novel, a more traditional and simple contrast of 'city' and 'country', which will require the evocation of a new spirit of place, that of rural-coastal Australia.

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The Flight From Suburbia

Although Harriett and Somers are extremely embarrassed by the display of sexual feeling between Callcott and Victoria, there is no major falling out between the couples. At the outset of chapter four Somers and Victoria have a friendly conversation over the fence and when Jack arrives to play chess the 'guerilla war' is suspended and the two men are 'satisfied, just sitting there together, a curious peaceful ease in being together.' What is curious, however, is that after Somers's morning walk with Callcott and his subsequent political discussion with Callcott and Trewhella, a clumsily effected breach appears between the two families which doesn't appear to be related to the incident towards the end of chapter three:

A gulf there was between them, really, between the Somerses and the Callcotts. And yet the easy way Callcott flung a flimsy rope of intimacy across the gulf, and was embracing the pair of his neighbours in mid-air, as it were, without a grain of common foothold. And Somers let himself be embraced. So he sat pale and silent and mortified in the kitchen that evening, thinking of it all and wishing himself far away, in Europe.

'Oh, how I detest this treacly democratic Australia,' he said. ' . . . How I hate it! I want to go away.'

'It isn't Australia,' said Harriett. 'Australia's lonely. It's just the people. And it isn't even the people - if you would only keep your proper distance, and not make yourself cheap to them and get into messes.'

No, it's the country. It's in the air. I want to leave it.'

But he was not very emphatic. Harriett wanted to go down to the South Coast. Of which she had heard from Victoria.

This passage has been quoted because it signals an important change in the novel. Just prior to this, it was Harriett who 'was becoming discontented. They had been in the house only six weeks: and she had had enough of it. . . . She felt humiliated in that beastly little Murdoch Street' and she tells Somers she 'just can't stand' what she calls 'all this intimacy and neighbouring.' Somers, who has been averse to it from the outset, 'was feeling also a revulsion from all this neighbouring, as Harriett called it'.

1DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 56.
2Op.cit., pp. 71-72. Bruce Steele has pointed out that Lawrence actually wrote 'lovely' and not 'lonely' in this passage. The quotations immediately following are from p. 70.
In the passage quoted above, however, Somers is moving past simple detestation of 'neighbouring' to a rejection of 'treacly democratic Australia'. But it is not just the political ambience, the 'freedom' and 'anarchy', of white Australia that Somers now detests but the place itself. Even when Harriett insists that 'it isn't Australia' itself he detests, Somers maintains that, 'no, it's the country. It's in the air.' Somers's response to Harriett indicates that he is not simply, as the narrator earlier explained when dealing with Somers's responses to the 'meaninglessness' of the 'activity' of white Australia, wearying 'himself to death with the problem of himself, and calling it Australia.' Rather, as occurred in the opening chapter of the novel when the narrator recounted Somers's experiences in the West Australian bush, it appears to be the 'continent of the kangaroo' and its 'spirit of place' that Somers wishes to flee. Yet, because Somers, as the narrator explains, is 'not very emphatic' in his reply to Harriett, the scene is then set for their departure, not from Australia itself but from their experience of 'neighbouring' in suburban Sydney.

Taking up the Callcotts' offer of a chance to stay on the 'south coast', Harriett and Somers take the train from Sydney to Mullumbimby with Jack and Vicky acting as guides during the trip. It is made clear that Somers and Harriett are fleeing the blight of suburban Sydney. They go 'to Mullumbimby by the two o'clock train from Sydney' and take an 'endless' time to escape the suburbs of Sydney. The remark that the 'town took almost as much leaving as London does', hints at the extent of Sydney's suburban sprawl. It is not until the train reaches 'Como' that the travellers begin to enter the 'real country'.

The moment the train turns south after 'Como' the narration exalts the landscape, suggesting it possesses a 'subtle, remote, formless beauty more poignant than anything ever experienced before.' This description certainly indicates a paradise of sorts; its beauty, however, is 'formless'. The language Lawrence uses hints at a

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3 Op.cit., p. 82.
5 Op.cit., p. 84.
6 Ibid.
landscape more imagined than real. However, having been born and raised on the Nottingham coalfield and having already written much about the impact of mining on the countryside, collieries were something Lawrence had 'experienced before' and as the train passes south of Sydney the narrator notes that they 'hardly disfigured the land at all.'\footnote{Op.cit., p. 86.} As they travel, Harriett hopes Mullumbimby will be as she imagined it, 'with the mountain behind, and steep hills, and blackberries, and a lovely little bays with sand'.\footnote{Op.cit., p. 72.}

She rather dreaded the settlements with the many many iron roofs, and the wide, unmade roads of sandy earth running between, down to the sea, or skirting swamp-like little creeks.\footnote{Op.cit., p. 86.}

When they arrive at the fictional 'Mullumbimby', however, Harriett's hopes for 'beautiful bays', 'no collieries' and 'few bungalows' are not entirely fulfilled. As the narrator puts it, 'the place was half and half.'\footnote{Ibid.} Furthermore, the first 'bungalow' the Somerses encounter is 'a wooden house painted dark red' and called 'Verdun', an indication that Mullumbimby is not free of the old world and its troubles. The red cottage with its reminder of the bloody battlefields of Europe, however, does not dampen Harriett's pleasure at the sight of the house they have rented in Mullumbimby: 'She turned to the house. There it crouched, with its long windows and its wide veranda and its various slopes of low red-tiled roofs. Perfect! Perfect!'\footnote{Op.cit., p. 88} Her happiness as she walks through the garden of the house is expressed in quite breathless prose:

\begin{quote}
. . . and the sea, the great Pacific right there and rolling in huge white thunderous rollers not forty yards away, under her grassy platform of a garden. She walked to the edge of the grass. Yes, just down the low cliff, really only a bank, went her own little path, like down a steep bank, and then was smooth white sand, and the long sea swishing white up its incline, and rocks to the left, and incredible long rollers furling over and crushing down on the shore. At her feet! At her very feet, the huge rhythmic Pacific.\footnote{Ibid.}
\end{quote}
Harriett's dream has apparently come true. The Pacific and the 'perfect' house beside it provide the focus for her idyll of coastal, rural, domestic solitude:

She rushed indoors. Once more in search of a home, to be alone with Lovatt, where he would be happy. How the sea thundered!13

As in Ben Jonson's pastoral poem 'To Penshurst', food almost magically appears - 'a boy came with milk, and another with bread and fresh butter and eggs, ordered by Mrs Wynne. The big black kettle was on the fire in the open hearth.'14 The happy couple have begun their life of pastoral ease in Mullumbimby: 'and Harriett took Lovatt's arm, she was so moved.'15

Lawrence, however, much like the traditional makers of Persian rugs, has left a flaw, an imperfection, within the pastoral tapestry he has created. The house-name 'Verdun' has already provided a hint of the influence of the old world and its wars even here in the heart of Harriett's idyll. Lawrence lightly fleshes out this hint when 'one of the doors leading on the verandas was opened' and the narrator declares that 'the noise of the sea came in frightening, like guns.'16 These tell-tale traces of the old world and its troubles, however, are swamped in the ecstasy of the description of the natural environment of Mullumbimby. The pristine beauty of the scene is passionately evoked in a prose aubade:

There was an unspeakable beauty in the mornings, the great sun from the sea, such a big, untamed proud sun, rising into a sky of such tender delicacy, blue, so blue, and yet so frail that even blue seems too coarse a colour to describe it, more virgin than humanity can conceive; the land inward lit up, the prettiness of many painted bungalows with tin roofs clustering up the low up-slopes of the grey-treed bush; and then rising like a wall, facing the light and still lightless, the tor face, with its high-up rim so grey, having tiny trees feathering against the most beautiful frail sky in the world. Morning!17

'Coo-ee', the house that Somers and Harriett have rented in Mullumbimby, has something in common with the houses of suburban Sydney. The garden had been used

15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
by previous occupants, a family of thirteen, and other residents of the area as a dumping ground for 'rags and cans', whilst the house itself required a thorough cleaning with 'beeswax and turps' and was infested with rats. When these matters had been attended to and the Callcotts have departed on a visit to Victoria’s brother, Harriett and Somers are at last able to relax and enjoy the domestic solitude: "... I love and adore the place," said Harriett. The narrator shortly makes it clear that not only was Harriett longing to have the house to themselves. So was Somers. Both have an impulse to retire to a life of coastal solitude at Mullumbimby.

In order to give credence to Mullumbimby as a place in which pastoral retirement might be possible, Lawrence deliberately censors the impressions of Thirroul upon which his description of Mullumbimby is based. This is evident as Somers takes in the scene on returning from a short walk with Harriett and the Callcotts along the beach south of 'Coo-ee':

He lingered behind the rest, they were nearly home. They were at the wide sandy place where the creek left off. Its still, brackish waters just sank into the sands, without ever running to meet the waves. And beyond the sands was a sort of marsh, bushes and tall stark dead gum-trees, and a few thin-tufted trees. Half-wild ponies walked heavily from the bush to the sands, and across to the slope where the low cliff rose again. In the depths of the marsh-like level was the low chimney of the mine, and tips of roofs: and beyond, a long range of wire-like trees holding up tufts of foliage in handfuls, in front of the pale blue, diminishing range of the hills in the distance. It was a weird scene, full of definite detail, fascinating detail, yet all in the funeral-grey monotony of the bush.

It is not a typically 'pretty' pastoral description. Indeed, the 'stark dead gum-trees' and the 'funeral-grey monotony of the bush' are harshly realistic and the adjectives indicate that all the life has been crushed out of this natural landscape. Furthermore, it is a coastal-rural scene marred by the incursions of industry. What Lawrence was realistically describing is a westward-looking view of the land fronting the ocean just to the south of 'Wyewurk' and roughly bounded by a line drawn directly westward from

18 Op.cit., p. 94
19 Op.cit., p. 95
Bulli jetty to the escarpment. In 1922, there was a mine - old Bulli pit, scene of a disastrous explosion in 1887 - some two miles directly to the west of Bulli jetty. Yet, in Lawrence's description, the mine is 'in the depths of the marsh-like level' just 'beyond the sands' of the beach, whereas the mine was, and is, situated reasonably high on a low range of the escarpment, which Lawrence accurately describes as a 'diminishing range of hills in the distance.' In actuality, 'the low chimney' was that of the small Bulli coke works which was then sited in exactly the position Lawrence describes. It could be that Lawrence mistook the chimney of the coke-works for that of a small colliery. This is unlikely, however, for Lawrence would almost certainly have traversed the 500 odd yards from the jetty to the coke-works in his walking expeditions around Thirroul. He has also completely ignored the Vulcan Firebrick Company's works, which would have been clearly visible from the point on the beach described before.21

Lawrence, of course, is creating a fictional place, not offering a realistic description of Thirroul. Although on occasions he renders aspects of the town with remarkable accuracy, in reality the scene described above was a great deal more industrial than mention of the low chimney of the mine and the 'tall stark dead gum-trees' indicates. Likewise, in his portrait of Mullumbimby, Lawrence omits any reference to the large railway marshalling yards and depot for steam locomotives, established in the middle of Thirroul in 1917, and the noise and pollution they produced. Thus, by ignoring some of the uglier aspects of nascently suburban Thirroul, he fashions Mullumbimby into closer conformity to the traditional vision of a rural settlement as a place of refuge from the pressures of urban life.

As in the earlier chapters of the novel, the chapter 'Coo-ee' is not without its political concerns. The political action of the chapter centres on a conversation between Somers and Callcott. In this conversation, Jack is revealed as something of a fascist,

21 A more realistic description of the area around the jetty occurs in Chapter 7, 'The Battle of Tongues' (p. 147), but Lawrence persists in situating the mine in 'the little hollow of bush...beyond the stagnant creek'. The creek would appear to be Tramway Creek which took its name from the railway tracks which carried the coal-skiffs and coke-skiffs to the jetty.
very keen on the army and 'on discipline, and on obedience.' He seeks extra-parliamentary solutions to the political problems he perceives and there is menace in his suggestion that the 'Australian soil' is 'waiting to be watered with blood.'

Callcott tells Somers of 'diggers back from the war' who have 'sworn to obey the leaders, no matter what the command', but Lawrence is at pains to keep the practice of such politics, as distinct from the 'talk', out of the landscape of Mullumbimby. As Jack informs Somers:

"There's quite a number of us in Sydney - and in the other towns as well."24

"... We have lodges in all the biggish places. ..."25

Mullumbimby, as the novel makes clear, is the country not the town and the conclusion to be drawn is that, apart from Jack's brief presence in Mullumbimby, these fascists are not in the 'country' and hence the location of the Somers's retreat is one largely devoid of the stain of 'politics and hot treason'.26 It is a place apart.

Somers, however, is 'very much impressed' by what Jack has to say and his desire for 'action along with other men', which has previously been ridiculed by Harriett, is revived. The respective attractions of the retreat into solitude and the dream of political engagement, now become the fulcrum of the novel's dynamics. Whereas, in conventional pastoral writing, the retreat is an interlude in political life, in Kangaroo it provides the base for a series of excursions into the political life of Sydney as the novel explores the competing impulses of political commitment and pastoral retirement.

Somers's dream of political commitment, of 'doing something with men alone', conflicts with Harriett's dream of 'living to ourselves' in a place where they can 'forget the world'.27 His attempts to turn 'away from their personal life of intimacy', to move 'outside the personal sphere of their two lives', towards the 'impersonal business of

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22 DHL, *Kangaroo*, op. cit., p. 99. Both quotations are from this page.
24 Ibid.
male activity for which he was always craving',\textsuperscript{29} are responsible for the first of Somers's nightmares. He dreams of both Harriett and his mother and realizes that:

They both believed in him terribly, in personal being. In the individual man he was, and the son of man, they believed with all the intensity of undivided love. But in the impersonal man, the man that would go beyond them into an activity that exceeded them, in this man they did not find it so easy to believe.\textsuperscript{30}

It is Harriett's 'difficulty' in believing in this 'impersonal' Somers that provides most of the tension between the married couple throughout the novel:

She was happy in her new house, delighted with the sea and the being alone, she loved her Coo-ee bungalow, and loved making it look nice. She loved having Lovatt alone with her, and all her desires as it were in the hollow of her hand. She was bright and affectionate with him. But underneath lurked this chagrin of his wanting to go away from her, for his activity.\textsuperscript{31}

It has been said that without tension there can be no drama. In Kangaroo, the drama, as Wilding has noted, is in the 'flux of Somers' views, his attraction to and withdrawal from politics'.\textsuperscript{32}

A few pages later, the narrator apprises the reader of further changes in Harriett's and Somers's attitudes. While Harriett is at first chagrined by his desire to become involved in politics, her attitudes later shift:

Harriett loved Coo-ee and was determined to be happy there. She had at last gradually realized that Lovatt was no longer lover to her or anybody, or even anything; and amidst the chagrin was a real relief. Because he was her husband, that was undeniable. And if, as her husband, he had to go on to other things, outside of marriage: well, that was his affair. It only angered her when he thought these other things - revolution or governments or whatnot - higher than their essential marriage. But then he would come to himself and acknowledge that his marriage was the centre of his life, the core, the root, however he liked to put it: and this other business was the inevitable excursion into the future, into the unknown, onwards, which man by his nature was condemned to make, even if he lost his life a dozen times in it. Well, so be it. Let him make the excursion: even without her. But she was not, if she could help it going to have him setting off on a trip that led nowhere. No, if he was to excurse ahead, it must be

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Wilding, op.cit., p. 183.
ahead, and her instinct must be convinced as the needle of a mariner's compass is convinced. And regarding this Australian business of Callcott's, she had her doubts.33

The narrator here makes it clear that Harriett believes involvement with Callcott and his friends is a dead-end road and that she will do her best (successfully as it turns out) to make Somers aware of this.

Why Harriett is happy with the situation at 'Coo-ee' is also later made clear in a single sentence: 'She wasn't a bit of flotsam, and she wasn't a dog chained to a dog-kennel.'34 In other words, having somewhere to live saves her from the life of an itinerant and living in what is 'only a camp' saves her from being committed or tied to a house like a dog to a kennel. That it is possible to quit 'Coo-ee' whenever they wish is thus one of its attractions in the eyes of Harriett. So, whilst she may wish to live in solitude with Somers, she doesn't wish to be tied down, only to be camped somewhere with him: 'where she camped with Lovatt Somers was now the world's centre to her, and that was enough.'35

By this time Harriett and Somers have exchanged positions. Initially it was Somers who wanted nothing to do with other people and Harriett who encouraged familiarity with the neighbours. It is now Harriett who desires solitude and Somers who wishes to become involved with others. However, despite her desire that they should 'live alone somewhere together and forget the world', Harriett has no objection to Somers's involvement with others provided it leads somewhere and doesn't take precedence over their marriage.

As yet, the novel has made no real case for either political commitment or pastoral retirement. The issue is presented in the chapter 'Coo-ee' as an instance of the tug of war between Harriett and Somers, as it was in the chapter 'Torestin', although the couple have now changed sides. In the 'Coo-ee' chapter it would appear that Lawrence is using Harriett to suggest very sharply that in his desire to pursue 'this Australian business of Callcott's' Somers is chasing a will-o'-the-wisp. The

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33 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., pp. 112-113.
34 Op.cit., p. 113
35 Ibid.
suggestion at this point is that, in her isolationism, Harriett is politically wiser than Somers and Lawrence chooses to close the chapter with a scene of domestic felicity:

... [Somers] had made the fire, and was sweeping the hearth. Coffee was ready by the time Harriett was dressed: and he was crouching making toast. They had breakfast together on the front veranda, facing the sea, eastwards... The coffee had a lot of chicory in it, but the butter and milk were good, and the brownish honey, that also, like the landscape, tasted queer, as if touched with unkindled smoke. It seemed to Somers as if the people of Australia ought to be dusky. Think of Sicilian honey - like the sound of birds singing; and now this with a dusky undertone to it. But good too - so good!36

This passage gives a hint of what for Harriett and Somers an idyllic life at Mullumbimby might be like.

The attractions of such a life are tested against those of urban life and political commitment. When Harriett and Somers return to Sydney 'for two days, to pack up and return to Coo-ee' they feel the pull of the sea:

All the time, they could hear the sea. It seemed strange that they felt the sea so far away, in Sydney. In Sydney itself, there is no sea. It might be Birmingham.37

Sydney, for all its 'wonderful harbour' (the sight of which delighted Harriett when they first arrived in Murdoch Street),38 after the experience of Mullumbimby, seems as sea-less as a city in the heart of England's midlands.

Jack attempts to lure Somers towards 'male activity' and political engagement while he is in Sydney, but Somers, although he had once 'secretly grieved over his friendlessness', now 'realized that in his innermost soul he had never wanted'39 friendship. More importantly, however, the narrator informs us that Somers had decided that he would never pledge himself to Jack, nor to this venture in which Jack was concerned.40 What finally prompts Somers's decision is that he comes to feel that

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36 Op.cit., pp. 113-114. The quotation immediately preceding this one is from p. 113.
39 Op.cit., p. 120
40 Ibid. The unusual thing about Lawrence's presentation of Somers's character is that, despite the fact that nearly all the judgements of Kangaroo are subject to the flux of the novel's attitudes, the reader is given such an early (and, as it proves, conclusive) indication that Somers will remain impervious to Kangaroo's appeals: 'Before Somers went down to George Street to find Jack and to be taken by him to luncheon with Kangaroo, he had come to the decision, or to the knowledge, that mating or mateship were contrary to his destiny' (op.cit., p. 120, italics mine). Despite the fact that the city/country
the 'living fellowship with other men' which he desires isn't that of 'mates and equality and mingling' but 'Some other living relationship...Perhaps the thing that the dark races know...the mystery of lordship.' Lawrence sets out to explore in his next novel, 'Quetzalcoatl'. That Somers's definite rejection of the idea of political engagement with the fascist schemes of either Jack or his leader Kangaroo has been made in Sydney, leaves the way open for Somers to retreat to the landscape of rural-coastal Mullumbimby and consider the possibilities of 'some other living relationship' in an Australian context.

The chapter entitled 'Kangaroo' is taken up almost entirely with political discussion between Somers, Callcott and Kangaroo in Sydney. It is an unlikely chapter in which to find a reference to the father of pastoral poetry. Nevertheless, during their discussion the following exchange takes place:

contrast is presented in such a way to create the illusion of a tug-of-war within Somers's personality between the options of political commitment and pastoral retirement, the reader is never given any real hope that Somers will ever commit himself to Kangaroo. And, as the above quotation shows, we are told this conclusively one third of the way into the novel, in chapter six (op.cit. p. 120). This is later re-confirmed in chapter 10 (op.cit. p. 204) where the reason for Somers's apathy towards Kangaroo's appeals for commitment is put down to 'torpor' induced by the 'old influence of the fern-world' which makes it impossible for Somers to 'care' (op.cit. p. 204). For all the space devoted to it, the allure of Kangaroo's political appeal to Somers is simply never a real issue. Somers begins by knowing that 'comradeship' is 'contrary to his destiny' and then has this 'knowledge' confirmed by the impact of the 'torpor' which the Australian spirit of place provokes in him - a 'torpor' induced by the 'old influence of the fern-world' (op.cit. p. 204). Indeed, with the obvious exception of Harriett, the only person or thing to which Somers ever shows any clear possibility of committing himself is the abstraction of the Australian spirit of place: 'He was so templed to commit himself to this strange continent and its strange people.' (op.cit. p. 321) In my view, the scenes of supposed political intrigue with Kangaroo and Jack, lengthy though they are, are as much of a red-herring as the incident when Jaz conspiratorially visits Jack at the end of chapter three, an episode which, as Michael Wilding notes (Political Fictions, op.cit., p. 183), is then 'dropped from the novel and the expectations of mystery aroused...are never fulfilled.' In short, one can only support the view of Dr Leavis when he remarks (D.H. Lawrence: Novelist, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1964, p. 67) that 'we are not...asked to suppose Somers ever in imminent danger of committing himself to the "revolution"; his disbelief in mere political movements is too profound.' Lawrence does present Somers as, initially, interested in Jack Callcott's schemes; an expectation of commitment is aroused. But, as the above quotation from chapter six demonstrates, Somers rejects Kangaroo and Jack before he goes to Cooley's George Street chambers. As Wilding has noted (op.cit., p. 182), 'instead of any further development at this point in the external narrative, there is stasis. Somers broods over Kangaroo's views, struggles with the conflicting demands of politics and marriage, meets Struthers, meets Kangaroo again. And again, instead of resolution or development, the narrative remains halted and we are given a lengthy chapter of flashback about the First World War. When we return to the present, it is to the perfunctory episode of the bomb outrage, to which Somers is merely an onlooker, which results in nothing, and after which Somers leaves the country.' See also chapter 12 of this thesis, 'The Meaninglessness of Meanings', where this point is argued in greater detail in both the text and the footnotes.

41 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 120.
... Mr Somers, help yourself to wine, that's the most comfortable. I hope you are going to write something for us. Australia is waiting for her Homer - or her Theocritus.

'Or even her Ally Sloper,' said Jack, 'if I may be permitted to be so old-fashioned.'

'If I were but blind,' said Somers, 'I might have a shot at Australian Homerics.'

'His eyes hurt him still, with looking at Sydney,' said Jack.

'There certainly is enough ot [sic] it to look at,' said Kangaroo.

'In acreage,' said Jack.

'Pity it spreads over so much ground,' said Somers.

Although the whole of this exchange would appear to be flippant, it is interesting that Kangaroo should choose to refer to Homer and Theocritus. No doubt the treatment of the Trojan war in The Iliad suggests an heroic treatment of Australia's military engagement in that part of the world in World War One. It is also amusing that Theocritus should be thought of as a model for a poet wishing to write of a country that lived off the sheep's back. Somers, however, dismisses the idea of having 'a shot at Australian Homerics' on the grounds that he isn't blind. It is true that Homer was blind, but Somers's implication seems to be that what he has seen does not lend itself to Homeric treatment and not that the Homeric is beyond him. It is an implication taken up by Jack. As for the mention of Theocritus and Ally Sloper, Somers ignores them and this would appear to indicate he is not interested in 'having a shot' at anything in the manner of either.

The chapter 'Kangaroo' ends in a way that sets a pattern for the rest of the novel. Returning to Mullumbimby after visiting Kangaroo, Somers goes down to the sea beneath 'Coo-ee':

He liked the sea, the pale sea of green glass that fell in such cold foam. . . .Now he understood the yearning in the seal-woman's croon, as she went back to the sea, leaving her husband and her children of warm flesh. No more cloying warmth. No more of this horrible stuffy heat of human beings. To be an isolated swift fish in the big seas, that are bigger than


43 Nevertheless, the reference to Theocritus is a surprising one, particularly when considered along with the reference to Greek pastoral drama mentioned earlier as well as the narrator's description (op.cit., p. 31) of Somers's impression of Victoria as being 'like an old Greek girl just bringing an offering to the altar of the mystic Bacchus. The offering of herself'. Moreover, a few lines earlier (op.cit., p. 30), Somers is described by the narrator as having thought of Victoria as 'Perhaps like the sacred prostitutes of the temple'.

the earth; fierce with cold, cold life, in the watery twilight before sympathy was created to clog us.

These were his feelings now. Mankind? Ha, he turned his face to the centre of the seas, away from any land. The noise of waters, and dumbness like a fish. The cold, lovely silence, before crying and calling were invented. His tongue felt heavy in his mouth, as if it had relapsed away from speech altogether.

He did not care a straw what Kangaroo said or felt, or what anybody said or felt, even himself. He had no feelings, and speech had gone out of him. He wanted to be cold, cold, and alone like a single fish, with no feeling in his heart at all except a certain icy exultance and wild, fish-like rapacity. 'Homo sum!' All right. Who sets a limit to what man is Man is also a fierce and fish-cold devil, in his hour, filled with cold fury of desire to get away from the cloy of human life altogether, not into death, but into that icily self-sufficient vigour of a fish.44

The passage is filled with the impulse to escape the human condition, to escape 'the horrible stuffy heat of human beings.' It is a passage that highlights that tendency, noted by Poggioli, of the pastoral of solitude to develop into an extreme form of the pastoral of self and to become the pastoral of self-love. It avoids this tendency in the lines 'he did not care a straw...what anybody said or felt' with the addition of the two word rider, 'even himself'; but it, nevertheless, comes perilously close to that far worse pitfall of misanthropy which, again as Poggioli has noted, is the negative component of excessive concern with the self. Rather than self love, however, the passage expresses a desire for complete, including emotional, self-sufficiency.

After his meeting with Kangaroo, Somers retreats to Mullumbimby and expresses a desire to be an 'isolated swift fish in the big seas'.45 Each time he travels to Sydney and engages in political conversations with Kangaroo he retreats to Mullumbimby, where the joys of lonely communion with the natural world are affirmed in exquisite prose. The sea which faces Mullumbimby, the Pacific Ocean, is true to its name and often acts as a balm for the troubled souls of Lawrence's protagonists.

Although in almost every other respect Lawrence's novels have been subject to critical disapproval, their descriptions of natural phenomena have been universally

44 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., pp. 141-142.
praised. Kenneth Young has actually referred to them as though they are primarily remarkable perceptions of non-human nature:

His novels are wayward and natural, rambling landscapes rather than cunningly constructed gardens. Re-reading them today, one is forcibly struck by page after page of magical description of nature, the sense of place, the atmosphere of the non-human world.46

Young is correct in referring to Lawrence's descriptions of nature as 'wayward' and 'rambling', but he fails to take account of the importance of their positioning in the novels, a positioning which imparts to them a similar function to that of the 'cunningly constructed gardens' of the traditional pastoral.

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'Saturday Night In Arcady'

Elements Of The Modern Pastoral Novel In *Kangaroo*

While the early and subsequent chapters of the novel reveal repeated examples of the traditional pastoral flight from both the horrors of the city and the complications of modern living (as well as echoes of even such a venerable pastoral romance as Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*)¹, it is also necessary to test *Kangaroo* against some of the key criteria Michael Squires has established in his study, *The Pastoral Novel*. As this present chapter will demonstrate, in addition to the persistent use of the central technique of traditional pastoral (the contrast between city and country with its implied critique of contemporary life) *Kangaroo* clearly contains many elements which Squires identifies as hallmarks of a modern pastoral novel.

Many of the elements of pastoral in *Kangaroo* have been identified earlier in the thesis. Yet, in *Kangaroo*, Lawrence is also functioning, in Squires's terms, as a "pastoral novelist" in that he:

... is involved less in appraising the urban present [via the portrait of Sydney suburbia identified in the previous chapter] than he is in creating patiently - with concrete incident and descriptive detail - a small, remote, circumscribed pastoral world. In such a creation lies his artistic achievement. To build such a pastoral world the methods he uses are various, and include so traditional a topos as the *locus amoenus* and so modern a topos as the secluded hut, both of which announce rhetorically the initiation of physical or spiritual change.²

'Coo-ee', of course, is clearly a version of 'the secluded hut and, as I have previously established in the chapters 'Suburbia and 'The Flight from Suburbia', it is the *locus amoenus* of Mullumbimby, rather than the 'vast town of Sydney with its political intrigue, that is both the cause and the site of Somers's 'spiritual change.'

Lawrence makes Mullumbimby a circumscribed world by a number of devices. He was fortunate in that 'the dark tor' of Thirroul on one side, and the Pacific Ocean on

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¹See the last page of this chapter, as well as the final chapter on this thesis, 'The Literary Form of *Kangaroo*', where the connection with Sidney is discussed in greater detail.

²Michael Squires, *op.cit.*, p. 15.
the other, provide natural models for a place that is largely cut off from both 'the vast town of Sydney' and the Australian interior. Lawrence succeeds in accentuating these given features by creating the impression that the only means of access to the town are by the narrow railway corridor and the direct shipping lane from Sydney to 'the jetty'. No indication is given in the depiction of Bulli Pass, later in the novel, that this road also leads to Sydney. The impression given is that of a mere track leading to the glorious bush in bloom behind Mullumbimby. A further impression of Mullumbimby, as a world apart, is given by Lawrence's portrait of the eccentric customs and manners of the inhabitants which seem so different to those of the suburbanites of Sydney.3

In addition to these devices, in fashioning Mullumbimby as a circumscribed pastoral world providing a refuge from both suburban neighbouring and urban political intrigue (as well as the war-time horrors of the 'old world'), Lawrence makes even the seascape of Mullumbimby conspire against the attempts of agents like Callcott to win Somers to Kangaroo's cause. The attempted conversion takes place beside the 'sea's edge' which is 'smoking with the fume of the waves like a mist, and the high shore ahead. . . .Tier after tier of white-frost foam piled breaking towards the shore, in a haste.'4

So furious is the sea (the implication is that it is enraged because of the audacity of Jack trying to lure Somers from its shores) that during the attempted conversion 'they had to shout at one another in unnaturally lifted voices, because of the huge noise of the sea'.5 As Michael Wilding has noted this scene creates a critical perspective on the irrelevance of Kangaroo's and Callcott's political schemes. They are clearly no match for the charms of rural retirement in Mullumbimby. Despite the fact that the conversation between Somers and Jack is conducted over a full seven pages of the novel, it is none the more relevant for the length at which it is detailed. Mullumbimby is

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3 The best examples of these eccentricities are provided in the description of the Mullumbimbians and their preference for suitcases over shopping baskets. The passage in question is quoted at footnote 23 of this present chapter.
4 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 95.
a world apart. 'Politics and red-hot treason' have no legitimate part to play within the confines of its borders. The sea below 'Coo-ee' serves to frame Callcott's political revelation of the existence and function of Kangaroo's diggers, placing it, in Wilding's words 'as trivial, transient, ephemeral in the movement of the cosmos.'

Another way in which Kangaroo meets the test of Squires's criteria for the pastoral novel is that 'the pastoral haven', Mullumbimby, 'is not only circumscribed but, within, is recognized for its remarkable beauty', 'its close correspondence between mind and setting', 'lush and lyrical descriptions of landscape, flowers, and the harmonious interaction of man and nature.' Examples of this have already been provided, and a more telling one will be detailed in a subsequent chapter devoted to Lawrence's depiction of the bush behind Mullumbimby as pastoral garden.

In addition, however, Lawrence's transformation of the actual semi-rural, semi-industrial seaside resort of Thirroul into the Arcadian Mullumbimby of Kangaroo also conforms to what Squires terms 'the total impression of the pastoral novel' in its use of 'sympathetic realism.' These are Squires's words and his italics, but the phrase is closely akin to the term 'symbolic realism' that I have used in D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul to account for 'both the idealization and realism clearly at work' in the depiction of landscape in the modern pastoral novel.

Thus, despite the considerable verisimilitude with which Lawrence depicts Thirroul, the effect of Lawrence's pastoral technique in transforming the town is much the same as that of a pastoral novelist like Thomas Hardy. Albert J. Guerard has noted that Hardy's Wessex novels 'leave an idealized impression of an ancient and stable world rather than an accurate almanac of Dorset' and it is clear that Lawrence, mutatis mutandum, does much the same for both the landscape and the inhabitants of Thirroul.

6 Michael Wilding, op.cit., p. 186.
7 Op.cit., p. 15
9 See the chapter entitled "Symbolic Realism", pp. 161-168
10 Michael Squires, op.cit., p. 16.
11 Albert J. Guerard, Thomas Hardy (1949), New Directions, Norfolk, Connecticut, 1964, p. 33; cited by Squires, op.cit., p. 17
through his depiction of the ancient aboriginality of Mullumbimby's 'spirit of place' and his image of its 'white folks peering out of the dusk almost like aborigines.' But it is in the areas where modern pastoral undertakes what Squires terms 'a modification of traditional pastoral' that it is most important to test Kangaroo against Squires's catalogue of more modern pastoral novels. Squires's summation is that:

... none of the novels [i.e. the seven pastoral novels he discusses as representative of the modern pastoral novel] is purely idyllic and none places its landscape and characters in Arcadia. The advent of science and the habit of looking at rural life sharply and squarely that we find in Crabbe or Cobbett or Richard Jefferies sufficiently affected the general outlook on rural life to prevent a pure idyll from being written by novelists of the first rank.

If the country life re-created in these novels is simple, and perhaps "simplified," it is in no way remote from the life of the fields. We discover realism in numerous ways: plausible characterization, accurate and detailed rendering of an actual locality, the use of dialect to achieve verisimilitude, and an honest acknowledgment of human suffering. If we find neither graceful shepherds, dressed with artificial language and populating an Arcadian landscape, nor a masquerade of disguised poets, we do find rural life treated with intense sympathy and idealized only to the point where realism of character and accuracy of landscape still shape our response to the novel's fictional world and qualify its idyllic atmosphere.

In D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul I have given an indication of the extent to which Kangaroo is an 'accurate and detailed rendering of an actual locality' and have tried to alert readers to, in Squire's words, those areas where 'the pastoral novelist makes life palatable by softening or omitting their coarseness.' What was only glanced at in that book, however, is Lawrence's 'use of dialect to achieve verisimilitude'. Debate about whether the shepherds of traditional pastoral should or should not use country dialect have wracked the genre for several centuries in England and, as far as I am aware, no

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12 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 208.
13 The seven novels are Adam Bede and Silas Marner by George Eliot, Under the Greenwood Tree, Far from the Madding Crowd, and The Woodlanders by Thomas Hardy, and The White Peacock and Lady Chatterley's Lover by D.H. Lawrence (Squires, op.cit., p. 3).
14 Squires, op.cit., p. 17.
15 Op.cit., p. 16; and see also Joseph Davis, D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul, op.cit., pp. 43, 45, 111.
16 Spenser's The Shepheardes Calendar is the best early English example of the use of 'realistic' dialect to depict shepherds within the genre. Alexander Pope's pastorals provide a contrasting example of an English writer attempting to employ the non-realistic decorum of the genre. Swift's marvellous 'A Pastoral Dialogue' (see The Penguin Book of English Pastoral Verse, op.cit., pp. 280-282), is a fine burlesque of the attempt to depict shepherds speaking the language of shepherds.
other critical study has yet remarked on the satiric purposes to which Lawrence puts the rural dialect of the Mullumbimbians in *Kangaroo*.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that it has gone unremarked, it is an important aspect of Lawrence's pastoral art, for as Squires has noted, 'the characters in the pastoral novel lie somewhere between the refined, idealized creations of traditional pastoral and coarse or gross transcripts from country life.' This is most evident, not so much in the presentation of the major characters, such as Kangaroo, Jazz, Callcott and Victoria, but in the yokels we meet in Mullumbimby. The depiction of these Mullumbimbians continually veers between idealized portraits at a distance, such as the depiction of Mullumbimby's 'white folks peering out of the dusk like aborigines', and the coarser caricatures of such figures as the 'white-moustached' librarian and Coo-ee's shit carter. In these later depictions Lawrence is able to extract considerable satiric humour from a series of pen-portraits which are, in a sense, as stylized and conventional as the stock figures of traditional pastoral.

On such occasions, it is Lawrence's ear for dialect that leads to most of the humour. The first yokel encountered is the sanitary man with his negative responses, 'A sort of neow sound', and his 'colonial humour' which is 'not rudeness.' And a similar satiric mirth is extracted from Lawrence's portrait of a female reader 'pronouncing', in 'tones of unmitigated intimacy', 'from the top of the broken chair', "'Y'ven got a new Zaine Greye, have yer?'" This later expression is taken from a scene in the novel which begins: 'Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays were the library nights.' Like the ironic chapter title, 'Saturday Night in Arcady', which Hardy used in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* when he first published it, Lawrence's depiction of Saturday night at the library in Mullumbimby is revealing of both his

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17Squires, *op.cit.*, p. 16
18DHL, *Kangaroo*, *op.cit.*, p. 208
distance from traditional pastoral and his simultaneous 'consciousness of working within the tradition.'

A similar consciousness can be discerned in the marvellous vignette of the yokels and their peculiar 'country' habits and customs contained in the description of Somers's and Harriett's responses as they walk around Mullumbimby:

She still had in her mind's eye an Australia with beautiful manorial farm-houses and dainty, perfect villages. She never acquiesced in the uncreatedness of the new country, the rawness, the slovenliness. It seemed to her comical, for instance, that no woman in Australia would carry a basket. Harriett went shopping as usual with her pretty straw basket in the village. But she felt that the women remarked on it. Only then did she notice that everybody carried a suit-case in this discreet country. The fat old woman who came to the door with a suit-case must, she thought, be a visitor coming to the wrong house. But no. 'Did you want a cabbage?' - In the suit-case two cabbages and half a pumpkin - A little girl goes to the dairy for six eggs and a half a pound of butter with a small, elegant suit-case. Nay, a child of three toddled with a little six-inch suit-case, containing, as Harriett had occasion to see, two buns, because the suit-case flew open and the two buns rolled out. Australian suit-cases were always flying open, and discharging groceries or a skinned rabbit or three bottles of beer. One had the impression that everyone was perpetually going away for the week-end: with a suit-case. Not so at all. Just a new-country bit of convention.

Ah, a new country! The cabbage, for example, cost tenpence, in the normal course of things, and a cauliflower a shilling. And the tradesman's carts flew round in the wilderness, delivering goods. There isn't much newness in man, whatever the country.

Here is a muted instance, in the ironic reference to 'manorial farm houses and dainty perfect villages', of Lawrence's consciousness of how different his pastoral depiction of Mullumbimby is to that of the older pastoral tradition. And the description itself, delighting as it does in the gently satiric revelation of the gaucheries of the yokels, is Lawrence's attempt to keep the idyllic tendencies of traditional pastoral at arm's length.

Nevertheless, Lawrence could stoop to such an idyll when necessary, as is evident from his depiction of the yokels in the bus-ride home from Wolloona. In this instance, however, the utopian idyll of 'niceness' and 'gentleness' functions as a

23Ibid.  
counterpart to the nightmarish bus-ride by the working class denizens of the English Midlands in 'The Nightmare' chapter. Even so, Lawrence is at pains to emphasize his distance from the tendencies of traditional pastoral by shattering the idyll of the Mullumbimby bus-ride via the narrator's report of Somers's feelings at the very end of the passage. The behaviour of the yokels who are passengers on the bus home to Mullumbimby, endearingly developed over some three pages, is acknowledged as possessing 'a great beauty', but 'at the same time' it is said to make Somers's 'spirits sink':

> It made him feel so sad underneath, or uneasy, like an impending disaster.

And so, in this way too, Lawrence avoids the 'disaster', for a modern pastoral novelist at least, of creating a pure idyll. Lawrence thereby also avoids the schematic simplification critics such as David Cavitch have found in a pastoral novel like *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

The treatment of the denizens of Mullumbimby is in this respect akin to the conscious awareness of the double nature of shepherd life employed and expressed in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. In that work, the family of Damoetas is only one side of the portrayal of pastoral life and is balanced by descriptions of more idealized shepherds also residing in the country. In *Kangaroo*, as in Sidney's *Arcadia*, the presentation of the inhabitants of the country combines coarseness with idealization. And in this respect, as Peter Marinelli has remarked, 'Arcadia is only a mirror of the greater world, containing within itself both perfection and imperfection, idealism and coarse reality.'

In the fashioning of Mullumbimby as a circumscribed rural world set apart from the political intrigue and suburban democratic culture of Sydney, in the conscious

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26 *Ibid.* It may be possible to read the description of the football match in Mullumbimby as just such a 'mirror' of the greater world. See John Lowe's suggestions in D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo* : an approach to some of its problems*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Monash University, 1989.
28 *Peter V. Marinelli, op.cit.*, p. 61.
employment of an awareness of the double nature of rural life, in the detailed rendering of an actual locality and in Lawrence's use of dialect to achieve both verisimilitude and some gently satiric humour, *Kangaroo* meets several of the criteria Michael Squires has demonstrated as integral to the art of the modern pastoral novel.
Pastoral Literary Problems

On April 24, 1922 while sailing on the RMS Orsova to Fremantle, Lawrence wrote to Lady Cynthia Asquith:

We're going to Australia - heaven knows why: because it will be cooler, and the sea is wide. Ceylon steams heat - and it isn't so much the heat as the chemical decomposition of one's blood by the ultra-violet rays of the sun. I don't know what we'll do in Australia - don't care.¹

Lawrence is already toying with the notion of 'thinning down' the blood which is mentioned in Chapter VII of Kangaroo ² and is echoed in Chapter XIII³, after which the notion becomes important in both promoting and understanding Somers's changed attitude to the Australian landscape. In Kangaroo, the changes this process provokes provide the physiological rationale for Somers's changing emotional and intellectual responses to Australia and Australians.

At the time of writing this letter, however, Lawrence does not appear to have even begun to have thought about writing a novel, let alone one set in Australia. Nearly a month later, in a letter written to Amy Lowell, he reveals that, although he still has nothing specific in mind, he appears to be thinking more generally about the nature of the novel, taking stock and thinking about giving up, for the time being at least, novels that deal with sex. Indeed, the letter indicates a greater interest in the mysterious relationship between people and place than relations between the sexes:

I am enjoying the face of the earth and letting my Muse, dear hussy, repent her ways. 'Get thee to a nunnery,]' I said to her. Heaven knows if we shall ever see her face again, unveiled, uncoiffed.

The earth - and man is a strange mystery: always rather what you expected, and yet oh, so different. One wonders if all books are just so many parish magazines. - The talk is just on top.

Alas for me and my erotic reputation! Tell them I have sent my Muse into a nunnery while I took a look into the world.⁴

²See DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., pp.165-166, 169.
Lawrence seems at this stage more interested in sight-seeing. Yet notice the phrase, 'while I look into the world.' He chooses not to look at things, but into them. The letter hints that he is thinking about the issue of place and literature very carefully and is unconcerned about maintaining his 'erotic reputation'.

How fitting then that the novel that he begins writing in little more than a week is so much concerned with 'the spirit of the place', of 'The earth' and 'man' as 'a strange mystery', and that the eroticism of this novel is reduced largely to a question of 'sex in trees' \(^5\) to use a surprising phrase from *Kangaroo*.

After boarding the 'Malwa' in Fremantle for Sydney, it is apparent that Lawrence still has no plans for a specific novel: 'I'm not working - don't want to...', he writes to Jan Juta.\(^6\) He even goes so far as to say of Australia and Australians that 'one could never make a novel out of these people, they haven't got any insides to them, to write about.'\(^7\)

Yet in the same letter - though in a continuation of it written from Thirroul - Lawrence announces to his agent immediately after expressing fears about the state of his finances that he is 'going to try to write a romance'. This sudden turnabout indicates at least that Lawrence has taken his muse out of the nunnery, that he has solved the problem of making a novel out of people that haven't got any insides to them to write about, and, more simply, that the state of his finances means he needs to ensure an advance, so he had better start writing regardless. Whether as the result of one (or all three) of these possibilities, by June 3 it is clear that Lawrence is settled in 'Wyewurk' at Thirroul, that the novel is going well and if he can keep it going he will stay until he has finished it - 'till about the end of August.'\(^8\)

\(^5\) DHL, *Kangaroo*, *op.cit.*, p. 204. The homoeroticism initially evident in Somers's response to *Kangaroo* seems to me yet another of those elements of the novel's narrative (like the mysterious late night arrival of Jaz and Victoria's near-seduction of Somers) that are apparently enthusiastically taken up and then dropped.

\(^6\) DHL to Jan Juta 20/5/1922 in *The Letters of DHL*, *Volume 4*, *op.cit.*, p. 244.

\(^7\) DHL to Robert Mountsier 25/5/1922?, *op.cit.*, p. 246.

\(^8\) DHL to Mabel Dodge Sterne, 3/6/1922, *op.cit.*, p. 251. The lower-case 'a' in August in Lawrence's original has not been corrected.
Some remarks made by Lawrence in a letter to his mother-in-law suggest what he may have seen as his solution to the dilemma of how to make a novel out of his Australian experiences:

We had two letters today: Anita's wedding letter too: and the news from Johanna, that she wants to leave Max. Oh God - revolution and earthquake! . . . I am in Australia, and suddenly writing again - a weird novel of Australia. So it goes. I hope to have it done by August.9

At least two elements of the eventual plot of Kangaroo - 'revolution and earthquake' - are evidently in Lawrence's mind. Yet it is the precise remark that he is writing 'a weird novel of Australia' and not the Australians, which indicates that he has determined to write a novel primarily of place. The letters which follow demonstrate two things: he's short of money and in need of an advance; and that he is very uncertain how this novel he is writing will be received. To Mountsier, his American agent, he expressed both these things:

. . . I've got just 31. here now: and it costs me about 3. a week to live, lowest estimate, here in this house. I've paid the rent (30/- week) till June 26th.

. . .

If the novel I have begun (pitched in Australia) keeps on at the rate it is going at, it should be ready by August. But it is a rum sort of novel, that'll probably bore you. So don't count on it.

. . .

I feel rather keen to write an American novel, after Australia.

D.H. Lawrence

It's quite lovely here.10

All the letters indicate the writing is going well and quickly until June 19. On this day, Lawrence writes to Mabel Dodge Sterne:

Am stuck in my novel - wish we could get away from here in July, but fear I shall have to wait till August for my money.11

Two days later, Frieda confirms in a letter to the same woman that Lawrence is indeed suffering writer's block:

9 DHL to Baroness Anna von Richthofen 9/6/1922, op.cit., p. 255.
11 DHL to Mabel Dodge Sterne 19/6/1922, op.cit., p. 267. An initial dash has been omitted from the beginning of this sentence.
... Lawrence has written a novel, gone it full tilt at page 305 - but has come to a stop and kicks'...

It is precisely at the beginning of the chapter entitled 'Diggers' that Somers first seeks solace for his emotional, marital and political troubles by turning to the land - to the Australian bush - and not the sea, the great Pacific ocean and the lonely shore beneath 'Coo-ee' which had previously so soothed his troubled soul. Before Chapter X, the Australian bush provoked nothing but fear, and sometimes real terror as is evident in the description in Chapter I of the eerie aboriginal presences Somers senses in Western Australia.

It is in Mullumbimby that Somers at last comes to an appreciation of how the bush is not really so terrifying after all and is, in fact, the ultimate expression of the Australian 'spirit of place' which he now perceives as deeply influencing white Australian attitudes. Somers's experience of the bush behind Mullumbimby is so powerful, and so important to the development of the rest of the novel, that it is necessary to quote it at some length. After Harriett and Somers have 'another ferocious battle' Somers starts 'walking off into the country.'

He takes a path west from 'Coo-ee' into what is recognizably the bush on top of the escarpment at the back of Thirroul and looks:

... mostly straight below him, at the massed foliage of the cliff-slope. Down into the centre of the great, dull-green whorls of the tree-ferns, and on to the shaggy mops of the cabbage palms. In one place a long fall of creeper was yellowish with damp flowers. Gum-trees came up in tufts. The previous world! - the world of the coal age. The lonely, lonely world that had waited, it seemed, since the coal age. These ancient flat-topped tree-ferns, these tawsled palms like mops. What was the good of trying to be an alert conscious man here? You couldn't. Drift, drift into a sort of obscurity, backwards into a nameless past, hoary as the country is hoary. Strange old feelings wake in the soul: old, non-human feelings. And an

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12 Frieda Lawrence to Mabel Dodge Sterne 21/6/1922, op.cit., pp. 268-269. According to information kindly provided by Bruce Steele of Monash University, who is currently editing the Cambridge edition of Kangaroo, the break in the manuscript is really at page 309, not 305, and appears to coincide with the closing of Chapter IX 'Harriett and Somers at Sea in Marriage' and the beginning of Chapter X, 'Diggers'. Never having had the opportunity to go to Texas to examine the Lawrence manuscripts and typescripts of Kangaroo first-hand, this was a very exciting piece of information to receive, for it served to confirm the present author's long-held views concerning the structure of a novel that has long baffled many literary critics. See also Bruce Steele, 'Kangaroo: Fact and Fiction', Meridian, Volume 10, Number 1, May 1991, pp. 27-28.

13 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 203.
old, old indifference, like a torpor, invades the spirit. An old, saurian torpor. Who wins? There was the land sprinkled with dwellings as with granulated sugar. There was a black smoke of steamers on the high pale sea, and a whiteness of steam from a colliery among the dull trees. Was the land awake? Would the people waken this ancient land, or would the land put them to sleep, drift them back into the torpid semi-consciousness of the world of twilight?

Somers felt a torpor coming over him. He hung there on the parapet looking down, and he didn't care. How profoundly, darkly he didn't care. There are no problems for the soul in its darkened, wide eyed torpor. Neither Harriett nor Kangaroo nor Jaz, nor even the world. Worlds come, and worlds go: even worlds. And when the old, old influence of the fern-world comes over a man, how can he care? He breathes the fern seed and drifts back, becomes darkly half vegetable, devoid of pre-occupations. Even the never slumbering urge of sex sinks down into something darker, more monotonous, incapable of caring: like sex in trees. The dark world before conscious responsibility was born.14

Here the overpowering influence of the land and the mention of the 'sex-urge' gives an indication of the sort of writing that results when Lawrence resolves to write a novel after sending his muse into a nunnery while he takes a look at the world and explores the mystery of the relationship between 'man' and the 'land'.

There is also still some sense of menace in some of these descriptions of the bush, in phrases like 'an old, saurian torpor', although it is a qualitatively different kind of menace to that which Somers previously experienced in the bush of West Australia:

Ah well, thought Somers, life is so big, and has such huge ante-worlds of grey twilight. How can one care about anything in particular!

He went home again, and had forgotten the quarrel and forgotten marriage or revolutions or anything; drifted away into the grey pre-world where men didn't have emotions. Where men didn't have emotions and personal consciousness, but were shadowy like trees, and on the whole silent, with numb brains and slow limbs and a great indifference.15

Somers's later experience of the bush behind Mullumbimby, however, is the first occasion on which he begins to come to some real understanding of, and accommodation with, the 'spirit of the place', that 'old, old indifference of the fern world [which] comes over a man'.16 For Somers it is the beginning of the process of

16 Op.cit., p. 204
'thinning down the blood' which was first hinted at in Lawrence's letter from Ceylon. It is first introduced in Kangaroo in Chapter VII when the train-traveller Evans suggests 'that it takes about four or five years for your blood properly to thin down.' Later, in Chapter XIII, the suggestion is that it has provoked Somers's 'nightmare', because of 'the shock' it has caused 'to his blood and his system.' This physiological process has by the final chapter apparently transformed Somers's attitude to the Australian landscape entirely and results in the amazing pastoral prose-paean to the bush which is the subject of the novel's penultimate scene, during which Somers and Harriett at last come to fully appreciate the delicate beauty of the bush.

What is more, the influence of the bush - 'the old, old influence of the fern-world' - becomes so powerful during Somers's encounter with it at the beginning of Chapter X that it even begins to exert an influence on Harriett, who has remained at home in 'Coo-ee':

But Harriett was waiting for him rather wistful, and loving him rather quiveringly. And yet even in the quiver of her passion was some of this indifference, this twilight indifference of the fern-world.

It is tempting to wonder whether the changed attitude to the Australian bush at this point in the novel was the result of an actual walk Lawrence made into the bush on the escarpment at the back of Thirroul.

The literary effect of this real or imagined experience of the bush is, I believe, both clear and absolutely crucial to an understanding of Somers's earlier and subsequent renunciations of all willingness to become involved in 'politics and red-hot treason'. Hence it is the change of direction - a turning to the bush, rather than the sea,

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17 The issue of 'thinning down the blood' is discussed more fully in Chapter 12, entitled "The Meaninglessness of Meanings": Conventional and Sexual Politics as Red-Herrings in Kangaroo'.


20 See the next chapter, 'The Bush as Pastoral Garden', for further discussion of this.


22 Lawrence does mention, in a letter to Siebenhaar, at just this time when he is overcoming his bout of writer's block and commencing Chapter X, that, after locking himself up in 'Wyewurk' for nearly nineteen straight days, he and Frieda are at last doing a bit of sightseeing: 'I am trying to do a novel: may heaven help me. We think to sail on August 10. ...Until then, stay here in this house, which we like, and make excursions around' (DHL to William Siebenhaar 21/61922 in The Letters of DHL, Volume 4, op.cit., p. 270).
for solace in Mullumbimby - that paves the way for the eventual transformation of the Australian bush into the pastoral (though highly realistically portrayed) garden that blooms in the final chapter.

This accommodation to the 'spirit of place' of the Australian bush is the solution to which Lawrence appears to have worked through when he, as Frieda puts it, 'came to a stop and kicked' at the end of Chapter IX. But, by whatever means he came to this ultimately 'pastoral' solution to his literary problems (his transformation of Mullumbimby into, firstly, a landscape that expresses the twilight indifference of the fern-world, and then into a paradisal garden of mimosa bloom) it did not take him a great deal of time. In one of the letters written on June 21, Lawrence expresses his fears about being unable to go on:

I have done more than half of the novel: the Lord alone knows what anyone will think of it: no love at all, and attempt at revolution. I do hope I shall be able to finish it: not like Aaron, who stuck for two years, and Mr Noon, who has been now nearly two years at a full stop. But I think I see my way.

He indicates he thinks he sees a way out of his literary problems. The solution took little more than two days to work its way through.

From Lawrence's letters we learn that by June 30 he was well into the final sections of the novel. A letter to Anna Jenkins states:

Been to Wollongong today: fierce cold wind: blew my hat in the sea, me after it, wave rose, all but washed me away for ever.

As this incident is recorded as happening to Somers in Chapter XIV where Wollongong is given the name 'Wolloona', Lawrence has, within less than ten days, completed the very structurally important 'The Nightmare' chapter and is obviously confident enough (although some critics would call it desperate enough) to be playing fast and loose with the chapter 'Bits'.

Those critics who regard the 'Bits' chapter as firm evidence that Lawrence was desperate for material to finish his novel fail to see that it is only in this chapter that

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24 DHL to Anna Jenkins 30/6/1922, op.cit., p. 272.
Somers begins to move past simple accommodation to the landscape but also begins to express far more open affection for Australians: 'So nice, so nice, so gentle. The strange, bright-eyed gentleness.' Lawrence now begins to 'see his way' so clearly in the novel that he starts to relax in his treatment of Somers. From the beginning, Somers has been quite openly portrayed as a pompous prig and Lawrence has frequently used his narrator to highlight Somers's misjudgements, prejudices and general ill-temper. In the 'Bits' chapter, Lawrence continues this procedure:

He [Somers] could have kicked himself for wanting to help mankind, join in revolutions or reforms or any of that stuff. And he kicked himself still harder thinking of his frantic struggles with the 'soul' and the 'dark god' and the 'listeners' and the 'answerer.' Blarney - blarney - blarney! He was a preacher and a blatherer, and he hated himself for it. Damn the soul, damn the 'dark god', damn the 'listener' and the 'answerer', and above all, damn his own interfering, nosy self.

But this is only the narrator's reportage of Somers's feelings. A little later in the chapter, Somers speaks in self-ridicule:

'I am a fool,' said Richard Lovat, which was the most frequent discovery he made. It came, moreover, every time with a new shock of surprise and chagrin. Every time he climbed a new mountain range and looked over, he saw, not only a new world, but a big anticipatory fool on this side of it, namely himself.

As this insight clearly reveals, the education of Richard Lovatt Somers is slowly taking place. He is coming to a much greater acceptance of both Australia and himself. But he is still prone to temptations.

The new temptation to which Somers is subjected in the 'Bits' chapter, by which time he has conclusively rejected all the others that have so far deluded him, is 'to commit himself to this strange continent and its strange people.'

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23 DHL, Kangaroo, op. cit., p. 321.
26 Op. cit., pp.315-316. Somers has earlier rejected both Kangaroo and conventional political action (op.cit., pp. 120, 204). For further discussion of this issue see Chapter 12, "The Meaninglessness of Meanings": Conventional and Sexual Politics as Red-Herrings in Kangaroo", and also footnote 39 of the previous chapter, 'The Flight from Suburbia'.
The issue is whether his acceptance of the charms of 'the continent of the kangaroo' will ever develop in Somers that 'saurian torpor', the state of 'torpid semi-consciousness', identified as characteristic of the 'twilight indifference of the fern-world' in the 'Diggers' chapter. This concept of a twilight world of 'fern-dark indifference', and the state of 'torpor' it induces, is a curious one. Perhaps its literary equivalent is to be found in Andrew Marvell's pastoral poem 'The Garden', where 'the mind from pleasure less' is said to 'withdraw into its happiness':

Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade.29

The danger for Somers is that, in coming to terms with the Australian landscape's 'spirit of place', he will be drawn further into this 'saurian torpor' and, in seeking increasing solitude, will become increasingly indifferent to his fellow beings. He runs the risk of being drawn into some inhuman state of isolation seeking 'recognition of the innate, sacred separateness',30 as it is expressed in the 'Bits' chapter. Cognizant of this, the narrator closes the chapter with a salutary warning:

... one cannot live a life of entire loneliness, like a monkey on a stick up and down one's own obstacle.31

Lawrence's narrator, if not Somers himself, is clearly aware of the extremes of solipsism and self-love into which the pastoral of solitude (with its promotion of mystical communion with nature in an inhuman isolation from the world) can so easily degenerate.

30 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 321
The Bush as Pastoral Garden

The novel's protagonist, Richard Lovatt Somers, approaches all the characters he meets - both political and non-political - in an idiosyncratically personal way. In fact, the message of the novel - if it can be said to have one at all - is that Somers is in no mood for dreams of either the brotherhood of man as espoused by Struthers or the fascist schemes of Kangaroo. Somers simply wants to be 'alone'. From a reading of Lawrence's letters from Thirroul, this is also what Somers's creator wanted in the winter months of 1922.

Certainly, Lawrence was more responsible than his character Somers, in that he fully realized that his desire to wallow in a state of rustic solitude in Thirroul was unconscionable:

We don't know one single soul - not a soul comes to the house. And I can't tell you how I like it. I could live like that forever: and drop writing even a letter: sort of come undone from everything. But my conscience tells me not yet.1

Yet the actual Wyewurk was just as much a real-life retreat for Lawrence as Coo-ee is a fictional one for Somers.

The desire to be by oneself - and the competing attractions of political involvement which threaten to swamp this desire - is so persistent a theme in Kangaroo that it seems to me that the novel is a modern example of that old literary genre: the pastoral and, in particular, the pastoral of solitude. For as Renato Poggioli has remarked, The psychological root of the pastoral is a double longing after innocence and happiness, to be recovered not through conversion of regeneration, but merely through a retreat:2

The testimony. . . [it] bears is simply that it is easier to reach moral truth and peace of mind (in other terms, innocence and happiness) by abandoning the strife of civil and social living and the ordeal of human fellowship for a solitary existence, in communion with nature and with the company of one's musings and thoughts.3

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1DHL to S.S. Kotelianysy 9/7/1922 in The Letters of DHL Volume 4, op.cit., p. 275.
2 Renato Poggioli, 'The Oaten Flute', op.cit., p. 147.
In flight from 'civilization' and 'human company' both Somers (and presumably his creator) found relief in their natural surroundings in 'Mullumbimby'/Thirroul:

... the shore was his great solace, for all that. The huge white rollers of the Pacific breaking in a white, soft, snow-rushing wall, while the thin spume flew back to sea like a combed mane, combed back by the strong, cold land-wind.4

This passage from the second-last chapter, signals the culmination of a significant change of attitude on the part of the novel.

*Kangaroo* began with the most vitriolic hatred for the Australian landscape on the part of its protagonist. Somers hated the way suburban Sydney was 'loused over with promiscuous bungalows' and he was terrified by his earlier experience of the West Australian bush. Even when he got to Mullumbimby, his response to its landscape is less than ecstatic. As the narrator says, 'the place was half and half.' And this is very apt, for in many ways, 'Mullumbimby' becomes a sort of half-way house from which Somers sallies forth into the world of dirty city politics and then retreats to the country to commune with nature by the shore.

Yet in Mullumbimby a process of adjustment begins to take place. Its landscape and climate begins to evoke a physiological change in Somers - a change which the traveller Evans suggests doesn't usually begin until after a lengthy period of acclimatization. Somers, however, is clearly (as Lawrence was himself) a hypersensitive being. His blood appears to have thinned down much more quickly than the presumably less sensitive Evans believes is possible. Immediately after Somers's conversation with Evans, the process of thinning down the blood appears to begin and he starts to respond more sympathetically to the landscape, particularly that surrounding the lonely shores of Mullumbimby.

By Chapter XIII, Somers begins to feel a fuller effect of the inverted Australian climate and environment on his blood. The narrator offers this as an explanation for the horrendous 'nightmare' (taking up an entire chapter) Somers has just experienced: 'Perhaps it was just this: the inversion of the seasons, the shock to his blood and his

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system.'\textsuperscript{5} Although 'The Nightmare' was experienced in Sydney, the fear has, he believes, been provoked:

\ldots in the quiet of Coo-ee, strangely enough.\ldots Why? Why in this free Australia? Why? Why should they both have been feeling this same terror and pressure that they had known during the war, why should it have come on again in Mullumbimby?\textsuperscript{6}

Neither the sea nor the house in which Somers and Harriett reside have provided quite the secluded little island of healing solitude they so desired.

It is at this point in the novel the reader is given further evidence, expressed in disturbingly misanthropic form, that Somers repudiates completely his quest for 'action along with his fellow men':

That was all he wanted: to get clear. Not to save humanity or to help humanity or to have anything to do with humanity. No-no. Kangaroo had been his last embrace with humanity. Now all he wanted was to cut himself clear. To be clear of humanity altogether, to be alone. To be clear of love, pity, and hate. To be alone from it all. To cut himself finally clear from the last encircling arm of the octopus humanity. To turn to the old dark gods, who had waited so long in the outer dark.\textsuperscript{7}

But it also becomes clear that Somers's pretence that the lonely shores of Mullumbimby could provide a refuge from both the world and his memories of the horrors of the war is unsustainable. Somers's realization that the life of pastoral seclusion he shares with Harriett in Mullumbimby has only been a respite is indicated by his decision to now 'turn to the old dark gods'. But once this decision is made, Somers comes to a greater appreciation of the fascination of what he previously described as 'fern dark indifference' of the Australian bush.\textsuperscript{8}

In the opening chapter the bush was experienced as menacing to Somers, as if it 'was biding its time with a terrible ageless watchfulness, waiting for a far-off end, watching the myriad intruding white men.'\textsuperscript{9} Somers hated also the anarchic lack of 'instinct for authority'\textsuperscript{10} he encountered soon after his arrival in Sydney, and was

\textsuperscript{5} Op.cit., p. 303.
\textsuperscript{7} Op.cit., p. 308.
repelled by the 'instinct of the place'\textsuperscript{11} which the narrator identifies, uncomplainingly, as being characteristic of Australia and Australians. The narrator, however, had pointed out in this same chapter that Somers's attitudes to these things are mistaken:

\ldots Richard was wrong. Given a good temper and a genuinely tolerant nature - both of which Australians seem to have in a high degree - you can get on for quite a long time, without 'rule'. For quite a long time the thing just goes by itself.\textsuperscript{12}

Subsequent events make it clear, however, that Jack Callcott - the man Somers at first identifies as a typical Australian 'type' - does not acquiesce at all in the 'absolutely and flatly democratic'\textsuperscript{13} 'instinct of the place' which the narrator assigns to Australia. Callcott does not possess anything remotely approaching that 'genuinely tolerant nature', earlier identified as belonging to 'a good Australian.'

This, of course, is all part of the flux of the novel's and Somers's attitudes. At first Somers found the Australian bush menacing and the implication of Callcott's early depiction in the novel is that he is one of those whom the narrator identified as 'a good Australian.' As the novel progresses, however, Jack becomes increasingly menacing and Somers, in turn, is increasingly drawn to the bush. Indeed, late in the novel, when Callcott returns to Mullumbimby and learns of Somers's final argument with Kangaroo in the 'Jack Slaps Back'\textsuperscript{14} chapter, he proves as menacing to Somers as was the West Australian bush in Chapter I:

Some of the fear he had felt for Kangaroo, he now felt for Jack. Jack was really very malevolent. There was hell in his reddened face and in his black, inchoate eyes, and his long, pent-up body.\textsuperscript{15}

This is Jack at his worst. Yet earlier, at about the half-way mark of the novel, Somers had recognized that the disintegrative impact of 'the spirit of place' (the influence of the 'fern-dark indifference' of 'the continent of the kangaroo' upon human character) could be slightly less actively malevolent in its workings on Callcott: 'The aboriginal

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 18.
\item \textsuperscript{12} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 19.
\item \textsuperscript{13} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 18.
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{Op.cit.}, pp. 332-340.
\item \textsuperscript{15} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 336.
\end{itemize}
sympathetic apathy was upon him, he was like some creature that has lost its soul, and simply stares.'

Having rejected the desire to be involved in the sinister world of 'politics and red hot treason', Somers now seeks only to be alone with his soul, and the Australian bush is the perfect place for this. Possessing none of the malevolence of Jack, and armed now with greater time for quiet reflection, Somers begins to perceive more clearly the Australian landscape's real impact: its influence upon the 'myriad intruding white men' generally and upon Jack in particular. The way in which the influence of the 'aboriginal daimon' enables the whole show to keep running in its offensively anarchic manner becomes increasingly clear:

The indifference - the fern dark indifference of this remote, golden Australia. Not to care - from the bottom of one's soul, not to care. Overpowered in the twilight of fern-odour. Just to keep enough grip to run the machinery of the day; and beyond that, to let yourself drift, not to strain or make any effort to consciousness whatsoever. That was Jack. . .

But Callcott is not quite like that; his sort of 'indifference' is not always benign and, in the 'A Row in Town' chapter the 'aboriginal sympathetic apathy' turns actively malignant in its workings and he becomes much more than 'just a trifle less than human.'

Disillusioned with his dreams of political involvement with such obnoxious and menacing people as Kangaroo and Callcott, Somers begins to give up the personal political struggle within and starts to respond more benignly to the Australian 'spirit of place'. As part of this process, the bush is no longer perceived as threatening and actually bursts into flower, becoming an almost pastoral garden where Harriett and Somers can wander in blissful solitude. Somers experiences the change first on his train journey to Sydney on August 1:

He received another summons to Kangaroo. He didn't want to go. He didn't want any more emotional stress of any sort. He was sick of having a soul that suffered or responded.

He didn't want to respond any more, or to suffer any more. Saunter blindly and obstinately through the days.

But he set off. The wattle-bloom - the whitish, mealy ones - were aflower in the bush, and at the top of huge poles of stems, big, blackish-crimson buds and flowers, flowers of some sort, shot up out of a clump of spear-leaves. The bush was in flower. The sky above was a tender, virgin blue, the air was pale with clarity, the sun moved strong, yet with a soft cat-like motion through the heavens. It was spring. - But still the bush kept its sombreness among all the pellucid ether: the eternally unlighted bush.19

As the language indicates, this is a new start for Somers, his emotional 'spring' as it were. However, he is not yet completely won over, still not entirely capable of responding with total sympathy to the bush he formerly found so frightening. The reference to the bush being 'eternally unlighted' still hints at its menacing potential.

By the novel's final chapter, the change in Somers's attitude to the Australian landscape is complete:

... he wandered round in the Australian spring. Already he loved it. He loved the country he had railed at so loudly a few months ago. While he 'cared' he had to rail at it. But the care once broken inside him, it had a deep mystery for him, and a dusky, far-off call that he knew would go on calling for long ages before it got any adequate response, in human beings. From far off, from down long, fern-dark avenues there seemed to be the voice of Australia, calling low.20

Somers no longer even grumbles 'at the haphazard throwing of bungalows here and there and anywhere'. He is able to wander up in the bush at the back of Mullumbimby and look down benignly and in sympathy with the land at the little township below. Meanwhile this landscape, that was formerly just 'half and half', is being described in exquisite and ecstatic prose.

Now a link is finally made with the horrendous war-experiences of 'The Nightmare' chapter. The soothing balm of Mullumbimby and its environs have served their purpose, erasing the horrors from Richard Somers's mind. He comes to reflect:

... how he used to hate tin roofs and untidyness. It recalled to him the young Australian captain: 'Oh, how I liked the rain on the tin roofs of the huts at the war. It reminded me of Australia.' 'And now,' thought Richard to himself, 'tin roofs and scattered shanties will always remind me of Australia. They

seem to me beautiful, though it's a fact they have nothing to do with beauty. 21

Finally, Somers comes to the great truth he has learnt about Australia:

People mattered so little. People hardly matter at all. . . . It is said that man is the chief environment of man. That, for Richard, was not true in Australia. . . . The vast continent is really void of speech. . . . But this speechless, aimless solitariness was in the air. It was natural to the country. The people left you alone. . . . You spoke, and they were friendly. But they never asked any questions, and they never encroached. They didn't care. The profound Australian indifference, which still is not really apathy. 22

Importantly, Somers has only been able to attain this more sympathetic appreciation of the Australian 'spirit of place' in Mullumbimby.

The town of Mullumbimby - 'half and half' as it is, part seaside resort, part wilderness, part country town, yet nascently suburban - has given Somers the respite he needs from the emotional torment of struggling with the human world. Here he has found:

Insouciant soullessness. Eternal indifference. Perhaps it is only the great pause between carings. But it is only in this pause that one finds the meaninglessness of meanings. . . . 23

Despite the very strong elements of notions of pastoral solitude and isolation to be found in the imagery of these passages, it is clear that Somers has not withdrawn from the world forever. He has not sought refuge in a state of irresponsible and mindless apathy. The beneficent influence of his experience with the Australian landscape in Mullumbimby is simply part of the healing process which his troubled soul is undergoing: a salubrious respite in the secluded countryside, something that will steel him for the coming fight, better preparing him for some future sallying forth into the world of action with men and women.

That Lawrence intends the idyll by the shore, this secluded life at 'Coo-ee' in Mullumbimby, to be simply a haven and not a permanent mode of living, is indicated by

23 Op.cit., p. 390. The issues raised by both this passage and the one referred to in the previous footnote are taken up in greater detail in Chapter 12 of this thesis.
the way he shatters it with the coming of the storm in the final chapter. Somers realizes that to commune with nature by the lonely shore forever is 'an illusion':

You can't have this freedom absolved from control. It can't be done. There is no stability. There will come a reaction and a devastation.\(^{24}\)

It is for this reason that Lawrence has the storm destroy the beach below 'Coo-ee' forever:

The beach never recovered, during the Somerses' stay, the river never subsided into the sand, the sandy foreshore never came back. It was a rocky, boulder-heaped ruin with that stream for an impasse.\(^{25}\)

The coastal idyll has been shattered, but Somers has not lost the heightened appreciation of the aboriginal Australian bush he has attained in Mullumbimby. This immensely sympathetic response to the Australian bush is the dominant image left with the reader at the close of the novel. It is perhaps the lushest, most ecstatic treatment the Australian landscape has ever received.

Symbolically, Somers and Harriet have gone to Sydney on Wattle Day and the mimosa bloom now becomes a symbol for Somers's new-found delight in the spirit of the bush.\(^{26}\) He can not 'bear to be in Sydney any more'\(^{27}\) and so the novel closes with a most beautiful evocation, and extraordinarily rich word-painting, of the actual heath-like bush in bloom at the back of the escarpment behind Thirroul: 'The bush! The wonderful Australia.'\(^{28}\)

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\(^{25}\) Op.cit., p. 412

\(^{26}\) This delight that Somers and Harriet share on this occasion does have a serious and more solitary counterpart earlier in the novel. Chong-wa Chung's article, 'In Search of the Dark God' in *DHL in the Modern World*, eds. Peter Preston and Peter Haire, Macmillan, London, 1989, p. 83, for example, claims: 'Once in the bush, Somers, in touch with the dark god that "made a man realise his own sacred aloneness", becomes complete and whole in the fulfilment of singleness. ...Somers is fully aware of what has filled his heart in the bush: the "dark, passionate religiousness and inward sense of an inwelling magnificence, direct flow from the unknowable God." He gains not only the balance of mind reconciled in the Law and Love, but the fullness of inner meaning ("the inward sense of inwelling magnificence"), which he found lacking in the empty city of Sydney.' I have some sympathy with the point that Chung is making but cannot completely concur with his suggestion because the quotations he uses to support his case are from chapter XVIII of *Kangaroo* (op.cit., pp. 382-383) at a point in the novel when Somers is not in the bush.

\(^{27}\) Ibid.

'PASTORAL UTOPIANIZING'
AN EXAMINATION OF 'THE NIGHTMARE' CHAPTER OF KANGAROO IN THE CONTEXT OF LAWRENCE'S LETTERS FROM THE WAR YEARS AND THE SHORT STORY 'THE MAN WHO LOVED ISLANDS'

Conservative literary critics, while often viewing 'The Nightmare' as the most important chapter of Kangaroo, have frequently failed to see it as an integral part of the fictional experiment Lawrence was undertaking in that novel. Laurie Clancy, for example, someone who avowedly detests Kangaroo, maintains that it 'contains one chapter, "The Nightmare", of some 50 pages describing the Lawrences' experiences in World War One that is by common consent one of the finest pieces of writing that he ever did.'1 Presumably Clancy would have suggested to Lawrence, as did his agent of the time, that the chapter was out of place in Kangaroo and should be cut down to a couple of pages for that novel and published complete somewhere else.

It is a common response and, apart from Australians such as Laurie Clancy, there has been strong agreement among overseas critics that 'The Nightmare' is the most distinctive and sustained section of Kangaroo. The single-minded attention it has received from some critics, at the expense of the rest of the novel, is thus understandable, if not acceptable. For English critics it is the one chapter they can readily identify with, set in Cornwall as most of it is; for biographers it has proved a rich lode from which they can 'mine' all sorts of presumed biographical facts about Lawrence's war-time experiences in Cornwall. This may or may not be the case.

In the framework of the novel as a whole, 'The Nightmare' chapter has considerable importance. It is the chapter which, in a traditional pastoral work, should have opened the novel. It provides the rationale for Somers's flight from the old world. Without the detail provided by this chapter, Somers's escape from the horrors of his former existence would remain unreal and undeveloped. 'The Nightmare' explains with reasonable precision what Somers meant when he described the 'old world', in the opening chapter, as 'done for, played out, finished'.

It has been noted how frequently English authors produced a pastoral response to the horrors of the First World War. This has been done most successfully by Paul Fussell in his discussion of the Georgian Poets in his *The Great War and Modern Memory*. Bernard Bergonzi, another critic who adopts a sociological approach to English literary culture during the period of the progress and aftermath of First World War, has also noted how conspicuous 'rural nostalgia' has been in the responses of writers. Bergonzi even goes so far to suggest that this rural nostalgia is 'characteristic of English polite culture'. And although Lawrence was from the wrong side of the class barricades to be a legitimate heir to such a culture, *The White Peacock* indicates he nonetheless had initially imbibed it as fully as his bourgeois contemporaries. His mother, his formative years in Eastwood, his 'literary' friendship with Jessie Chambers and his experience of rural life on the Chambers' farm, his own predilections, and his scholarship to Nottingham University, all saw to that.

It is surprising then that more critics have not seen Lawrence's Nightmare chapter - his fullest war-time 'literary' reminiscence - in its utopian/dystopian pastoral context. Fussell himself, although he quotes from *Kangaroo*, fails to make the connection. Bergonzi, in his book *Heroes' Twilight*, uses some of Lawrence's wartime letters to show that 'Lawrence's vision of England, of a traditional, rural-centred order, had affinities with the nostalgia for England of the poets in uniform, though it was far more intense than theirs, and was made tragic by the conviction that this order was collapsing'. Bergonzi is even able to see that Lawrence's experience of the war was the paramount factor in forcing him from England and thus providing the basis on which he would build the travel-novels of his middle-period. But Bergonzi proves incapable of placing *Kangaroo* in this context - seeing it only as 'a fifty-page chapter called 'The Nightmare' - 'an avowedly autobiographical recapitulation of his life in wartime England', 'a pure digression in the otherwise tedious narrative'.

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4 Ibid.
Glen Cavaliero, in *The Rural Tradition in the English Novel 1900-1939*, while discussing Hardy's poem 'The Oxen' and the year 1915 in which it was written, has argued that 'the note of wistfulness' (presumably akin to Bergonzi's 'rural nostalgia') is a characteristic of much literature of that period:

Its natural focus was the life of rural England. There, if anywhere, might be found not only a valid image of the good life, but also a sense of the numinous which could ease the passage from religious dependence to spiritual autonomy. The apparent simplicity of country life appealed to the frustrated religious feelings of the age; but attitudes towards it were indicative not only of changes in religious belief but of social change as well.5

Furthermore, Lawrence's attitude to both nature and country life after his non-combatant experience of the First World War (but nonetheless bitter for that) did begin to take on a more spiritual dimension. Indeed, in *Kangaroo* it amounts to an almost 'Aboriginal' view of 'the numinosness of the natural world'. But, in 'The Nightmare' chapter (one which looks back to the social and political dislocations brought about by the military implications of industrial capitalism as adumbrated in the portrait of Skrebensky in *The Rainbow*) Lawrence focuses more on the 'social changes' the Great War imposed upon a British population he regarded as having been transformed into a mob.

'The Nightmare' chapter is thus a great vitriolic welling-up of accumulated bile and spleen but its very personalized presentation of the social changes Lawrence felt the war had brought about in England is but one half of the pastoral dialectic in *Kangaroo*. Its social and cultural analysis is the touchstone against which the reader must measure the spiritual dimensions - in terms of landscape and place - of the rest of the novel. Lawrence's growing interest in the religious and social dimensions of 'the spirit of place' are indicative, in Cavaliero's terms, 'not only of changes in religious belief but of social change as well.' My purpose in this chapter is thus to trace the arcadian and utopian strains of Lawrence's responses to the war - in *Kangaroo*, his letters from the period and 'The Man Who Loved Islands' - in order to show that 'The

5 Glen Cavaliero, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
Nightmare' chapter is central to the pastoral underpinnings of Kangaroo rather than simply a pure, non-contextualized, digression in an otherwise 'tedious narrative'. In order to do this I have appropriated Kingsley Widmer's critical term 'pastoral utopianizing' (without necessarily utilizing his definition of what this amounts to) as a convenient phrase for expressing the ambiguities and tensions evident within Lawrence's responses to war: responses that are often contradictory and waver continually between the impulses towards political commitment, utopian escape and pastoral retirement.

Perhaps the overall ambiguities which lie at the heart of the 'pastoral utopianizing' of 'The Nightmare Chapter' have been best expressed by Eugene Goodheart in The Utopian Vision of D.H. Lawrence: 'His [Lawrence's] view of society is paradoxical: on the one hand, he fiercely rejects its claim, and on the other, he sees his personal tragedy in the thwarting of his "societal" instinct. 'What we have in Lawrence', remarks Goodheart, 'is the coincidence of two impulses: the impulse towards self-responsibility (the phrase that he assigns to the quests of his heroes in Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo) and the impulse toward true human community. When society demands total commitment, it is in the very act of destroying itself; to refuse to make the commitment then is a way of saving society from itself.'

Although not a Marxist analysis, Goodheart's view would no doubt gain some degree of support from a Marxist like Michael Wilding who has launched a spirited defence of Lawrence against the attacks of Old Left critics such as Christopher Caudwell.

Caudwell saw Lawrence as 'a man incapable of that subordination of self to others, of co-operation, of solidarity as a class, which is the characteristic of the

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6 See Kingsley Widmer, 'Primatopianism: Some Pastoral Utopianizing: The Golden Age Social Aesthetic, and News From Nowhere', published as chapter 4 of Counterings: Utopian Dialectics in Contemporary Contexts, UMI Research Press, Ann Arbor, 1988. The connection between Utopia and Pastoral in both literature and criticism, however, is a long established one. See, for example, the chapter 'Arcadia and Utopia' in Lawrence David Lerner, The Uses of Nostalgia: Studies in Pastoral Poetry, Chatto and Windus Ltd., London, 1972. Moreover, Renato Poggioli in 'The Oaten Flute', op.cit., p. 172, makes the connection even more forcefully when he declares: 'Utopia, after all, is but the idyll of the future.'

proletariat. He remained the individualist, the bourgeois revolutionary angrily working out his own salvation, critical of all, alone in possession of grace. He rid himself of every bourgeois illusion but the important one.\textsuperscript{8} Raymond Williams, on the other hand, is a Marxist slightly more sympathetic to Lawrence's class position as the son of a miner trying to make his way in a bourgeois literary world:

Lawrence was so involved with the business of getting free of the industrial system that he never came seriously to the problem of changing it, although he knew that since the problem was common an individual solution was only a cry in the wind. It would be absurd to blame him on these grounds. It is not so much that he was an artist, and thus supposedly condemned by romantic theory, to individual solution. In fact, as we know, Lawrence spent a good deal of time trying to generalize about the necessary common change; he was deeply committed, all his life, to the idea of re-forming society. But his main energy went, and had to go, to the business of personal liberation from the system.\textsuperscript{9}

Quoting from Lawrence's essay on democracy, Williams goes on to characterize Lawrence's political position as 'a kind of romantic anarchism', arguing that 'Lawrence is very close to the socialism of a man like [William] Morris, and there can be little doubt that he and Morris would have felt alike about much that has subsequently passed for socialism.'\textsuperscript{10}

Wilding, however, highlights the importance of seeing 'Lawrence's stress on the individual in the context of a socialist critique of industrial capitalism.'\textsuperscript{11} He argues that what older Marxist critics like Caudwell and Williams have 'continually missed is Lawrence's emphasis that the only worthwhile social revolution will be one that is built on the primacy of the individual: not the individual of the old society, either, he emphasizes, but a new individual.'\textsuperscript{12} The difficulty for critics who come after such writers is that there would appear to be a considerable amount of truth in each position. Part of the problem in fairly assessing Lawrence's political standpoint, in \textit{Kangaroo} at

\textsuperscript{11} Wilding, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}
least, arises from the difficulty of clearly distinguishing the views of Somers from those of the narrator and of Lawrence himself. If one deals with that which Somers alone thinks and says in Kangaroo, it is very difficult to refute Caudwell's position; if one views Somers as a working class artist struggling to get free of the clutches of the British war-machine, then Williams's position seems perfectly adequate; yet, in the context of the full complexity of the range of attitudes and opinions expressed in Kangaroo, Wilding's argument would appear to be the one which distorts Lawrence's own political position the least. However, if one then compares the attitudes expressed in Lawrence's letters from the period to which 'The Nightmare' chapter directly relates we find an interesting discrepancy. The man who wrote the war-time letters appears closer to the position of Somers in Kangaroo than to the author of that same novel in 1922.

As Scott Sanders has explained, Lawrence, like any novelist, has written his world and spun around his characters a chrysalis of talk, words, theories 'as a shelter against life':

It seems evident that in his last years Lawrence himself was haunted by questions about the purposes and effects of his own fiction. Had he substituted words for the thing itself? Had he simply provided his readers with a surrogate for living? Were his efforts to act directly through his prose upon the feelings of his audience only another tyranny of the mind over body? Were his novels, plays, essays, letters and tales merely an intricate cocoon of words? Were his fictions in any sense real? Only such questioning on Lawrence's part can account for the degree of self-satire involved in the portraits of Rawdon Lilly in Aaron's Rod, Lovat Somers in Kangaroo, Don Ramon in The Plumed Serpent, and Clifford Chatterley, all of them rather disillusioned and ineffectual writers, unable to come to terms with their wives or their society; or for the persistence and hyperbole with which he proclaimed the value of fiction, in that remarkable series of late essays on the novel, including 'Why the Novel Matters', 'Morality and the Novel', 'John Galsworthy', 'The Novel', 'The Novel and the Feelings'.

These questions go to the heart of the very personal modernist literary aesthetic Lawrence was developing in Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo. Prose becomes a vehicle for both testing his own dreams of political commitment against the attractions of

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pastoral retirement and making his fiction more real, more true to the flux of life, in that it attempts to give the readers some sense of how one's personal political life is really lived. The fact Lawrence gave the final chapter of *Aaron's Rod* the contemptuous epithet 'Words' (along with the extraordinary difficulty he encountered in completing the book), is an indication, I suspect, of the sense of failure Lawrence felt in attempting to make his depiction of life less a substitute for the real thing. *Kangaroo*'s greater success in achieving this is probably a result of the fact that Lawrence, through his narrator's regular interruptions, makes his readers more conscious of the endeavour.

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Lawrence's war-time letters reveal a man with a utopian pastoral sensibility who has despaired of any genuine political hopes for a supposedly democratic England and who is desperate to escape. It is from this period of his life that his real-life delusion of 'Rananim' emerges and it is this same period that gave to Lawrence his contempt for the facade of bourgeois democracy so evident in the opening chapters of *Kangaroo* and which he later depicts as the dictatorial English 'mob-spirit' in 'The Nightmare' chapter. Lawrence's social outlook at this period became expressive of a contempt for the notion of achieving a more ideal society for the great mass of people. A 'Rananim' based on gathering 'together about twenty souls...where there shall be no money but a sort of communism as far as the necessaries of life go' was about all he felt capable of hoping for. The idea that an ideal society could be created for all people through the principle of mass democracy was simply not an issue.

Wilding skilfully conveys the link between Lawrence's actual war-time experiences and Somers's attitude to Australian democracy presented in *Kangaroo* when he writes:

> Although Australia represents for Somers the extreme of democracy, his revulsion from democracy is not something that is a response to Australia. Australia may serve to remind him of his attitudes; but their cause lies in his experience in England during the First World War. Not until chapter 12, 'The Nightmare', are we shown these events and his responses. And when we are finally shown the demagogue-led democracy, the mass hysteria, the civilian abuses, this is to parallel the situation that Somers has now come to see would
be created if Kangaroo seized power in Australia. The revelation of the roots of Somers's political attitudes is delayed until it serves, when it is given, to underline the nature of Kangaroo's Digger groups.14

The whole narrative point of 'The Nightmare' chapter is that Lawrence presents his own experiences as a civilian in the war in fictional form in order to show what 'democracy' could easily become 'with a bit of manipulation.' It is people like Kangaroo and Callcott who, in the context of Australian democracy, are capable of just such manipulation. 'The Nightmare' chapter makes the connection between the demagogy of Bottomley and Kangaroo and thus, in Wilding's words, associates 'the intrusive regimentation of life in England...with the regimentation and repressive aims of Kangaroo's paramilitary organization.'15 As part of this condemnation of the Diggers, the novel gives us some intimations of what such a movement is capable of in the depiction of the murderous Callcott in 'The Row in Town' chapter.

Jack's portrayal as a brutal soldier, in Wilding's words, 'off for a fuck after a good day's killing', provides final confirmation of the novel's revulsion from all that Kangaroo's political movement represents. The perversions of personality which Jack's experience of the war appear to have provoked provide confirmation of the 'political' correctness of Somers's decision not to become involved with the 'democratic' demagogy of the mob-spirit of John Bull, even if it means declining a position of solidarity with the class into which he was born.

The moral argument behind both 'The Nightmare' chapter and of much of Kangaroo as a whole has been encapsulated well by Wilding:

What Lawrence realized was that the physically violent derives and grows from the acceptance of the quieter moral violence, the intrusion on civil liberties, the restrictions on the individual's private existence. Once these are accepted, then it is an easy step to condoning physical violence. And physical violence is the way in which those intrusions on the individual's liberties are maintained. A bourgeois ethic allows an objection to the horrors of war, but denies that there is a direct connection between those horrors and bourgeois society. Lawrence objects to the domestic violences resulting from, or 'justified' by, war. . .[:J:J conscription, imprisonment of those who refuse to register for conscription, censorship, police

14 Wilding, op.cit., p. 156
surveillance of groups opposing the war. War in the name of democracy, freedom, provides the excuse for the restrictions on freedom and democracy within the nation.\textsuperscript{16}

That Lawrence resorted to a sort of 'pastoral utopianizing', seeking solace in nature or in simple utopian flights of fancy when all became too bleak for him after the banning of \textit{The Rainbow} and the persecution he and Frieda suffered in Cornwall, is thus a completely human and understandable response, even if it lacks all the political correctness that a hard-line politically committed position demands. It is in this political context - as a sort of debate between the varying versions of political 'correctness' offered by exponents of somewhat differing interpretations of Marxism - that my following discussion of the pastoral utopianizing of Lawrence's 'The Nightmare' chapter needs to be understood.

The tensions between the literary and real-life option of retirement into utopian pastoral solitude are all too evident in both Lawrence's letters written during the war and in 'The Nightmare' chapter of \textit{Kangaroo}. Lawrence's understanding of the political and emotional bankruptcy of such a position becomes increasingly evident in the years after the signing of the Armistice and, in 1926, is conclusively revealed when he undertakes the writing of the sardonic pastoral-utopian fable, 'The Man Who Loved Islands'. In \textit{Kangaroo}, however, as a literary work emerging during the middle of this period (and one which contains a long, semi-autobiographical, reminiscence of his war experiences), the tensions in his thought between pastoral retirement and possible political commitment - a dialectic which informs the entire novel - are still not completely resolved.

\textit{Kangaroo}, most of it written in 1922, shows Lawrence still struggling to get free of the mind-set he developed in 1915 - the year 'the old world ended'. It is a mind-set concisely (if rather childishly) expressed in a letter to E.M Forster written on the 28 January, 1915:

\begin{quote}
In my Island ['Rananim'], I wanted people to come without class or money, sacrificing nothing, but each coming with all his desires, yet knowing that his life is but a tiny section of a Whole: so that he shall fulfil his life in reaction to
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 158.
the Whole, I wanted a real community, not built out of abstinence or equality, but out of many fulfilled individualities seeking greater fulfilment. But I can't find anybody.17

But the post-war Lawrence had come to almost completely despair of achieving any political or social ideal with the same people and the same political system which had both brought the war about and supported its wretched conduct. His postwar political position (one very like that expressed by Somers in Kangaroo) is best summed up in the new introduction he wrote for The Crown, published in 1925: ‘I knew then, and I know now, it is no use trying to do anything - I speak only for myself - publicly. It is no use trying merely to modify present forms.’18 But as John Worthen has remarked, ‘The Crown’ had belonged to exactly that period when Lawrence hoped his writing could have a political effect, and could be an instrument for direct change, and he prefaced its republication with a statement of exactly the opposite - which was the position he had reached by 1925.19

What is crucial here, however, is that Lawrence’s view that it is no use trying ‘to modify present forms’ applies specifically to both the form and content of Kangaroo. A chapter like ‘The Nightmare’ itself, then, is all part of Lawrence’s attempt to develop a new form for the novel, just as his fleeing in horror from Kangaroo in the chapter immediately preceding ‘The Nightmare’ is a recognition of the uselessness of trying to change society by the conventional ‘political’ means proffered by Kangaroo and Struthers. Rather than creating a totally new form, it seems to me that Lawrence really only succeeded in exploding existing forms of the novel. In Kangaroo, this is managed in such a way that the conventions of linear narrative are re-ordered in a highly unorthodox fashion, one that enables Lawrence to accommodate such ‘disruptive’ and ‘out of place’ reminiscences as ‘The Nightmare’, along with various other narrative intrusions, in order to give the reader a stronger sense of the flux and the chaos which more closely approximates the way life is actually lived.

17 DHL to E. M. Forster, 28/1/1915, The Letters of DHL, Volume 2, op.cit., p. 266. The claim that the ‘old world’ ended in 1915 is from Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 250.
It is, I suspect, not without significance then that less than a month after Lawrence wrote the last words of his final revision of *Kangaroo* he was working on the essay 'Surgery for the Novel - or a Bomb'. Yet, surprisingly (and as this thesis aims to demonstrate), Lawrence's utilization of so many of the aspects of existing literary genres ensures that, in literary terms, he is trying merely 'to modify present forms.' Using the epithet 'thought-adventure' to describe *Kangaroo* is an indication of Lawrence's struggle to identify a new form for the novel, but the label itself does little to achieve the 'newness' (despite the novel's many experiments and unconventionality) in form that Lawrence requires. *Kangaroo'*s achievement lies more in the presentation of a novel which is an exploration of the fuller implications of the position of post-war political isolation in which Lawrence found himself, after his self-imposed exile from England, than in the creation of a completely new form for the novel.

John Worthen neatly summed up Lawrence's achievement in *Kangaroo* when he wrote that, in terms of both form and content, it 'is an extremely honest living-through of the problems Lawrence carried within himself; of his twenties novels, it is the least damaged by the straining of insistent belief against persistent pessimism. It is the creation of the European Lawrence caught midway between his old world hope of progress and an unknown new world; it had to be a peculiar and experimental novel because the novel form itself is a form of the old world.'\(^{20}\) This vexed question of the unorthodox form of *Kangaroo*, and the extent of its originality, will be dealt with later. The following section of the present chapter seeks to explore the more conventional nature of Lawrence's 'pastoral utopianizing'.

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The opening paragraph of 'The Nightmare' chapter with its references to the 'old Greek past' of 'Sicily' - the inspiration for Theocritus' literary pastorals - and the 'un appeased spirit of murderous hate' which is said to emerge from them introduces a number of fearful elements into the pastoral world of the novel. Death is one of the few

unpleasant features found persistently in literary arcadias, and the fear of death and 'murder' is a particularly important one in pastoral literature. *Et in arcadia ego*. This sense of fear is here exacerbated by the fact that it follows on immediately from the threatening presence of Kangaroo after Somers rejects him with the words:

'. . . I'm tired, tired. I want to be a man, with the dark gods beyond me, greater than me. I want the great gods, and my own mere manliness.'\(^1\)

The fear felt by Somers in the streets of Sydney after he walks out on Kangaroo serves to remind him of his experience:

. . . in England, during the latter years of the war. . . .\(^2\) Somers had known what it was like to live in a perpetual state of semi-fear: the fear of the criminal public and the criminal government.\(^2\)

These memories in turn serve to confirm Somers's misanthropy - the 'criminal public' - and rejection of political action - the 'criminal government'. Somers's refusal to identify himself with the criminal mob leads him to embrace a seemingly even more firmly solipsistic world-view. But, from Wilding's perspective, such objections only appear self-centred if we ignore the revolutionary underpinnings of both Lawrence's and Somers's political position. Somers's objections, claims Wilding, are 'objections to the political consequences of war, not to the horrors of the trenches. His critics argue that in the context of the slaughter of the First World War, Lawrence's objection to compulsory medical examination is selfish and trivial. But to make such an objection is to assume that only the physically violent is significant; and to assume that the war is an accidental cataclysm visited from outside - not something generated by the conditions and nature of the society we live in.'\(^2\) Although I personally agree with the sentiments Wilding expresses, we nonetheless need to be very careful here. For Wilding - in what in my view is one of his rare lapses - has used Somers's views to

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3. Wilding, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-158. Greater care than Wilding adopts in this instance is needed in order to keep the attitudes and actions of the fictional Somers separate from those of the actual Lawrence. Throughout the thesis, I have tried to make it obvious what is happening whenever I have chosen to speculate about Lawrence's own political position using the views expressed by either Somers or the narrator in *Kangaroo* as an indicator of what Lawrence himself may have thought.
express Lawrence's contemporary (that is, 1922) political position. Yet it is not always possible to be certain that the two coincide. Some further examination of Somers's statements is required.

Somers's (not necessarily Lawrence's) objection is to 'the whole spirit of the war, the vast mob-spirit, which he could never acquiesce in.'24 This seems quite reasonable, but Lawrence makes it hard for his readers to warm to the reasonableness in Somers's political position because of the often misanthropic language in which it is expressed. Moreover, Somers's discussions of that ultimate misanthropy, the mass-slaughter of World War One, are often tinged with a disturbing solipsism:

> The terrible, unnatural war, made so indecent because in every country practically every man lost his head, and lost his own centrality, his own manly isolation in his own integrity, which alone keeps life real.25

The implication, as this position is developed in the novel, is that the price of the loss of 'inward, isolated manly integrity' is a worse 'after-war price to pay' than the loss of men's 'heads'.26 If such a view is indeed implied then it would indicate the complete bankruptcy of Somers's individualism. The 'damage' of the war in Somers's view, according to the narrator, was that it engendered 'no courage in any man to face his own isolated soul, and abide by its decision.'27 But we need to be alert to the flux of the novel's attitudes, for the political position which Lawrence here presents Somers as adopting in relation to the war is a complex one, and it is precisely at this point (very close to the beginning 'The Nightmare' chapter) that the inhumanity of Somers's political and philosophical individualism reaches its zenith.

Momentarily, Somers's ideas appear less foolish when the narrator explains that it is 'the industrialism and commercialism of England, with which patriotism and democracy became identified',28 which Somers opposes. But then the apparent strength of such an insight is once again immediately reduced to 'the beastly industrial

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24 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 246.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
self-righteousness, to humiliate him as a separate, single man.'29 In this chapter, as is frequently the case in Kangaroo, all is flux. What makes it even more difficult for literary and political critics, however, is that Lawrence's own response to World War One may, if the opinion of Compton Mackenzie is to be believed, have been disturbingly close to that of Somers in Kangaroo. As Mackenzie recalled:

Lawrence's rage with the war was fed by his having a German wife. I hardly exaggerate when I say that one might have supposed we had gone to war with Germany solely for the purpose of annoying Lawrence personally.30

Somers's own responses, however, become even more disturbing when he finds, only three pages into 'The Nightmare' chapter, a scapegoat for the war in the 'smirking [presumably 'Jewish' as it is in the English edition] financier' and not in the capitalist class as a whole, much as sections of the Labor Party in Australia during the late 20s and early 30s avoided class analysis and blamed the depression not on capitalism but on the banks and Jewish financiers.

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The first threatened 'call-up' which Somers experiences again reinforces his desires for a life of independent solitude:

He would never voluntarily make a martyr of himself. His feeling was private to himself, he didn't want to force it on any other man. He would just act alone.31

Under threat of the 'call-up' Somers's fears once again become petty: 'He said in his heart, the day his beard was shaven he was beaten, lost'.32 These feelings culminate once again in Somers's prizing of the loss of individuality above the loss of life: 'It is not death that matters, but the loss of the integral soul.'33 Only when Harriett speaks, on seeing a 'far-off zeppelin', does some humanity re-enter 'The Nightmare' chapter: 

"Think, some of the boys I played with when I was a child are probably in it."34

29 Ibid.
In his explanation of his reasons for fleeing the 'old world' and in his analysis of exactly why he believes it is 'done for', Somers gives us a precise date for its demise. The narrator explains:

It was in 1915 the old world ended. In the winter 1915-1916 the spirit of the old London collapsed... The integrity of London collapsed, and the genuine debasement began, the unspeakable baseness of the press and the public voice, the reign of that bloated ignominy, John Bull.35

It was a collapse that both exacerbates Somers's misanthropy and intensifies his impulse to retreat. But the critic needs to consider carefully the question of whether or not the concomitant destruction of Somers's belief in 'democracy' marks him off, to use the words of William Empson in his Some Versions of Pastoral, 'as a man ripe for fascism.'36 The care is necessary because it is the fascist qualities of 'John Bull's' manipulation of the press and the imposition of military authority and censorship to which Somers objects. Although presumably not adopting a pacifist position, Somers's aim is to passively maintain his individuality against such impositions, just as he does against many of the demands made upon him by Cooley, Harriett and Callcott. One of the easiest ways to do this is for Somers to escape, by physically removing himself from their presence or influence.

Yet it becomes clear as the chapter progresses that, even during the war, Somers's impulses were as much towards pastoral as physical escape:

It was in mid-winter, 1915, that Somers and Harriett went down to Cornwall. The spirit of the war - the spirit of collapse and of human ignominy, had not travelled so far yet. It came in advancing waves.37

As the last sentence of the paragraph indicates, it would prove an unsatisfactory escape. Even in Cornwall the pastoral locus amoenus, just as in Mullumbimby, is a country milieu by the sea and (although it is given its actual name)38 the narrator's description gives it a typically utopian pastoral sense of 'no-place': 'Away in the west

35 Ibid.
36 William Empson, op.cit., p. 11. Empson is quoting Gorki in this instance.
37 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 251.
38 Lawrence and Frieda did live at Zennor, Cornwall, during the war.
Richard and Harriett lived alone in their cottage by the savage Atlantic. Just as the 'Atlantic' is a much harsher word than 'Pacific', the pastoral idyll does not have the tranquillity it normally possesses when Somers and Harriett are in Mullumbimby. In Cornwall, Somers cannot indulge his dreams of solitude quite so well as he does in Australia: because of his isolation and his absolute separateness, he was marked out as a spy. Apart from police and military harassment, there is also poverty to wreck Somers's and Harriett's pastoral idyll in Cornwall.

Somers's self-love is such that even when he is 'labelled unfit' by the military authorities, he makes a virtue of it because it reinforces his peculiar sense of individuality:

Let them label me unfit, he said to himself. I know my own body is fragile, in its way, but also very strong, and it's the only body that would carry my particular self. Let the fools peer at it and put me down undeveloped chest and what they like, so long as they leave me to my own way.

Because of this acute sense of his own individuality, Somers possessed fears 'of committing himself'. Even when the military doctor exhorts Somers '...to do what you can for your country...', he rejects the idea not on the more familiarly revolutionary political grounds of Lenin's or John Maclean's 'conscientious objection', but on the grounds 'of his own separate soul':

He must remain alone, outside of everything, everything, conscious of what he was doing and not doing. Conscious he must be, and consciously he must stick to it. To be forced into nothing. To act from his soul alone.

This may well be a standpoint of revolutionary individualism, but it is nonetheless clear that Lawrence is not providing Somers with a class analysis but, rather, a non-political

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39 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 251.
40 Ibid.
41 See op.cit., p. 253: '... he and Harriett were very poor these years'.
46 Op.cit., pp. 256-257. John Maclean, was the most active working class anti-war activist in Britain at the time. Although famous then, he is relatively unknown today.
reification: 'The English soul went under, in the war, and as a conscious, proud, adventurous, self-responsible soul, it was lost.'47

Lawrence depicts the war as leaving Somers shattered. His consciousness becomes almost a total void which grasps at the thing closest to it. Solipsism is the result:

Richard Lovatt had nothing to hang on to but his own soul. So he hung on to it, and tried to keep his wits. If no man was with him, he was hardly aware of it, he had to grip on so desperately, like a man on a plank in a shipwreck. The plank was his own individual self.48

This is, perhaps, not so unreasonable a response given his circumstances, but its reasonableness appears lessened by Somers's attempts to make a virtue of his desperate isolation. Even Somers's quite justifiable hate of the military is not totally laudable, for it is tinged with that characteristic distaste for all mankind which Lawrence gives the narrator's prose in this chapter: 'a war-time that let loose the foulest feelings of a mob'.50

Somers still believes solely in 'the freedom of the individual.'51 It is good that Somers does not believe in personal enemies - 'it was just the military'52 - but Lawrence's undoubted understanding of what the military-industrial complex represents and how it is related to the capitalist trade war he is experiencing is presented in terms of 'pastoral' escapism. Somers responds to the violation of the pastoral garden of his birthplace by escaping completely within the pastoral of self. He makes a:

... long journey up the west...up to Derby. Glamorous west of England: if a man were free. He sat through the whole day, very still, looking at the world. Very still, gone very far inside himself, travelling through this England in spring. He loved it so much. But it was in the grip of something monstrous, not English, and he was almost gripped too. As it was, by making himself far away inside himself, he contained himself, and was still.53

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
In the novel where the actual, physical landscape is no longer capable of providing a satisfactory escape, Somers retreats within himself. Yet the retreat, as Somers appears to realize, is a retreat into a void. Without either connexion or solidarity with the mass of mankind, Somers is 'hurling through the chaos into oblivion.'

The passage in which the above remark by the narrator occurs, containing a description of 'a black, wild Saturday night' with 'his people', is one of the most important in the novel:

A black, wild Saturday night. These were the collier youths Somers had been to school with - approximately. As they tore their bowels with their singing, they tore his. But as he sat squashed far back among all that coated flesh, in the dimmest glim of a light, that only made the darkness more substantial, he felt like some strange isolated cell in some tensely packed organism that was hurling through chaos into oblivion. The colliers. He was more at one with them. But they were blind, ventral. Once they broke loose heaven knows what it would be.

It captures precisely the problem of Somers's relationship with the class into which he was born. 'He was more at one with them' than he is, presumably, with the militarists and financiers but he simultaneously shrinks in revulsion and fear - 'they were blind, ventral. Once they broke loose heaven knows what it would be.' Somers is thus removed entirely from his social base. There is no-where to go but 'far away inside himself', into the void of solipsism.

In the England of 'The Nightmare' chapter, however, Somers's retreat into philosophical solipsism is advanced but not yet complete. Most of the material world has been blotted out but Harriett, as the narrator explains, with 'her face very bright' is 'perhaps' 'the only real thing' 'left in his world.' The pastoral of solitude, 'alone somewhere together', is still vaguely sustainable for Somers and the final retreat into the extremes of the pastoral of self-love is not yet necessary, as he has only received a 'C3' classification from the military authorities:

Richard drifted away this summer, on to the land, into the weather, into Cornwall. He worked out of doors all the time - he ceased to care inwardly - he began to drift away from himself. He was very thick with John Thomas, and nearly always at the farm. Harriet was a great deal alone.\(^{59}\)

There is still a slim hope that Somers will avoid even the dangers of the pastoral of solitude and drift 'back to the common people, becoming a working man, of the lower classes', 'but his spirit became careless, lost its concentration.'\(^{60}\) The harvest festival, so common in traditionally joyous pastoral writing, is momentarily evoked ('Corn harvest lasted long, and was a happy time for all')\(^{61}\) and all seems to go 'well, well.'

The problem with Somers's political position in this chapter is that it assumes that taking the line of least resistance is an enduring virtue: 'And so it was. What was the good of putting oneself in their power in any way, if it could be avoided?'\(^{62}\) At times it may well be. Yet if adopted as a consistent (not just strategic) policy, it can often lead to an abandonment of commitment. Significantly, the sentence which directly follows the narrator's rationalization of Somers's political practice, or rather lack of it, is also redolent of pastoral harvest: 'So, the lower fields were cleared of corn, and they started on the two big fields above on the moors.'\(^{63}\) The trajectory of Somers's political attitudes is into pastoral retirement, not political commitment. Yet, as usual, Somers's attitudes, just like the 'behaviour' of his Cornish companions ('it was all a flux'\(^{64}\)), are still only in a state of labile equilibrium.

Somers's concern with the self again begins to manifest itself as callous indifference towards Harriett:

Poor Harriett spent many lonely days in the cottage. Richard was not interested in her now. He was only interested in John Thomas and the farm people, and he was growing more like a farm labourer every day. And the farm people didn't mind how long she was left alone, at night too, in that lonely cottage, and with all the tension of fear upon her.\(^{65}\)


\(^{63}\) *Ibid.*


As in the chapter, 'Harriett and Lovatt at Sea in Marriage', Somers shrinks from human contact into an idyll of solitude and self-love during which he is visited by a more malign presentiment of the 'spirit of place' than Somers's has earlier experienced in Mullumbimby. It is an epiphany more like the 'long black hand' Somers's experiences in the bush in Western Australia:

... Somers alone lay on the sheaves, waiting for the last wain to come to be loaded, while the others were down milking. And then the Cornish night would gradually come down upon the dark, shaggy moors, that were like the fur of some beast, and upon the pale-grey granite masses, so ancient and Druidical, suggesting blood-sacrifice.

... And this autumn Richard Lovatt seemed to drift back. He had a passion, a profound nostalgia for place. He could feel himself metamorphosing. He no longer wanted to struggle consciously along, a thought-adventurer. He preferred to drift into a sort of blood-darkness, to take up in his veins again the savage vibrations that still lingered round the secret rocks, the place of the pre-Christian human sacrifice. Human sacrifice! He could feel his dark, blood-consciousness tingle to it again, the desire of it, the mystery of it.66

The 'mystery' of 'blood-consciousness' becomes, for Somers, some sort of substitute for political struggle against the militarists and Jewish financiers. For Somers, as I suspect for Lawrence himself, the 'spirit of place', even in its most malign manifestations, was always infinitely more interesting than the 'spirit' of conventional politics.

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One 'Cornish, magic morning' Somers announces to his only real friends in Cornwall- John Thomas and his sister Ann:

'One day, when the war ends, before long,' said Somers as they climbed behind the trap in the sun, past the still-flickering gorse-bushes, 'we will go far across the sea - to Mexico, to Australia - and try living there. You must come too, and we will have a farm.'67

Somers has apparently made up his mind that Europe, as is pointed out in the opening chapter is 'done for'.68 It is again the characteristic flight of Somers's mind into a

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world of pastoral escape. The manner in which it is expressed here is extraordinarily similar to the way in which Lawrence expressed himself in actual letters to friends during the war and, in fact, right up until the time he began to write *Kangaroo* in Thirroul in 1922.

At Zennor in Cornwall, Lawrence wrote that he had 'the best place to live in which we shall find in England'.69 He sent Middleton Murry and Katherine Mansfield some drawings of the three cottages at Higher Tregerthen which he described as 'like a little monastery...our Rananim.'70 'Rananim' was the name Lawrence gave to what was intended to be a monastic colony, secluded from the sick world, of a small number of like-minded people dedicated to fostering, as Keith Sagar has put it, "new shoots of life" within themselves, and subsequently to seeding the sterile ruins of western civilization.71 It was Lawrence's real-life utopian dream of religious-pastoral escape. One of the many expressions of 'Rananim', occurring in a January, 1915 letter written to Lawrence's childhood socialist acquaintance, Willie Hopkin, also indicates that the scheme had a political dimension:

I want to gather together about twenty souls and sail away from this world of war and squalor and found a little colony where there shall be no money but a sort of communism as far as necessaries of life go, and some real decency.72

This scheme became the persistent theme of his letters during this period. At times he was disillusioned: 'I had hoped and tried to get a little nucleus of living people together. But I think it is no good. One must start direct with the open public, without associates. But how to begin, and when, I don't yet know.'73 At others, his sanguine dreams of escape could not get the better of both his disillusion and, perhaps, his reason:

In this war, in the whole spirit which we now maintain, I do not believe, I believe it is wrong, so awfully wrong, that it is like a great consuming fire that draws up all our souls in its

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73 DHL to Lady Cynthia Asquith 16/8/1915, *op.cit.*, p. 381.
draught. So if they shall let me I shall go away soon, to America. Perhaps you will say it is cowardice: but how shall one submit to such ultimate wrong as this which we commit, now, England - and the other nations? If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out. And I am English, and my Englishness is my very vision. But now I must go away, if my soul is sightless for ever. Let it then be blind, rather than commit the vast wickedness of acquiescence.74

If only Lawrence had had the courage to stand and fight - though he specifically denies it is 'cowardice' to flee here - he and his art may not have had to suffer ravages which are prophetically intimated in this letter and of which, for some critics, the novel Kangaroo has often seemed to be such a poignant example.

Nevertheless, as is evident from his letters, Lawrence persisted in his dreams of escape, whatever the cost. As the dream becomes less sustainable, the letters adopt a more specifically pastoral tone and use of language:

> If only it will all end up happily, like a song or a poem, and we live blythely by a big river, where there are fish, and in the forest behind wild turkeys and quails: there we make songs and poems and stories and dramas, in a vale of Avalon, in the Hesperides, among the Loves.75

The language used here suggests that even Lawrence was beginning to realize that such dreams were only sustainable in the world of literature. The letter itself is redolent of the charms of country life in Ben Jonson's pastoral poem 'To Penshurst'. Against all hope, however, Lawrence began to insist that though the escape to the 'vale of Avalon' was impossible, the escape to the Americas was a genuine possibility:

> Some members of our Florida expedition are coming down too - we begin the new life in Cornwall. It is real.76

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74 DHL to Lady Cynthia Asquith 21/10/1915, op.cit., p. 414. It is interesting to see how the issue of 'vision' in this passage is later taken up in Kangaroo. Somers eyes are said 'to hurt him still with looking at Sydney'. And Lawrence also provides Callcott with a joke about Somers having 'a shot at Australian Homeries', which Somers answers by remarking, "If I were but blind..." See Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 122. See also the 'Suburbia' chapter of this thesis above. The issue of 'vision' is also later connected with the idea of 'thinning down the blood' (Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 169): 'Yet he said to himself: "Do I want my blood to thin down like theirs? - that peculiar emptiness that is in them, because of the thinning that's gone out of them? Do I want this curious transparent blood of the antipodes, with its momentaneous feeling, and its sort of absence? - But of course till my blood has thinned down I shan't see with their eyes. - And how in the name of heaven is this world-brotherhood mankind going to see with one eye, eye to eye, when the very blood is of different thicknesses on different continents, and with the difference in blood, the inevitable psychic difference. Different vision!"


76 DHL to Lady Cynthia Asquith 24/12/1915, p. 487.
The stay in Cornwall was only meant to be temporary. Lawrence expected to be in Florida by the end of the summer of 1915. It is possible to sense Lawrence willing the impossible into existence in the final sentence of the quoted portion of the letter: 'It is real'. Yet, as 'The Nightmare' chapter of Kangaroo indicates, there was to be no possibility of escape: 'It was in 1915 the old world ended' and the only possibility of escape for Lawrence for the duration of the war was within his mind. Even he was forced to admit, 'There is no Florida, there's only this, this England, which nauseates my soul'. Yet Lawrence persisted in his utopian, pastoral dreaming against all hope, but the sense of hopelessness infected his vision and his dreams of escape are no longer rooted in any sense of 'community'. The year 1916 Lawrence proclaimed 'Year 1. of the new world', a world with 'no people in it but new-born people: moi-meme et Frieda.' It is a vision uncannily like the state of pastoral solitude evoked in Kangaroo, 'alone somewhere together' with Harriett in Mullumbimby.

Importantly, this dream of escape would later take on a literary form, for (as was mentioned in an earlier chapter) one of the literary problems with which Lawrence grapples in Kangaroo is the question of how to 'make a novel out of these people' that 'haven't got any insides to them, to write about.' Lawrence's impression of Australians certainly wasn't of a 'new-born people'. Rather, as he wrote to his mother-in-law: '. . .they are no new people: very nervous, neurotic, as if they don't sleep well, always with a ghost nearby.'

The longer he stays in Cornwall, the more Lawrence's vision of escape takes the form of a pastoral of solitude. On 7th December, 1916 Lawrence looked back over the year that was to have been Year 1 of the new world:

I have been in Cornwall for twelve months now, never out of it, so I feel a stranger to the world. I find myself divested of all my friends, and much more confident and free, having no connections anywhere. Why should one seek

77 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 250.
79 DHL to Katherine Mansfield 7/1/1916, op.cit., p. 499. The lower-case 'o' in 'or is in the original.
81 DHL to Baroness Anna von Richtholen 15/5/1922, op.cit., p. 238.
intimacies - they are only a net about one. It is one's business to stand quite apart and single, in one's soul.82

In the language of this letter it is possible to see the incipient development of those aspects of individualistic misanthropy and excessive concern with the self which he was later to give to Somers in Kangaroo. The language indicates, as Lawrence's wartime letters again reveal, that he was turning his back on mankind:

The only way is the way of my far-off wildness which shall become a school and a monastery and an Eden and a Hesperides - a seed of a new heaven and a new earth.83

He was retreating into a world, as the use of the word 'monastery' indicates, of solipsistic religious solitude:

... I tell you my Rananim, my Florida idea, was the true one. Only the people were wrong. But to go to Rananim without the people is right...84

One could hardly ask for a clearer, real-life exposition of the pastoral of solitude and self-love.

Keith Sagar has argued that 'the idea of Rananim' 'was always his last resort.' He argues that Lawrence's 'other ideas about human relationships were put to the test, if not in reality, then in his fiction.' Sagar's contention, however, is that Lawrence 'never dared follow through, imaginatively, the Rananim idea; it was too precious to put at risk. When he writes of it in his letters, his language lapses into Arcadian or Prelapsarian.'85 Yet Kangaroo does test, imaginatively, the Rananim idea but 'without the people', as Lawrence phrased it in his letters. To do so, however, presented Lawrence with some difficult literary problems. As he remarked during the writing of the novel Aaron's Rod: 'I find people ultimately boring; and you can't have fiction without people. So fiction does not, at the bottom, interest me any more. I am weary of humanity and human things. One is happy in the thoughts only that transcend humanity.'86 Yet one way for an author to partially solve the problem of lack of

85 Keith Sagar, op.cit., p. 104.
interest in the people normally deemed so necessary in fiction is to write pastorals of solitude and self. Such writing reduces the need for 'people', apart from the self, to a minimum. It is possible, too, that it is Lawrence's fundamental lack of interest in people that helps transform Kangaroo into what is, primarily, a novel of place. Lawrence's struggle to find a literary form more suited to his new-found lack of interest in people, perhaps, provides as good an explanation as any for the difficulties he found in completing Aaron's Rod and for the adventurous fictional structure in both that novel and Kangaroo.

Even the signing of the Armistice, as David Garnett remembered, did not change Lawrence's conviction that the old world was 'done for'. Yet, as Katherine Mansfield explained, Lawrence's moods could fluctuate wildly:

He was just his old, merry, rich self, laughing, describing things, giving you pictures, full of enthusiasm and joy in a future where we become all 'vagabonds' - we simply did not talk about people. We kept to things like nuts and cowslips and fires in woods and his black self was not.

In life, as in art, the retreat into nature, a pastoral world of 'cowslips' and 'fires in woods' could take his mind off what the war had done to England: 'Europe is done for; England most of all the countries.'

Lawrence's hatred of England continued to increase even when he had escaped to Taormina in Italy. On learning of the attacks launched against Women in Love by critics in England, he poured out his anger in a letter to the Brewsters:

... it is a world of canaille: absolutely. Canaille, canaglia, Schweinhunderei, stink-pots. Pfui! Pish, pshaw, prrr! They all stink in my nostrils.
That's how I feel in Taormina. . . .

This echoes extraordinarily the reference in Kangaroo to the 'military canaille. Canaille! Canaglia! Schweinerie!'.

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87 See Edward Nehls A Composite Biography of DHL, Volume I, op.cit., p. 479.
89 Op.cit., p. 479. These are the words which David Garnett remembered Lawrence saying on Armistice Day, 1918. They are remarkably like those the narrator uses to describe Somers's reasons for coming to Australia. See DHL Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 9: 'In Europe, he had made up his mind that everything was done for, played out, finished, and he must come to a new country.'
The reaction to *Women in Love* again rekindled Lawrence's desire to escape. He wrote to his publisher Seltzer on 8 October, 1921:

I wish I could find a ship that would carry me round the world and land me somewhere in the West - New Mexico or California - and I could have a little house and two goats, somewhere away by myself in the Rocky Mountains.\(^91\)

His desire to be a lonely goatherd was further fired by the alluring letters of Mabel Dodge in which she remembered describing her home in Taos, New Mexico, 'as a lofty, pastoral land far from railroads, full of time and ease...and where the plainest tasks took on a beauty and significance they had not in other places.'\(^92\) It was these letters of Mabel Dodge which appealed precisely to the pastoral impulses that had been germinating in Lawrence's heart since 1915 and which succeeded in impelling him towards the town of Thirroul in transit to New Mexico.

An examination of all the letters quoted in the preceding pages makes it possible to see 'The Nightmare' chapter not simply as a lapse into autobiography on the part of a writer desperate to complete a novel with a seemingly feckless and wayward plot, but rather as a crucial part of the pastoral structure of *Kangaroo*. They reveal how passionate and how heart-felt the pastoral escape into which Lawrence launches his protagonist Somers really was; they also lay bare the characteristic flights of pastoral and utopian fantasy to which Lawrence's mind was subject.

All in all, Somers's war-time experiences, as outlined in 'The Nightmare' chapter, lead him to a seemingly final rejection of the social, material world:

... Somers sat there feeling he had been killed: perfectly still, and pale, in a kind of after-death, feeling he had been killed. He had always believed so in everything - society, love, friends. This was one of his serious deaths in belief. So he sat with his immobile face of a crucified Christ who makes no complaint, only broods silently and alone, remote.\(^93\)

It is a traumatic moment for Somers, but it is an experience which differs, qualitatively, from both traditional pastoral retreats into beauteous worlds of nature or even into more unwholesome pastoral retreats into the self. As the language indicates - 'a kind of after-

\(^91\) DHL to Thomas Seltzer 8/10/1921 *The Letters of DHL Volume 4, op.cit.*, p. 93.
\(^93\) DHL *Kangaroo*, *op.cit.*, p. 286.
death', 'one of his serious deaths in belief' - it is a life-crushing retreat, deathly. Gone are all traces of community- 'society, love friends.' He has withdrawn totally from his working class-origins and the incipient solidarity he felt with 'the collier youths' he 'had been to school with'. 94 For Harriett it is not so far a philosophic road to travel: 'She had far less belief than he in the goodness of mankind.'95 Her question of Somers - 'Why didn't he show fight?'96 - remains unanswered.

Now exiled by the military to London, Somers feels the 'Torture of nostalgia' for 'the farm' in Cornwall:

... grey, naked, stony, with the big, pale roofed new barn - and the network of dark-green fields with the pale-grey walls - and the gorse and the sea.97

The characteristic pastoral flight of Somers's mind, like that of Lawrence's as revealed in the letters, is again invoked. He dreams of Cornwall, 'craved to be back, his soul was there.'98

Somers once more begins to feel 'set apart from mankind'99 and launches into an outburst of misanthropy:

... The foul, dense, carrion-eating mob were trying to set their teeth in him. Which meant mortification and death. Whatever I do, I do of my own responsible self. I refuse their imputations I despise them. They are canaille, carrion-eating, filthy-mouthed canaille, like dead-man-devouring jackals. I wish to God I could kill them. I wish I had power to blight them, to slay them with a blight, slay them in thousands and thousands. I wish to God I could kill them off, the masses of canaille.

... Let me know them for human filth. ...but never fear them.100

Somers has become 'ill'101 and his thoughts are correspondingly 'sick'. Somers will not allow himself to be judged by his fellow human beings. It is, as he says through

98 Ibid.
the narrator, 'For my own soul only to judge'.\textsuperscript{102} He places himself outside of all human standards. His fellow beings are reduced to 'canaille', 'human filth' and Somers's misanthropy wells up into a passionate idyll of solitude and self:

So he discovered the great secret: to stand alone as his own judge of himself, absolutely. He took his stand absolutely on his own judgement of himself. Then, the mongrel-mouthed world would say and do what it liked. This is the greatest secret of behaviour: to stand alone, and judge oneself from the deeps of one's own soul. And then, to know, to hear what the others say and think: to refer their judgement to the touchstone of one's own soul-judgement. To fear one's own inward soul, and never to fear the outside world, nay, not even one single person, not even fifty million persons.\textsuperscript{103}

The fifty millions, it needs to be noted, would have been well-nigh the entire population of Britain at the time and not just the military bullies who were harassing Somers and Harriett.

Yet once again Somers's attitudes change and he sustains, for a moment, a joyous pastoral idyll of 'Shakespeare's England':

It was a lovely spring: and here, in the heart of England - Shakespeare's England - there was a sweetness and a humanness that he had never known before. The people were friendly and unsuspicious, though they knew all about the trouble. The police too were delicate and kindly. It was a human world once more, human and lovely: though the gangs of wood-men were cutting down the trees, baring the beautiful spring woods, making logs for trench-props.\textsuperscript{104}

But the reality of war which emerges in the final sentence shatters all possibility of sustaining such an idyll and Somers, after he is called up once more for a medical examination, reiterates his hatred of 'these horrible machine people, these iron and coal people'.\textsuperscript{105} Important is the uncritical language used by the narrator. 'People' is not a term from the language of class. Somers presumably condemns the coalminers - a pitiable example of which class he has just described being ridiculed by medical officers\textsuperscript{106} - along with the 'Masters of money-power'\textsuperscript{107} in such utterances. Somers's

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{103} Op.cit., p. 291.
\item \textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{105} Op.cit., p. 297.
\item \textsuperscript{106} Op.cit., p. 295.
\item \textsuperscript{107} Op.cit., p. 297.
\end{itemize}
hatred is immense and it leads him into a condemnation of his birthplace and of the class into which he was born:

This was his home district - but from the deepest soul he now hated it, mistrusted it even more than he hated it. As far as life went, he mistrusted it utterly, with a black soul. Mistrusted it and hated it, with its smoke and its money-power and its squirming millions who aren't human anymore.  

There is no subtlety of class analysis here in Somers's condemnation of 'the squirming millions who aren't human any more', no hint of understanding that from this inhumanity a 'human world once more, human and lovely' can emerge. There is no conception on the part of Somers that the problems posed by the evils and obscenities of 'money-power', as he puts it, can be solved in the social world of class-conscious human endeavour. There is only the impulse for pastoral retreat into the beautiful world of nature which itself is being permanently destroyed by the ravages of the capitalist trade-war which is World War One:

Ah, how lovely the southwest seemed, after it all. There was hardly any food, but neither he nor Harriet minded. They could pick up and be wonderfully happy again, gathering the little chestnuts in the woods, and the few last bilberries. Men were working harder than ever felling the trees for trench-timber, denuding the land. But their brush fires were burning in the woods, and when they had gone, in the cold dusk, Somers went with a sack to pick up the unburnt faggots and the great chips of wood the axes had left golden against the felled logs. Flakes of sweet, pale gold oak, he gathered them in the dusk, in a sack, along with the other poor villagers. For he was poorer even than they. Still, it made him very happy to do these things - to see a big, glowing pile of wood-flakes in his shed - and to dig the garden, and set the rubbish burning in the late, wistful autumn - or to wander through the hazel copses, away to the real old English hamlets, that are still like Shakespeare - and like Hardy's Woodlanders.

Eventually the Armistice comes and Somers emerges from his waking nightmare in Sydney. Somers's reflections on why he experienced the nightmare in Sydney raise major questions:

Since he had been in Italy the fear had left him entirely. He had not even remembered it, in India. Only in the quiet of Coo-ee, strangely enough, it had come back in spasms: the dread,  

almost the horror, of democratic society, the mob. Harriett had been feeling it too. Why? Why, in this free Australia? Why? Why should they both have been feeling this same terror and pressure that they had known during the war, why should it have come on again in Mullumbimby? Perhaps in Mullumbimby they were suspect again, two strangers, so much alone. Perhaps the secret service was making investigations about them. Ah, canaille! 111

And although the narrator provides no unsubtle answers, there is more than a hint in this passage that the pastoral dream of being 'alone somewhere together' with Harriett is no longer sustainable in Mullumbimby, just as it could not be sustained in Cornwall. But these questions also help to adumbrate the more serious political point that the reason Somers experiences 'The Nightmare' in 'free' Australia is because, in reality, there is not a vast amount of difference between Australian peace-time democracy and fascist war-time British demagoguery. What is being implied is that the differences are entirely superficial, merely the difference between the illusion and the reality of bourgeois democracy. Wilding is thus correct in suggesting that Lawrence views the war not as an accidental cataclysm from outside, but rather as something generated by the conditions and nature of the society we live in.

Keith Sagar has claimed that:

Lawrence could justify to himself a state of private happiness and atonement with nature and the gods only as preparatory to a further effort in the world of men, not as a permanent condition. 112

But such a view, at least in the case of Lawrence's protagonist Somers, is not confirmed by 'The Nightmare' chapter of Kangaroo. Lawrence has Somers, at the close of this chapter, defiantly insist that he will have nothing more to do with what Sagar terms 'further effort in the world of men'. Pastoral retreat in 'The Nightmare' chapter is not preparatory to a 'return' but merely to a further retreat into the misanthropic world of pastoral self-love even if there is a full recognition of the loneliness of such a political position in the imagery through which it is expressed:

Richard faced out all his memories like a nightmare in the night, and cut clear. He felt broken off from his fellow-men. He felt broken off from the England he had belonged to.

112 Keith Sagar, op.cit., p. 137.
The ties were gone. He was loose like a single timber of some wrecked ship, drifting the face of the earth. Without a people, without a land. So be it. He was broken apart, apart he would remain.\textsuperscript{113}

The final sentence of the chapter - 'In his soul he was cut off, and from his own isolated soul he would judge' - thus reveals Somers as confirmed in his insistence on the virtues of solitary judgement, even if it is likely that such virtues cannot be sustained by the precise \textit{locus amoenus} of 'Mullumbimby'.

The novel as a whole, however, operates the other way. \textit{Kangaroo} is not, as so many critics have gone almost as far to say, a series of disconnected chapters. It is a holistic literary work with its own peculiar structural integrity. Consequently, although one would hardly expect it from reading 'The Nightmare' chapter in isolation, as many critics appear to have done, there is still hope for Somers because, as the Australian critic Michael Wilding has realized, the key element of \textit{Kangaroo} is that all is flux. It is a 'thought adventure' and Somers's attitudes are constantly shifting. As such, there is hope that Somers, like Lawrence, will be able to 'justify himself a state of private happiness and atonement with nature and the gods only as preparatory to further effort in the world of men, not as a permanent condition.'

But there is only the hope of this, there is not the certainty. For the only thing that 'The Nightmare', as \textit{Kangaroo} itself, conclusively confirms, is that life is 'wonderful and complex, and always relative.'\textsuperscript{114}

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If by 1922 Lawrence had moved on from the essentially escapist 'pastoral utopianizing' of the 'Rananim' option outlined in both his war-time letters and 'The Nightmare' chapter, a still greater development of Lawrence's appreciation of the political significance of his former purely escapist 'pastoral utopianizing' is evident in his marvellously ambivalent fable, 'The Man Who Loved Islands'. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Lawrence would appear to have largely abandoned his own hopes of a 'Rananim' by 1922, in \textit{Kangaroo} Somers is still portrayed as living in the shadow

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 301.
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 310.
of the death 'in belief' which the war occasioned in Lawrence himself. 'The Nightmare' chapter depicts Somers as a man who has had nearly all his aspirations for a better form of human community (despite a persistent but vague longing for 'activity in the world of men') severely battered: 'He had believed so in everything - society, love, friends. This was one of his serious deaths in belief.'115

For a time prior to what is depicted in Kangaroo as the end of the old world in 1915, Lawrence had himself believed that writing could be used, in a quite direct and apparently simple way, to actually change society. In Kangaroo, he presents Somers as a man who has experienced a death in this belief. Just prior to his escape from his most threatening interview with Kangaroo in Sydney, an incident which directly precedes 'The Nightmare' chapter, Somers has declared: "...It seems like a trap to me, all this social business and this saving mankind. Why can't mankind save itself? It can if it wants to. I'm a fool, I neither want love nor power. I like the world. And I like to be alone in it, by myself. . . ."116 But Somers is presented as someone who, like Lawrence himself, is all too conscious of the isolation of the writer: "I want to do something with living people, somewhere, somehow, while I live on earth. I write, but I write alone. And I live alone. Without any connection whatever with the rest of men."117 The desire for utopian social change is at cross purposes with the desire for utopian pastoral escape in both Somers and Lawrence. Harriett expresses this dichotomy in Somers's personality with great savagery earlier in the novel when she declares, "...You don't like people. You always turn away from them and hate them. Yet like a dog to his vomit you always turn back..."118

Although this political and personal dilemma is not one which either Somers or Lawrence ever seems to have successfully resolved, there can be no doubt that Lawrence was highly conscious that it was not just a literary issue. The 'Man Who Loved Islands' fable, with its satiric condemnation of Cathcart's quest for utopian

118 Op.cit., p. 73
pastoral escape is evidence enough of that. It is a story that provides an edge to the sort of dystopian pastoral satire in *Kangaroo* which is only present incipiently in the ridicule to which Lawrence subjects many of Somers's ideas.

As a short fiction it looks back to the equally unsuccessful experience on the island of *The Trespasser*, but it also looks forward to the key goal of Lawrence's life and writing: 'to', in the words of Scott Sanders, 'imagine a form of social life that would transcend the natural world without violating it.' But in the fable 'The Man Who Loved Islands', Lawrence casts a critical eye over the tensions in his own social thought and produces a biting (though partly humorous) denunciation of 'pastoral utopianizing'. The complexity of tone in the fable is captured well in the opening paragraph, an opening that also lays bare the tensions in Lawrence's quest for Rananim:

There was a man who loved islands. He was born on one, but it didn't suit him, as there were too many people on it, besides himself. He wanted an island all of his own: not necessarily to be alone on it, but to make it a world of his own.120

Kingsley Widmer has encapsulated the unfolding of the fable well:

A well-to-do cultivated English dandy, Cathcart, takes possession of an island in order to create a "world of his own," the perfect place. "Why should it not be the Happy Isle at last?" So he becomes the "Master" of an autonomous island farming and fishing colony, with thirteen others (mostly employees). In spite of expertise and earnestness, things go wrong: a cow falls over a cliff; he lives in too high, expensive, a gentlemanly style; the employees swindle the Master; in sum, he and his rationalized egotism have quite failed to take into account the impetuses from the "timeless world" of human and other natural irrationalities, which therefore become a pervasive "malevolence".121

One of the closest connections between 'The Man Who Loved Islands' and *Kangaroo* is the way they both mock the dehumanized idealism of their namesakes.

Another is the use of pastoral motifs and images. 'The island acquired by our potential islander was not in the remote oceans', for example, but is a rural place

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121 Kingsley Widmer, *Counterings, op.cit.*, p. 11.
possessing 'a small farmhouse with sheds and a few outlying fields'\textsuperscript{122}: a place with fields 'of hay' and 'ripening oats' and 'over the turf where the short, downland cowslips nodded, you saw to the east still another island, a tiny one this time, like the calf of the cow. This tiny island also belonged to the islander.\textsuperscript{123}

Yet the island, like Cornwall and Australia, also has its dark spirit of place:

\ldots in the night, when the wind left off blowing in great gusts and volleys, as at sea, you felt that your island was a universe, infinite and old as the darkness; not an island at all, but an infinite dark world where all the souls from all the other bygone nights lived on, and the infinite distance was near.

Strangely, from your little island in space, you were gone forth into the dark, great realms of time, where all the souls that never die veer and swoop on their vast, strange errands. The little earthly island has dwindled, like a jumping off place, into nothingness, for you have jumped off, you know not how, into the dark wide mystery of time, where the past is vastly alive, and the future is not separated off.\textsuperscript{124}

And this 'spirit of the place' begins to haunt the island as Cathcart attempts to persist, against all the odds, in his utopian dream:

He was uncannily aware, as he lay in the dark, that the blackthorn grove that seemed a bit uncanny even in the realm of space and day, at night was crying with old men of an invisible race, round the alter stone. What was a ruin under the hornbeam trees by day, was a moaning of blood-stained priests with crucifixes, on the ineffable night. What was a cave and a hidden beach between coarse rocks, became in the invisible dark the purple-lipped imprecation of pirates.

To escape any more of this sort of awareness, our islander daily concentrated upon his material island. Why should it not be the Happy Isle at last? Why not the last small isle of the Hesperides, the perfect place, all filled with his own gracious, blossom-like spirit? A minute world of pure perfection, made by man himself.\textsuperscript{125}

But the islander's servants and workers begin to grate on him, particularly after he brings over 'a buxom house-keeper from the world and a soft-spoken, much experienced butler. . . .to be islanders.'\textsuperscript{126}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[122] DHL, 'The Man Who Loved Islands', \textit{op.cit.}, p. 722.
\item[125] \textit{Op.cit.}, pp. 724-725
\end{footnotes}
In time, the islander is ironically revealed as man very much like Kangaroo, as a 'politician' who believes himself to have the potential to be a marvellously benign dictator:

Well, it was ideal. The master was no tyrant. Ah, no! He was a delicate, sensitive, handsome Master, who wanted everything to be perfect and everybody happy. Himself, of course, to be the fount of happiness and perfection.\(^\text{127}\)

Those of whom he wishes to be master, however, are not quite so sure. As Lawrence expresses it with delicious irony:

> It is doubtful whether any of them really like him, man to man, or even woman to man. But then it is doubtful if he really liked any of them, as man to man, or man to woman. He wanted them to be happy, and the little world to be perfect. But anyone who wants the world to be perfect must be careful not to have real likes or dislikes. A general goodwill is all you can afford.\(^\text{128}\)

And this passage provides a critical perspective, one almost completely absent in Kangaroo, which helps to blunt the idyll of 'general goodwill' so evident in Lawrence's depiction of the bus-ride home from Mullumbimby in the 'Bits' chapter.

In 'The Man Who Loved Islands', as in Kangaroo, the enjoyment of a utopian pastoral idyll is both accentuated and disturbed by the working of the spirit of place:

... the island was so lovely. When there was a scent of honeysuckle and the moon brightly flickering down on the sea, then even the grumblers felt a strange nostalgia for it. It set you yearning with a wild yearning: perhaps for the past, to be far back in the mysterious past of the island, when the blood had a different throb. Strange floods of passion came over you, strange violent lusts and imaginations of cruelty. The blood and the passion and the lust which the island had known. Uncanny dreams, half-dreams, half-evoked yearnings.\(^\text{129}\)

Eventually Cathcart flees to the second island, one which lacks any of Lawrence's usual conceptions - be they benign or malign - of 'the spirit of place':

On this island there were no human ghosts, no ghosts of any ancient race. The sea and the spume and the weather had washed them all out, washed them out so there was only the sound of the sea itself, its own ghost, myriad-voiced, communing and plotting and shouting all winter long.\(\ldots\) The

coldness, the greyness, even the soft, creeping fog of the sea, and the islet of rock humped up in it all, like the last point in space.  

While the original island's spirit was violated by the ignominy of becoming 'a honeymoon-and-golf island' after the Master sells it, the Master's enjoyment of the experience of the second island is marred by the presence of his new wife and mother-in-law: two people who make the island idyll as oppressive as the experience of suburban neighbouring in Kangaroo.

Presenting Cathcart as fleeing in horror and disillusion to a still more remote island he has purchased, in order to be alone with his cat and sheep, Lawrence creates a pastoral utopia gone wrong, a place so anti-pastoral in outlook that even the sheep grate on his nerves:

... what he disliked most was when one of the lumps of sheep opened its mouth and baa-ed its hoarse, raucous baa. He watched it, and it looked to him hideous and gross. He came to dislike the sheep very much.

On this island, the Master wallows in misanthropy and disillusion:

... the hustle and horror of getting the sheep caught and tied and put in the ship made him loathe with profound repulsion the whole of the animal creation. What repulsive god invented animals and evil-smelling men? To his nostrils, the fisherman and the sheep alike smelled foul; an uncleanness on the fresh earth.

The final, stark, snow-covered scenes which bring about the Master's solitary annihilation in 'The Man Who Loved Islands' thus provide a powerful antidote to any desire to indulge solipsistic yearnings the story may have provoked.

But the complexity of Lawrence's 'pastoral utopianizing' in 'The Man Who Loved Islands' is such that, like Kangaroo, it is open to interpretations as similarly conflicting as those which relate to the dispute about the bourgeois or revolutionary nature of Lawrence's politics found in the writings of Caudwell, Williams and

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Wilding. On one level the story provides an object lesson on the dangers of seeking to retire from the world by fleeing decadent bourgeois culture; at another there is the possibility that Lawrence is posing the question as to whether it is not better to succumb, like 'The Man Who Loved Islands', to the solipsistic decadence within us in the hope that such activity will accelerate the collapse of this same decadent bourgeois culture.

Cathcart, in 'The Man Who Loved Islands', is a character who is the embodiment of the idea that Lawrence expressed in his last work *Apocalypse*:

> We cannot bear connection. That is our malady. We must break away, and be isolate. We call that being free, being individual. Beyond a certain point, which we have reached, it is suicide. Perhaps we have chosen suicide.\(^{135}\)

As is revealed in his willing himself to death on the third and final island, Cathcart has clearly made such a choice.

It is a choice, furthermore, which Lawrence's fictions often explore. It is the schizoid response to society of both Ursula and Somers and perhaps of Lawrence himself: a yearning, on the one hand, for 'Perfect noli me tangere solitude'\(^{136}\) and, on the other, a utopian longing for a perfect society where it is possible to 're-establish the living organic connections with the cosmos, the sun and earth, with mankind and nation and family.'\(^{137}\) This contradiction, this ambivalence, is present in varying degrees in nearly all Lawrence's work. His genius was that if he could not integrate it, he could at least articulate it with power and complexity.

The reason Marxists from Caudwell to Wilding have so varyingly evaluated Lawrence's political position is that it is impossible, even in such an obvious fictional example as 'The Man Who Loved Islands', to be absolutely certain of Lawrence's position: the tensions between his fictional impulses to pastoral retirement, on the one hand, and commitment to human community, on the other, are never dialectically


\(^{137}\) DHL, *Apocalypse, op.cit.*, p. 224. This passage is also quoted by Widmer, *op.cit.*, p. 285, but he is using a later edition of *Apocalypse* (Penguin, 1975) and inserts a comma after 'organic'.
synthesized; they waver hesitantly between antitheses. His use of the natural world as a form of pastoral utopia makes that literary device function simultaneously as both a powerful standard of social criticism and a romantic literary concept whose critical power is completely undermined. The idyllic natural world and social relations of both Mullumbimby and its inhabitants depicted in Kangaroo and the idyllic image of human community presented in the depiction of the Marsh farm in The Rainbow, despite their limitations, serve as a touchstone towards which the necessary changes in society should be directed. But the full value of such forms of community is only adumbrated by Lawrence. Often he is only willing to unreservedly praise a landscape without people and, in these cases, the idyllic places he envisions are proposed not as a measure against which society should be judged, but as a 'pastoral utopianizing' alternative to it.

In Kangaroo, Lawrence explores the dilemmas and the fears and the hopes of a man who has lost faith in the power of his writing to bring about social change and who therefore wonders whether it is best just to enjoy one's isolation. But the strength of Kangaroo, as John Worthen has recognized, is that Somers is presented as man, who despite the shattering of his utopian hopes for the creation of an ideal community (a 'Rananim') by his civilian experience of the war, is continually nostalgic for community, always wondering if he can ever be a social being again, in any meaningful way.\footnote{139 John Worthen, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 146.}

As Paul Fussell has shown, in The Great War and Modern Memory, the escape into pastoral was a common response of those writers who found themselves caught up in the horrors of the trenches. What is different, apart from the fact that Lawrence was a non-combatant, is that while most of these 'Georgian' pastoral responses to the war were conventional in choice of form and metaphor, Lawrence's response to the First World War in Kangaroo becomes an arena where modernism meets a centuries
old literary tradition. As someone who reckoned he had had as tough a time of it running the gauntlet of John Bull and the early twentieth century military industrial complex as those who lived (and frequently died) in the hell of trench warfare, Lawrence is perhaps unique in looking both back and forward. Conducting what was for him a perennial literary struggle, he attempted to develop (with mixed success) a new form of political novel. As I have essayed it in my *D.H. Lawrence At Thirroul*, he went both Dada and bucolic. The displaced reminiscence of the war which is 'The Nightmare' chapter may be a formally 'modern' journey into the self, but the concerns of its 'pastoral utopianizing' are linked both to an ancient genre and a long-standing debate within Lawrence's own life and fiction.
Section Three: *Kangaroo* in its Lawrentian, Generic and Political Context
The Genesis of Lawrence's Notions of 'The Spirit of Place' in His Pre-Kangaroo Non-Fiction

An Examination of *Twilight in Italy*, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, *Sea and Sardinia* and the 'Introduction' to Maurice Magnus's *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*

Lawrence's sensitivity to place is one of the hallmarks of both his 'pastoral utopianizing' and his peculiar literary genius. The rural places of his childhood come to be seen in his early novels as emblematic of a process which is destroying, in England at least, an entire rural culture. All too aware of the limitations as well as the satisfactions of rural living, and that the English garden of his childhood and youth is being irrevocably destroyed, Lawrence became acutely alert to the possibilities (and the menacings) provided by those places he subsequently encountered in Europe, Ceylon, Australia and the Americas. He gave many of these personal hopes and fears to the characters and the wry, fictionalized self-portraits of his novels and travel-writing.

'We travel, perhaps', wrote Lawrence in a review of H.M. Tomlinson's *Gifts of Fortune*, 'with a secret and absurd hope of setting foot on the hesperides, of running our boat up a little creek and landing in the Garden of Eden.' Yet despite the fact that Lawrence was aware that such a hope could only result in disillusion, both Lawrence's and his major character's lives can be seen quite literally, and without being unnecessarily reductive, as persistently engaged in an illusory (and profoundly disillusioning) quest for the perfect place. During the war, as the previous chapter has demonstrated, he sought this place in Cornwall and, in his imagination, in 'Florida'...

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1 See also Squires's analysis (op.cit., pp. 174-175) of how 'the pressures of Lawrence's experience played a decisive part in directing him towards the pastoral genre'.

less an actual geographic place of the imagination and more like the longed-for 'America' of the Italians in _Twilight in Italy_.

After the war, both Lawrence and his characters continue this search outside of England. With the possible exception of Aaron Sissoon, they do not long seek it in cities. Lawrence and his characters more often end up, or voluntarily flee, to the wilderneses of the rural countryside in Italy, Australia, and Mexico. Behind this utopian search for the perfect place is that related pastoral quest for that little hut or farm. "'What I want to do', says Somers in _Kangaroo_, "is to go a bit further back into the bush - near some little township - have a horse and a cow of my own - and - damn everything.'"3 In this utterance Lawrence perhaps expresses some of his own profound nostalgia for the rural places of both his childhood and what he believes to be the childhood of mankind. Whether the thought is Somers's or Lawrence's, it is nevertheless expressive of the kind of nostalgia or, as Lawrence phrases it on one occasion, 'wishful thinking', which is at the heart of so much pastoral writing. It is the purpose of this chapter to explore the ways in which both this nostalgia and this desire for the perfect place4 is embodied in the notions and evocations of "The Spirit of Place" expressed in some of the published travel-writing and criticism which pre-dates the writing of _Kangaroo_.

It needs to be stressed, as W.J. Keith has done, that this nostalgia or 'wishful thinking' is expressive of a self-division in Lawrence which cannot be dismissed simply 'in terms of romantic nostalgia or sentimental reaction.'5 In an illuminating exploration of _The Rainbow_, _Women in Love_ and Lawrence's interest in Hardy, Keith reminds readers of the scene in the sixth chapter of _The Rainbow_ where Lawrence shows Anna 'on the Pisgah mountain' with 'the land stretched out before her but also

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3 DHL, _Kangaroo_, op.cit., p. 405.
reluctant to advance towards it.\textsuperscript{6} Her decision not to advance towards it, but to 'root' herself to the Marsh Farm makes her, according to the chapter title, 'Anna Victrix'. But, as Keith recognizes, her victory is simultaneously a defeat. And so, to a considerable extent, is Ursula's:

Both in the closing section of \textit{The Rainbow} and at occasional but crucial moments in \textit{Women in Love}, Ursula feels painfully, excruciatingly, the pull of the Marsh Farm and all it stood for. She feels it in the brief, curious scene where Anthony Schofield, market-gardener brother of her friend Maggie, proposes to her; and she feels it again when, believing herself pregnant, she thinks back to the life-pattern of her mother.

Critics have generally interpreted these scenes as temptations to be overcome, and there is much truth in this. Schofield represents the past, and Ursula knows that you can't go home again. Anna 'relinquished the adventure to the unknown' - the adventure Ursula must follow. But we must not underestimate either the force of the temptation or the pain involved in resisting it.\textsuperscript{7}

It is such an awareness that goes to the heart of the nature of Lawrence's pastoral art. Keith is right, I feel, to assert that 'Lawrence recognized Ursula's story as, in a sense, his own.'\textsuperscript{8} We have Lawrence's great symbol of the rainbow at the end of the novel of that name to express the hope that Ursula has made the right decision to turn away from the world symbolized by the Marsh Farm, but \textit{Women in Love} is not a novel which \textit{conclusively} reassures its readers that she has made the right decision.

The only conclusion a reader can draw is, as Keith has written, that 'Both Ursula and Lawrence are . . . profoundly torn in in their loyalties and preferences.'\textsuperscript{9} Not even the sudden emergence of the rainbow symbol at the close of the novel can overcome both the readers' and Ursula's powerful fears that 'wanting some fantastic fulfilment in life' may not be as worthy a desire as that of the known, 'rooted' if circumscribed, life of her mother expressed at the beginning of that same final chapter:

Suddenly she saw her mother in a just and true light. Her mother was simple and radically true. She had taken the life


\textsuperscript{7} W.J. Keith, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 154.

\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Op.cit.}, p. 155.

that was given. She had not, in her arrogant conceit, insisted on creating life to fit herself. Her mother was right, profoundly right, and she herself had been false, trashy, conceited.\textsuperscript{10}

With the passing of time, Lawrence's feelings on the correctness or otherwise of just such a break into the unknown as both he and Ursula had made became increasingly complex. Even as late as chapter 29 of \textit{Women in Love},\textsuperscript{11} the sight of a man going to feed cattle in a barn serves to remind Ursula of 'the limited but rooted world she has left behind':\textsuperscript{12}

> It had reminded Ursula again of home, of the Marsh, of her childhood.
> Oh, God, could one bear it, this past which was gone down the abyss? Could she bear, that it had ever been!...She wished it could be gone for ever. ...She wanted to have no past.\textsuperscript{13}

Unable to deny the allure of the rural world of her childhood, Ursula simply wishes it had never existed. And for all its complexity, Lawrence's pastoral is almost always, at bottom, a form of wish-fulfilment, of hope against hope, a pastoral art which is both nostalgic and something more than simply nostalgic.

As W.J. Keith has suggested, 'Whether communicated in imagery of uprooting or transplanting or of death or birth', the question of leaving or going back to a rooted pastoral existence, of taking up or relinquishing 'the adventure to the unknown', is a 'process' that is both 'traumatic and complex' as it is expressed in Lawrence's art. 'Characteristically', writes Keith:

> ... Lawrence portrays it in all its human discomfort and suffering. Moreover, he is never closer to Hardy, I suggest, than on this subject. Both novelists knew that they had benefited from their own widening circles; both were conscious that there own lives would have been stifled by the narrowness of the 'provincial,' regional life they both escaped and nostalgically missed. They also knew that their literary success depended upon the patronage of an urban middle class that they found uncongenial. Both were deracinated; Hardy found fellow-feeling with Jude, while Lawrence recognized Ursula's story as, in a sense, his own.

In \textit{Women in Love}, it might be said that the break has been made but that the wounds are still sore... But it is

\footnote{DHL, \textit{The Rainbow}, op.cit., p. 485.}
\footnote{\textit{When The Women in Love} has begun to be transformed, through its Swiss setting and freer structure, into a work more akin to Lawrence's subsequent pastoral travel novels.}
\footnote{W.J. Keith, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 155.}
\footnote{DHL, \textit{Women in Love}, \textit{op.cit.}, chapter 29, p. 460; also cited by Keith, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 155.}
Gerald Crich, losing 'all his sense of place,' as Lawrence says of him just before his death (ch. 30), who ultimately denies his past. Ursula pulls back from the abyss she contemplates. We must not forget that, at the end of *Women in Love*, she and Birkin return - whether temporarily or finally is not made clear - to England and the Mill. Perhaps it is not too much to suggest that they return where they start from and know the place for the first time. At any rate, the pull between past and future, origin and goal, remains.\textsuperscript{14}

This same 'pull' as it is manifested in particular urban and rural landscapes, something which is part of a long-standing debate within Lawrence's own life and fiction, goes to the heart of his pastoral practice.

Lawrence's notions of 'The Spirit of Place', then, grew out of his own vernacular roots in the area around Eastwood. From the outset he gives place a crucial position in his writings and what he subsequently has to say about the 'spirit of place' is a clear indication of his own recognition of how important place has always been to him. This recognition, implicit though it always was in his work, only became explicit (and was only developed into the notion of 'the spirit of place') after he had left England and subsequently returned, thus opening himself to an awareness of how much the elapsing of time and, later, war would change the land and the people he loved.

This recognition has much to do with what Alex Haley called 'roots',\textsuperscript{15} and Lawrence's sensitivity to place is almost certainly linked to his search for his own roots and a never-realized nostalgia for the area in which he was born and raised; an area that even by 1914 was going, if not gone - its Sherwood-like forests felled for trench props and the entire rural-mining fabric transformed by the relentless march of bricks and mortar.\textsuperscript{16} But while such nostalgia frequently piques the literary heart, pastoral is oft the balm that soothes the savage breast. And the word 'savage' is not here used lightly, for other factors were also at play.

\textsuperscript{14} W.J. Keith, *op.cit.*, p. 155.
\textsuperscript{15} Alex Haley, *Roots* (1976), Hutchison Group (Australia), Richmond, Victoria, 1977.
\textsuperscript{16} Reference is made to the practice of 'felling trees for trench-limber' at the close of 'The Nightmare' chapter (*Kangaroo*, *op.cit.*, p. 298). For the advance of bricks and mortar over the country of Lawrence's and his sister's heart, see Ada Lawrence and Stuart Gelder, *The Early Life of DHL*, Martin Seeker, London 1932, pp. 16-17.
Lawrence's nostalgia for his own childhood also provoked an interest in the childhood of mankind. It both stimulated his interest in primitivism and opened his mind and heart to what was special about places - what made them different, singular. His personal reading harmonized (presumably not simply fortuitously) with the nostalgia aching in his heart. The reading necessary for his detailed 'Study of Thomas Hardy' (1914) would have assisted in putting 'place' at the forefront of his critical consciousness. 'Place' was something that Lawrence saw as especially conspicuous in Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, where 'there exists a great background vital and vivid, which matters more than the people who move upon it.' A reading of this novel, in particular, may well have helped to confirm Lawrence's developing suspicion that it was place (the 'American continent' itself) that accounted for the great difference between English and American writing - the 'otherness' he would later discern when formulating the central thesis of his *Studies in Classic American Literature*, the work in which he first penned the phrase 'The Spirit of Place' (1918). The 'Red Indians of the continent (including the 'Incas, Aztecs and Esquimos') also attracted Lawrence's attention. He became intensely interested in the 'aboriginality' of both place and race, and these concerns fired his imagination and became largely responsible for that wanderlust which is today often described as 'The Quest of D.H.Lawrence'. Both his reading and his personal experiences ensured that, in 1922, the tiny rural-coastal mining village of Thirroul would appeal directly to Lawrence's sense of nostalgia, just as its strangeness - its 'otherness' - drove him on and away.

Lawrence's early feelings for place, as they can be discerned in *The White Peacock*, *The Trespasser* and *Sons and Lovers*, were largely intuitive, and instinctual; passionate, rather than reflective, despite the Pre-Raphaelite and Wagnerian stylizing to which they are often subjected in the former two novels. However, by the time he came

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17 DHL, "Study of Thomas Hardy in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of DHL*, op.cit., p. 419. Lawrence also claims this is true of the *The Woodlanders* and *Two on a Tower*, but regards *The Return of the Native* as the more important novel. The other great theme which Lawrence sees as the central preoccupation of Hardy's novels is that struggle between, as W. J. Keith has phrased it (*Regions of the Imagination*, p.cit., p. 146), 'the demands of community and the urgings of individuality'. This theme in Lawrence's own writings will be taken up in later chapters of this thesis devoted to Lawrence's philosophy of the self as it relates to *Kangaroo*.\footnote{\textit{\textsuperscript{17}} DHL, "Study of Thomas Hardy in  \textit{Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of DHL}, op.cit., p. 419. Lawrence also claims this is true of the \textit{The Woodlanders} and \textit{Two on a Tower}, but regards \textit{The Return of the Native} as the more important novel. The other great theme which Lawrence sees as the central preoccupation of Hardy's novels is that struggle between, as W. J. Keith has phrased it (\textit{Regions of the Imagination}, p.cit., p. 146), 'the demands of community and the urgings of individuality'. This theme in Lawrence's own writings will be taken up in later chapters of this thesis devoted to Lawrence's philosophy of the self as it relates to \textit{Kangaroo}.}
to write the second part of *Mr Noon* in 1921 - the last piece of fiction attempted before undertaking the writing of *Kangaroo* - Lawrence could show through the character of Gilbert Noon that he at least felt (if not entirely understood) 'place' in all its complexity: in its universality, its specificity of locality, its nationality, and its internationality; in all its variety and sameness. The passage from *Mr Noon* where this is revealed is worth quoting at some length:

The great Isar valley lay beneath. . . . It was a lovely, ringing, morning-bright world, for the Englishman vast and glamorous. The sense of space was an intoxication for him. He felt he could walk without stopping on to the far north-eastern magic of Russia, or south to Italy. All the big, spreading glamour of mediaeval Europe seemed to envelop him.

"Na! Isn't it beautiful?" said the professor.
"Beautiful," said Gilbert.

The bigness: that was what he loved so much. The bigness and the sense of an infinite multiplicity of connections. There seemed to run gleams and shadows from the vast spaces of Russia, a yellow light seemed to struggle through from the great Alp-knot from Italy, magical Italy, while from the north, from the massive lands of Germany, and from far-off Scandinavia one could feel a whiteness, a northern, sub-arctic whiteness. Many magical lands, many magical peoples, all magnetic and strange, uniting to form the vast patchwork of Europe. The glamorous vast multiplicity, all made up of differences, mediaeval, romantic differences, this seemed to break his soul like a chrysalis into new life.

For the first time he saw England from the outside: tiny she seemed, and tight, and so partial. Such a little bit among all the vast rest. Whereas until now she had seemed all-in-all in herself. Now he knew it was not so. Her all-in-allness was a delusion of her natives. Her marvellous truths and standards and ideals were just local, not universal. They were just a piece of a local pattern, in what was really a vast, complicated, far-reaching design.

So he watched the glitter of the range of Alps towards the Tyrol: he saw the pale-green Isar climbing down her curved levels, coming towards him, making for Munich and then Austria, the Danube, the enormous meanderings of the Danube. He saw the white road, which seemed to him to lead to Russia. And he became unEnglished. His tight and exclusive nationality seemed to break down in his heart. He loved the world in its multiplicity, not in its horrible oneness, uniformity, homogeneity. He loved the rich and free variegation of Europe, the manyness. His old obtuseness which saw everything alike, in one term, fell from his eyes and from his soul, and he felt rich. There were so many, many lands and peoples beside himself and his own land. And all were magically different, and it was so nice to be one among many, to feel the horrible imprisoning oneness and insularity collapsed, a real delusion broken, and to know that universal ideals and morals were after all only local and temporal.
Gilbert smoked his pipe, and pondered. He seemed to feel a new salt running vital in his veins, a new, free vibration in all his nerves, like a bird that has got out of a cage, and even out of the room wherein the cage hung.\(^{18}\)

In examining, as did Gilbert Noon, his feelings for place from the outside, Lawrence is intrigued by the reaction\(^19\) which this 'new salt' (this new, subtle and 'free vibration' emanating from places) sets off in other people and himself. Even though this passage from *Mr Noon* Part II was probably written late in 1921, it describes events Lawrence himself had experienced many years earlier. By 1918 Lawrence, trapped in England by the war, had written and first published the essay 'The Spirit of Place'. Yet, although it is Lawrence who undoubtedly popularized this famous phrase, he did not coin it: from where, then, did the phrase 'spirit of place' come?

As for its ultimate origins, this writer cannot say. It seems possible, however, that Lawrence purloined the phrase from Vernon Lee, a writer who sometimes used the pseudonym Violet Paget. Although there is no mention of Lee (or 'Paget') anywhere in Lawrence's extant prose, it is likely that he had read at least one article by her. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that Lawrence not only wished to meet her, but almost managed to do so.\(^{20}\)

Lee was held in immense regard by the late Victorians after publishing her widely-acclaimed *Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy* (1880) at the age of 24. It was with her 'Genius Loci' type of travel essay, however, that Vernon Lee reached the widest public. The little essays on travel and places appeared, for the most part, weekly in *The Westminster Gazette*, where Lawrence was also regularly published from May


\(^{19}\) It is a reaction surprisingly similar to the chemical process, the 'thinning down of the blood', referred to in *Kangaroo*, op.cit., pp. 165-166, 303.

\(^{20}\) See Peter Gunn, *Vernon Lee: Violet Paget 1856-1931*, Oxford University Press, New York 1964, p. 184. See also introduction to Aldous Huxley, *The Letters of DHL*, Heinemann, London, 1932, p. xxxi. Gunn (op.cit., p. 181) remarks that Huxley met Lee at Lady Ottoline Morrell's home at Garsington during the war. It is possible (although unrecorded) that Lawrence met Lee here. Gunn also remarks that DHL was once invited to tea by Vernon Lee, 'but had to be put off, as Vernon Lee was unwell on the appointed day thereby denying posterity of two (possible) accounts of fascinating, but intrinsically opposed personalities'. Gunn also adds an interesting footnote to this remark: 'It appears, on the authority of Miss Nesta de Robeck, that Vernon Lee refused to meet Lawrence after reading his preface to Maurice Magnus's *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*. That she was not alone in her attitude to Lawrence on this occasion is seen from Norman Doughty's *A Plea for Better Manners* (1925). Mr Aldous Huxley quotes in his introduction to *The Letters of DHL*, Vernon Lee's remarks on Lawrence, "He sees", Vernon Lee once said to me, "more than a human being ought to see. Perhaps", she added, "that is why he hates humanity so much."
11, 1912 until September 13, 1913. Even if Lawrence had not read Lee before 1909, he would have at least seen the article by her included in the second issue of his beloved *The English Review* - the lively journal that launched his own career. Perhaps this encounter with the work of Miss Lee would have led him to read *Genius Loci: Notes on Places* (1899), *The Enchanted Woods and Other Essays on the Genius of Places*, *The Spirit of Rome* (both 1905), *The Sentimental Traveller* (1908) and *The Tower of Mirrors and Other Essays on the Spirit of Places* (1914).

While the above-mentioned works of Vernon Lee might have provided Lawrence with the term 'spirit of place' itself, it may well have been his increasing interest in primitivism that gave this notion its peculiarly Lawrentian dimensions. In a letter written in October, 1913, Lawrence remarks that he preferred Jane Harrison's *Ancient Art and Ritual* even to *Tristram Shandy*, which 'I love', for 'I am just in the mood for it. It just fascinates me to see art coming out of religious yearning.'

In addition to Lawrence's interest in the religious source of art', as John B. Vickery points out:

... his letters from this point on suggest that Miss Harrison, who learned it herself from Frazer's *Golden Bough*, may also have shown him that the individual goes through critical stages of transition which are analogous to the death and birth of vegetation.

In a famous letter to Bertrand Russell on December 8, 1915, Lawrence remarked that he had been reading both Frazer's *Golden Bough* and his *Totemism and Exogamy*. What the impact of these two works was, Lawrence makes quite clear: it substantiated his own views on a variety of subjects and gave impetus to his speculative bent. The specific nature of this effect is best seen when, after announcing his study of Frazer, Lawrence declares:

Now I am convinced of what I believed when I was about twenty - that there is another seat of consciousness than the brain and the nerve system: there is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness, which depends on the eye as its source or connector. There is the blood-consciousness, with the sexual connection, holding the same relation as the eye, in seeing,
holds to the mental consciousness. On the other hand, when I take a woman, then the blood-percept is supreme, my blood-knowing is overwhelming. There is a transmission, I don't know of what, between her blood and mine, in the act of connection. So that afterwards, even if she goes away, the blood-consciousness persists between us, when the mental-consciousness is suspended; and I am formed then by my blood-consciousness, not by my mind or nerves at all.

Similarly, in the transmission from the blood of the mother to the embryo in the womb, there goes the whole blood consciousness. And when they say a mental image is sometimes transmitted from the mother to the embryo, this is not the mental image, but the blood-image. All living things, even plants, have a blood-being. If a lizard falls on the breast of a pregnant woman, then the blood-being of the lizard passes with a shock into the blood-being of the woman, and is transferred to the foetus, probably without intervention of either nerve or brain consciousness. And this is the origin of totem: and for this reason some tribes no doubt really were kangaroos; they contained the blood-knowledge of the kangaroo. And blood knowledge comes either through the mother or through the sex - so that dreams at puberty are as good an origin of the totem as the precept of a pregnant woman.

Curiously, here we find further evidence to support the view that the character Kangaroo is more a 'totemic' figure than a character supposedly based on some real-life Australian model.

J.B. Vickery has also recognised that Lawrence, drawing on Frazer's The Golden Bough, uses 'references to nameless spirits' in Kangaroo to 'serve a further purpose in' his 'fiction':

In them we see the anthropological dimension with which Lawrence's concept of the spirit of place is endowed.

An example can be seen in Alvina Houghton, from The Lost Girl, who recognizes that not all places have friendly spirits or ones which will accommodate themselves to our habits and perspectives. Before she can enter 'the pre-world...the old eternity' on the edge of the Abruzzi, she has to see that 'there are places which resist us, which have the power to overthrow our psychic being. It seems as if every country had its potent negative centres, localities which savagely and triumphantly refuse our living culture.'

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Vickery remarks that, 'In effect, Lawrence utilizes Frazer’s concept of taboo as negative magic and as a dangerous physical power that needs to be insulated. For Lawrence, it is a means of emphasizing both the living quality of the natural world and also the protective nature of space in creating geographical isolation.' Whilst it is difficult to agree with this last statement there is no doubt that Vickery and I agree on the effect of the anthropological dimensions of Lawrence’s concept of the ‘spirit of place’ as they apply to *Kangaroo*:

The terror aroused when a man sensitive to such primitive feelings comes into direct contact with such a potent, negative center is most graphically and sustainedly presented at the very beginning of *Kangaroo*. Somers, confronted with the Australian bush, is roused to see the trees as corpses and aborigines, to feel the mythic power of the moon, and to sense the existence of a mysterious and unseen but full-bodied presence that “not tired of watching its victim...was biding its time with a terrible ageless watchfulness.” By skilfully keeping this brooding presence in the forefront of the novel, Lawrence endues the spirit of place with an added function. It serves as a mythically aware audience before which the totemic drama of the kangaroo, simultaneously animal, man, and country, is enacted.

Having seen where Lawrence’s notion of the ‘spirit of place’ may have originated and where Lawrence’s application of the concept ended in *Kangaroo*, it remains to trace the development of this Lawrentian concept in his pre-*Kangaroo* non-fiction.

Lawrence’s escape from England, necessitated by his elopement with Frieda, was perhaps the single most important event of his life. His experience of the ‘continent’, particularly of the southern Tyrol and northern Italy, was to change his writing forever.

The experiences detailed in the last two essays of *Twilight in Italy*, ‘Italians in Exile’ and ‘The Return Journey’, appear to have had an impact on Lawrence’s responses to nearly all the new landscapes he subsequently encountered. It was the experience of his own exile from England, and that of the Italians exiled in

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27 Ibid.
Switzerland, which confirmed Lawrence's affection for the older, southern, continental cultures of Europe, stimulating his interest in primitivism and the impact of environment, landscape, and place on the souls and personalities of those who dwell within them.

As in Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, where the heath exerts a mysteriously powerful influence over the lives of the characters, in the sketch entitled 'John' from *Twilight in Italy*, John seems:

... scarcely like a person with individual choice, more like a creature under the influence of fate which was disintegrating the old life and precipitating him, a fragment inconclusive, into the new chaos.\(^{28}\)

Even as John fights the influence of his 'campanilismo' (the strong, sometimes morbid, sense of belonging to a locality) to go into exile in America, Lawrence transforms John's relatives, as they stand waving goodbye to John in his 'sordid American clothes, on the deck of the steamer', into elements of the landscape:

What were his wife and child to him? - they were the last steps of the past. His father was the continent behind him: his wife and child the foreshore of the past; but his face was set outwards, away from it all - whither, neither he nor anybody knew, but he called it America.\(^{29}\)

For Lawrence, it appears something of a mystery why these Italians are fleeing a landscape and a people which he regards as having all the virtues that the more modern, northern countries (countries which people like the Italian John generically call 'America') so obviously lack.

And how these 'Italians in Exile' pay the price of their banishment! They have exiled themselves from Italy, but Italy has not exiled itself from them. When he meets these exiled Italians rehearsing a play in Switzerland, Lawrence notes their reaction to his talk of their native land:

"When you come to Italy," they said to me, "salute it from us, salute the sun, and the earth, l'Italia. So we drank in salute of Italy. They sent their greeting by me.


"You know in Italy there is the sun, the sun," said Alfredo to me profoundly, wet-mouthed, tipsy.
I was reminded of Enrico Persavelli and his terrifying cry at the end of 'Ghosts':
"Il sole, il sole!"  

Here the nostalgia these exiles feel for Italy is evoked all the more plangently and poignantly because of the warmth generated by the images of the Italian sun Lawrence has positioned in the earlier essays of the *Twilight in Italy* collection, 'The Lemon Gardens' in particular.

Yet, in encountering these exiles, Lawrence is also perhaps contemplating his own exile. He is learning to distinguish between those who only temporarily leave their country and those who leave forever. It is an important distinction, for Lawrence will later make precisely that decision. Whether exile is a permanent or impermanent state, Lawrence decides, depends on a number of factors:

So we talked for a while of Italy. They had a pained tenderness for it, sad, reserved.
"Don't you want to go back?" I said, pressing them to tell me definitely. "Won't you go back some time?"
But they spoke reservedly, without freedom.

These Italians are figures like those from a Hardy novel: not totally free spirits, but beings determined by their landscape and circumstances, both physical and economic.

Lawrence senses that nearly all Italians feel their landscape in the blood, yet those he encounters in Switzerland are very different to those, like Paolo and II Duro, found in earlier *Twilight* sketches:

They loved Italy passionately; but they would not go back. All their blood, all their senses were Italian, needed the Italian sky, the speech, the sensuous life. They could hardly live except through the senses. Their minds were not developed, mentally they were children, lovable, naive, almost fragile children. But sensually they were accomplished.
Yet a new tiny flower was struggling to open in them, the flower of a new spirit...

... I could see the sons of Italy would never go back. Men like Paolo and II Duro broke away only to return. The dominance of the old form was too strong for them. Call it love of country or love of the village, campanilismo, or what not, it was the dominance of the old pagan form, the old affirmation

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of immortality through procreation, as opposed to the Christian affirmation of immortality through self-death and social love.

But 'John' and these Italians in Switzerland were a generation younger, and they would not go back, at least not to the old Italy. Suffer as they might, and they did suffer, wincing in every nerve and fibre from the cold material insentience of the northern countries and of America, still they would endure this for the sake of something else they wanted. They would suffer a death in the flesh, as 'John' had suffered in fighting the street crowd, as these men suffered year after year cramped in their black gloomy cold Swiss valley, working in the factory. But there would come a new spirit out of it.32

And it was this 'new spirit' which Lawrence, the exile, would seek for the rest of his life, while continuing to rage against the northern, dehumanizing, mechanical spirit, here symbolized by 'the factory' in the 'black gloomy cold Swiss valley'.

In *Twilight in Italy* we see some of the horrendous changes which must necessarily occur before the 'new spirit' of which he dreamed could be brought into existence. It is in this non-fictional work that Lawrence first hints at what may happen when European man is exposed to the 'subtle vibration of response to the new earth' of what he would later, in the 1918 version of the essay 'The Spirit of Place' in *Studies in Classic American Literature*, term the 'unknown America', where 'their subtlest plasm' will be 'changed under the radiation of new skies, new influence of light, their first and rarest life-stuff transmuted'.33 Such a process, however, takes many years.

Initially, Lawrence tells us, when a man or woman gives up a country, all sorts of disastrous consequences can follow. The most frightening words uttered in *Twilight in Italy* are, the ghostly words of Giuseppino:

"Sa signore," said the Giuseppino to me quiet, almost invisible or inaudible, as it seemed, like a spirit addressing me, "l'uomo non ha patria - a man has no country . . ."34

It is war and the political-military-industrial complex that supports it, just as it would later be war and the same complex which finally drove Lawrence from England, that has divorced these Italians from home and hearth:

"Have you been a soldier?" I interrupted him.

32 *Opcit.*, pp. 144-145.
34 DHL, *Twilight in Italy*, *op.cit.*, p. 145.
He had not, none of them had: that was why they could not really go back to Italy. Now this was out; this explained partly their curious reservation in speaking about their beloved country. They had forfeited parents as well as homeland.35

As these exiled Italians talk, Lawrence becomes more and more fearful. After listening to Giuseppino speak, Lawrence reflects: 'I did not want him to go on: I did not want to answer. I could feel a new spirit in him, something strange and pure and slightly frightening':36

I did not want to see the Italians. Something had got tied up in me, and I could not bear to see them again. I like them so much; but, for some reason or other, my mind stopped like clockwork if I wanted to think of them and of what their lives would be, their future. It was as if some curious negative magnetism arrested my mind, prevented it from working, the moment I turned it towards these Italians.

I do not know why it was. But I could never write to them, or think of them, or even read the paper they gave me, though it lay in my drawer for months, in Italy, and I often glanced over six lines of it. And often, often my mind went back to the group, the play they were rehearsing, the wine in the pleasant cafe, and the night. But the moment my memory touched them, my whole soul stopped and was null; I could not go on. Even now I cannot really consider them in thought. I shrink involuntarily away. I do not know why this is.37

Later Lawrence would come to articulate more clearly why he could not 'really consider them in thought', for their lives were but a semaphore for what his own would be. In his subsequent prose, and particularly in his fiction, Lawrence would begin to rail against all the horrors that life (modern, industrial, divorced from one's native land and environment) lived according to this 'new spirit' would entail. Lawrence gives some indication of what a life guided by this unfortunate 'new spirit' might possibly be like in his depiction of the encounter with an Englishman from Streatham in Twilight in Italy, someone in whom Lawrence can sense 'the machine that had him in its grip':

He slaved for a year, mechanically, in London, riding in the Tube, working in the office. Then for a fortnight he was left free. So he rushed off to Switzerland, with a tour planned out, and with just enough money to see him through, and to buy presents at Interlaken: bits of edelweiss pottery: I could see him going home with them.

... It all seemed to me so foolish. I was almost in tears.

35Ibid.
Suddenly I hated him. The dogged fool, to keep his nose on the grindstone like that.\textsuperscript{38}

Thus, disgusted and contemptuous, Lawrence, as usual, marches away and communes with nature. But he then, somewhat matter-of-factly, turns to contemplation 'of the advance of the industrial world upon the world of nature':

The valley here seemed wider, the great flanks of the mountains gave place, the peaks above were further back. So one was happier. I was pleased as I sat by the thin track of single flat stones that dropped swiftly downhill.

At the bottom was a little town with a factory or quarry, or a foundry, some place with long, smoking chimneys; which made me feel quite at home among the mountains.

It is the hideous rawness of the world of men, the horrible desolating harshness of the advance of the industrial world upon the world of nature, that is so painful. It looks as though the industrial spread of mankind were a sort of dry disintegration advancing and advancing, a process of dry disintegration. If only we could learn to take thought for the whole world instead of merely tiny bits of it.\textsuperscript{39}

The 'little, hideous, crude, factory-settlement' of Andermatt revolted Lawrence. His detailed description of it is particularly striking:

... the straggling, inconclusive street of Andermatt looked as if it were some accident - houses, hotels, barracks, lodging-places tumbled at random as the caravan of civilization crossed this high, cold, arid bridge of the world.

I bought two post cards and wrote them out of doors in the cold, livid twilight. Then I asked a soldier where was the post-office. He directed me. It was something like sending post cards from Skegness or Bognor, there in the post-office.

I was trying to make myself agree to stay in Andermatt for the night. But I could not. The whole place was so terribly raw and flat and accidental, as if great pieces of furniture had tumbled out of a pantechnicon and lay discarded by the road. I hovered in the street, in the twilight, trying to make myself stay. I looked at the announcements of lodgings and boarding for visitors. It was no good. I could not go into one of these houses.

So I passed on, through the old, low, broad-eaved houses that cringe down to the very street, out into the open again. The air was fierce and savage. On one side was moorland, level; on the other a sweep of naked hill, curved concave, and sprinkled with snow. I could see how wonderful it would all be, under five or six feet of winter snow, ski-ing and tobogganing at Christmas. But it needed the snow. In summer there is nothing to be seen but the winter's broken detritus.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{38}Op.	extsuperscript{c}it., pp. 158-159.
\textsuperscript{39}Op.	extsuperscript{c}it., p. 162
\textsuperscript{40}Op.	extsuperscript{c}it., pp. 162-163.
Remarkably, this description bears a strong resemblance to one Lawrence would write some ten years later in Australia when he visited Wollongong. In both descriptions there is the same sense of disgust at the touristy 'slumminess' and the same comparison of a relatively unattractive natural world with the chaos of the human settlements:

It was a wonderful Main Street. . . . There were several large but rather scaring brown hotels, with balconies all round: there was a yellow stucco church with a red-painted tin steeple, like a weird toy: there were high roofs and low roofs, all corrugated iron: and you came to an opening, and there, behold, were one or two forlorn bungalows inside their wooden palings, and then the void. The naked bush, sinking in a hollow to a sort of marsh, and then down the coast some sort of 'works,' brickworks or something smoking. All as if it had tumbled off the pantechnicon of civilisation as it dragged round the edges of this wild land, and there lay, busy but not rooted in. As if none of the houses had any foundations.

The differences in the descriptions are also striking. Andermatt, in summer, is repulsive: it is the epitome of 'the horrible, desolating harshness of the advance of the industrial world upon the world of nature.' In Wollongong, however, 'the "works" and the industry are only destroying the 'edges of this wild land'. 'The whole place' is not 'terribly raw' as in Andermatt. In Australia the humans are not overwhelming the continent as they are in Europe, for their 'haphazard' Australian industrial civilization is 'busy but not rooted in.' The 'pantechnicon of civilization' only drags 'round the edges of this wild land', whereas in Europe 'great pieces of furniture had tumbled out of a pantechnicon and lay discarded by the road.'

On this 'high, cold, arid bridge of the European world', Lawrence can only be happy in solitude:

. . . such splendid silence and coldness and clean isolation. It was something eternal, unbroachable: I was free, in this heavy,

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41DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 317.
43DHL, Twilight in Italy, op.cit., p. 162.
44DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 316.
45DHL, Twilight in Italy, op.cit., p. 163.
46DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 316.
47Ibid.
48DHL, Twilight in Italy, op.cit., p. 163.
49Ibid.
ice-cold air, this upper world, alone. London, far away below, beyond, England, Germany, France - they were all so unreal in the night. It was a sort of grief that this continent all beneath was so unreal, false, non-existent in its activity. Out of the silence one looked down on it, and it seemed to have lost all importance, all significance. It was so big, yet it had no significance: what could one do but wander about?50

The northern European continent has lost its meaning for Lawrence and his decision to 'wander', to become an 'exile', has been arrived at. He is a little uncertain, but the decision nevertheless has been fairly conclusively made: 'Thank God I need not go home: never, perhaps.'51

As Lawrence crosses 'in silence from the northern world to the southern'52 it is truly his personal literary rubicon and it is striking he reached it so early. Henceforth the trajectory of his writing is to 'the valley in the south', a valley 'like a cornucopia full of sunshine'.53 And in Twilight in Italy, as in much of Lawrence's other writing, the sun is accompanied by the old pastoral dream - a primitive, more natural arcadia:

It is strange how different the sun-dried, ancient, southern slopes of the world are, from the northern slopes. It is as if the god Pan really had his home among these sun-bleached stones and tough, sun-dark trees. And one knows it all in one's blood, it is pure, sun-dried memory. So I was content, coming down into Airolo.54

But even the sunny fields of Pan are infected by the 'industrial spread of mankind' like 'a sort of dry disintegration advancing and advancing'55:

... The valley was perhaps beautiful: I don't know. I can only remember the road. It was broad and new, and it ran very often beside the railway. It ran also by quarries and occasional factories, also through villages. And the quality of its sordidness is something that does not bear thinking of, a quality that has entered Italian life now, if it was not there before.

It is as if the whole social form were breaking down, and the human element swarmed within the disintegration, like maggots in cheese. The roads, the railways are built, the mines and quarries are excavated, but the whole organism of life, the social organism, is slowly crumbling and caving in, in a kind of process of dry rot, most terrifying to see. So that it seems at

last that we should be left with a great system of roads and
railways and industries, and a world of utter chaos seething
upon these fabrications: as if we had created a steel framework,
and the whole body of society were crumbling and rotting in
between. It is most terrifying to realize; and I have always felt
this terror upon a new Italian high-road -- more there than
anywhere.

The remembrance of the Ticino valley is a sort of
nightmare to me. But it was better when at last, in the darkness
of the night, I got into Bellinzona. In the midst of the town one
felt the old organism still living. It is only at its extremities that
it is falling to pieces, as in dry rot.56

Lawrence here identifies a process akin to that he later saw in the New World, in
Australia. Europe is falling apart at the 'extremities', in the centre of the old towns 'the
old organism is still living.'57 In Australia, while it is also the centre that survives,
there is cause for optimism because the centre is so vast and the 'edges of this wild
land' are only under insubstantial attack and, hence, there is still some hope that the
'continent of the kangaroo' will reclaim its own. In Europe, however, we can not be so
sure, for, as Lawrence explains in Kangaroo, Europe is 'done for'.58

Lawrence only came to this realization in England, toward the end of the war.
But here in this last essay from the Twilight in Italy collection,59 we see him groping
towards the same conclusion. In Lugano, 'it seemed here, here in this holiday-place,
was the quick of the disintegration, the dry-rot, in this dry, friable flux of people
backwards and forwards on the edge of the lake'.60 In Lake Como, Lawrence's
feelings are the same: 'it must have been wonderful when the Romans came here. Now
it is all villas. I think only the sunrise is wonderful, sometimes'. Even the cathedral in
Como, though 'it must have been wonderful even a hundred years ago' is now 'like a
relic, a museum object' and 'everywhere stinks of mechanical money-pleasure.'61

Lawrence sees little hope. Even the sunrise is only sometimes wonderful. His
faith, however, is always in nature; he wonders 'why the whole hills did not slide

58DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 9.
59As Paul Eggert has made clear in his examiner's notes (p. 4, remark 11) on the first version of this
thesis, and as is supported by Lawrence's letters, 'there is no evidence to suggest the...[last five]
 essays were written before 1915.
60DHL, Twilight in Italy, op.cit., p. 174.
down, in some great natural catastrophe*,62 a response which looks forward to the chapter 'Volcanic Evidence' in Kangaroo. But, as always, Lawrence is not a complete misanthropist. There is some hope in the men, for 'there, in Milan sitting in the cathedral square, on Saturday afternoon drinking bitter campari and watching the swarm of Italian city-men drink and talk vivaciously, I saw that here the life was still vivid, here the process of disintegration was vigorous, and centred in a multiplicity of mechanical activities that engage the human mind as well as the body. But, also as always, there was the same purpose stinking in it all, the mechanising, the perfect mechanising of human life.'63

Lawrence also held out the expectation that some hope, however slight, must lie in the men and women who are 'vivid' and 'vigorous'.64 But theirs would be a massive fight for 'always there was the same purpose stinking in it all'.65 It is little wonder then that Lawrence, in moments of despair, placed his faith only in the birds, beasts and flowers which were always his great love, and in the elemental forces of nature which would hopefully teach mankind to 'learn to take thought for the whole world instead of for merely tiny bits of it.'66

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By 1915 nearly all Lawrence's genuine hope had gone; only his 'pastoral utopianizing' remained, and even that was severely battered. He had given up on Europe, but because of the war he could not escape it. It would be seven years before he physically experienced a new continent, before he gained his first sight of the new world. In his mind, however, as early as 1918, he was turning over what influence the 'new world' had on people; he was considering what impact a new continent might have had on the Europeans who had fled the old world. Denied the ability to go to the

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64Ibid.
65Ibid.
'new world' and see for himself, his study of classic American Literature gave him the vicarious experience of a new continent.

As a consequence of his reading, and presumably as an outcome of his experiences in both England and Italy, Lawrence became interested in the effect the 'subtle magnetic or vital influence inherent in every specific locality' has on the displaced European consciousness. A study of Lawrence's masterful and pioneering *Studies in Classic American Literature* gives much insight into the development of some of the ideas which would eventually inform the first work of fiction he tackled outside Europe. In many surprising ways, the various versions of Lawrence's collection of essays which were finally published in 1923 as *Studies in Classic American Literature*, can be read as a blueprint for the novel *Kangaroo* which he would write at Thirroul during the Australian winter of 1922.

The lack of recognition which Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature* has received outside America is surprising, for it is surely his most important work of non-fiction outside the inspired travel-books, *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia*. In the various versions of the studies, Lawrence outlines many of the philosophies that inform much of his fiction. Moreover, it was in the *Studies* that Lawrence first utilized some of the key phrases and ideas he later employed in the novel *Kangaroo*. For example, it is in the first of the versions of these essays, written late in 1918, that Lawrence first uses the words 'spirit of place' and goes on to enunciate the philosophy behind the expression: a phrase and a philosophy which was later to make its initial appearance in Lawrence's fictional *oeuvre* in the opening pages of *Kangaroo*.

In coming up with his first fictional response to a continent other than Europe, it appears as if Lawrence also plundered a great many of the devices and techniques he had identified as making American literature 'something other than a small branch or province of English Literature.' In *Kangaroo*, Lawrence first grapples fictionally with the issue of the 'aboriginality' of the continents of the new world and their impact

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on the displaced Europeans who inhabit them. *Studies in Classic American Literature* had earlier achieved this, in non-fictional form, by exploration and critical analysis of the major literary products of the new world, long before Lawrence set foot on the American continent. It appears highly likely that Lawrence’s exploration of the ‘spirit’ of ‘the continent of the kangaroo’, and its impact on the ‘British Australians’ who inhabit it, would be a much lesser fictional work if it was not informed by the insights Lawrence had gained from long and careful analysis of the literary fruits of the American continent.

Within *Studies in Classic American Literature*, in praising ‘the beauty and glamorous magnificence’ of Fenimore Cooper’s ‘presentation of the aboriginal American landscape’, Lawrence remarks:

> It is the same bitter tale of the horrid advance of civilization that subjects all life to its mechanization of laws and penalties and benevolent Providence. Over the whole world we hear the great wail of natural life under the triumph of civilization. But the violated Spirits of Place will avenge themselves. How long will such a civilization sterilize the creative world? Not long. The Spirits of Place take a slow, implacable revenge.69

This passage is from the essay ‘Fenimore Cooper’s Leatherstocking Novels’ first published in March 1919. In it we hear echoes of Lawrence’s concern about ‘the advance of the industrial world upon the world of nature’70 voiced in *Twilight in Italy*.

What is new and important, however, are the remarks about the ‘slow, implacable revenge’ which the world’s many ‘violated Spirits of Place’ will take upon so-called ‘civilization’. Without taking these remarks into account, it is very difficult to be alive to the full implications of the following passage which Lawrence inserted, with seeming casualness, in the midst of what appeared to be an extended evocation of the ‘spirit of place’ of suburban Australia:

> ... the tree-trunks like naked pale aborigines among the dark-soaked foliage, in the moonlight. And not a sign of life - not a vestige. Yet something. Something big and aware and hidden! ...
...the horrid thing in the bush! He laboured to think what it might be. It must be the spirit of the place. Something fully evoked to-night, perhaps provoked, by that unnatural West-Australian moon. Provoked by the moon, the roused spirit of the bush. He felt it watching, and waiting. Following with certainty, just behind his back. It might have reached a long black arm and gripped him. But no, it wanted to wait. It was not tired of watching its victim. An alien people - a victim. It was biding its time with a terrible ageless watchfulness, waiting for a far-off end, watching the myriad intruding white men.71

This is akin to the 'slow, implacable revenge' about which Lawrence had written some three years earlier, a spirit which would be enacted by the 'violated Spirits of Place'. And it is clear from even the few brief pages of Kangaroo which precede this passage that Lawrence's narrator feels very strongly that the 'spirit of the bush' has been violated by the eczema-like spread of Australian suburbia around the shores of the harbour.

Despite the scars evident in descriptions of an Australian landscape 'reddened with suburbs', scars very similar to those perceived in the Italian suburbs of Twilight in Italy, Lawrence's narrator notes how insubstantial these violations often are. Sometimes they are no more than the temporary shacks run up in the wilderness' described in Kangaroo.12 Even in the city of Sydney, the novel senses an awareness of the aboriginal underdark, emerging as night descends and seeming to obliterate the rash of red-roofed bungalows. Such dwellings will no doubt provide an easy 'victim' for the 'roused spirit of the bush', but the question is left begging as to what toll this 'roused' 'spirit of place will take on the 'myriad intruding white men.' There is the suggestion towards the end of the novel that these white Australians may become more sympathetic to the land they abuse.

Although both Somers and the narrator appear disgusted by the effects of white settlement they see in Sydney, the novel appears, finally, in its portrait of Thirroul as Mullumbimby, to offer its readers a more pleasing image of a white Australian community. In place of the decrepit shacks which are seen to litter Sydney's northern beach suburbs at the start of the novel, we are left with the image of the 'prettiness of

71DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., pp. 9-10.
the many painted bungalows' in Mullumbimby. So in harmony with the 'continent of
the kangaroo' do these denizens of this creation of Lawrence's mind appear that when
darkness descends it seems as if there are 'white folks peering out of the dusk almost
like aborigines'.73 There are unlikely to have been many citizens of Thirroul in 1922
who would have perceived themselves in such a way.

Unfortunately, when one has turned the final page of Kangaroo, although the
reader is left with some slight hope that - amid the litter of tin cans and rubbish dumped
on every vacant block that extends even to Mullumbimby - white Australians may one
day achieve some more sympathetic accommodation with the land they so appallingly
abuse, the reader is not very much the wiser when it comes to explaining the precise
reason why 'the roused spirit of the bush', 'the spirit of the place', is 'watching, and
waiting.'

Thus the questions posed in the extraordinary passage from the novel's opening
chapter remain unanswered at the end. In the original version of 'The Spirit of Place',
however, Lawrence explains it all so clearly:

Every people is polarized in some particular locality, some
home or homeland. And every great era of civilization seems to
be the expression of a particular continent or continent region,
as well as of the people concerned. There is, no doubt, some
peculiar potentiality attaching to every region of the earth's
surface, over and above the indisputable facts of climate and
geological condition. There is some subtle magnetic or vital
influence inherent in every specific locality, and it is this
influence which keeps the inhabitant stable. Thus race is
ultimately as much a question of place as of heredity. It is the
island of Great Britain which has really determined the English
race, the genius of Place has made us one people. The place
attracts its own human element, and the race drifts inevitably to
its own psychic geographical pole.

For every great locality has its own pure daimon, and is
thus conveyed at last into perfected life. We have seen Asia,
and north Africa, and a good deal of Europe. We know the
white abstraction of the Arctic and Antarctic continents, the
unspeakable immortality of the ice, where existence is and
being is not. There remains America, and, beyond, the even
farther-off Australia.74

This was written long before Lawrence had seen either America or Australia. But, coincidentally, his American *Studies* and his Australian novel were to become even more than just thematically linked. The writing of *Kangaroo* and the rewriting of the *Studies* eventually became entwined. His revision of the typescript of *Kangaroo* took place in October 1922 and that of the *Studies* in November and December. Seltzer published *Studies* in August, 1923 and *Kangaroo* in September.

The 1923 version of the essay on 'Edgar Allan Poe' contains an important paragraph that was not included in the version published in April, 1919:

> ... while ever the soul remains alive, it is the moulder and not the moulded. It is the souls of living men that subtly impregnate stones, houses, mountains, continents, and give these their subtlest forms. People only become subject to stones after having lost their integral souls.  

This contradicts the view that 'people' and races are 'ultimately as much a question of place as of heredity' in the first of the 1918 versions of *Studies*. On the view expressed in the 1923 version, however, it is people (rather than the place itself) that ultimately give a particular place its special quality or 'spirit'.

Yet there is little doubt that Lawrence himself would have seen no contradiction here. For him, the Americans (and the Australians, he later came to discover) have already lost 'their integral souls' and hence they are only too ready to become 'subject to stones' and the 'polarities' or place. Even in the above-quoted passage from the original version of 'The Spirit of Place', Lawrence sees 'place' as an 'expression of a particular continent. . .as well as [italics mine] of the people concerned.'

The 'alien quality' Lawrence detected in American literature belonged, he nevertheless maintained, 'to the American continent itself.' He also remarked that we needed to 'wake and sharpen in ourselves the subtle faculty for perceiving the greater inhuman forces that control us.' At the opening of *Kangaroo*, Lawrence's protagonist, Richard Lovatt Somers, is only too well aware of the 'inhuman forces, the violated Spirits of Place' 'that control us' in their quest for 'slow, implacable

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revenge.' But the novel gets so involved in evoking the various 'spirits of place' of the Australian continent - Sydney suburbia, the west Australian bush, 'Mullumbimby', the lonely Pacific shore, the heath in bloom at the back of Mullumbimby - that it frequently loses sight of the process of 'slow, implacable revenge' foreshadowed in the opening chapter.

Lawrence tantalizes his readers with the powerful insight into the menace of the 'roused spirit of the bush' at the start of Kangaroo. It is an insight that, if developed, may have produced the first novel written in Australia from what might be termed a truly aboriginal perspective. Instead, Kangaroo becomes simply a novel containing inspired sketches of various 'aboriginal Australias': a serious of impressionistic and, often, extemporaneous vignettes of the respective 'Spirits of Place' of the 'continent of the kangaroo' and the impact these 'spirits' have on the 'British Australians'. In this way Kangaroo bears a striking resemblance to the Studies in Classic American Literature in that mutatis mutandum, it attempts to understand how a 'little salt of the aboriginal America has entered into...[the] blood of the exiled Europeans who inhabit that continent.

Without having made a long and careful study of the 'suggestive force' in American literature (a force Lawrence believed was 'not relative to us, not inherent in the English race', but rather an 'alien quality' which 'belongs to the American continent itself'), then Lawrence would have found it far more difficult to respond, fictionally, to the alien quality of the Australian continent and its 'spirit of place'.

Indeed, it is testimony to both Lawrence's genius and hubris that he would even attempt to try. A couple of weeks near Darlington in Western Australia, and whistle stop day-tours of Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney before twelve weeks in Thirroul would simply baffle most people. Lawrence never even glimpsed the red centre and probably never even saw, let alone spoke to, an Australian aborigine, yet Kangaroo somehow manages to stand up as a surprisingly insightful and not wildly inaccurate fictional response to the continent of Australia. Without Studies in Classic

American Literature as a handbook to how Europeans respond to continents other than Europe, Lawrence, in Kangaroo, would probably have been as all at sea as Dana in Two Years Before the Mast and Herman Melville in Moby Dick.

Apart from the usual idiosyncratic Lawrentian sermons about 'blood consciousness' and mind consciousness', which permeate Kangaroo as much as all Lawrence's fiction, in the Studies we also see Lawrence exploring the idea that the influence of the American continent and climate 'thins down' the blood in much the same way that the Australian continent and its climate is said to affect Somers and the traveller Evans in Kangaroo:

At present the mind consciousness and the so-called spirit triumphs. In America supremely. In America, nobody does anything from the blood. Always from the nerves, if not from the mind. The blood is chemically reduced by the nerves, in American activity.79

Intriguingly, it is in what is presumed to be the second version of the essay 'Nathaniel Hawthorn' that Lawrence, in discussing ancient and modern science, utters the words, 'Life is a flux',80 words which Michael Wilding has effectively demonstrated are the key to Somers's character in Kangaroo and also perhaps the dominant leit-motif of the novel.

The impact of the sea in shaping the American response to place was something that Lawrence also highlighted in his various essays on Dana and Melville. The role Lawrence gives to the Pacific Ocean in Kangaroo as balm for Somers's troubled soul would appear to owe much to these American writers. The resemblance of the phrasing Lawrence uses in passages from the Studies to describe the sea and passages from Kangaroo to describe the bush behind Thirroul is also surprisingly close:

This is the first of all the waters, immemorial. Its mysteries are grander, profounder, older than those of the Atlantic. Without doubt the great era of the previous world perfected itself about the Pacific. Without doubt the Pacific has known a vast previous civilisation, before the geological cataclysms.81

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79DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 81.
...[Somers] was looking mostly straight below him, at the massed foliage of the cliff-slope. Down in the centre of the great, dull-green whorls of the tree-ferns, and on to the shaggy mops of the cabbage-palms. In one place a long fall of creeper was yellowish with damp flowers. Gum-trees came up in tufts. The previous world!

When the chapter entitled 'Volcanic Evidence', from Kangaroo, is also taken into consideration, along with the reference to 'the violence native to the American Continent' from an unpublished typescript of Lawrence's essay on Moby Dick, these phrasings appear more than simply coincidental. As Lawrence remarks in the final version of his essay on Dana, probably written just after, or just before, the final correction of Kangaroo, 'At a certain point, human life becomes uninteresting to men' and they 'turn to some universal' like 'the sea' or, as in Kangaroo, the bush, after the idyll of the beach and sea is destroyed.

Indeed, Dana, like Somers, experiences the sea as a balm for his troubled emotional states, though in Dana the tone and language make it seem a religious rather than a natural healing: 'And suddenly, he turned to the sea, the naked Mother. He went to sea as a common sailor before the mast.' Later, in this same study of Dana, Lawrence provides what could just as easily be his own critical exegesis on the storm which breaks up the beach and the rural-coastal idyll in Mullumbimby:

Don't expect me to say why storms must be. They just are. Storms in the air, storms in the water, storms of thunder, storms of anger. Storms just are.

Storms are a sort of violent readjustment in some polarized flow. You have a polarized circuit, a circuit of unstable equilibrium. The instability increases till there is a crash. Everything seems to break down. Thunder roars, lightning flashes. The master roars, the whip whizzes. The sky sends down sweet rain. The ship knows a new strange stillness, a readjustment, a refinding of equilibrium.

The ship metaphor also plays a part in Lawrence's Kangaroo, not least in the allegory of the good ship Harriett and Lovatt in the chapter 'Harriett and Lovatt in Marriage'. Indeed, it is in the 1923 version of his study of Melville's 'Typee' and

82 DHL, Kangaroo, op. cit., p. 204.
83 DHL, The Symbolic Meaning, op. cit., p. 236
84 DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op. cit., p. 106.
85 Ibid.
'Omoo' that Lawrence anatomizes the idiocy of the quest for the 'perfect fulfilment of love', the 'lovey-doveyness of perfect mutual understanding' which is ridiculed in Kangaroo. In this discussion of Melville, Lawrence also highlights the other error that Somers makes in Kangaroo:

From the "perfect woman lover" he passed on to the "perfect friend". He looked and looked for the perfect man friend.

Couldn't find him.

It is precisely this, the quest for 'the love of comrades', as explored in Women in Love, which Lawrence pilloried fictionally in Kangaroo and went on to lambast in his final version of his essay on Whitman.

Even Lawrence's descriptions of white settlement in Sydney and Mullumbimby in Kangaroo appear lifted straight from the passages of the original version (published in March 1919) of his essay on Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking novels. What Lawrence sees as Cooper's description of America's 'settled habitations' appear surprisingly like the descriptions of shacks in the wilderness 'sprinkled on the surface of a darkness into which...[they] never penetrated' that Lawrence would later write for Kangaroo. Intriguingly, the pattern of habitation which Lawrence claims Cooper saw as being true of the American Indians, Lawrence turns on its head and sees as true of the 'myriad invading white' men who occupy Australia:

They [the 'western Indians'] do not inhabit the place; they are seen in a state of evanescent transit, and their settled habitations seem more like camps of invaders than homes of an established people.

Acutely, Lawrence saw this as being true of the 'British Australians' in 'the continent of the kangaroo'.

Lawrence's distaste for the Australians' affection for the 'conveniences' of modern life, against which he railed in his letters from Thirroul, is even given a philosophical basis in the 1923 version of Dana's Two Years Before the Mast:

90 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 8.
91 DHL, The Symbolic Meaning, op.cit., p. 100.
Every time we turn on a tap to have water, every time we turn a handle to have a fire or light, we deny ourselves and annul our being. The great elements, the earth, air, fire, water, are there like some great mistress whom we woo and struggle with, whom we heave and wrestle with. And all our appliances do but deny these fine embraces, take the miracle of life away from us. The machine is the great neuter. It is the eunuch of eunuchs. In the end it emasculates us all. When we balance the sticks and kindle a fire, we partake of the mysteries. But when we turn on an electric tap there is, as it were, a wad between us and the dynamic universe. We do not know what we lose by all our labour-saving appliances. Of the two evils it would be much the lesser to lose all machinery, every bit, rather than to have, as we have, hopelessly too much.92

The feelings of inhuman solitude that Lawrence injected into *Kangaroo* were still with him when he wrote the final version of his study of Melville's *Typee* and *Omoo*: 'Let us get out of this loathsome complication of living humanly with humans.'93 So, too, is the tendency towards misanthropy which sometimes infects the pastoral of solitude in *Kangaroo*: 'Let the sea wash us clean of the leprosy of our humanity and humanness.'94

But Lawrence was no mindless utopian, as he goes on to explain in the same essay on Melville:

> Love is never a fulfilment. Life is never a thing of continuous bliss. There is no paradise. Fight and laugh and feel bitter and feel bliss: and fight again. Fight, fight. That is life.
> Why pin ourselves down on a paradisal ideal. It is only ourselves we torture.95

Lawrence had thought long and hard about the dangers of literary pastoral and 'pastoral utopianizing'. His view of Hector St John de Crevecoeur's 'Children of Nature', 'so sweet and pure under the greenwood tree', was that 'it is all a swindle'.96

Lawrence also understood, even if you ignore the people and write pastorals of solitude, that:

> You can't idealize the soil. But you've got to try. And trying, you reap a great imaginative reward. And the greatest reward is failure. To know you have failed, that you *must* fail. That is the greatest comfort of all, at last.

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94Ibid.
Tolstoi failed with the soil; Thomas Hardy too; and Giovanni Verga; the three greatest.97

While the citing of so many similarities between *Kangaroo* and the *Studies* does not of itself necessarily advance our understanding of what Lawrence meant by 'the spirit of place', his *Sea and Sardinia* provides more fruitful ground for advancing an understanding of what Lawrence meant by the term in *Kangaroo*.

Lawrence's delineation of the influences shaping both the 'spirit of place' and 'the spirit of race' surfaces once again in *Sea and Sardinia*. Like the *Studies*, this important work and its influence on the writing of *Kangaroo* has been neglected by critics. What is more, the connections between *Kangaroo* and *Sea and Sardinia* are not simply casual or coincidental. *Sea and Sardinia* is concerned precisely with evoking the 'spirit of place' of a land Lawrence had only just discovered. Like *Kangaroo*, it was written in an incredible six weeks, and without Lawrence taking a single note in preparation. Moreover, in *Sea and Sardinia*, Lawrence uses for the first time the awkward phrase 'spirit of the place' which would later be used in the opening pages of *Kangaroo*.

Importantly, Lawrence saw in Sardinia that which he was soon to see in Australia. In the description of his journey to Nuoro, Lawrence reflects on the differences between the remote places of the 'known' Abruzzi and the 'unknown' Sardinia. Life in the remote Abruzzi, says Lawrence:

... is so primitive, so pagan, so strangely heathen and half-savage. And yet it is human life. And the wildest country is half humanized, half brought under. It is all conscious. Wherever one is in Italy, either one is conscious of the present, or of the mediaeval influences, or of the far, mysterious gods of the early Mediterranean. Wherever one is the place has its conscious genus. Man has lived there and brought forth his consciousness there and in some way brought that place to consciousness, given it its expression, and, really, finished it. The expression may be Proserpine, or Pan, or even the strange "shrouded gods" of the Etruscans or the Sikels, none the less it is an expression. The land has been humanised, through and through: and we in our own tissued consciousness bear the

results of this humanisation. So that for us to go to Italy and to penetrate into Italy is like a most fascinating act of self-discovery - back, back down the old ways of time. Strange and wonderful chords awake in us, and vibrate again after many hundreds of years of complete forgetfulness.

And then - and then - there is a final feeling of sterility. It is all worked out. It is all known: connu, connu!

This Sunday morning, seeing the frost among the tangled, still savage bushes of Sardinia, my soul thrilled again. This was not all known. This was not all worked out. Life was not only a process of rediscovering backwards. It is that, also: and it is that intensely.98

Lawrence's use of the words 'in some way' early in this passage and, again in the final sentence quoted here, is cryptic.99 'Is man, or the landscape, the dominant influence on man?' Lawrence appears to ask. He goes on to conclude the passage by having it both ways. In doing so, and it is typical of Lawrence's utopian bent, he conjures up an image of what might well be the Australia to which he would soon travel: 'There are unknown, unworked lands where the salt has not lost its savour.'100 And, like the Studies and Kangaroo, Sea and Sardinia becomes a work which attempts to understand how 'a little salt' of an aboriginal landscape enters into the blood of both its permanent inhabitants and a sensitive visitor like Lawrence.

In this way, the Studies, Sea and Sardinia and Kangaroo are, respectively, attempts by Lawrence to critically, non-fictionally and fictionally, provide answers to the same fundamental questions: what is humankind's relationship to the environment? And, is it the people or the landscape that finally determines the peculiar 'spirit of a place'?

98 DHL, Sea and Sardinia, Heron Books in association with Heinemann, London, 1968, p. 307. The word 'genus' may be a typographical error. Bruce Steele suggests 'genius', rather than 'genus'. It may be necessary to consult the original manuscript if it is still extant.

99 Be it 'the spirit of place', the 'dark gods', 'the Holy Ghost' or 'the dark forest', these 'expressions, as Lawrence demands, remain obscure.' This point is made by Aidan Burns, in Nature and Culture in D.H. Lawrence, and it is later quoted in more detail in chapter 11. As Burns has shown, such 'obscurity' (the freedom to 'never picture in words' that 'which might become the plan or the blueprint for further action') is why Lawrence thinks the novel has the advantage over philosophy because it never seeks such a blueprint (op.cit., p. 4). If Lawrence, at times, is cryptic or obscure and uses language which, in the words of Aidan Burns (op.cit., p. 21), is 'bound to generate confusion' it is often because 'his non-fiction, and at times even his fiction, is polemical. He knew that in a different climate different things would need to be stressed.' Burns's remarks are particularly appropriate when examining Lawrence's notion of 'the spirit of place' and particularly the question of whether Lawrence felt man or the landscape was the dominant influence on man.

100 DHL, Sea and Sardinia, op.cit., p. 307.
In the original version of *Studies in Classic American Literature*, Lawrence begins the essay 'The Spirit of Place' by attempting to analyze American literature 'in terms of otherness and difference':

> There is a stranger on the face of the earth, and it is no use our trying any further to gull ourselves that he is one of us, and just as we are. There is an unthinkable gulf between us and America, and across the space we see, not our own folk signalling to us, but strangers, incomprehensible beings, simulacra perhaps of ourselves, but other, creatures of an other-world.\(^{101}\)

It is clear from this statement that Americans are different to Europeans and that American literature is consequently also different: 'It is the genuine American literature which affords the best approach to the knowledge of this othering.'\(^{102}\)

The difficult question which remains, however, is whether this difference, this 'otherness', is a consequence of the Americans themselves or the influence the American landscape has had on those who live within the continent. Or is it, rather, some imprecise mixture of the two? It is assumed at the outset that Lawrence refers only to white Americans in this context, because he is, of course, attempting to make sense of a civilization through its literary rather than oral culture - what Lawrence terms American 'Art-speech'\(^{103}\) rather than speech itself. Thus, by the time Lawrence came to write the essay entitled 'Fenimore Cooper's Anglo-American novels', first published in February 1919, three months after the essay 'The Spirit of Place', he is seeking to explain the influence the aboriginal peoples of the American continent - 'the Red Indian, the Esquimo, the Incas, the Patagonian'\(^{104}\) - have had on modern white Americans, as far as this can be seen through classic American literature.

>'Assuredly', Lawrence declares, 'the dead Indians have their place in the souls of present-day Americans, but whether they are at peace there is another question.'\(^{105}\)

Using his notions of 'polarity', Lawrence then expounds on the interdependence of each living creature:

\(^{101}\)DHL, *The Symbolic Meaning*, op.cit., p. 17

\(^{102}\)Ibid.


\(^{105}\)Ibid.
Upon the destroyer devolves the necessity of continuing the nature and being of the destroyed. This is an axiom. It follows from the law of polarity. If we destroy one pole, the other collapses, or becomes doubly responsible. The tiger destroys the deer. If all deer are destroyed, the tiger collapses. Similarly, if all tigers are destroyed, deer will collapse, for then their is no equipoise to keep them vivid in their being. Between the beast predative and the beast ruminative is a balance in polarity, and the destruction of either pole is the destruction of both in the long run.106

What is really new in Lawrence's writing, however, is the subsequent expression of the notion that 'the Aztec lives unappeased and destructive within the Mexican, the Red Indian lives unappeased and inwardly destructive in the American.'107 In this statement, rather than in the musings on 'polarity', lies the keynote of Lawrence's notions of 'the 'spirit of place'.

Lawrence remarks that Fenimore Cooper's work 'very beautifully gives the myth of the atonement, the communion between the soul of the white man and the soul of the Indian.'108 No doubt Lawrence believed that, in the long distant future, some such communion was possible. It is indeed, perhaps, the great hope, the great desire, that was at the heart of Lawrence's primitivism. In his own writing, however, Lawrence was never as confident as Cooper. In those of Lawrence's works presently under consideration, older, aboriginal peoples always threaten to exert a destructive - indeed, at times, vindictive - influence on both the inhabitants of modern-day Italy and on the British Europeans who have invaded the continents of Australia and America.

The question remains as to whether the aboriginal inhabitants of these places and their destructive influences are at one with - or, indeed, are - the vindictive spirit of the land and hence embody its peculiar daimon, or whether these indigenous inhabitants express a spirit somewhat different to that of the place itself. In commenting on Herman Melville's 'peculiar, lurid, glamorous style which is natural to the great Americans', Lawrence suggests this style comes 'from the violence native to the American Continent, where force is more powerful than consciousness, and so is never

106Ibid.
107Ibid.
gracefully expressed.\textsuperscript{109} Here the land's 'spirit of place' is portrayed as influencing the white inhabitants of modern America directly and without the mediation of the souls of the dead Aztecs and red Indians. But whether the 'spirit of place' is a function of a particular landscape or of the distinctive spirit of the indigenous people who reside within that landscape remains a moot point. Usually, however, in both Lawrence's fiction and non-fiction, the spirit of the indigenous peoples amounts to a force within itself - a force of destruction and of vengeance.

As Lawrence went on to write in Sea and Sardinia:

\begin{quote}
The spirit of the place is a strange thing. Our mechanical age tries to override it. But it does not succeed. In the end the strange, sinister spirit of place, so diverse and adverse in differing places, will smash our mechanical oneness to smithereens, and all that we think the real thing will go off with a pop, and we shall be left staring.\textsuperscript{110}
\end{quote}

This remark was provoked by Lawrence's first view of Cagliari. But here it is not the people of Cagliari, but the landscape, indeed what almost amounts to the 'lost continent' of Cagliari, which provokes this remark. Even the town of Cagliari itself, is a strange elemental, non-human thing:

\begin{quote}
... this curious craggy-studded town, like a great stud of house-covered rock jutting up out of the bay flats...the world's end. And into this world's end starts at Cagliari, and on either side, sudden, serpent-crested hills.

But it still reminds me of Malta: lost between Europe and Africa and belonging to nowhere. Belonging to nowhere, never having belonged to anywhere. To Spain and the Arabs and the Phoenicians most. But as if it had never really had a fate. No fate. Left outside of time and history.\textsuperscript{111}
\end{quote}

In his earlier study of Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking novels, Lawrence attempted to anatomize that novelist's great love:

\begin{quote}
To Fenimore Cooper himself there was one beloved, whom he loved ceaselessly. It was the aboriginal American, beloved in the same way by Longfellow and Prescott, though not so passionately. The great demon, the vast Spirit of Place in the New World, drew him, polarised the whole of his living psyche. Europe was the fixed pole of his cultured ego, his finished self. But she was the extreme negative pole of repulsion to his vital, innermost being. He yearned mystically
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{109}Op.cit., p. 236
\textsuperscript{110}DHL, Sea and Sardinia, op.cit., p. 239.
\textsuperscript{111}Op.cit., p.239
to the soul of his Red brother; he brooded over him and asked for him with superlative desire.

And he dreamed his true marriage with the aboriginal psyche. All futurity for him lay latent, not in the white woman, but in the dark, magnificent presence of American warriors, with whom he would be at one in the ultimate atonement between races.\(^\text{112}\)

Here Lawrence appears more concerned with the influence of an aboriginal people rather than aboriginal place on a particular American writer.

But, as Lawrence later remarked in the 1923 version of his essay on the American writer Richard Henry Dana Jnr, 'Fenimore Cooper's beautiful landscape... is wish-fulfilment, done from a distance.'\(^\text{113}\) It is, in other words, a form of pastoral, and highly unrealistic pastoral at that. In his anatomy of this 'wish-fulfilment, done from a distance' - the unrealistic nature of Cooper's presentation of the 'outpost village' - Lawrence provides an insight into his own later transformation of the village of Thirroul into the demi-arcadian 'Mullumbimby' of Kangaroo:

The book [Pioneers] exists, really, as a wonderful and beautiful picture of an outpost village. It is England- but England lost on the edge of the unknown; England more English and characteristic than England ever was, asserting itself in the toils of the great dark spirit of the continent.

There is the actual village itself - the long, raw street of wooden houses, with wood-fires blinking and flashing through the uncurtained windows, in the winter nights. There is the curious, amusing "Hall" of the village... all this is given with a beauty and magnificence unsurpassable... No man could sufficiently praise the beauty and glamorous magnificence of Cooper's presentation of the aboriginal American landscape, the New World\(^\text{114}\)

Perhaps it was Cooper's presentation of the American outpost village which inspired Lawrence's fictional portrait of Thirroul, for it is perhaps not too great an exaggeration to turn Lawrence's words on their head and suggest that 'no man could sufficiently praise the beauty and glamorous magnificence' of Lawrence's 'presentation of the aboriginal' Australian 'landscape' he found in and around Thirroul. The similarities between Lawrence's portraits of Mullumbimby at dusk and the "School of Arts Library"\(^\text{115}\)(the curious, amusing "Hall" of the village') and the overall 'New World'

\(^{112}\) DHL, The Symbolic Meaning, op.cit., p. 96.
\(^{113}\) DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 106.
\(^{115}\) DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., pp. 218-219.
quality with which they are conveyed, however, suggest that Lawrence may have been
drawing on Cooper's *Pioneers* for inspiration.

Lawrence also sees in Cooper's 'wish-fulfilment, done from a distance', 'the
Red man. . .departing before the advance of civilization'.116 And this leads him to a
restatement of the notion of 'spirit of place', a restatement that melds his horror at the
impact of industrial civilization with the idea that the landscape and its 'spirit of place'
will strike back, avenging itself on European civilization.117

But Lawrence did not restrict his rage to so-called 'modern civilization', to what
is termed in *Kangaroo* 'the myriad intruding white men' trying to establish, as in
Cooper's pioneers, an 'outpost village'. In *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence flies into a
'black, black, black' rage against the 'cursed. . .degenerate aborigines'118 of Sorgono.
They are condemned by:

\[ \ldots \text{the dirty-breasted host who } \text{dared} \text{ to keep such an inn, the} \]
\[ \text{sordid villagers who had the baseness to squat their beastly} \]
\[ \text{human nastiness in this upland valley.}119 \]

Here 'aborigines', though relatively white Sardinian aborigines, are violating the spirit
of their own place in a way which is extraordinarily similar to that of 'the myriad
intruding white man' in Australia. The host of the Sardinian inn, aborigine though he
is, has succumbed to what Lawrence sees as 'the beastly human nastiness' of modern
civilization; he is clearly a qualitatively different human being to the traditional
Sardinian 'peasants in black and white costume': the host violates Sardinia's 'spirit of
place' whereas the peasants appear to embody it.

Genuine indigenes, in contrast to 'degenerate aborigines', can embody a
landscape's 'spirit of place' it would seem. Consequently, the only parts of Sardinia
Lawrence wholly praises are the non-humanized landscapes and the remaining
'peasants in black and white costume' to whom 'The peculiar ancient loneliness of the
Sardinian hills clings. . .and something stiff, static, pre-world.'120 This 'pre-world

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117Op.cit., p. 99. This restatement has been quoted earlier in this chapter at footnote 67.
119Ibid.
120Op.cit., p. 329
quality, something which Lawrence would later term in Australia 'the twilight indifference of the fern world', is precisely that feature of Australia which both attracts and frightens Somers in Kangaroo.

In the passage quoted above it is people, even 'degenerate aborigines', who violate the natural world and wreak havoc on the landscape's 'spirit of place'. Later, in the 1923 version of his essay on Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking novels, Lawrence expresses a more sanguine view of the potential impact of 'the spirit of place':

When you are actually in America, America hurts, because it has a powerful disintegrative influence upon the white psyche. It is full of grinning, unappeased aboriginal demons, too, ghosts, and it persecutes the white men, like some Eumenides, until the white men give up their absolute whiteness. America is tense with latent violence and resistance. The very common sense of white Americans has a tinge of helplessness in it, and deep fear of what might be if they were not common-sensical.

Yet one day the demons of America must be placated, the ghosts must be appeased, the Spirit of Place atoned for. Then the true passionate love for American Soil will appear. As yet there is too much menace in the landscape.

But probably, one day America will be as beautiful in actuality as it is in Cooper. Not yet, however. When the factories have fallen down again.\(^\text{121}\)

In these paragraphs are enmeshed nearly all of Lawrence's notions of 'the spirit of place'. Earlier 'degenerate aborigines', like the Sardinian host, were giving up their aboriginality under the advance of civilization, whereas now, in the passage quoted directly above, Lawrence holds out the hope that 'the myriad intruding white men' will one day come to an 'Aboriginal' appreciation of the land they have usurped. But this way lies pastoral and wish-fulfilment at a very great distance - at some point in the far-distant future 'when the factories have all fallen down again'. That Lawrence cannot wholly believe in such utopian, pastoral utterances is neatly indicated by his use of the word 'probably'.

What Lawrence is saying is that there are ghosts in the landscape, and these ghosts are the souls of the slaughtered indigenes who once embodied in their aboriginality the characteristic spirit of particular places. But this view was expressed in either late 1918 or early 1919. By 1923, after he had written Kangaroo and thus

\(^{121}\text{DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 48.}\)
attempted himself - like the exponents of the classic American literature he admired - to capture in fiction precisely what he had meant when he first coined the notion 'spirit of place', a new element enters his exploratory definitions of the concept.

Having tackled, like Fenimore Cooper before him, the problems of idealizing a landscape, of capturing its glamorous magnificence and in doing so experiencing the pitfalls involved in producing his own very similar version of pastoral - a kind of 'wish-fulfilment, done from a distance' - Lawrence comes to the view that the peculiar spirit of a place is as much a question of race as place - of the impact of aboriginal, living souls on a landscape, rather than the impact of the landscape on those same living souls.122

How does what is termed, in the 1919 version of the essay on Fenimore Cooper's Anglo American novels, 'the soul of the dead Red man', influence the modern American by living 'unappeased and inwardly destructive' within him or her?123 How is this possible when, as Lawrence phrases it in the 1923 essay on Edgar Allen Poe, 'it is only the souls of living men that subtly impregnate. . .continents, and give them their subllest form'?124 The answer would appear to be that once the souls of the living, aboriginal inhabitants of a place 'subtly impregnate' a landscape they do so perpetually. Thus, because modern man has lost his integral soul he becomes subject to 'the soul of the dead red man' and it is for this reason that the indigenous peoples of America live unappeased and inwardly destructive125 in the white Americans and, presumably, the Australian aborigine lives similarly within the 'myriad intruding white men' of Australia.

So, at least in its final utterance, Lawrence's notion of the 'spirit of place' in the Studies is a reasonably clear expression of the view that it is the living souls of human beings which give a landscape its special qualities. His view is that when people, or their living souls, are destroyed, then until the ghosts of those exterminated human beings have been exorcised, it is the living souls of the indigenous peoples which give a landscape its special qualities.
beings are appeased, and atoned for, there will always be 'too much menace in the landscape.' When this will finally take place remains unstated. For Lawrence it is something that will happen 'probably, one day' or, as he states in the 1919 version of the essay on Cooper's Anglo-American novels, 'at length the soul of the dead red man will be at one with the soul of the living white man. And then we shall have a new race.'

In 1919, Lawrence was capable of recognizing that the idea of 'the atonement, the communion between the soul of the white man and the soul of the Indian' was a 'myth' and presumably he could make the same recognition when he wrote in 1923 that while the American 'spirit of place' and its unappeased demons 'must' be atoned for, this would only 'probably' happen 'when the factories have fallen down again.' It is this sort of wishful thinking which lies at the heart of Lawrence's pastoral utopianizing.

Lawrence's notion of 'the spirit of place' thus embodies the hope that, eventually, the genocide of indigenous peoples by the 'myriad intruding white men' would be atoned for and, in the meantime, humanized and non-humanized landscapes will continue exerting an influence on people, both aboriginal and non-aboriginal (people whose souls can be sometimes living, sometimes dead) and who then, in turn, have varying influences - 'so diverse and adverse in differing places', as it is phrased in Sea and Sardinia - on the landscapes they inhabit. Moreover, as Lawrence asserts in the original version of his essay on Fenimore Cooper's Anglo-American novels, all of the above influences function through 'the law of polarity.' According to Lawrence, 'This is an axiom':

Every continent has its own spirit of place. Every people is polarized in some particular locality, which is home, the homeland. Different places on the face of the earth have different vital effluence, different vibration, different chemical

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126 DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 48.
128 Ibid.
129 DHL, Sea and Sardinia, op.cit., p. 239.
exhalation, different polarity with different stars: call it what you like. But the spirit of place is a great reality.\textsuperscript{131}

Why then, if his explicit, non-fictional, expressions of the notion of the 'spirit of place' remain, in the final analysis, based on assertion, is Lawrence so widely regarded as the pre-eminent exponent of the art of evoking the peculiar and special qualities of particular landscapes - England, Italy, Australia, America - in English prose? How is it then that a surprising number of Australians have come to regard a work such as \textit{Kangaroo} as the finest literary evocation of the Australian landscape yet achieved. Is this simply cultural cringing?

Some would answer that it is no more than Lawrence's genius which accounts for his 'miraculous apprehension of landscapes'. But as the Australian writer and critic, Peter Pierce, has written in a review of \textit{D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul}:

There lies a familiar trap for the novel's interpreters. Sometimes lauded as a miraculous apprehension of Australian landscapes, one beyond the intuitive faculties of the native-born, \textit{Kangaroo} treats of the bush vaguely and portentously. Somers thinks of the bush "biding its time with a terrible ageless watchfulness"; finds in it "an old, saurian torpor". That his expressionistic account has been regarded by some as realistic appraisal is a sorry token of cultural dependence.\textsuperscript{132}

What most critics ignore, and Pierce is one of the very few critics who makes it obvious that he realizes this, is how much Lawrence's 'miraculous apprehension of... landscapes' (Australian and otherwise) is based on bluff, how frequently vague and portentous treatments of the natural world substitute for genuine first-hand knowledge and feeling for particular places.

For example, in one passage from \textit{Sea and Sardinia} - a work which like \textit{Kangaroo} is based on little more than six weeks of actual experience of a landscape - Lawrence writes of 'the woods of Gennargentu':

And cork trees! I see curious slim oaky-looking trees that are stripped quite naked below the boughs, standing brown-ruddy, curiously distinct among the bluey-grey pallor of the others. They remind me, again and again, of glowing, coffee-brown, naked aborigines of the South Seas.\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{131}DHL, \textit{Studies in Classic American Literature}, op.cit., pp. 5-6.
\textsuperscript{132}Peter Pierce, 'Putting "Kangaroo" in its place [review of \textit{DHL at Thirroul}]', \textit{Canberra Times}, 24 February 1990.
\textsuperscript{133}DHL, \textit{Sea and Sardinia}, op.cit., p. 276.
Lawrence, of course, wrote this line long before he’d got anywhere near the south seas or seen one of its 'coffee-brown naked aborigines' in the flesh.

Yet even though Lawrence might bluff like this, his self-confidence in his literary powers is so strong, and he is so alive to the particularities of places, that he could make readers feel that he genuinely understood the generalities of their spirits. He can evoke individual elements of a landscape so well - be they human or non-human - that it does not really matter whether it is place or race that determines the special quality, 'daemon' or 'emanation' if you like, of a region or locality. After all, he was a novelist, not a professional philosopher, and (as Pierce notes) Lawrence was always capable of rising to the challenge of the particulars of places. Whether he could name something or not, as with the bluebottles on Thirroul beach, or whether he had actually seen 'the glowing coffee brown aborigines of the south seas', Lawrence's great genius was that he could make readers feel through his prose that both he and they had experienced their presence.

The special quality of the pastoral of solitude which is Kangaroo is that Lawrence, as he would later write of Melville's Moby Dick:

> . . . with sheer physical vibrational sensitiveness, like a marvellous wireless-station, registers the effects of the outer world. And he records also, almost beyond pain or pleasure, the extreme transitions of the isolated, far-driven soul, the soul which is now alone, without any real human contact.\(^{134}\)

There could be no more fitting description of Lawrence's study of Richard Lovatt Somers's responses to the Australian landscapes of Kangaroo.

Lawrence was aware, too, of the dangers of eulogizing a landscape. No doubt even more acutely aware of such dangers after the writing of Kangaroo in 1922, Lawrence remarked in the 1923 version of the Dana essay from the Studies, that 'Thoreau sort of isolated his own bit of locality and put it under the lens, to examine it. He almost anatomized it, with his admiration.'\(^{135}\) And it was this understanding of the dangers of what Thoreau had done which possibly led Lawrence to declare: 'You can't

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\(^{134}\)DHL, *Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit.*, p. 139.

idealize the soil. But you've got to try.'¹³⁶ And perhaps this is why in Lawrence there is always a sense of contrast between the reality of what a landscape really is and what it could or should be (or once had been) before the interfering hand of man and his 'mind-consciousness'.¹³⁷

Lawrence's literary gifts were not for the big picture, but rather, as he saw in Thoreau, for 'isolating his own bit of locality' and focussing in on the particulars of place: the birds, beasts and flowers. As Katharine Susannah Prichard realized,¹³⁸ Lawrence was often wildly inaccurate when it came to general statements about Australia and Australians, but she could never know how perspicuously accurate was Lawrence's prose when it came to capturing the particularities of Thirroul, despite his minor distortions. This in the end is the measure of Lawrence's genius and the measure of a major part of his achievement in Kangaroo.

As a work of fiction, Kangaroo (despite the evidence I have provided to show that, contrary to widely accepted opinion, it does possess an identifiable pastoral superstructure) will probably always be open to as much blame as praise because, on a superficial reading, as Laurie Clancy petulantly remarked, it appears to be 'put together any old how.'¹³⁹ Considered as a travel-book, however, Kangaroo is a work which stands, perhaps, even above the widely regarded tours-de force of Twilight in Italy and Sea and Sardinia. In order to test Kangaroo's claims as a travel-book, it is instructive to examine how closely Kangaroo resembles the non-fictional Sea and Sardinia which preceded it.

Indeed, Sea and Sardinia has so many elements and details in common with Kangaroo that it could almost be termed a non-fictional dry-run for the fictional Kangaroo. Both, for example, took little more than six weeks to write and this alone, apart from even the shared use of the phrase 'the spirit of the place', warrants a

¹³⁶Ibid.
¹³⁸See Katharine Susannah Prichard, Meanjin Quarterly, IX, Summer, 1950, pp. 252-259.
¹³⁹Laurie Clancy, 'Conjecture as an art form' [Review of DHL at Thirroul], Weekend Australian, 1 April, 1988.
comparative examination of their merits as that part of Lawrence's work best described as 'travel literature'.

V

Just as Kangaroo begins with the characters of Somers and Harriett fleeing the 'old world which is done for', Sea and Sardinia begins with Lawrence and the queen bee' (Frieda) fleeing 'the abhorred Etna' and the Sicilians 'who have long lost all notion of what a human being is' and are a 'sort of sulphureous demons.140 Structurally, then, both works begin with an escape. Present, too, at the opening of Sea and Sardinia, is another example of Lawrence's misanthropic utterances:

But let me confess, in parenthesis, that I am not at all sure whether I don't prefer these demons to our sanctified humanity.141

In such an utterance it is also possible to savour something of the chatty, unconcerned narrative voice which is characteristic of both works.

At the outset, in both works, Lawrence's concern for what so-called civilization has done to the landscape is on display. In Kangaroo, Sydney is infected by an eczema-like rash of suburbia whereas, in Sea and Sardinia, the same features of the Italian landscape which irritated Lawrence in Twilight in Italy are said to be present in Sicily:

Nothing can be more depressing than an Italian high-road. From Syracuse to Airolo it is the same: horrible, dreary, slummy high-roads the moment you approach a village or any human habitation. Here there is an acrid smell of lemon juice. There is a factory for making citrate. The houses flush on the road, under the great limestone face of the hill, open their slummy doors, and throw out dirty water and coffee dregs.142

This is the rural equivalent of the litter and tin shacks of suburban Sydney.

Lawrence's description of Messina - 'a squalid earthquake-hopeless port in a lovely harbour'143 - is disturbingly like the image of Australia presented in the first half

140DHL, Sea and Sardinia, op.cit., p. 187.
141Ibid.
of *Kangaroo*. It also provides an intimation of the tidal wave Somers wishes would destroy the violations of 'the continent of the kangaroo' embodied in Sydney and its suburbs and also serves as a harbinger of the 'Volcanic Evidence' chapter. So much that Lawrence saw in Sicily and Sardinia inspired his imagination and served to help fill out his portrait of Australia.

Even the portrait of Australian democracy which makes up the opening chapter of *Kangaroo* owes much to the descriptions Lawrence had written for *Sea and Sardinia*. The crew of the ship on which Lawrence and the 'q-b' travel is subjected to a similar treatment to the Australian workmen in Macquarie Street:

>A gang of the crew leans near me - a larger gang further down. Heaven knows what they can all be - but they can never do anything but stand in gangs and talk and eat and smoke cigarettes... The whole gang looks continually sideways. Nobody ever commands them - there seems to be absolutely no control.144

When they sail to Trapani in Sicily, the Lawrences find that the town is much like the suburban scene Somers and Harriett encounter in Sydney's northern beachside suburbs:

>So we crossed the avenue which looks so beautiful from the sea, and which, when you get into it, is a cross between an outside place where you throw rubbish and a humpy unmade road in a raw suburb, with a few iron seats, and litter of old straw and rag. Indescribably dreary in itself: yet with noble trees, and lovely sunshine, and the sea and the islands gleaming magic beyond the harbour mouth, and the sun, the eternal sun full focussed.145

So much of that which has been praised as marvellously evocative of the Australian scene in *Kangaroo* is not much different from the descriptions of Sicily and Sardinia which Lawrence wrote a year earlier.

The sun of these southern European climes is also as favourably reported as the Australian sun in *Kangaroo*. In *Sea and Sardinia*, Lawrence gives it a very Italian 'lovely strong winey warmth'.146 But the mornings are praised for precisely the same reasons as those described in *Kangaroo*:

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The lovely dawn: the lovely pure, wide morning in the mid-sea, so golden-aired and delighted, with the sea-like sequins shaking, and the sky far, far, far above, unfathomably clear.¹⁴⁷

The beauty is so moving to Lawrence, as it is later for Somers, that it causes him to exult in his role as exile from the old world which is 'done for': 'let me wander aimlessly across this vivid oyster world, the world empty of man, where space flies happily.'¹⁴⁸ It is the idyll of solitude - Lawrence alone together with Frieda (an idyll so familiar to readers of Kangaroo where the names Somers and Harriett are substituted) - expounded yet again. The sea too is once again the initial locus amoenus for the retreat into solitude: 'Happy it was to sit there in the stillness, with nothing but the humanless sea to shine about us.'¹⁴⁹

Even the hum-drum details of tourist life are shared by both works. In Kangaroo it is only 'meat' which is cheap;¹⁵⁰ in Sea and Sardinia, it is only 'eggs'.¹⁵¹ At the end of Sea and Sardinia we experience the same complaints about cab-drivers which open Kangaroo: 'I am weary of that boa-constrictor, a Naples cabman after dark. By day there is more-or-less a tariff.'¹⁵²

Just as a train journey takes Somers and Harriett to the 'real country' in Kangaroo,¹⁵³ so too a train-ride to Mandas takes Lawrence and Frieda to the real, ancient landscape of Sardinia - inland from the coast.¹⁵⁴ Here, as in Mullumbimby, the landscape is said to be reminiscent of Cornwall, England, and Derbyshire. As occurs to Somers in Australia, the similarities of the landscapes of Sardinia and Cornwall provoke in Lawrence 'the old nostalgia for the Celtic regions'.¹⁵⁵ As also happens with Somers and Harriett on the rail journey to Mullumbimby, Lawrence and Frieda encounter 'miners' on a train in Sardinia.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁰ DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 11.
¹⁵¹ DHL, Sea and Sardinia, op.cit., p. 248.
¹⁵³ DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 84.
¹⁵⁴ DHL, Sea and Sardinia, op.cit., p. 258.
Such an encounter with miners in both works is perhaps merely a matter of chance, but when combined with other odd details such as the contempt both books share for the conformity involved in what is termed, in *Sea and Sardinia*, 'khaki democracy', the similarities become more striking. That Lawrence and Frieda are mistaken for 'a pair of Bolshevist agents', just as Somers is thought by Callicott to be 'perhaps a bolshy' on the opening page of *Kangaroo*, is equally striking. *Sea and Sardinia*, then, contains nearly all the 'Bits' that would go to make up *Kangaroo* and thus serves to give the reader some strong premonitions of the structural eccentricities of *Kangaroo*.

In the descriptions of the journey back to Italy which close *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence mentions the newspaper "Corriere della Sera". Frieda Lawrence remarked in her autobiography that the *Corriere* and the Sydney *Bulletin* (from which Lawrence lifted a number of passages for *Kangaroo*) were two of the few newspapers Lawrence genuinely enjoyed. A comment by Lawrence in *Sea and Sardinia* supports Frieda's remark:

... once more I read the "Corriere della Sera" from end to end. Once more we knew ourselves in the real active world, where the air seems like a lively wine dissolving the pearl of the old order. I hope, dear reader, you like the metaphor.

Here, on the same page as the mention of the newspaper, Lawrence again adopts that provocatively chatty narrative tone which so characterizes *Mr Noon* and *Kangaroo*.

In these last pages of *Sea and Sardinia*, we also encounter the other essential elements of *Kangaroo*. The petty fears of mingling, the incipient misanthropy and the hatred of the conformity Lawrence associates with democracy while waiting to buy boat-tickets in a queue:

... one is ground small in those mills of God, Demos struggling for tickets. It isn't very nice - so close, so incomparably crushed. And never for a second must one be off one's guard for one's watch and money and even hanky. When

158 Frieda Lawrence *Not I But The Wind...*, Macmillian Company of Canada, St Martin's House, Toronto, 1934, p. 120.
I first came to Italy after the war I was robbed twice in three weeks, floating around in the sweet old innocent confidence in mankind. Since then I have never ceased to be on guard. Somehow or other, waking and sleeping one's spirit must be on its guard nowadays. Which is really what I prefer, now I have learnt it. Confidence in the goodness of mankind is a very thin protection indeed.\textsuperscript{160}

So much of Lawrence's distaste for Australia begins to seem like leftover hatred for aspects of Italy and Sicily once one has read \textit{Sea and Sardinia}. Lawrence's distaste for 'Vulgar, vulgar post-war commercialism and dog-fish money-stink',\textsuperscript{161} which is ever-present in \textit{Kangaroo}, also surfaces in the last pages of \textit{Sea and Sardinia}. And so too does Lawrence's endless fascination for that which is 'eternally morning glamorous about these lands as they rise from the sea.'\textsuperscript{162}

With the same cavalier indifference to the rules of narrative suspense and plot progression so evident in \textit{Kangaroo}, Lawrence chooses to close \textit{Sea and Sardinia} with the description of a marionette play. In the description, Frieda's passion for this form of theatre is weakly stated but then subsumed by Lawrence's ulterior purpose: to praise 'the generous, hot southern blood, so subtle and spontaneous, that asks for blood contact, not for mental communion or spirit sympathy.'\textsuperscript{163}

This is, of course, the division between blood and mental spiritual consciousness against which Lawrence so often raged. This message ends \textit{Sea and Sardinia}, just as it permeates \textit{Kangaroo} and all his fiction from \textit{The Rainbow} to \textit{Lady Chatterley's Lover}. It is even the leit-motif of his 1923 \textit{Studies in Classic American Literature}, where Lawrence argues that in America 'the mind-consciousness and the so-called spirit triumphs.'\textsuperscript{164} Lawrence's central critique of the white Americans is that 'truly immersed in doing something, with the deep blood-consciousness active... they never are.'\textsuperscript{165} And this is precisely the fault Lawrence also finds in most Australians he fictionally creates.\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{162}Op.cit., p. 381.
\textsuperscript{164}DHL, \textit{Studies in Classic American Literature}, op.cit., p. 81.
\textsuperscript{165}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{166}It is a particular fault of both Callcott and Kangaroo. This same fault probably lies behind most of the general critical remarks Lawrence makes about Australians in his letters.
The seeming chaos of the ending of the non-fictional *Sea and Sardinia*, then, can be seen as the work of a writer preparing the ground for a first attempt at using similar principles in his fiction. This is perhaps why Lawrence gave the following extraordinary advice to Mollie Skinner when urging her to write a book about the early Australian settlers. Mollie Skinner asked Lawrence, but 'What about the story?' and was shocked by his reply:

> [Lawrence] 'You need no story,'
> [Mollie Skinner] 'Construction?'
> 'You need none.' (Later he bitterly condemned me for lack of it.)
> 'I have no time.'
> 'You can take an hour - the same hour - that's very important - daily. Write bit by bit the scenes you have witnessed, the people you know, describing their reactions as you know they do react, not as you imagine they should. You spoil things by rewriting. Write and build up from day to day.'
> 'And what about the end?'
> 'When you've done 80,000 words, throw down your pen.'

Coming from Lawrence, who habitually re-wrote his novels (sometimes more than three times), this is odd advice, but it is precisely what Lawrence had done little more than a year before in *Sea and Sardinia*. He would do it again in a few weeks time at Thirroul.

Certainly, both *Sea and Sardinia* and *Kangaroo* are works which attempt to capture the experience of lives lived on the run and hence lend themselves to the superficially chaotic techniques Lawrence employed. But what holds them together as works of literature is that, for Lawrence, peddling as he nearly always was, the same cherished ideas in each work he wrote, there is a form, roughly akin to a version of pastoral, which holds together all the chaotic, repetitive and disintegrative elements in his writings.

*Kangaroo* and *Sea and Sardinia* may be strikingly similar in their apparent formlessness, but as in nearly all Lawrence's work, the form is inherent in the prose. All his words are overlaid on a perennial series of contrasts: the contrast of the old world and the new, of the northern continents with the southern: of the human with the

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non-human world; and, of course, most importantly of all, the contrast which is at the heart of all pastoral, the contrast of the world which is and the world which might be (or the world which was): one way lies pastoral, the other utopianism, and Lawrence was heir to both traditions.

It, indeed, seems impossible for Lawrence to have written anything without an implied or explicit contrast underpinning every word. In *Sea and Sardinia*, Naples and Sicily are horrid and so is Sydney in *Kangaroo*. But Lawrence's is not a bleak art, a pastoralism of hopelessness, for while one pole of his 'spirits of the place' (as Naples/Sicily in *Sea and Sardinia* or Sydney in *Kangaroo*) can often be presented as black visions of despair, at least there are always places like Sardinia and Thirroul/Mullumbimby in those same works which possess unsullied environments and some few people with redeeming qualities. Indeed, these or similar contrasts are the polarities upon which nearly all Lawrence's 'Spirits of Places' are based.

*Sea and Sardinia* can thus be seen as the non-fictional training ground upon which Lawrence, after a long period of gestation, began the literary exploration of the notions of 'the spirit of place' he had begun to develop in *Twilight in Italy* and had critically honed in the *Studies*. His 'little travel-book', 'little diary' or 'sketch book of Sardinia' as he called it in letters to friends, also gave him the confidence to undertake in *Kangaroo* the most radical experiment with narrative voice he had ever attempted. Although the similarities of *Sea and Sardinia* and *Kangaroo* are legion, the essential difference between the two works is largely a light of fiction: *Kangaroo* presents a Lawrence who is often not quite Lawrence (and, more often than is generally realized, *not at all* Lawrence) along with a narrator who is supposed to be the objective and authentic spokesperson for the Australian 'spirit of place', whereas Lawrence, as Lawrence, is the sole and subjective delineator of the peculiar daimon of Sardinia.

On the 30th September, 1919, Lawrence had written revealingly in a letter that his 'classic American essays...contain a whole Weltanschaung - new, if old'. It is

168 DHL to Martin Secker 14/1/1921 in *The Letters of DHL Volume 3*, op.cit., p. 648; DHL to Robert Mountsier 21/1/1921 op.cit., p. 650; and DHL to Mary Cannan 12/2/1921, op.cit., p. 664.

169 DHL to Benjamin Huebsch 30/9/1919 in *The Letters of DHL Volume 3*, op.cit., p. 400.
a large claim, yet in the Studies it is possible to trace the development of nearly all of the elements of the loosely-melded artistic and political sensibility which was soon to burst forth in what was, for Lawrence, a new kind of novel. The bare bones of some of the vagaries of Sea and Sardinia had, to some extent, been laid down years before in Twilight in Italy and would, many years later, take on new shapes in the reckless fictional art of Kangaroo. But it was, pre-eminently, the critical investigations undertaken in writing the Studies in Classic American Literature (a writing and rewriting which took place over more than seven years)\textsuperscript{170} that provided Lawrence with the Weltanschaung which really honed the unique artistic and political consciousness which was to result in the 'queer show' of Kangaroo.

Kangaroo, then, is the culmination of the preoccupations of almost a decade. It is perhaps not surprising therefore to find in it nearly all the concerns we today recognize as distinctly Lawrentian, or that the more modern literary strategies Lawrence employs in Kangaroo are placed over some very old literary structures - techniques and structures which he had noted in the Studies were employed by Cooper and the other great Americans when they created their distinctly 'American' responses to place.

Lawrence's approach to developing an 'aboriginal' or 'Australian' response to the 'place' he encountered in Thirroul was perhaps a more conscious and critically-informed, if quickly written, process than the classic art of the Americans, but it is still possible to apply Lawrence's own words to his Australian novel: artistically it 'contains a whole Weltanschaung - new, if old'.

VI

While Lawrence's Sea and Sardinia and Kangaroo are literary works which are loosely held together by a strikingly similar series of structural contrasts, the long introduction to Maurice Magnus's Memoirs which Lawrence completed in January,

\textsuperscript{170}The first mention by Lawrence that he is reading Crevecoeur, Melville and Dana occurs in a letter to Amy Lowell 23/8/1916. See The Letters of DHL, op.cit., Volume 2, p. 645. The clearest indication that he had conceived the project of the Studies occurs in a letter to Robert Mountsiuer 4/1/1917. See The Letters of DHL, op.cit., Volume 3, p. 65.
1922, has an equally strong bearing on the pastoral 'plot' of the fictional Kangaroo. Indeed, it sets forth, non-fictionally, the self-same dilemma faced by Richard Lovatt Somers, although the site of that dilemma is the actual Monte Cassino and not the fictional 'Mullumbimby'. It is also, apart from the translations of Verga, the last major work he completed before beginning Kangaroo.

Lawrence only became further embroiled with Magnus, whom he disliked, because of a desire to see the Monastery of Monte Cassino, where Magnus was pretending (or perhaps deluding himself) that he wished to remain as a member of a religious order.\textsuperscript{171} The tone of Lawrence's 'Introduction' is varied. At first the mood is light and gently comic, but the introduction then develops a complex expression of intense nostalgia.\textsuperscript{172} Looking out from the window of Magnus's monastery cell, his sensibility heightened by the splendour of Monte Cassino's medievalism, Lawrence comes to the view that the pastoral beauty of the monastery and its environs are absent from the modern world.

Looking out on a farming countryside - not dissimilar, he notes, to the Eastwood in which he grew up - Lawrence adopts an attitude not unlike the wistfulness towards isolated, unreflective, rural living sometimes expressed in his first pastoral The White Peacock.\textsuperscript{173} Such an experience causes Lawrence to consider, once again, what is lost and what is gained by the movement from the ancient rural world with its especial sensibilities and traditions into the realms of modern industrial civilization where he is ineluctably a 'child of the present.'\textsuperscript{174}

Lawrence's response to the allure of the pastoral impulse, however, is as complex as that of Shakespeare in Cymbeline. He too shares something of that ambiguity and complexity of feeling epitomized in the words: 'most miserable is the

\textsuperscript{171}The site of this encounter (a monastery as refuge from the world for both a pompous little swindler like Magnus and a 'thought-adventurer' like Lawrence) is itself redolent of at least one aspect of the traditional pastoral retreat.

\textsuperscript{172} See David Cavitch, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 123-124, who says something similar, noting both Lawrence's 'nostalgia' and 'The pastoral beauty of the place'.


\textsuperscript{174} DHL, 'Introduction' to \textit{Memoirs of the Foreign Legion}, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 318.
desire that's glorious'. Like the refugees from the corrupt court in Cymbeline, Lawrence's first impulse is that of the traditional pastoral retreat, to withdraw from the race of life and sequester himself within a Monte Cassino which preserves 'that lingering nonchalance and wildness of the Middle Ages'.

The world of pastoral, however, even when encountered in real-life, is not for Lawrence a simple literary matter. And it does not provoke in Lawrence an entirely favourable response:

It was so strange from M-'s window to look down on the plain and see the white road going straight past a mountain that stood like a loaf of sugar, the river meandering in loops, and the railway with glistening lines making a long black swoop across the flat and into the hills. To see the station like a little harbour where trucks like shipping stood anchored in rows in the black bay of railway. To see trains stop in the station and tiny people swarming like flies! To see all this from the monastery, where the Middle Ages live on in a sort of agony, like Tithonus, and cannot die, this was almost a violation to my soul, and almost a wound.

Monte Cassino is an anachronism and Lawrence knows it. Yet, drawn to it as he is, Lawrence suffers a 'violation' to his soul in rejecting it. But reject it he must:

We were seated, in the sunny afternoon, on the wild hill-top high above the world. Across the stretch of pale, dry, standing thistles that peopled the waste ground, and beyond the rocks was the ruined convent. Rocks rose behind us, the summit. Away on the left were the woods which hid us from the great monastery. This was the mountain top, the last foothold of the old world. Below we could see the plain, the straight white road, straight as a thought, and the more flexible black railway with the railway station. There swarmed the ferrovieri like ants. There was democracy, industrialism, socialism, the red flag of the communists and the red, white and green tricolour of the fascisti. That was another world. And how bitter, how barren a world! Barren like the black cinder-track of the railway, with its two steel lines.

And here above, sitting with the little stretch of pale, dry thistles around us, our back to a warm rock, we were in the Middle Ages. Both worlds were agony to me. But here, on the mountain top was worst: the past, the poignancy of the not-quite-dead past.

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"I think one's got to go through with the life down there - get somewhere beyond it. One can't go back," I said to him.\textsuperscript{178}

While writing this introduction to Magnus's \textit{Memoirs}, Lawrence was clearly once again contemplating the alternatives of either a life of pastoral withdrawal or further purposive activity in the world. And these are the alternatives with which he confronts his fictional protagonist, Richard Lovatt Somers, little more than five months later in \textit{Kangaroo}.\textsuperscript{179} These are, in short, the alternatives, the polarities, which structure the novel he would come to write in Australia. The ancient monastic order at Monte Cassino was especially appealing to Lawrence as an example of those aspirations he gives to Somers in \textit{Kangaroo} - the desire for brotherhood and a limited form of community. But what it does not provide is 'activity in the world of men.' On the threshold of the pastoral cloister, Lawrence realizes that "...one's got to go through with the life down there'.

However, as perversely as is the case with Somers in \textit{Kangaroo}, once he is back in the world of men, among the cities of the coast, Lawrence feels torn away from all that once drew him with its allure:

There on the steamer I sat in a bit of sunshine, and felt that again the world had come to an end for me, and again my heart was broken. The steamer seemed to be making its way away from the old world, that had come to another end in me.\textsuperscript{180}

It is a passage reminiscent of the close of the English version of \textit{Kangaroo}, only that in \textit{Kangaroo} the steamer has become a streamer.\textsuperscript{181} In \textit{Kangaroo}, the broken streamer is now a metaphor for the broken heart of the 'Introduction' to Magnus's \textit{Memoirs}.

\textsuperscript{178}\textit{Op.cit.}, pp. 324-325. It is a passage closely akin to the view expressed by Gudrun in \textit{Women In Love}: ""Yes," she said. "In a way, one is of the world if one lives in it. But isn't it really an illusion to think you can get out of it? After all, a cottage in the Abruzzi, or wherever it may be, isn't a new world. No, the only thing to do with the new world, is to see it through."' (\textit{Women in Love, op.cit.}, p. 493)

\textsuperscript{179}Indeed, \textit{Kangaroo} expresses the decision in almost exactly the same language as the 'Introduction' to Magnus's \textit{Memoirs}: "'You have got to go through the mistakes. You've got to go all round the world, and then half-way around again, till you get back. Go on, go on, the world is round, and it will bring you back. Draw your ring around the world, the ring of consciousness. Draw it round until it is complete.'" (DHL, \textit{Kangaroo, op.cit.}, p. 403)

\textsuperscript{180}DHL, 'Introduction' to \textit{Memoirs of the Foreign Legion, op.cit.}, p. 328.

\textsuperscript{181}The American version ends with the sentence: 'The last streamers blowing away, like broken attachments, broken.' The English edition gives the word 'broken' slightly more emphasis and links it more closely to the Magnus 'Introduction' by adding the word 'heartstrings' before adding almost a full page of additional text. See DHL, \textit{Kangaroo, op.cit.}, p. 418 and DHL, \textit{Kangaroo}, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1976, p. 393.
The secluded pastoral life of a monastic community, becalmed in the rural traditions of the Middle Ages, has an immense allure, just as did the woods of Lawrence's childhood. But the sight of the old peasant walking on the slope of the monastery hill causes Lawrence to consider the grave limitations of such a pastoral existence, an existence like that of the Brangwen men at the beginning of The Rainbow, as 'having no idea, no sustained emotion',\(^{182}\) compelled, as Cavitch argues, 'by insentient, strong blood to keep on with the eternal round of sameness.'\(^{183}\) To follow such a life would be a regression into primitivism. One can't go back, as Lawrence recognized both here and in his later observations on the Pueblo Indians:

They. . .have their backs set against our form of civilization. Yet it rises against them. In the pueblo they have mowing machines and threshing machines, and American schools, and the young men no longer care so much for the sacred dances. - And after all, if we have to go ahead, we must ourselves go ahead. We can go back and pick up some threads - but these Indians are up against a dead wall, even more than we are: but a different wall.\(^{184}\)

High on Monte Cassino, Lawrence saw in the 'woods. . .the last foothold of the old world.' Down below were railways 'and democracy, industrialism, socialism, the red flag of the communists and the red, white and green tricolor of the fascisti.' But that was a 'bitter', 'barren. . .world!'\(^{185}\) It is with these two alternatives that Lawrence confronted the fictional Richard Lovatt Somers: Mullumbimby and 'the continent of the kangaroo' as the last foothold of the old world, on the one hand; and Sydney suburbia with its 'democracy', 'industrialism', the 'socialism' of Struthers and the opposing 'colours' of 'fascisti' like Kangaroo and Callcott, on the other.

Like Lawrence himself, Somers finally decides not to withdraw from the world, but to leave Australia and 'go through with the life down there' in order to 'get somewhere beyond it.'\(^{186}\) But to 'get beyond it' is the difficult thing. And Lawrence explains Magnus's nostalgia for the illusory perfection of monastic life at Monte

\(^{183}\) David Cavitch, op.cit., p. 125.
\(^{184}\) DHL to Else Jaffe 27/9/1922 in The Letters of DHL, op.cit., Volume 4, p. 310.
\(^{185}\) DHL, 'Introduction' to Memoirs of the Foreign Legion, op.cit., p. 325
\(^{186}\) Ibid.
Cassino by noting that Magnus 'lives in fear of his own self and its consequences'.

It is to the task of recognizing the self and its consequences that Lawrence devotes so many of his philosophical musings in Kangaroo.

One of the great obstacles to the recognition of each person's own self and its consequences is provided by the horror of mass war, a topic to which Lawrence devotes considerable attention both in Kangaroo and the introduction to the Memoirs. As David Cavitch has expressed it in a marvellously comprehensive summary of the final section of Lawrence's 'Introduction':

Accepting responsibility for himself, as Magnus would not do, Lawrence is disenchanted by any alternatives to the world of commerce and nationalism that appeared repulsive from the mountaintop. The hope of love and unity prevailing in the contemporary industrial system seems bitterly impossible. Mass wars are fought in the modern world, and men - like Magnus - vilely exploit one another even in friendships. Lawrence's distress over men's aggressions rises to the edge of hysteria following his descent from the mountain, as he denounces the sophisticated weaponry that gives effect to a pure, abstract lust to kill. The real world to which Lawrence sadly returns affords him "no eternal union with a man," but, instead, strife and consciousness of solitude in his efforts to establish his relationships to the people and the world around him. For this decisive moment, Lawrence recognizes that his nostalgic dream of perfect life is fed by his excessive fear of man's aggression, the "fear of his own self and its consequences," that he identified in Magnus. Wrestling with his fear, he rages against warfare to say that he can triumph morally over the worst that man can do.

The search for the place where this was possible was to dog Lawrence for the rest of his life. And though he succeeded in marvellously evoking the spirits of so many of the places he encountered, he could never ultimately hope to completely succeed in his quest for the perfect place.

It was quite literally a search for Utopia. Lawrence's and his character's lives involved a perpetual, and ultimately illusory, search for 'the spirit' of this place: the spirit of no-place. Behind it all was a kind of wishful thinking which lies at the heart of the pastoral impulse.

188 David Cavitch, op. cit., pp. 127-128 (italics mine).
THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES
OF LAWRENCE'S PHILOSOPHY OF
THE SELF
FROM STUDIES IN CLASSIC AMERICAN LITERATURE TO KANGAROO

Lawrence's 'quest for the self' in Kangaroo, just as it was conducted in many of his other novels, proved a most elusive search. Revealing the 'innate nature of man' was not something he believed could be easily achieved. Nor did Lawrence want it to be, as he explained in the essay 'Why The Novel Matters': 'woe betide me if I try to put my finger on it. If I say of myself, I am this, I am that! - then, if I stick to it, I turn into a stupid fixed thing like a lamp-post'.

So, when the narrator in Kangaroo makes the paradoxical assertion that 'Life makes no absolute statement', he is merely giving voice to both the techniques of structure and characterization on which Kangaroo is based. The philosophy which led to the adoption of these techniques is expressed with some clarity in 'Why the Novel matters':

We should ask for no absolutes, or absolute. Once and for all and for ever, let us have done with the ugly imperialism of any absolute. There is no absolute good, there is nothing absolutely right. All things flow and change, and even change is not absolute. The whole is a strange assembly of apparently incongruous parts, slipping past one another.

Clear as such a statement may be, there is some justification, as Aidan Burns has done, in applying Bertrand Russell's mark about Wittgenstein to Lawrence himself, to wit, that he 'seemed to have a great deal to say about what cannot be said'. But that is presumably the reason that Lawrence became a novelist and not a professional philosopher.

Nevertheless, it is possible to posit at least a sense of how Lawrence in both Kangaroo and the Studies, in an essentially polemic way, came to a relatively clear

enunciation of his understanding of the self and its relation to society. It is a question of much interest to Marxists and it is one which, in my view, Lawrence was able to resolve in a way which takes the views of Marx in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* in a direction similar to that of William Morris; thereby unravelling those puzzles, those moral cul-de-sacs, which society creates but which are not necessarily solvable by societal means. Burns expresses the dilemma well, arguing that, while the Americans correctly stressed 'the importance of freedom', they misunderstood it, failing to recognize 'just how much of the old European self they carried with them into the New World and they gravely misunderstood the extent to which the self is determined by the natural and social environment in which it flourishes. The great question, as Burns correctly recognizes, which this dilemma raises for Lawrence is:

Can the self be seen on the one hand as dependent upon its social relations and on the other as natural entity more often than not frustrated and destroyed by the social milieu into which it is thrown?

The political consequences of trying to deal with such dilemmas, are perhaps most clearly expressed in Lawrence's essay on Benjamin Franklin in *Studies in Classic American Literature*. Against the notion of the perfectibility of man, and against Franklin's enunciation of the behaviour necessary for such perfectibility, Lawrence baulks:

> The wholeness of man is his soul. Not merely that nice little comfortable bit which Benjamin marks out. It's a queer thing is a man's soul. It is the whole of him. Which means it is the unknown him, as well as the known. It seems to me just funny, professors and Benjamins fixing the functions of the soul. Why, the soul of man is a vast forest, and all Benjamin intended was a neat back garden.

But Lawrence does not perceive the soul or the self as being susceptible to rational expression. It cannot be expressed because its 'nature' cannot rationally be known in the first place. It's all a question of 'blood-consciousness', the 'dark forest',

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4 Lawrence use the term 'cul-de-sac' in 'Why The Novel Matters', op.cit., p. 536. He avoids the plural culs-de-sac.

5 Aidan Burns, op.cit., p. 6.


the 'dark gods'. The problem for Lawrence and his philosophy of the self, in rationalist terms, is that what Aidan Burns terms 'the dark forest of the human soul' is 'finally mysterious and radically unintelligible'.8 Benjamin Franklin, however, can not comprehend this because his view of the self is 'dwarfed by the concepts in which he is able to conceive it':

It is a classic case of what Birkin meant in Women in Love when he speaks of being imprisoned within a false set of concepts. When Ursula is teaching her class about catkins Hermione claims that the children are damaged when they are stimulated to consciousness too soon; that knowledge kills all spontaneity and all instinct, and that the development of our mind is our very death. To which Birkin replies: 'Not because they have too much mind, but too little. . . [They are] imprisoned within a limited, false set of concepts.'9 The expression 'not too much mind, but too little' seems to get it exactly right, though I am not sure it was always Lawrence's way of expressing it. For it opens up the possibility of an enlarged reason which can include the dark forest and at the same time provides a footing which can prevent the slide into total irrationality. As we shall see, Lawrence is continually striving to break the stranglehold of false concepts by producing in the novels an enlarged experience which itself constitutes the kind of knowledge which transcends them.10

In Kangaroo then Lawrence proceeds to pit the 'rationality' and 'order' of British civilization against the irrational anarchy Somers, at first, believes has been imparted to Australian democracy by the spirit of the land. For Lawrence's 'British Australians', as for Fenimore Cooper's Americans, the old European self has been brought into conflict with both the indigenous peoples and the aboriginal spirit of their respective lands. And, as I have shown in the previous chapter, Lawrence saw Cooper's idea of a blood-brother relationship between the European consciousness and the aboriginal psyche as a version of pastoral, of wish-fulfilment.

Lawrence saw Cooper as working toward a deeper level of human relationship, much like the one that Somers at first seeks with Kangaroo:

A stark, stripped human relationship of two men, deeper than the deeps of sex. Deeper than property, deeper than fatherhood, deeper than marriage, deeper than love.11

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8Aidan Burns, op.cit., p. 13.
9 This quotation is from Women in Love, op.cit., p. 45.
10Aidan Burns, op.cit., p. 12.
11DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 51.
According to Lawrence, Cooper's Leatherstocking novels 'create the myth of this new relation.'\textsuperscript{12} Recognizing it as a myth, however, Lawrence, in turn, conjures the possibility of creating a similar myth in \textit{Kangaroo}, but mercilessly contrives it so that the Somers/Cooley relationship breaks down under the weight of its own abstract verbiage. Lawrence also shows, utilizing Melvilles's nautical metaphor in the 'Harriett and Lovatt at Sea in Marriage' chapter of \textit{Kangaroo}, how male-female relationships will break down under the strain of verbal abstraction because Somers (and presumably Lawrence himself) believe there are, to use Burns's words, 'dimensions of the self which lie even deeper than such language':

\begin{quote}
This is why... in \textit{Women in Love} Birkin will not say he loves Ursula; he does not want his future imprisoned within the confines of that word nor will he be stifled by the awful weight of history which it carries.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

In Lawrence's view, it is only without the help of the old wordy abstractions of 'the perfect lover' and 'ideal marriage'\textsuperscript{14} that the work necessary for the creation of a new social order, based on a fluid and changing search for the individual self within us all, is possible.

The upshot of all this, in \textit{Kangaroo} at least, is that the sacrifice of reason to the blood-consciousness of the dark-forest has alarming, ultimately lethal, consequences in the case of Callcott and more benign ones in Somers. In Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking Novels, the encounter between a displaced European such as Natty Bumppo and an indigene like Chingachook has the potential to be liberating. What is different in \textit{Kangaroo} is that it is not an encounter with someone who reflects the benign spirit of a place, but the encounter with the place itself that is potentially liberating. The experience of 'the continent of the kangaroo' begins to erode those restrictive notions of order and stability and class which European culture has imposed on Somers's understanding of both himself and the universe. They help him to break free of the false concepts which the narrator explicitly identifies as 'wrong' at the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[Ibid.]
\item[Burns, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 15.]
\item[DHL, \textit{Kangaroo, op.cit.}, p. 194.]
\end{footnotes}
beginning of the novel. From this point his experience of the Australian continent and its people begins to open Somers up to the 'dark forest'\textsuperscript{15} in his soul and put him once again in touch with the deeper resources of his nature. It also opens up the novel structurally, imparting to Lawrence a freedom to respond to the continent multifariously, to incorporate conflicting viewpoints, artistically free of the ordered and abstract literary conventions of so many of his contemporaries.

The political vision is clear enough, but how it is to be achieved remains undeveloped. Positive freedom, Lawrence wrote in the \textit{Studies}, depends upon the individual's place in 'a living, organic \textit{believing} community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose.'\textsuperscript{16} As Raymond Southall has noted,\textsuperscript{17} such a community is adumbrated in the portrait of the citizens of Mullumbimby in \textit{Kangaroo}. But it is a political vision surprisingly akin to Cooper's wish-fulfilment. Presumably, it too will be finally achieved in life at some distant point in the future when all the factories have fallen down.

In practical political terms, all \textit{Kangaroo} can do is present a Romantic view of the self into which Somers is constantly questing to retreat. In keeping with the form of modern pastoral novels, the locus of this retreat ('the soul of man') is 'a vast forest'.\textsuperscript{18} But the new society composed of people who had delved the depths of their dark 'vast forest' would comprise a much vaster forest than the neat back garden implied by the place and the people of Lawrence's Mullumbimby.

The tensions between the individual and society and the dualisms which Lawrence developed in order to explain and solve these tensions are what has got him into most political and literary trouble with critics and philosophers. The difficulty arises, I feel, because Lawrence expresses his ideas, in \textit{Kangaroo} and elsewhere, in

\textsuperscript{15}See DHL, \textit{Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit.}, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{17}See the blurb which he wrote for the Collins Imprint edition of \textit{Kangaroo, op.cit.} We have also discussed this privately, and I am indebted to him for the insight. Lawrence's depiction of the bus-passengers as an idealized political community is taken up in chapters 12 and 13 of the thesis.
\textsuperscript{18}DHL, \textit{Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit.}, p. 10.
terms of so many dualities. Rick Rylance has provided a marvellously comprehensive summary of the dualities which impinge on both Somers and the text of Kangaroo:

Politically, the novel...shows Lawrence's alert sense of how the private and public, the personal and the political, might become confused...Meanwhile, ideologically, Somers is in utter confusion, and a range of options are held in tense opposition until none appears finally attractive: sprawling suburban democracy is opposed to the beautiful natural world (though the natural world itself also appears frighteningly empty and unsolacing); unionist socialism is opposed to rightist authoritarianism; commitment to freedom; marriage to male bonding, love to violence and the pursuit of political power. Thus helpless social ideals and ideological certainties are juxtaposed with Somers' engrossed, uncertain self-assessment...What this difficult dialectical method does to the politics of a novel like Kangaroo is to scupper any sense of a firm solution. The form of the book reflects this. It is tellingly non-linear in narrative, and moves disconcertingly in time, tone and perspective. It brings together diverse bits of writing to jostle against each other...Kangaroo is like The Waste Land in prose; a critical inquiry whose shape comes from the distress of its personally felt predicament.19

This 'personally felt predicament' was one I feel Lawrence shared with Marx, who insisted that, within capitalist society, people will be divided against themselves, torn between their social nature as humans and the demands of private property and profit, for as long as they are forced to live within a society in which social relations are so often reduced to the level of commodity fetishism. Like the Marxism, to which it is, to some extent a counterpart, Lawrence's political position, to use the words of Northrop Frye in a different context to which they were originally intended, is based on a 'revolutionary attitude, but unlike Marxism it imposes no specific social obligations on the person who holds it.20

Unlike Lawrence's political thinking, the dualism in Marxist thought is based on the opposing interests of the working class and the bourgeoisie. Lawrence, however, saw the tensions resulting from such an opposition differently and far more multifariously - although there can be little doubt that one particular split in human development becomes the over-riding dualism within his political and social thinking.

19Rick Rylance, 'Lawrence's politics', op.cit., p. 171.
In the 'Study of Thomas Hardy', he had recognized 'the division of man against himself' in the way that Hardy's characters are always torn 'between the demands of community and the urgings of individuality'. Lawrence's own writings, however, are informed by an over-riding dualism which sees each individual in modern society torn between what he termed, 'blood-consciousness' and 'mentaland spiritual consciousness' or, as he expresses it in his essay on 'Hawthorn's "Blithedale Romance"', 'a dual consciousness, of which the two halves are most of the time in opposition to one another' - and will be so long as time lasts. But, as Aidan Burns has recognized, this is not quite 'what Lawrence is saying'. Lawrence, like a good dialectician, is able to synthesize his dialectical antitheses:

The real self is to be identified with neither principle. For there is a third principle which lies deeper than either blood or mind; it is a unifying principle which enables us to discriminate, which tells us when to choose the blood and when to choose the mind. He calls it the Holy Ghost [and this is precisely what Lawrence calls it in Kangaroo and some of his other writings].

Bertrand Russell, therefore, is mistaken in speaking of Lawrence's mystical philosophy of the blood, when he implies that Lawrence was preaching a complete surrender to the blood-consciousness. On the other hand, Lawrence's insistence on the separation and total independence of the two seats of consciousness was bound to generate confusion, especially when he insists that a choice must be made between them. Furthermore, in his efforts to redress what he saw as the excessive importance given in his time to the mind - and here Russell was one of the chief offenders - he does tend to place undue emphasis on the 'irrational'. But here he must be seen as trying to correct an imbalance, so that his non-fiction, and at times even his fiction [and this is very true of Kangaroo], is

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21 The phrasing I have used is from W.J. Keith, Regions of the Imagination, op.cit., p. 146. He, however, is referring to The Lost Girl and not to Lawrence's study of Hardy. For Lawrence's remarks, see 'Study of Thomas Hardy' (chapter III) in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of DHL, op.cit., p. 411.

22 DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 99. Curiously, Lawrence also makes reference to the thinning down of the blood in this context: '...the harder a man works at mental labour, at idealism, at transcendental occupations, the thinner becomes his blood, and the more brittle his nerves.'

23 In Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 347, the narrator declares: '...it is the bolt-fly of the Holy Ghost, unlistened to, that is the real cause of everything.' Moreover, In 'Hawthorn's "Blithedale Romance"' (Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 97) Lawrence contends that:

The Holy Ghost doesn't forgive because the Holy Ghost is within you. The Holy Ghost is you: your very You. So if, in your conceit of ego, you make a break in your own YOU, in your own integrity, how can you be forgiven? You might as well make a rip in your own bowels. You know if you rip your own bowels they will go rotten and you will go rotten. And there's an end of you, in the body.

The same if you make a breach within your own Holy Ghost. You go soul-rotten.'
polemical. He knew that in a different climate different things would need to be stressed.\textsuperscript{24}

In \textit{Kangaroo} it is possible to see that although Lawrence was drawn, like Herman Melville, to the manifestations and representatives of less conscious (so-called more 'primitive') cultures, he understood that to become like them would involve a regression in conscious life that was by no means desirable. Jack Callcott in \textit{Kangaroo} is the epitome of the tragic consequences of regression to such a state by someone possessing a European consciousness. Lawrence himself had been subject to such temptations and, like Melville, had recognized their futility. He now knows, he tells us, that there can be no going back:

\ldots Melville couldn't go back: and Gauguin couldn't really go back: and I know now that I could never go back. Back towards the past, savage life. One cannot go back. It is one's destiny inside one.\textsuperscript{25}

Lawrence's verdict in the \textit{Studies} is that it is just wish-fulfilment, a version of 'primitive' pastoral to think that we can.\textsuperscript{26}

As has been noted in an earlier chapter, Lawrence wrote in a letter dated September 27, 1922, speaking of the Taos Indians: 'We can go back and pick up some threads, but these Indians are up against a dead wall, even more than we are'.\textsuperscript{27}

'Consequently', argues Burns, Lawrence's:

\ldots interest in primitive peoples must be seen as this picking up of the threads and nothing more. For he recognizes that a purely natural, inchoate self, uninfluenced by language or society, is not a reality and certainly not a goal worth striving after; the self is a product of nature and society. His fears are centred on society's tendency to inhibit further developments by petrifying, in a conceptual framework, some earlier stage of growth.

\ldots Since man's freedom is destroyed by his enslavement to traditional concepts of the self or of right, it can only be restored when he finds the courage to act independently of such concepts. He must not bind himself to any mental concepts whatever; not to the idea of self-sacrifice, nor to the idea of

\textsuperscript{24}Burns, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{25}\textit{DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit.}, p. 129.
\textsuperscript{26}See Burns, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 15, where he makes a similar point, although he disagrees with Lawrence's criticism of Cooper.
\textsuperscript{27}\textit{DHL to Else Jaffe 27/9/1922 in The Letters of DHL Volume 4, op.cit.}, p. 310. The passage has been quoted in greater detail in the previous chapter at footnote 184.
love, nor even to the idea of sex. The future of the self is the Open Road. On the negative side the picture here is like Sartre's. The individual must never be subject to any extrinsic system of rules. But unlike Sartre, Lawrence insists that he must subject himself to something other than his own freedom. This something is the soul, the Holy Ghost or the dark forest. These expressions, as Lawrence demands, remain obscure. For it is not always an easy thing to distinguish those inspirations which come from the dark forest from more transient impulses deriving from sources in our conscious life which are less fully human. 28

This latter statement may sound all far too hopelessly reified and obscure, but at the back of all such explorations by Lawrence is a view that is not entirely incompatible with Marxism. Though each self is individual and isolated, like that of Richard Lovatt Somers, for a real rather than abstract life to be led it requires contact with other selves. Lawrence's notion of the self is thus, implicitly, a recognition that man is both an individual and a truly social being. It is thus not against the social nature of man per se that Somers polemically rails, only against the ultimately fascist idealizations of Cooley and the frequently racist abstractions of Struthers's socialism. He seeks pastoral solitude only while both individuals and society continue to divorce themselves from their true natures and their 'natural' places in the social world. *Kangaroo* shows Lawrence as an author reluctant to commit himself to any creed, but still more in tune with the fundamental insights of Marxism than with the perversions of fascism. His extreme concern with the largely non-rational and ineffable bases of individualism, and his despair with the state of modern society, appear to have leant Lawrence, for a time at least, towards at least some degree of sympathy for the individualistic (and indeed occasionally terroristic) solutions offered by the disruptive politics of anarchism.

In his novels, however, Lawrence never offers full support to any existing political creed. He particularly detests the words, the abstractions and idealizations, by which politics is conventionally expressed. He is interested in more fundamental changes in society, more concerned with the life that is lived in people's relationships to each other and to the natural world - with 'politics' (as the business of living) conducted beneath the level of verbal chatter.

It is a difficult thing to achieve in words. And it is something at which Lawrence hinted in the masterly opening chapter of *The Rainbow* where words are used to convey the non-verbal experience of both the attractions and the limitations of a life lived in tune with the rhythms of nature. It is also hinted at in Lawrence's literary conduct of the early relationship between Lydia Lensky and Tom Brangwen, when, because of their inadequate grasp of each other's languages, the relationship develops more in the absence than presence of 'words'. And it is to the unconventional, non-verbal politics of Lawrence's *Kangaroo* that the next chapter devotes most of its attention.
'THE MEANINGLESSNESS OF MEANINGS'¹
CONVENTIONAL POLITICS AND SEXUAL POLITICS AS RED-HERRINGS IN KANGAROO

In Kangaroo, Lawrence delights in dashing his more conventional reader's expectations. Jaz's seemingly sinister and conspiratorial midnight visit to Jack at the end of chapter three, for example, gives the appearance of being a significant development in plot. Instead of being taken up by Lawrence it is simply dropped. Similarly, later it appears almost certain that Somers will willingly allow himself to be seduced by Victoria (after all she has earlier spent an entire car-trip making eyes at Somers), but Lawrence constructs it in such a way that Somers develops a convenient bout of puritanism and runs off home.

Even more surprisingly, as early as chapter four, Somers declares that he really does not 'care about politics' and then, less than a page later, asserts that 'no sort of politics will help the country'.² Despite the continual flux of Somers's position, the reader is given a very good indication that Somers will reject both Kangaroo and Struthers long before he conclusively gets round to doing so. As a novel detailing an attempted political conversion of an individual, a contest of wills between Cooley and Callcott and Struthers and Jaz for the political conscience of Somers, it is clearly a conscious failure.³ Why then does Lawrence spend so much time, particularly in the case of Struthers, detailing political views which the reader has good reason to suspect are ultimately inconsequential to Somers? Is the novel's long discussion of the politics of both Kangaroo and Struthers simply a giant red-herring?

My answer is multi-fold. On the most basic level, all the talk about politics helps to fill-up the 'plot' of a novel Lawrence wrote at break-neck speed and with the

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¹DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 390.
³Rick Rylance (op.cit., p. 171) demonstrates this well when he argues that Kangaroo 'dramatizes its political problem' by playing 'off settled conviction (generally pictured as misguided) against Somers's bewildered searching. Competing political opinions are put at arm's length because they cannot be integrated with personal need.'
conscious of aim of jettisoning 'plot' as it is conventionally conceived. The novel defends no single class and appears as uninterested in a particular political cause as Lawrence's other works. Michael Bentley is correct to suggest that because of this 'there are obvious senses in which Lawrence is not a political novelist at all':

Take away Kangaroo and some pieces from the Phoenix collection and surprisingly little direct comment on politics is evident.4

And only in the first few chapters, as I have shown earlier, does Kangaroo have anything intelligent to say about the anarchic character of both the site, citizens and character of Australian democracy. Moreover, even this emerges by means other than the statements of Struthers or Kangaroo.5

One is tempted to concur with Michael Bentley's conclusion that 'When Lawrence himself relegated so much of his political observation to half-lines of contextual rapportage or the vatic spiritualities of Kangaroo, it is hard to see the seriousness of any claim that he assumed a singular and interesting political position.'6 But the first part of his statement is too extreme. For, in the case of the depiction of the political views of Struthers, the 'contextual rapportage' amounts to pages and pages of the most masterly, and lightningly grasped, understanding of the philosophies of that section of the Australian Labour Movement on the fringes (both within and without) of the ALP in 1922. That Lawrence could glean such a comprehensive understanding of both the limits of Australian left-wing thought, and the racism which infected it in 1922, from his reading of the daily press and magazines such as The Bulletin is surprising.7 But impressive as the accuracy of Lawrence's depiction of left-wing

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5 See the 'Suburbia' chapter of this thesis.
6 Michael Bentley, op.cit., p. 61.
7 The suggestion that Lawrence must have had contact with someone involved in Australia's right-wing secret armies to complete his portrait of Cooley's clandestine movement, is made even more problematic when one considers the strength and accuracy of Lawrence's rapportage of Struthers and his beliefs in Kangaroo. Can we really expect, as Robert Darroch and Andrew Moore seem to suggest we should, that Lawrence was in contact with Major-General Sir Charles Rosenthal and Jack Scott as well as both Jock Garden and A.C. Willis, the south coast based head of the Miner's Union and ALP Legislative Councillor? It would be necessary to suppose that Lawrence carried with him to NSW, along with a single introduction to Mr Bert Toy of The Bulletin, a far greater number of personal introductions than it would be prudent to believe possible for him to attain.
Australian racism is, its purpose in the novel - despite the relatively greater space given to it than to Cooley's philosophy - is no less a means of 'filling-up space' than its supposed exploration of right-wing political activity in Australia.

For, as both Raymond Southall and I have argued, when it comes to the organizations attached to Cooley and Struthers:

\[\ldots\] neither of these groups is central to Kangaroo's perceptions of the political ethos of Australia, which is that it is 'absolutely and flatly democratic'. It is this 'granted condition of Australia' that is responsible for the relaxed air of democratic freedom which is the focus's of the novel's political attention.\(^8\)

Paraphrasing an early draft of this thesis, Southall also notes that in the opening paragraph of Kangaroo 'this has an almost pastoral charm'.\(^9\) It is the pastoral - and hence essentially non-political - 'politics' of Kangaroo which I will take up later in this chapter. For the moment, what needs to be examined is how the politics of both Cooley and Struthers are virtually never taken seriously by either the novel or Somers.

With Struthers, Somers is 'almost rude'\(^10\) while listening to his political lecture. And after the sermon has ended, Somers is said to feel 'like a child escaped from school'.\(^11\) With Cooley we are given slightly more hope that Somers is interested in the man and his philosophy, but mostly because Somers is attracted to him physically. Siren-like, Kangaroo's voice momentarily lulls Somers into believing that he believes in Kangaroo. An alluring warmth, a honeyed softness, emanates from his physical being:

The man had a beautiful voice, when he was really talking. It was like a flute, a wood-instrument. And his face, with that odd look of a sheep or a kangaroo, took on an extraordinary beauty of its own, a glow as if it were suffused with light. And the eyes shone with a a queer, holy light, behind the eyeglasses. And yet it was still the kangaroo face.

And yet even his body had become beautiful, to Somers - one might love it intensely, every one of its contours, its roundnesses and downward-drooping heaviness. Almost a grotesque, like a Chinese Buddha. And yet not a grotesque.

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\(^8\) Raymond Southall, 'Foreword' to Kangaroo, op.cit., p.vii.
\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^10\) DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 224.
Beautiful, beautiful as some half-tropical, bulging flower from a tree.\textsuperscript{12}

The reader, too, almost comes to believe that Somers will succumb to the allure of Kangaroo, particularly when Richard declares 'to his astonished self: "Why, the man is like a god. . ."'.\textsuperscript{13}

But the language used by Lawrence in the passages quoted above indicate that Cooley is not a real human being. He is merely the 'instrument' by which Lawrence chooses to express a political philosophy the reader already has good reason to suspect Somers will reject. He is like the oaten reed, the pastoral flute in \textit{Aaron's Rod} - the spell of which is shattered when the flute is broken by a terrorist's bomb. Similarly, the bomb which explodes in the 'A Row In Town' chapter shatters the literary - rather than musical - political instrument which is Kangaroo. Yet long before Cooley writes to Somers, summoning him to his death-bed in Sydney and informing Somers about the bullets in his 'marsupial belly', we know the 'flute' ('the wood-instrument')\textsuperscript{14} which is Kangaroo can no longer work its charms on Somers.

Indeed, as Andrew Peek has noted:

\ldots Kangaroo comes to seem to Somers a drastically limited and essentially dehumanised man. Incapable of sustaining normative heterosexual relationships (as he himself admits in chapter 6), Kangaroo is increasingly seen as a sort of inhuman machine, having only to 'turn all the levers and forces of his clever, almost fiendishly subtle will, and he could triumph' (K., p.124), and Somers eventually has little compunction in rejecting the Australian's offer and abandoning him. \ldots\textsuperscript{15}

Somers may have earlier been astonished to find himself declaring that Kangaroo is god-like, but it comes as little surprise for the reader to encounter and savour the ironic resonance of Somers's later outburst to the same man, "'What's the good, men trying to be gods?'"\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{14}A metaphor perfectly attuned to the totem-like depiction of Kangaroo which I remark upon in chapter 14 of this thesis, entitled 'The Literary Form of \textit{Kangaroo}'.
\textsuperscript{16}\textit{DHL}, \textit{Kangaroo, op.cit.}, p. 242.
The novel thus continually makes us aware that, despite the charms of instrument through which fascist philosophy is expressed in the novel, Richard Lovatt Somers is ultimately impervious to its allure. As the narrator earlier declared of the relationship between Somers and Cooley in the chapter, 'The Battle Of Tongues': 'Kangaroo had not the power to touch him.'

Some readers, however, appear to have mistaken Somers's appreciation of the beauty of Kangaroo's voice, along with his ambivalence concerning the physical appearance of Kangaroo, as indications of a commitment to the political ideology of fascism. It is noteworthy, however, that visual appreciation, at least since the writing of *Women in Love*, has rarely been viewed in Lawrence's writing as much of an issue in the relations between people. It is but a lesser form of that 'vital connexion' Lawrence so prized between human beings. Readers of Lawrence have previously been warned that 'it's not a question of visual appreciation in the least'. Moreover, Birkin underlines his point in discussion with Ursula by claiming: "I don't want to see you. I've seen plenty of women. And I'm sick and weary of seeing them. I want a woman I don't see." But even Birkin's argument is undercut (just as most of what Somers says in *Kangaroo* is undercut by Frieda's responses) by Ursula's saucy reply: "I'm sorry I can't oblige you by being invisible". Appearances, in Lawrence's writing, are thus very often deceptive. Somers does, at first, seem drawn to Kangaroo and his fascist views, but the reader needs to be careful. For although, on the one hand, Lawrence presents Somers as a man none too fond of democracy, on the other the novel itself conjures up an image of Australia as a potential, if not actual, site for a form of ultra-democratic anarchism expressing itself primarily in 'gentleness' and 'niceness'.

Somers himself, however, as Harriett attests, is largely uninterested in conventional political creeds and tars bolsheviks and fascists with the same brush:

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18 Compare, for example, pp. 127-128 and pp. 148-149.
... Conservatives or bolshevists or Labour Party - they're all alike: they all want to grab and have things in their clutches, and they're devilish with jealousy if they haven't got them. That's politics. You've said thousands of times that politics are a game for the base people with no human soul in them. Thousands of times you've said it. And yet now -'

He was silent for a while.

'Now,' he said slowly. 'Now I see you don't have to give all your possessions to the poor. You've got to have no poor that can be saved by just possessions. You've got to put the control of all supplies into the hands of sincere, sensible men who are still men enough to know that manhood isn't the same thing as goods. We don't want possessions. Nobody wants possessions - more than just the immediate things; as you say yourself, one trunk for you, one for me, and one for the household goods. That's about all. We don't want anything else. And the world is ours - Australia or India. Coo-ee or Ardnaree or where you like. You have got to teach people that, by withholding possessions and stopping the mere frenzy for possession which runs the world to-day. You've got to do that first, not last.23

Yet even this is a philosophy which aligns Somers more closely with the working class into which he was born than to the Australian, English and American functionaries of capitalism condemned by the narrator in Chapter I.24

Somers is uninterested in any of the conventional political philosophies, and the anarchism espoused by both the novel and the narrator (though not, at first, by Somers himself) presumably leans towards half-hearted approval for the terroristic responses to politics which occur in both Aaron's Rod and 'The Row in Town' chapter in Kangaroo. Indeed, it is in this chapter that Somers explains his slight preference for Struthers over Cooley:

'Now Kangaroo,' said Richard, 'is in a false position. He wants to save property for the property owners, and he wants to save Labour from itself and from the capitalists and the politician and all. In fact, he wants to save everything as we have it, and it can't be done. You can't eat your cake and have it, and I prefer Willie Struthers. Bolshevism is at least not sentimental. It's a last step towards an end, a hopeless end. But better disaster than an equivocal nothingness, like the present. Kangaroo wants to be God himself, and save everybody, which is just irritating, at last. Kangaroo as God himself, with a kind marsupial belly, is worse than Struthers' absolute of the

24See Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 24. This passage has been quoted earlier at footnote 43 of the 'Suburbia' chapter.
People. Though it's a choice of evils, and I choose neither. I chose the Lord Almighty.  

Even this statement, however, coming so late in the novel, is really telling readers little that they don't already know. As early as the end of the chapter 'Kangaroo', before the reader has been introduced to Struthers, we know that Somers is uninterested in any of the conventional political theories to which anyone will give voice. As the narrator declares:

He did not care a straw what Kangaroo said or felt, or what anybody said or felt, even himself. He had no feelings, and speech had gone out of him. He wanted to be cold, cold, and alone like a single fish, with no feeling in his heart at all, except a certain icy exultance and wild, fish-like rapacity. 'Homo sum!' All right, who sets a limit to what a man is. Man is also a fierce and fish-cold devil, in his hour, filled with cold fury of desire to get away from the cloy of human life altogether, not into death, but into that icily self-sufficient vigour of a fish.  

Here we see the misanthropic and inhuman tendencies into which Somers's despair with talk about conventional politics leads him.

Indeed, like many of Lawrence's works, *Kangaroo* displays a positive detestation of the *words* uttered by the likes of both Struthers and Cooley, and frequently by Somers himself. With regard to Somers, this is especially true in the chapter entitled 'Harriett and Lovatt at Sea in Marriage'. 'Words', it needs to be noted, is the pejorative title of the final chapter of *Aaron's Rod* in which the pastoral flute is shattered. And elsewhere Lawrence often used the term as an indictment. Writing to Koteliansky on 15 December, 1916, Lawrence condemned Middleton Murry's *Still Life*, as merely 'words, words.' Furthermore, in his later essay 'Pan in America', Lawrence remarked, '[The Indian] is careful never to utter one word of the mystery.  

26 Op. cit., p. 142
27 As early as chapter 2 in *Aaron's Rod*, the narrator expresses most forcefully Aaron's contempt for words: '...Fair, wise, even benevolent words: always the human good speaking, and always underneath, something hateful, something detestable and murderous. Wise speech, and good intentions they were invariably maggoty with these secret lustful inclinations to destroy the man in a man. Whenever he heard anyone holding forth: the landlady, this doctor, the spokesman at the miners' meeting - or the all-benevolent newspaper - his soul curdled with revulsion as from something foul. Even the infernal good-will and love of his wife. To hell with good-will. It was more hateful than ill-will. All righteous bullying, like poison gas!' (DHL, *Aaron's Rod*, op. cit., p. 20)
28 DHL to Koteliansky 15/12/1916 in *The Letters of DHL Volume 3*, op. cit., p. 53.
Speech is the death of Pan, who can but laugh and sound the reed-flute.29 And in Kangaroo when asked by Jack what he cares supremely about, Somers replies:

'That,' he answered, 'you either know or don't know. And if you don't know, it would only be words, my trying to tell.'30

Occurring so early in the novel, this serves to undercut nearly all the political utterances Struther and Cooley may later make. By the end of the novel, however, the value of 'words' - of the babel of either sexual or social politics - has been undercut in a much more completely fundamental way.

After Somers climbs to the top of the tor above Mullumbimby, with all the experiences of politics and marriage contained in the novel now behind him, he is quite literally in a position to give an overview of his response to 'the continent of the kangaroo'. In an extraordinary passage extending for some three pages, the narrator (conveying Somers's reflections) contends that 'wordlessness' - 'speechless, aimless solitariness' - is 'natural to the country':31

They didn't care. The profound Australian indifference, which still is not really apathy. The disintegration of the social mankind back to its elements. Rudimentary individuals with no desire of communication. Speeches, just noises. A herding together like dumb cattle, a promiscuity like slovenly animals. Yet the basic indifference under everything.32

Politics in Australia, as the narrator explains (voicing Somers's feelings yet again), is just a means of avoiding the reality of the bedrock indifference emanating from the Australian 'spirit of place':

It seemed strange to Somers that Labour should be so insistent in Australia - or that Kangaroo should have been so burning. But then he realized that these men were all the time yoked to some work, they were all the time in the collar. And the work kept them doing a good deal more than they kept the work going. Nothing but the absolute drive of the world's work kept them going. Without it, they would have lapsed into the old bushranging recklessness, lapsed into the profound indifference which was basic in them.

But still, they were men, they were healthy, they were full of energy, even if they were indifferent to the aim in front.

30 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 68.
32 Ibid.
So they embraced one aim or another, out of need to be going somewhere, doing something more than just backing a horse. Something more than a mere day's work and a gamble. Some smack at the old establishment institution of life, that came from Europe.33

It is this realization which provokes in Somers 'a horror of vast super-incumbent buildings.'34 Rejecting 'a big palazzo of a house' or 'an old gothic cathedral' as inappropriate for Australia (as almost clashing with the 'aura' of its spirit of place), Somers comes to regard even 'the foundationless shacks and bungalows'35 as 'a sort of heaven':

... the frail, aloof, inconspicuous clarity of the landscape was like a sort of heaven, bungalows, shacks, corrugated iron and all. No wonder Australians love Australia. It is the land that as yet has made no great mistakes, humanly. The horrible human mistakes of Europe. And probably, the even worse human mistakes of America.37

It is as close as the novel comes to idealizing the Australian landscape. And when Jaz asks why on earth Somers would wish to leave a land that he loves (and which 'goes to his marrow') Somers expresses his desires in the archetypal terms of Romantic pastoral wishfulness:

'. . . What I want to do is go a bit further back into the bush - near some little township - have a horse and a cow of my own - and - damn everything.'38

Yet even such pastoral impulses - perhaps because they are only expressed in mere words - are undercut by the perversity of Somers's decision to leave Australia (and then perhaps come back again).39 And so the novel ends ambiguously, with Jaz's wry remark - ' "Why Mr Somers!" laughed Jaz; 'seems to me you just go round the world looking for things you're not going to give in to. You're as bad as we folk." '40 - providing a just-right lightness of tone to close a 'political' novel in which conventional politics are as much a red-herring as a serious issue.

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35 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 See Ibid.
Conventional politics are rejected by the novel, but what might be termed 'the politics of the personal' (and Lawrence's italicization of the personal pronoun in the quotation which follows indicates that it is indeed a very personal form of politics) - is quite specifically defined. Rejection of conventional politics does not simply make Somers 'the enemy of civilization' per se. Rather, as Richard himself declares:

'. . . I'm the enemy of this machine-civilization and this ideal civilisation. But I'm not the enemy of the deep, self-responsible consciousness in man, which is what I mean by civilization. In that sense of civilisation, I'd fight for ever for the flag, and try to carry it on into deeper, darker places. It's an adventure, Jaz, like any other. And when you realize what you're doing, it's perhaps the best adventure.'41

Despite such statements, Lawrence smashes the idyll of Harriett and Somers, alone together in Mullumbimby, by the device of the storm which destroys the beach below Coo-ee and then replaces it with an idyll of the bush. Significantly, however, the impact of the novel's final idyll of the bush in bloom on Harriett and Somers is expressed in terms of an unspoken thought:

At home, with all the house full of blossom, the fluffy gold wattle-bloom, they sat at tea in the pleasant room, the bright fire burning, eating boiled eggs and toast. And they looked at one another - and Richard uttered the unspoken thought:

'Do you wish you were staying?'
'I-I-' stammered Harriett - 'If I had three lives. I'd wish to stay. It's the loveliest thing I've ever known.'

'I know,' he answered, laughing. 'If one could live a hundred years. But since one only has a short time--'

They were both silent. The flowers there in the room were like angel-presences, something out of heaven. The bush! The wonderful Australia.

Yet the day came to go: to give up the keys and leave the lonely, bare Coo-ee to the next comers. Even the sea had gone flowery again at last. And everybody was so simple, so kindly at the departure. Harriett felt that she would leave behind her forever something of herself, in that Coo-ee home. And he knew that one of his souls would stand for ever out on those rocks beyond the jetty, towards Bulli, advanced into the sea, with the dark magic of the tor standing just inland.42

But they leave nevertheless. It seems perverse, but the point that is being made is that it is a decision which is not easily expressed by means of either words or talk.

Nevertheless, although Kangaroo contains a string of references to the horror of too much talk and too many words it must, of course, express that horror using 'mere words'. Talk and words, however, are but one form of language and the novel often makes it clear that it is only human talk (especially the political abstractions mouthed by Kangaroo) that is being condemned. A prime instance of this occurs after Somers has made one of his many retreats to the seashore below 'Coo-ee':

The sea talked and talked all the time, in its disintegrative, elemental language. And at last it talked its way into Somers's soul, and he forgot the world again, the babel. The simplicity came back, and with it the inward peace.\(^{43}\)

As can be seen in the above quotation, not all talk is bad, not all language is 'babel'. Not only is the sea a source of the sort of piscatorial otium so admired in the pastorals of Isaak Walton, but there is a deeper layer of almost telepathic communication - a voiceless 'voice' - between man and man, man and woman, and mankind and nature, of which the novel wholly approves. This view had earlier been given a more detailed expression in Women in Love:

'There is,' he [Birkin] said, in a voice of pure abstraction, 'a final me which is stark and impersonal and beyond responsibility. So there is a final you. And it is there I would want to meet you - not in the emotional, loving plane - but there beyond, where there is no speech and no terms of agreement. There we are two stark, unknown beings, two utterly strange creatures, I would want to approach you, and you me. And there could be no obligation, because there is no standard for action there, because no understanding has been reaped from that plane. It is quite inhuman - so there can be no calling to book, in any form whatsoever - because one is outside the pale of all that is accepted, and nothing known applies. One can only follow the impulse, taking that which lies in front, and responsible for nothing, asked for nothing, giving nothing, only each taking according to the primal desire.\(^{44}\)

It is Somers's willingness to follow such impulses that initially opens him to the 'voice' of Kangaroo. It is to this in Kangaroo and not to his politics that Somers initially responds - to the flute-like voice 'when he was really talking' and the philosophy of 'voice' he cajolingly espouses to Somers:

'. . .I offer no creed. I offer myself, my heart of wisdom, strange warm cavern where the voice of the oracle steams in

\(^{44}\)DHL, Women In Love, op.cit., pp. 162-163.
Before it is revealed for the political sham that it is, such a philosophy - affirmative of life and possessing no absolute creed - appears to accord with the relaxed, even anarchic, air of democratic freedom which is the focus of the novel's political attention.

Hence the view that *Kangaroo* is a novel centrally concerned with the character Kangaroo is one which, like Somers himself, has been initially drawn by the *show* rather than the *substance* of Kangaroo's political philosophy. It is a view that ignores the basis of Somers's final rejection of Cooley, the 'falling-out', which immediately precedes 'The Nightmare' chapter:

'I want to hear,' said Kangaroo, 'your case against me.'

'It's not a case, Kangaroo,' said Richard, 'it's a sort of instinct.'

'Against what?'

'Why, against your ponderousness. And against your insistence. And against the whole sticky stream of love, and the hateful will-to-love. It's the will-to-love that I hate, Kangaroo.'

'In me?'

'In us all. I just hate it. It's a sort of syrup we have to stew in, and it's loathsome. Don't love me. Don't want to save mankind. You're so awfully general, and your love is so awfully general: as if one were only a cherry in the syrup. Don't love me. Don't want me to love you. Let's be hard, separate men. Let's understand one another deeper than love.'

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46Op.cit., pp. 241-242. There is a strong element of truth in Bruce Steele's remark (see examiner's report on the first submitted version of this thesis: p. 2, note to p. 112) to the effect that: 'Although the narrator insists on Somers's rejection of Jack's schemes comparatively early, it is not a total rejection of any commitment. Somers vacillates throughout until almost the end.' However, an examination of both the current and the following 9 footnotes will demonstrate that the rejection is being reiterated throughout the novel, not only by the narrator but also by both Harriett and Somers himself. Somers's vacillation, I would suggest, is simply an important feature of the novel's realism, an attempt by Lawrence to convey a sense of life as it is really lived, for rarely in life do we reject either a person or a political philosophy outright. We usually toss an issue over in our minds, and meet the person espousing a cause or point of view a number of times, before either rejecting or accepting them or their ideas. Despite the way in which Lawrence admirably conveys the dynamics of this 'weighing up process', the quotations from the novel which follow seem to me to provide strong evidence that he is also alerting readers to the fact that Somers and the novel (and presumably Lawrence himself) possess an underlying antipathy towards the politics of both Kangaroo and Struthers. Somers rejects Kangaroo and his politics very early in the novel (as does the narrator and Harriett) and this rejection is reinforced at crucial points throughout the novel. Somers is only momentarily drawn to Kangaroo's appearance and voice (op.cit., p. 127), but quickly (within 20 pages) comes to 'dislike... his appearance' and it is even said that Somers's 'revulsion from the First [sic?] persisted' (op.cit., p. 148. This passage is quoted in full at footnote 54 of this present chapter). On this reading then, Somers's return to Sydney to visit the dying Kangaroo is more a matter of common courtesy and respect for the mortality of a fellow human being, rather than evidence of any lingering commitment...
However, the reader has been prepared for the exposure of the mechanized, systematised, cloying philosophy referred to here some hundreds of pages earlier when the narrator depicted Kangaroo as a sort of human mechanical contrivance, having 'only to turn on all the levers of clever, almost fiendishly subtle will, and he could triumph.' The reader should clearly not expect 'the voice of life' to emanate from such an inhuman figure, nor should that reader be taken in by Cooley's espousal of such a belief just two pages after the narrator has depicted him as an inhuman machine.

Although Somers at first seems drawn by a mysterious, almost telepathic, 'connexion' with Kangaroo, he finally rejects him. Struthers too is rejected because, while Cooley wants to be a 'God himself', the bastardized Australian socialism to which Struthers owes allegiance conspires to make money a God:

All this theoretical socialism started by Jews like Marx and appealing only to the will-to-power in the masses, making money the whole crux, this has cruelly injured the working people of Europe. For the working people of Europe were generous by nature, and money was not their prime passion. All this political socialism - all politics, in fact - has conspired to make money the only god. It has been a great treacherous conspiracy against the generous heart of the people. And that heart is betrayed: and knows it.

So all of the 'words', the 'talk', about Cooley's and Struthers's political views have been for nothing. They are simply the reddest of red-herrings because, for Somers, 'all politics' conspires 'to make money the only god'. The joke, however, is that as early as the fourth chapter of the novel Somers has quite plainly stated that, for him at least, politics is an irrelevance:

'I really don't care about politics. Politics is no more than your country's housekeeping. If I had to swallow my whole life up in housekeeping I wouldn't keep house at all, I'd sleep under a hedge. Same with a country and politics. I'd rather...

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on the part of Somers towards either Kangaroo and his philosophy. The 'vacillation' on Somers's part, to which Bruce Steele refers in his examiner's report, seems to me to be due far less to any real sympathy towards those who attempt to convert him and much more to Lawrence's attempt to present Somers's character with sufficient verisimilitude in order to prevent him becoming 'a stupid fixed thing like a lamp-post', as it is expressed in 'Why The Novel Matters' (op.cit., p.537). As I have shown in the opening paragraphs of the previous chapter, Lawrence was highly conscious of the dangers of being 'absolute' about anything, and especially about the fictional presentation of character.

47DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 124.
49See Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 354.
have no country than be gulfed in politics and social stuff. I'd rather have the moon for a motherland.\textsuperscript{51}

Because Lawrence so often confronts the reader with the flux of not only Somers's attitudes, but of nearly all the attitudes expressed in the novel, a certain hesitancy in accepting Somers's position as final would be judicious. In the very next chapter, however, Harriett (who often shares an exasperation similar to that of the reader in the face of Somers's continually shifting opinions) elicits from Somers an unambiguous declaration of his lack of interest in politics:

'. . . Really, I give it up [says Harriett]. I don't know what you do want. You change so. You've always said you despise politics, and yet here you are [entertaining the thought of becoming actively involved with Callcott and Cooley] - She tailed off as if it were hopeless.

'It's not the politics. But it is a new life-form, a new social form. We're pot-bound inside democracy and the democratic feeling.'\textsuperscript{52}

Conventional politics thus becomes a red-herring in the novel because Somers is seeking something much more fundamentally revolutionary than even Struthers's bastardized Australian bolshevism: Somers is seeking 'a new life-form'. Somers is momentarily attracted to Kangaroo because he mistakenly assumes that this is what Kangaroo is also seeking. Lawrence allows conventional politics to become such a giant red-herring in the novel, and hence opens the novel to misinterpretation, because he spends at least as much time allowing Struthers and Kangaroo to espouse their 'despised' politics as he does to expounding, or even adumbrating, Somers's 'new social form'.\textsuperscript{53}

It is precisely because Somers is fundamentally uninterested in conventional politics that his rejection of both Struthers and Cooley is ultimately for reasons other than their political philosophies. Kangaroo, for instance, is rejected by Somers on the grounds of his appearance; and this rejection, once again, comes surprisingly early in the novel:

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\textsuperscript{52}Op.cit., p. 110 
\textsuperscript{53}This is, perhaps, to be expected for, as Poggioli has noted ('The Oaten Flute', op.cit., p. 174), 'In general... the political pastoral is' usually more 'a protest against society itself' than 'a plea for a better society'. 
He went to Sydney and to Cooley's rooms. But during the first half hour, the revulsion from the First [sic?] persisted. Somers disliked his appearance, and the kangaroo look made him feel devilish. And then the queer, slow manner of approach. Kangaroo was not really ready for his visitor, and he seemed dense, heavy, absent, clownish. It was that kangarooish clownishness that made a vicious kind of hate spring into Somers's face.54

Similarly, the socialist, Struthers, is condemned, finally, because Somers does not 'like him physically' and doesn't care to shake his 'red, dry, thin-skinned hand.'55

Despite the fact that Somers returns to interview Kangaroo a number of times during the novel, Lawrence never gives the reader any strong indication that Somers could commit himself irrevocably to either the leader Kangaroo or Callcott, his lieutenant. In the evenly-pitched war Somers fights with Harriett over whether he should commit himself to the Diggers' leaders, the running battles are nearly always being won by Harriett, even if Somers sometimes half-heartedly refuses to admit defeat:

This discussion ended in a draw. Harriett had struck home once or twice, and she knew it. That appeased her for the moment. But he stuck to his essential position, though he was not so sure of the circumstantial standing.56

Somers hopes against hope, and against the wise plain-speaking of Harriett, that Kangaroo can offer something more than a conventional political programme. But this is not to be and, unsurprisingly, their most serious falling out is over a most apolitical issue: primarily because Kangaroo can not understand that there are peoples in the world ('Celts - Cornish, Irish' etc.) who 'remember older gods, older ideals, different gods . . . [and who hence] are nearer the magic of the dark world.'57 It is this statement, made by Somers at the close of the chapter 'Willie Struthers and Kangaroo', which leads to the final breach in relations with Kangaroo. This breach is important too, not in any political sense, but in terms of providing a 'pastoral' rationale for the novel, in that it precipitates the structurally important 'The Nightmare' chapter.

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Too often critics have dismissed 'The Nightmare' chapter as a 'filler' and even Lawrence's American agent wanted it excised and published separately. But the chapter is integral rather than peripheral to the novel. Not only does it provide the reader with an understanding of why Somers and Harriett have fled Europe, but it also takes up the issue of how older (supposedly more 'primitive') races like the Celts are supposedly 'nearer to the magic of the dark world', something which the novel's continual allusions to 'aboriginality' indicates is a matter of some importance. Like the work of the classic American writers he identified in the Studies, Lawrence is attempting to explore the impact of Australia as a place - that is the impact of its 'aboriginal' spirit - on its white inhabitants. The novel is suggestive rather than explanatory in its exploration of this theme, but the modernity of Lawrence's attempt to construct a narrative which frequently adopts an 'aboriginal' viewpoint as focus is difficult to deny. The notion of the aboriginal 'spirit of place' watching the myriad intruding white man has been sufficiently dealt with earlier in this thesis, but the recurrence of the term throughout the novel is in keeping with Somers's view that 'the people of Australia ought to be dusky'. And so well have the Mullumbimbians apparently adapted to Australia's aboriginal 'spirit of place' that Lawrence has his narrator eventually describe them as 'white folks peering out of the dusk almost like Aborigines', preparing the way thereby for the idyll of 'niceness and gentleness' epitomized in their depiction on the bus-ride home from Wolloona towards the end of the novel. However, the novel also clearly shows in the descriptions of Jack and Victoria, that the influence of 'the spirit of place' on the white Australians is not always desirable and, indeed, at times, is positively menacing.

'The Nightmare' chapter, in that it is not simply a political red-herring but recounts, at length, the experiences which have made Somers despise all politics, is actually much less a 'filler' than the ostensibly more central chapters dealing with politics and marriage. Much of the novel's sense of the 'do-as-you-please liberty' of

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60 Op. cit., pp. 208-209, passages which are quoted later in this chapter.
Australia is conveyed by such seemingly 'anti-structural' chapters as 'Bits', 'Volcanic Evidence' and 'The Nightmare' and, in many senses, they are more central to the novel's purpose than the 'mere words' of those chapters which explore Kangaroo's, Somers's and Struthers's philosophies of 'politics' and 'marriage' in an outwardly more conventional way.

The chapter 'Harriett and Lovatt at Sea in Marriage' provides an example. It is ostensibly the most 'literary' of the novel's chapters, working itself out by means of a metaphor purloined from that 'Classic American' Herman Melville. As L.D. Clark has realized:

In the chapter 'Harriett and Lovat at Sea in Marriage', the good ship Harriet and Lovat is the Pequod all over again, which has sailed far off to the 'lone and wasteful waters of the sea of perfect love', where 'fierce, full-blooded lusty bull-whales rushed at her and all but burst her timbers'. Harriet's attitude is in clear contrast to that of Ahab's sailors: she has resisted the 'mystic man and male' in Somers, while of course the crew of the Pequod fall under their captain's spell. The pilgrim couple also pursue a 'sacral consciousness' in the form of the dark gods, not to destroy but to embrace. By implication they encounter a sort of leviathan, too: the man Kangaroo, who must die before the pilgrims can proceed. The anticipated destiny of the Somers' Pequod is not that of the original; they have distant oceans yet to sail. Within the complexity of marriage Somers sees the inconsequence of aspirations to leadership, and of political action for the attainment of more ample being. The outcome is the rejection of both fatherly and brotherly love, and a fresh view of Power as the divine energy emanating from the dark gods into the integral soul - it is in Kangaroo that these are first given a specific identity.61

Despite this, the chapter 'Harriett and Lovat' is itself little more than an elaborate literary metaphor and joke. It is just a string of 'mere words', the purpose of which is to poke fun at Somers's delusions of 'Lord and mastership' and to show how equally unsatisfactory are each of the three idealist conceptions of love presented. The reader becomes aware that this digression is little more than 'fill' because the previous chapter - one more ostensibly 'filled' with A. Meston's journalism and 'Volcanic

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Evidence’ - has already more fully explained the secret to happiness in marriage and the way Somers's actions are jeopardising his relationship with Harriett. What is more, the secret has everything to do with 'connexion' and nothing to do with the vapidities of Lawrence’s nautical metaphors:

But Harriett was not going to be ignored; no, she was not. She was not going to sink herself to the level of a convenience. She didn't really want protestations of gratitude or love. This only puzzled her and confused her. But she wanted him inwardly to keep a connection with her. Silently, he must maintain the flow between him and her, and safeguard it carefully. It is a thing which a man cannot do with his head: it isn't remembering. And it is a thing which a woman cannot explain or understand, because it is quite irrational. But it is one of the deepest realities in life. When a man and a woman truly come together, when there is a marriage, then an unconscious, vital connection is established between them, like a throbbing blood-circuit. A man may forget a woman entirely with his head, and fling himself with energy and fervour into whatever job he is tackling, and all is well, all is good, if he does not break that inner vital connection which is the mystery of marriage. But let him once get out of unison, out of conjunction, let him inwardly break loose and come apart, let him fall into the worst of male vices, the vice of abstraction and mechanisation, and have the conceit of working alone and of himself, then he commits the breach. He hurts the woman and he hurts himself, though neither may know why. The greatest hero that ever existed was heroic only whilst he kept the throbbing inner union with something, God, Fatherland, or woman. The most immediate is woman, the wife. But the most grovelling wife-worshippers are the foulest of traitors and renegades to the inner unison. A man must strive onward, but from the root of marriage, marriage with God, with wife, with mankind. Like a tree that is rooted, always growing and flowering away from its root, so is a vitally active man. But let him take some false direction, and there is torture through the whole organism, roots and all. The woman suffers blindly from the man's mistaken direction, and reacts blindly.

Now in this revolution stunt, and his insistence on 'male' activity, Somers had upturned the root flow, and Harriett was a devil to him; - quite rightly; - for he knew that inside himself he was devilish. She tried to keep her kindness and happiness. But no, it was false when the inner connection was betrayed.62

So all the idealist talk of both marriage and red-hot treason has simply been a ruse. Such talk amounts to little in terms of the novel's conception of how the political ambience of Australia derives from its 'spirit of place'. They are 'mere words'. And the spewing forth of supposedly 'rational' words about both 'political' and 'sexual'

politics lead to a similar 'betrayal' of, on the one hand, 'the generous heart of the people' and, on the other, of the 'inner connection' established within 'marriage'.

Somers's 'connection' with Harriett, the unconscious, vital 'polarity' between them, and the risks of it being broken by Somers's attempts to find a similar 'connection' with men, is never a real issue in the novel. Somers oscillates between Kangaroo and Struthers, but the main function Lawrence assigns to Harriett in the novel is as a corrective when male excess threatens. As L.D. Clark remarks of Harriett:

She does not represent possessive love, as one might expect, but simply the stabilising power of strong feminine attachment, in which she is not a hindrance but rather a support to Somers' attainment of true isolate selfhood. Not that their union is by any means pure sailing. 63

And this lack (to further Lawrence's metaphor) of 'pure sailing' is one of the major achievements of Kangaroo. Lawrence manages to present a marriage that is strong and real and non-idealized and, despite some overt 'fictional' protestations by Somers to the contrary, remarkably unconstrained (though obviously not completely) by the sexist prejudices of the time in which it was written.

In the Somers' marriage we have all 'the unconscious, vital connexion...like a throbbing blood-circuit' already 'established between them'.64 It is a given of the novel. The relationship is presented with all the restless fluidity and contrariness of the experience of life and Lawrence manages to effectively convey a 'sense of', what Raymond Southall has called, 'experience continuously revised'.65 As Lawrence himself wrote (initially evincing more sexism than is present in Kangaroo) in the essay 'Morality and The Novel':

The great relationship, for humanity, will always be the relation between man and woman. The relation between man and man, woman and woman, parent and child, will always be subsidiary. And the relation between man and woman will change for ever, and will for ever be the new central clue to human life. It is the relation itself which is the quick and the central clue to life, not the man, nor the woman, nor the children that result from the relationship, as a contingency.

63 L.D. Clark, op.cit., p. 203.
64 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 187
65 Raymond Southall, 'Foreword' to Kangaroo, op.cit., p. xi.
It is no use thinking you can put a stamp on the relation between man and woman, to keep it in the status quo. You can't. You might as well try to put a stamp on the rainbow or the rain.66

In Kangaroo, Harriett is clearly the woman behind the 'great' man, but what merciless fun is made of that 'great' man's childishness! Their relationship is not some mechanized abstraction of Perfect Love. It is 'the relation itself which is the quick and central clue to life', an 'experience' and a 'relation' in a constant state of revision, and this is something which the novel shows admirably. If it is a relationship which looks, on occasion, to be about to explode, then so be it, argues Lawrence. For this is all part of his purpose in Kangaroo. As he expressed it in 'Surgery For The Novel - Or A Bomb':

Supposing a bomb were put under the whole scheme of things, what would we be after? What feelings do we want to carry through into the next epoch? What feelings will carry us through? What is the underlying impulse in us that will provide the motive power for a new state of things, when this democratic-industrial-lovey-dovey-darling-take-me-to-mamma state of things is bust?

What next? That's what interests me. "What now?" is no fun any more.67

This concern is more the key to Somers's and Harriett's relationship rather than any elaborate literary metaphor.

One of Lawrence's great achievements in Kangaroo is that, while highly conscious of the difficulty of doing justice to this 'sense of experience continuously revised' using only mere words, he nevertheless makes a very good fist of conveying to the reader some sense of how life is lived. His success in conveying an unidealized impression of the 'unconscious, vital connection...like a blood throbbing circuit' that Somers wishes to make with 'the spirit of place' and 'the dark gods', however, is much more problematic. The difficulty largely stems from the fact that Lawrence's notion of polarity has both a negative and positive current. The negative is a recognition of the hostile or malevolent potential in nature as evinced by the image of the 'long black arm' in the bush or the 'volcanic evidence' found in the chapter of that title; the

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positive is a recognition of the Wordsworthian attraction to the numinousness of the natural world epitomized in the closing depiction of the bush in bloom.

For all his restless trips to Italy, Germany, Ceylon, Malta, Australia, the South Sea Islands, America, New Mexico, and then back again to Europe, Lawrence never really succeeded in, as Chong-wha Chung phrases it, 'unearting "The Truth"' in 'The Spirit of Place': it was always a fused current, alternating between the polar opposites of innate malevolence and benign numinousness. As Chung notes:

In each different place he used different key words for the vision of his truth: the rainbow, the phoenix, the crown, the Holy Ghost, the Great Peace, the poppy, the dark god, the morning star, the forked flame, and many other like the Absolute, the infinite, or the Ultimate Whole. After Lawrence left his home town of Eastwood for Germany with his future wife in 1912, he was on the road, so to speak, always on the lookout for the revelation of these symbols. Sometimes he saw the vision in England in the form of Rananim or the crown, sometimes he saw the rainbow of new hope across the vast oceans, sometimes he saw the dark god in the Australian bush, and sometimes he saw the morning star in the Mexican skies; other times he felt the Holy Ghost, the forked flame, the Absolute or the infinite coiled inside the depths of the unconscious.68

By the time he wrote *Kangaroo*, with the achievements of Verga firmly in his mind while he was doing his shipboard translation en route to Australia, Lawrence knew the risks involved in trying to give literary life to 'the spirit of place'. He knew from the *Studies* that: 'You can't idealize the soil. But you've got to try.'69 As a means of trying to avoid such idealization, in his descriptions of both the actual Sardinia and the America he saw through studying its classic literature, Lawrence presented 'the spirit of place' as something which menaced the white inhabitants.70 The same menace

69DHL, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, op.cit., p. 106. This passage has been quoted in greater detail in chapter 10, 'The Genesis of Lawrence's Notions of "The Spirit of Place"...'; at footnote 97.
70See also Jack Lindsay, 'DHL and *Women in Love* in *Decay and Renewal: Critical Essays on Twentieth Century Writing*, Sydney, Wild & Woolley, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1976, p. 113-114, where he, in a passing remark on Lawrence's interest in primitive art, sums up well Lawrence's dilemma about the possibilities and limitations of primitivism: 'On the one hand it represents the non-cerebral, non-"visual" sphere of organic being which he has praised as the opposite of the egoist way of the money-hypnotised world; but on the other hand it represents a way of life, of terrible fears of a menacing nature [italics mine], which he does not want to revive. He wonders if the impact of such a pre-machine art, together with all its related attitudes, does not lead to a break-down of all that has been held worthwhile in civilization, with the remnants of intellectualist consciousness tormented in the midst of "the knowledge in dissolution, the African knowledge." This was a dilemma that was to
is experienced by Somers in the West Australian bush at the beginning of the novel. But the menace experienced by the hypersensitive Somers in *Kangaroo* gives way to the novel's exploration of the impact of the Australian continent on the 'attitudes and democratic character' of the white 'British' Australians Somers encounters.

It is here that Lawrence's mastery of his material is most in evidence. The reader of *Kangaroo* is given an indication of Somers's impressions of why British democracy has been transmuted by the Australian continent and the British Australians who inhabit it. But Somers's initial impressions are rarely given full approval by the narrator because Lawrence contrives to make both the structure and the narrative voice of the novel a reflection of, as I have expressed it in *D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul*, the good humoured take-it-easy she'll-be-right attitude which the novel's opening paragraph declares belongs to 'a good Australian'.

The anatomization of Australian democracy achieved, as I have detailed earlier, in the depiction of Sydney suburbia in the opening chapters of the novel relies on a 'sense of experience continually revised' which is achieved by pitting the novel's narrative voice against the priggish impressions of Somers. The reader, for example, is left in considerable doubt, during the suburban Sunday walk in Sydney, whether the narrator concurs with his report that there is something 'not what Somers called human' in Callcott. Indeed, the narrator would here appear to express some admiration for Jack's 'attitude of taking things as they come, perfected.' Later in the novel, the reader develops a suspicion that the narrator and Somers may be in closer agreement on many matters, particularly as direct speech is less frequently used and Somers's views begin to be increasingly presented through the narrator's report of what Somers is thinking. But it is not always an easy task to disentangle these views or to feel sure that

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remain with him all the rest of his life, because of the idealist absolute way in which he has opposed organic being and social existence. In *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) he came close to glorifying the worst sides of primitive society, the Aztec blood-sacrifice, as if it were the only alternative to bourgeois industrial society. I believe that he horrified himself by this movement of his thought, and tried to beat a retreat.' In this regard, Renato Poggioli ('The Oaten Flute', *op.cit.*, p. 176) remarked that 'the cult of the primitive, which is also the most recent variant of the myth of the noble savage', is one of the 'most obvious' forms in which 'the pastoral ideal' has 'survived'.

71 See Joseph Davis, *DHL at Thirroul*, *op.cit.*, p.188.
72 See 'Suburbia' chapter of this thesis above.
73 *DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit.*, p. 63.
the narrator and Somers are definitely in agreement. As Rick Rylance has noted, the narrative 'moves disconcertingly' and this technique helps 'to scupper any sense of a firm solution'\textsuperscript{74} to the problems (both political, personal and literary) the novel raises.

What does become clear, however, is that the Australian 'spirit of place' reacts upon white Australians in two entirely different ways. The novel suggests that Australians become either carefree or careless. And the restless fluidity of the novel's judgements means that sometimes each state is both approved and condemned. Somers at first condemns the indifference of Australians as it manifests itself in the irresponsible freedom (a freedom devoid of responsibility) evident in the way the 'continent of the kangaroo' has become loused over by white settlement. Significantly, the narrator holds back from total condemnation of this.

Both the narrator and Somers see that Jack's facetiousness and 'taking things as they come' is of a piece with the soullessness of urban Australia and the indifference evident in a city littered with tin cans. The malevolent consequences of this irresponsible indifference are evident in Jack's equation of 'taking' a life with 'taking a woman' in 'The Row in Town' chapter.

Lawrence makes few bones about the fact that it is the 'aboriginal daimon' of 'the spirit of the place' working its malevolent influence on Australians like Jack, disintegrating and distorting his psyche, and manifesting itself in a sub-human and callousness:

\begin{quote}
He didn't care. He just leaned back and stretched himself in that intense physical way which Somers thought a trifle less than human. The man was all body: a strong body full of energy like a machine that has got steam up, but is inactive. He had no mind, no spirit, no soul: just a tense, inactive body and an eye rather glazed and a trifle bloodshot. The old psyche slowly disintegrating.

\ldots{} Whether he listened or whether he didn't, who knows? The aboriginal sympathetic apathy was upon him, he was like some creature that has lost its soul, and simply stares.\textsuperscript{75}
\end{quote}

In the novel's presentation of Victoria, however, we witness the 'opposite pole'

\textsuperscript{74}Rick Rylance, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 171.

That strange and aboriginal indifference that was bottommost in him seemed like a dynamo in her. She fluttered in the air like a loose live nerve, a nerve of the sympathetic system.76

But at this stage of the novel, at about the half-way mark in the chapter 'Diggers', even Victoria's sort of 'sympathetic' indifference does not appear to be viewed by the novel as entirely praiseworthy. Part of the problem in determining precisely what the reader is to make of these descriptions of Jack and Victoria is the novel's shifting attitudes. But at one point, almost exactly in the middle of the novel, it is possible to capture this particular shifting attitude just as it moves and attempt to becalm it, as it were, in the transition:

Jack was a queer sight to Somers, when he was in this brightly vacant mood, not a man at all, but a chance thing, gazing spellbound on the evolutions of chance. And in this state, this very Australian state, you could hardly get a word out of him. Or when he broke into a little volley of speech, you listened with wonder to the noise of it, as if a weird animal has suddenly given voice.

The indifference, the marvellous bed-rock indifference. Not the static fatalism of the east. But an indifference based on real recklessness, an indifference with a deep flow of loose energy beneath it, ready to break out like a geyser. Ready to break into a kind of frenzy, a berserk frenzy, running amok in wild generosity, or still more wild smashing up. The wild joy in letting loose, in a smash-up. But will he ever let loose? Or will the static patience settle deeper, and the fern-twilight altogether envelop him? The slow transmutation! What does today matter, or this century? Time is so huge, and in Australia the next step back is to the fern age.

The township looked its queerest as dusk fell. Then the odd electric lights shone at rather wide intervals, the wide, unmade roads of rutted earth seemed to belong again to the wild, in the semi-dark, and the low bungalows with the door open and the light showing seemed like shacks in the wilderness, a settlement in the fierce gloom of the wilderness. Then youths dashed fiercely on horse-back down the soft roads, standing in the stirrups and crouching over the neck of the thin, queer brown race-horses, that sprinted along like ghosts. And the young baker, in emulation, dashed through the village on his cream pony. A collier who had been staying somewhere cantered stiffly away into the dark on a pony like a rocking horse. Young maidens in cotton dresses stood at the little rail gates of the bungalow homes talking to young men in a buggy, or to a young man on foot, or to the last tradesman's cart, or to youths who were strolling past. It was evening, and the intense dusk of the far-off land, and white folks peering out

of the dusk almost like aborigines. The far-off land, just as far-off when you are in it: nay, then furthest off.77

Here the impact of the 'spirit of place' is seen to manifest itself upon the novel's characters in the form of that 'very Australian state' (and not for Lawrence entirely unpraiseworthy) of voicelessness. Later it is manifested in the 'responsible gentleness' of the Mullumbimbians, before malignly flaring up into a frenzy involving the wild smashing up of a human head by Callcott in 'The Row in Town' chapter. It then subsides into the 'slow transmutation' of the 'fern age' - the epithet Lawrence repeatedly uses to indicate his primitivistic response to the Australian bush. Finally, as always in Kangaroo, the passage drifts off into the leitmotif of Lawrence's romantic pastoral transformation of Thirroul into Mullumbimby.

As Raymond Southall has written, again paraphrasing an early draft of this thesis, 'In creating this contrast between Mullumbimby and Sydney the novel draws upon romantic [pastoral] tradition, with its belief in the natural advantages of rural over city life, in order to suggest that it is not impossible for the 'intruding white men' to establish some measure of rapport with their Australian environment and so begin to overcome their alienation from the aboriginal "spirit of the place".78 And in Lawrence's image of the 'white folks peering out of the dusk almost like aborigines'79 we are presented with the great utopian pastoral hope of the novel.

As the novel progresses, Somers's blood finally appears to have thinned down sufficiently for him to be able to respond more sympathetically to the more benign 'white Australian' architectural manifestations of the continent of the Kangaroo's 'spirit of place':

Sitting at the edge of the bush he looked at the settlement and the sea beyond. He had quite forgotten how he used to grumble at the haphazard throwing of bungalows here and there and anywhere: how he used to hate the tin roofs and the untidyness.80

78 Raymond Southall, "Foreword" to Kangaroo, op.cit., pp. ix-x.
And then follows more than two pages of pastoral idealization of the rural beauties of Mullumbimby viewed from the escarpment as night falls - description full of 'cows' and 'flowers' and 'wooden verandahs.' 81 No longer does night-fall in the bush terrify Somers and the idealization of the little town is such that even 'a rubbish heap of ashes and tins' is camouflaged by 'brambles' and made rustic by its juxtaposition with 'the very white fowls clustering for bed-time.' 82 Moreover, all this is described in the context of 'the thick aboriginal dusk settling down.' 83

With this final fully idyllic transformation of Thirroul into a rural Mullumbimby - an idyll far more rural than the town's semi-industrial/semi-resort reality of 1922 warranted - Lawrence's pastoral slips into its persistent praise of solitude. Indeed, on this occasion, the Australian 'spirit of place' is praised precisely because it has produced a continent that is 'void of speech':

People mattered so little. People hardly matter at all. They were there, they were friendly. But they never entered inside one. It is said that man is the chief environment of man. That, for Richard, was not true in Australia. Man was there, but unnoticeable. You said a few words to a neighbour or an acquaintance, but it was merely for the sake of making a sound of some sort. Just a sound. There was nothing really to be said. The vast continent is really void of speech. Only man makes noises to man, from habit. Richard found he never wanted to talk to anybody, never wanted to be with anybody. He had fallen apart out of the human association. And the rest of the people either were the same, or they herded together in a promiscuous fashion. But this speechless, aimless solitariness was in the air. It was natural to the country. The people left you alone. They didn't follow you with their curiosity and their inquisitiveness and their human fellowship. You passed, and they forgot you. You came, again, and they hardly saw you. You spoke, and they were friendly. But they never asked any questions, and they never encroached. 84

In this passage Lawrence has transformed Australia into an atavist's delight, a veritable primitivist's paradise. It needs to be noted, however, that 'the instinct of the place' is revealed more by the laconic, and occasionally taciturn, behaviour of these Australians than by means of the 'words' (all the talk about 'politics and red-hot treason') which the novel has so pejoratively appraised. The above-quoted passage can thus be seen as

81 It is a marvellous description, but too long to quote in full. See pp. 400-402
the novel's philosophical companion-piece for the surprising idyll contained in the description of the bus ride home to Mullumbimby from Wolloona\(^{85}\) which Lawrence inserted in the midst of the 'Bits' chapter. For here the novel offers its most pleasing picture of a white community; it is Lawrence's strongest political idyll, and far more central to the novel's anatomization of Australian democracy than the babble of Cooley and Struthers.

Lawrence is always at his political best, in *Kangaroo* and many of his other novels, when he is adumbrating the social effects of class on the communities in which he settled. And although such political and social vignettes as the bus-ride to Wolloona, the Sunday walk with Jack Callcott and the impressionistic exploration of the social milieu of the taxi-drivers at the opening of *Kangaroo* can hardly be expected to rival the more authentic and considered vignettes of the Bestwood class system in *Sons and Lovers*,\(^{86}\) the reader learns far more about Australian society from such descriptions than from all the pages devoted to the philosophies of Kangaroo and Struthers.

On the bus Harriett and Somers encounter:

> ... a lovely little boy with the bright, wide, gentle eyes of these Australians. So alert and alive and with that loveableness that almost hurts one. Absolute trust in the 'niceness' of the world.\(^{87}\)

Then the reader is introduced to Joe and Alf: 'Real careless Australians, careless of their appearance, careless of their speech, of their money, of everything - except their happy-go-lucky, democratic friendliness. Really nice, with bright, quick willing eyes.'\(^{88}\)

But it is the bus-driver who perhaps best epitomizes that aspect of Australian democracy closest to the novel's narrative point of view:

> The driver's face was long and deep red. He was absolutely laconic. And yet, absolutely willing, as if life held no other possibility than that of being an absolutely willing citizen. A fat man with a fat little girl waiting at one of the corners. 'Up she goes!' he said as he lifted her in.

\(^{85}\) It also need to be noted that this description has its decidedly unidyllic and anti-utopian counterpart in the description of the wild bus-ride described in 'The Nightmare' chapter, pp. 265-267.  
\(^{86}\) See, for example, *Sons and Lovers*, op.cit., p. 69.  
\(^{87}\) *DHL*, *Kangaroo*, op.cit., pp. 319-320.  
A perpetual, unchanging willingness, and an absolute equality. The same good-humoured, right-you-are approach from everybody to everybody. 'Right-you-are! Righto!' Somers had been told so many hundreds of times. Right-he-was, Righto! - that he almost had dropped into the way of it. It was like sleeping between blankets - so cosy. So cosy.

They were really awfully nice. There was a winsome charm about them. They none of them seemed mean, or tight, or petty.

...the driver bustled to carry out some goods. The way he stooped to pick up the heavy wooden box in his arms: so willing to stoop to burdens. So long, of course, as his Rights of Man were fully recognised. You mustn't try any superior tricks with him.

Well it was really awfully nice. It was touching. And it made life so easy, so easy.

Of course these were not government servants. Government servants have another sort of feeling. They feel their office, even in N.S.W. - even a railway-clerk. Oh yes.

So nice, so nice, so gentle. The strange bright-eyed gentleness. Of course, really rub him the wrong way, and you've got a Tartar. But not before you've asked for one. Gentle as a kangaroo, or a wallaby, with that wide-eyed, bright-eyed, alert, responsible gentleness Somers had never known in Europe. It had a great beauty. And at the same time it made his spirits sink.89

Although Somers is presumably expressing his distaste for government officialdom gained by dint of his experiences during the war (detailed in 'The Nightmare' chapter) and although the narrator imparts to Somers much of the author's detestation of bourgeois democracy, once again the real political insights of the novel are presented in passing rather than directly. Indeed, they are more often conveyed to the reader by means of a seemingly gratuitous aside delivered by the narrator, rather than the laboriously detailed set speeches of Kangaroo and Struthers and, occasionally, Somers himself.

Yet no attempt is made to provide a satisfactory explanation of how Mullumbimby's miraculously democratic polis, and the wondrous 'responsible gentleness' (as opposed to the irresponsible, and ultimately fascist, indifference of Callcott) in which it sometimes manifests itself, has come about. Like the hazy and very distant revolution which has transformed the world of Morris's News From Nowhere into a communitarian rural anarchist co-operative, Lawrence gives us no

clear indication of how the 'spirit of place' has wrought such different beings as the rural Mullumbimbians, with their happy-go-lucky democratic friendliness, and the atavistic, almost sub-human Jack Callcott. Instead, the novel drifts off once again into rustic, cosy domesticity in Mullumbimby:

'Thank heaven for a home,' he said, as they sat in the dark, big room at Coo-ee, and at their buns, and looked out of their windows and saw here as well a whirl of gannets like a snowstorm, and a dark sea littered with white fluffs. The wind roared in the chimney, and for the first time the sea was inaudible.

'You see,' she said, 'how thankful you are for a home.'

'Chilled to the bone!' he said. 'I'm chilled to the bone with my day's pleasure-outing.'

So they drew up the couch before the fire, and he piled rugs on her and jarrah chunks on the fire, and at last it was toastingly warm.

Throughout Lawrence's depiction of the bus journey to Mullumbimby as a political and social idyll, the dynamic interplay of the conflicting viewpoints which are at the heart of the novel's dialectic are being played off against the idealizations of the Australians presented. The 'responsible' gentleness Somers had never known in Europe is said to have a great beauty, but it is also identified as making 'his spirits sink:

90 However, Harriett does at one point imply that it is the war that has corrupted Callcott's nature: '... Having once been a Captain with some power, he wants the same again, and more.' (op.cit., p.111)


92 The tension between the views of the novel, the narrator and Somers (and both the independence and interdependence of these views) is precisely that which gives Kangaroo its sense of flux, of 'experience continually revised'. The novel and the narrator, for example, appear to approve of the friendly tacturnity of the social interaction manifested in the 'Right-you-are! Right-O' of the both the taxi-drivers and Callcott on his Sunday walk and in the bus-ride to Mullumbimby. For Somers, on the other hand, at least in so far as his feelings are accurately reported by the narrator, these same social responses are despised in his initial encounter with the taxi-driver, regarded as 'not what Somers called human' (op.cit., p. 63) during his Sunday morning walk with Callcott and, even after he has become more responsive to 'the instinct of the place', is still simultaneously said to have 'made his spirits sink' (op.cit., p. 321), despite the length at which Somers's appreciation of its winsomeness is detailed in the description of the bus-ride to Mullumbimby. The narrator, however, explicitly states that Somers's attitudes to Australia's democratic social relations are wrong in the first instance, but then withholds judgement in the second. After Somers's blood has sufficiently thinned down for him to adjust to 'the instinct of the place', the views of Somers and the narrator become more frequently indistinguishable, particularly as Somers's opinions now begin to be increasingly reported by the narrator rather than revealed through dialogue. Presumably, Lawrence's own feelings occupied some middle position between repulsion and attraction, although the balance of his ambivalence would appear to have shifted towards a greater appreciation of what he conceived to be Australia's instinct and 'spirit' during both the latter part of his brief stay and the latter part of Kangaroo. The 'instinct of the place' is both alluring and not quite human, the flux of the novel's attitudes being accentuated even further by the fact that which is 'alluring' is frequently viewed pejoratively and that which is not quite human is frequently given some degree of approval. Kangaroo's narrative attitude is thus, by far the most complex of its many complexities.
It made him feel so sad underneath, or uneasy, like an impending disaster. Such a charm. He was so tempted to commit himself to this strange continent and its strange people. It was so fascinating. It seemed so free, an absence of any form of stress whatsoever. No strain in any way, once you could accept it.

He was so tempted, save from a sense of impending disaster at the bottom of his soul. And there a voice kept saying: 'No, no. No, no. It won't do. You've got to have a reversion. You can't carry this mode any further. You've got to have a recognition of the innate, sacred separateness.'

Such thoughts continually cut across Somers's appreciation of the virtues of Australian democratic society and make it possible for him, for a time at least, to commit himself to the allure of a pastoral life of solitude, love and happiness, ensconced in cosy domesticity in ultra-democratic Mullumbimby. Virtuous as some aspects of the culture the 'British Australians' have created on 'the continent of the kangaroo' may be, the novel, Lawrence himself, the narrator and Somers all eventually come to agree that the 'myriad intruding white men' will be forever alien. Despite the novel's recurrent presentation of the allure of pastoral retirement and solitude for Somers, one of the prime insights of Kangaroo is that 'the continent of the kangaroo' is a most inhospitable place for traditional pastoral practices. The desire to retreat to the dairying country of the south coast and pick blackberries is now recognized by both Harriett and Somers as inimical to the Australian 'spirit of place':

'Of course' [says Somers]. . . 'this land always gives me the feeling that it doesn't want to be touched, it doesn't want men to get hold of it.'

'. . . The farms don't really belong to the land. They only scratch it and irritate it, and are never at one with it.'

Not for nothing, then, does the novel then turn inland, from the farming country around coastal Mullumbimby, to the virgin bush which, as the novel suggests, epitomises the real 'spirit' of Australia. And it is curious that like another English writer - Havelock Ellis, whose own idyll of solitude, Kanga Creek, was published in the same year Lawrence was in Australia - Lawrence chooses to close his own Australian pastoral romance with an idyllic image of the wattle in bloom.

93DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 321
95And, like Kangaroo, Ellis's Kanga Creek is also a work deeply concerned with solitude. See Geoffrey Dutton's Kanga Creek: Havelock Ellis in Australia, Picador, Sydney, 1989.
Yet all this - laconic friendliness, 'responsible gentleness' and the bush in bloom - is only the gentler side of the restless fluidity of Lawrence's dualism in *Kangaroo*. Somers may well think to himself that "Perhaps. . . this really is the country where men might live in a sort of harmless Eden, once they have settled the old Adam in themselves", yet in *Kangaroo* there is always the 'but'. For behind the veneer of Australian democracy - on the streets of Sydney - the novel detects two streams on the footpath and thus literally stumbles on the hollowness of Australian democracy:

On the pavement the foot-passengers walked in two divided streams, keeping to the left, and by their unanimity made it impossible for you to wander and look at the shops, if the shops happened to be on your right. The stream of foot-passengers flowed over you.

And so it was: far more regulated than London, yet all with a curious exhilaration of voluntariness that oppressed Richard like a madness. No control, and no opposition to control. Policeman were cyphers, not noticeable. Every man his own policeman. The terrible lift of the harmless crowd. The strange relief from all superimposed control. One feels the police, for example, in London, and their civic majesty of authority. But in Sydney, no majesty or authority at all.

Behind this democratic veneer, with its sense of a 'strange relief from superimposed control', lies the great question posed by the novel: 'Can a great continent breed a people of this magic harmlessness without becoming a sacrifice of some other, external power?' Readers are given a fairly clear answer to this question when we see Jack Callcott and Kangaroo's other followers in action during 'The Row in Town' chapter. Such violence might be alien to the 'harmless' and 'gentle' Australians Somers encounters in the street, but whether or not this violence is an 'external' or internal threat is not made very clear. The truly chastening perception of the novel, however, is that these 'British Australians' are themselves 'An alien people - a victim.' It is a vague and portentous threatening, but one which even though it is expressed so early in the novel's development still manages to resonate throughout the pages of *Kangaroo*.

The question of for how long 'the spirit of place' will bide its time, 'watching the myriad intruding white men' is an extraordinary one for its time and place, particularly in that it was penned by a visiting Englishman. But it remains largely undeveloped in *Kangaroo*, and the novel's explanation of precisely why these 'British Australians' remain so alien to 'the spirit of the place' has little to do with examining the white settlement of Australia from an Aboriginal perspective. Indeed, the explanation is acutely and personally Lawrentian: *Kangaroo*, Cooley, Struthers, and white Australians generally, do not possess that 'connexion', that rootedness, that polarity, with the integral 'spirit of the place' which Lawrence deems essential for worthwhile experience. They simply lack either an appreciation or an awareness of the 'dark god' which the novel considers so important in both marriage and politics and in human experience generally. And be it one's relationship with the natural world, or in politics or marriage, the novel argues its case using the most natural of comparisons:

...just as a tree is only perfect in blossom because it has groping roots, so is a man only perfected in his individual being by his groping, pulsing unison with mankind. The unknown God is within, at the quick. But the quick must send down roots into the great flesh of mankind.

How? In this same vertebral correspondence. The mystic may stare at his own navel and try to abstract himself forever towards Nirvana, it is half at least illusion. There is all the time a powerful, unconscious interplay going on between the vertebral centres of consciousness in all men, a deep mindless current flashing and quivering through the family, the community, the nation, the continent, and even the world. No man can really isolate himself. And this vertebral interplay is the root of our living: must always be so.100

The novel's verdict is that neither Kangaroo, Callcott, nor Struthers have recognized this. But this is its only verdict.

Lawrence really has no political nostrums to offer in *Kangaroo*. Nor does he present a prognosis for the continent's political future. The super-structure of Australian democracy is built on the 'marvellous, bedrock indifference'101 of the Australian 'spirit of place'. But that is all Lawrence is saying. As Raymond Southall has noted, the often conflicting viewpoints presented by the novel are 'directed not by

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dogmatic conviction, but by the dialectics of argument'. Hence the overt political statements expressed in the novel are often largely irrelevant - they are the mere theses and antitheses off which ideas can be bounced by a novelist who mostly withholds final judgement. The novel accepts no condition of intellectual stasis, recognizing that all is flux - 'relativity in dynamic living' - and hence dialectical syntheses are themselves always subject to constant revision.

Again, as Southall notes:

It is with a deeper attraction to the natural world, and an atavistic longing to become one with it, to be as suited to it as a fish or a gannet, that Somers responds to the disillusionment of his hope that 'a smash up in the social-industrial world' might be achieved through political activity. Like Wordsworth in this, and in his deification of the natural powers from which modern urban-industrial man has become estranged (there are striking similarities, for instance, between the account of Somers's experience in the Western Australian bush and the 'stolen boat' passage in The Prelude), Lawrence is also like Wordsworth in rejecting revolution as the means to restore the 'dark Gods' and re-establish contact with the natural sources of human fulfilment.

That Somers rejects Struthers's plans for socialist revolution, however, does not entitle the reader to regard Somers as the fascist persona of Lawrence himself. After all, Somers also rejects Cooley's Diggers.

Nevertheless, a number of more politically conservative critics than Southall have used Kangaroo as a rod with which to beat Lawrence and thereby expose his supposed proto-fascism and his imagined adumbration of Auschwitz. Kate Millett uses Kangaroo and the character of Somers to harangue Lawrence for both his 'rasping fascist tone' and his delusions of male-supremacy. If anything, the rejection of Kangaroo and the fun that is poked at Somers in the 'Harriett and Lovatt at Sea in Marriage' chapter both point the other way.

Despite the red-herrings of Cooley's and Struthers's political ravings (the 'mere words' Lawrence so detested) towards the end of Kangaroo, the novel expresses,

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102 Raymond Southall, "Foreword", op. cit., p. xi.
106 In the sixteenth chapter of Kangaroo, entitled 'A Row in Town'.
by means of the narrator's report of Somers's views, a political stance which I believe
does some justice to the complexity of Lawrence's actual political position around the
time *Kangaroo* was being written:

What Richard wanted was some sort of new show: a new
recognition of the life-mystery, a departure from the dreariness
of money-making, money-having, and money-spending. It
meant a new recognition of difference, of highness and of
lowness, of one man meet for service and another man clean
with glory, having majesty in himself, the innate majesty of the
purest *being*, not the strongest instrument, like Napoleon. Not
the tuppenny trick-majesty of Kaisers. But the true majesty of
the single soul which has all its own weakness, but its strength
in spite of them, its own lovableness, as well as its might and
dread. The single-soul that stands naked between the dark God
and the dark-blooded masses of men. 'Now Kangaroo,' said
Richard, 'is in a false position. He wants to save property for
the property owners, and he wants to save Labour from itself
and from the capitalists and the politician and all. In fact he
wants to save everything as we have it, and it can't be done.
You can't eat your cake and have it, and I prefer Willie
Struthers. Bolshevism is at least not sentimental. It's a last step
towards an end, a hopeless end. But better disaster than an
equivocal nothingness, like the present. Kangaroo wants to be
God himself, and save everybody, which is just irritating, at
last. Kangaroo, as God himself, with a kind marsupial belly, is
worse than Struthers' absolute of the People. Though it's a
choice of evils, and I choose neither. I choose the Lord
Almighty.'

This 'Lord Almighty' is 'the dark God' to which, as Chong-wa Chung noted,
Lawrence gave a myriad of names. The phrases, 'the dark God' or 'dark gods',
become words which function, in *Kangaroo* at least, as key-notes for the espousal of a
very personal political philosophy.

Yet much more than simply a relatively static Lawrentian political viewpoint is
conveyed by the 'flux', or the 'restless fluidity', of the narrative techniques employed
in *Kangaroo*. The deliberately anarchic structure of the novel, with its peculiar mixture
of what Southall has termed 'description, reflection, recollection, collage and self-
appraisal, is a recognition of the need for creative, purposive freedom in a world
threatened on the one hand by chaos and on the other by life-denying demands for
order and stability. Moreover, the merits of the 'responsible gentleness' of

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Mullumbimby's idealized political community can only be evaluated properly if we place them in the context of Somers's experiences of World War One in 'The Nightmare' chapter. Such a view is reinforced by the fact that it is difficult not to compare the 'nightmarish' bus-ride that Somers takes in England during the war with the one of a very different character which Lawrence depicts Somers making from Wolloona to Mullumbimby, particularly when the emphasis in each description is on the passengers and not on Somers himself.\footnote{Compare the descriptions of the respective bus rides, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 265-267 and pp. 319-321.}

As Michael Bentley has suggested, it is just such idealized political communities, taking various forms in Lawrence's writings (and of which the description of the bus-passengers en-route to Mullumbimby is but one), which function as:

\begin{quote}
. . .a refuge in a natural marsh of barbarism wherein 'the blood rises in our heel-prints' (\textit{WP}, p.25). The desirable polity is a Woodside, a soothing bower where we 'just live, nothing abnormal, nothing cruel and extravagant - just natural - like doves in a dove-cote' (\textit{WP}, p.129).\footnote{Bentley, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 75-6. The page numbers in brackets are to the 1950 Penguin edition of \textit{The White Peacock}.}
\end{quote}

Bentley argues that 'Kangaroo says little more than this', supporting his view by quoting the following passage:

\begin{quote}
Life is cruel - and above all things man needs to be reassured and suggested into his new issues. And he needs to be relieved from this terrible responsibility of governing himself when he doesn't know what he wants, and has no aim towards which to govern himself. Man again needs a father - not a friend or a brother sufferer, a suffering Saviour. Man needs a quiet, gentle father who uses his authority in the name of living life, and who is absolutely stern against anti-life. I offer no creed. I offer myself, my heart of wisdom. . . .\footnote{DHL, \textit{Kangaroo, op.cit.}, pp. 126-127.}
\end{quote}

Some may feel that it is reckless to use the words of Cooley to make a point about Lawrence's own political views, and it indeed ordinarily would be. However, not only has Bentley been sufficiently astute to select an utterance made by Kangaroo while Somers is initially drawn to him, but he is never foolish enough to think it possible to extract a firm political programme from Lawrence's fiction via the game of textual analysis and deductive reasoning - a game he suggests would be 'as enjoyable and
pointless as looking for a lecture in a psalm."\textsuperscript{112} Tindall, in \textit{D.H. Lawrence & Susan his Cow},\textsuperscript{113} for example, undertakes such an attempt and, while he makes a good fist of trying to explain what Lawrence means by 'polarity', is defeated finally by the impossibility of trying to transform Lawrence into a professional rational philosopher. For Lawrence, 'Knowledge' of the physical world entered the human body more through nerve and sensation than through the brain. Attempts at rational explication of the nature of this 'ancient sort of root knowledge', as it is described in \textit{Kangaroo},\textsuperscript{114} or the 'mindless progressive knowledge through the sense, knowledge arrested and ending in the senses'\textsuperscript{115} adumbrated in \textit{Women in Love}, is not something from which much critical profit can be extracted.

Realizing this, Bentley has great success in puncturing T.S. Eliot's notorious complaint concerning Lawrence's philosophical ratiocination: to wit, 'that Lawrence did not know how much he did not know'. 'The point', argues Bentley:

\begin{quote}
...is that Lawrence did not care to know what Eliot required him to know. 'I am so sure of what I know,' he wrote to Lady Ottoline Morrell in 1915, '...that I am sure I am stronger in the truth, in the knowledge I have, than all the world outside that knowledge. (\textit{CL}, p.351). And here at least he had been consistent since his early days. At Nottingham he has spurned the prescribed course reading - 'systematic reading be damned!' - and despised what he took to be second-hand knowledge lifted from other writers. It followed that Lawrence's thought was never going to be based on a collection of admired texts or on a series of deductive procedures applied to stated premises.\textsuperscript{116}
\end{quote}

What is more, Bentley is wisely alive to the contrariness of both Somers and Lawrence's overt political statements. The characterization in \textit{Kangaroo} identifies the fictional Somers, like Lawrence himself, as the writer of an essay on democracy. But Harriett, presumably a fictionalized Frieda, alleges Somers has never cared for politics.\textsuperscript{117} However, while the novel claims that, for Somers, politicians are little

\begin{footnotes}
\item[114]\textit{DHL}, \textit{Kangaroo}, op.cit., p. 148.
\item[115]\textit{DHL}, \textit{Women in Love}, p. 330; also quoted by Bentley, op.cit., p. 60.
\item[117]\textit{DHL}, \textit{Kangaroo}, op.cit., p. 110; see also Bentley, op.cit., p. 62
\end{footnotes}
more than glorified housekeepers or clerks, this is extraordinarily similar to the theme actually developed by Lawrence in his own essay on 'Democracy':

You, you Cabinet Minister - what are you? You are the arch-grocer, the super-hotel-manager, the foreman over the ships and railways. What else are you? You are the super-tradesman, same paunch, same ingratiating manner, same everything. Governments, what are they? Just board-meetings of big business men. . . . But Ideal! An Ideal Government? What nonsense. . . .

Politics - what are they? Just another, extra-large, commercial wrangle over buying and selling - nothing else. Very good to have the wrangle. Let us have the buying and selling well done. But ideal! Politics ideal! Political Idealists. What rank gewgaw and nonsense!

As occurs in Kangaroo, all idealist verbiage, whether it relates to marriage or politics, is rejected by both Lawrence and Somers.

Most Marxists, and no doubt a good few others, argue that the cussedness and the frequent tetchiness of Lawrence's political statements are the result of the alienation from society he experienced because of his war-time experiences. They were experiences that made him seethe with rage at the shabby personal treatment he felt he had received. Bentley suggests that it was often 'noticed by others that Lawrence cherished a certain calme anglais, especially when he was presented with the alternative ambiences of Australia or Mexico.' I am not certain that this statement is entirely correct, particularly in relation to Australia, but it is intriguing that Somers is himself described in Kangaroo as 'one of the most intensely English little men England ever produced'. Set against such a view of Somers, however, is the important image of him in Kangaroo as a living personification of the anarchist's bomb:

. . .I don't really like Kangaroo. The devil in me fairly hates him. Him and everybody. Well, alright then, if I am finally a sort of human bomb, black inside, and primed, I hope the hour and the place will come for my going off: for my exploding with the maximum amount of havoc. Some men have to be bombs, to explode and make breaches in the walls

118 See op.cit., p. 67.
120 See, for example, Paul Delaney's DHL's Nightmare, Harvester Press, Sussex, 1979
121 Michael Bentley, op.cit., p. 64.
122 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 258; also cited by Bentley, op.cit., p. 64.
But Kangaroo's interest in bombs, like that of Aaron's Rod, is much more literary than political.

At some time during World War One, Lawrence's 'political' interest in establishing a Rananim, a small community of like-minded souls seeking 'connexion' with the 'dark gods' within, began to founder on the rocks of both its own contradictions and his extreme, highly anarchic individualism. Michael Bentley exposes the contradictions well:

By the end of 1917 Lawrence was taking the view that there were no more than eight people in the world whose company he could tolerate for two hours without physical distress. The failure of all his schemes in 1915 left him scrambled; he just sat and gibbered with fury. Those whom he believed to have betrayed him were scrambled also into a common human mess, all 'world-builders a la Lansbury', all 'Garsington tea-party Bertie[s]... The Lawrence of Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo was already in embryo.

Lawrence, unhappy with the limited achievements of the modern novel, both serious and popular (as exemplified by what he had read or heard of both Joyce's Ulysses and what he regarded as the pot-boilers of popular writers like Zane Grey and John Galsworthy), turned to making changes in that realm which he knew best and in which he could realistically hope to effect some practical change: the novel. And in his essay, 'Surgery For The Novel - Or A Bomb', first published in 1923, Lawrence asserted that 'You've got to find a new impulse for the new things in mankind, and it's really fatal to find it through abstraction.' It is a statement with much relevance for Kangaroo, for it gives additional insight into the nature of the 'new show' which Lawrence was attempting in that novel.

In Kangaroo, Somers is a character who is struggling with the problems which had beset his creator for a great many years. In the essay entitled '. . . Love Was Once A Little Boy' (1925), Lawrence expressed with some sophistication - and without the

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124 Michael Bentley, op. cit., p. 75.
sense of crisis with which it is conveyed in Kangaroo - some of the dilemmas involved in Somers's individualistic quest for the 'dark god':

Be Thyself! is the grand cry of individualism. But individualism makes the mistake of considering an individual as a fixed entity: a little windmill that spins without shifting ground or changing its own nature. And this is nonsense. When power enters us, it does not just move us mechanically. It changes us. When the unseen wind blows, it blows upon us, and through us. It carries us like a ship on a sea. And it roars to flame in us, like a draught in a fierce fire. Or like a dandelion in flower.126

Such a statement provides an admirable account of the 'flux', 'the restless fluidity' of Somers's characterization. For Somers as an individual is not a 'fixed entity'. His opinions spin and shift ground. And the achievement of Kangaroo is that it catches the reader up in these changes and is able to give some indication, some approximation - using only 'mere words' - of how life is actually lived. And all this 'restless fluidity, especially Somers's frequent tilting at alternate windmills, is embedded in the structure of the novel.

Confronted with the abstractions espoused by Cooley, Somers's rejection of him, despite his great desire for 'doing something' in the world of men, is very much tied up with the dilemmas Lawrence recounted in his introduction to the essay entitled 'The Crown', a work which was first published in 1915, but which was issued with an introduction as part of Reflections On The Death Of A Porcupine in 1925:

"The Crown" was written in 1915, when the war was already twelve months old, and had gone pretty deep. John Middleton Murry said to me: "Let us do something."

The doing consisted in a tiny monthly paper, which Murry called The Signature, and in having weekly meetings somewhere in London... . . .

To me the venture meant nothing real: a little escapade. I can't believe in "doing things" like that. In a great issue like the war, there was nothing to be "done" in Murry's sense. There is still nothing to be "done". Probably not for many, many years will men start to "do" something. And even then, only after they have changed gradually, and deeply.

I knew then, and I know now, it is no use trying to do anything - I speak only for myself - publicly. It is no use trying merely to modify present forms. The whole great form of our era will have to go. And nothing will really send it down but the new shoots of life springing up and slowly bursting the

foundations. And one can do nothing, but fight tooth and nail to
defend the new shoots of life from being crushed out, and let
them grow. We can’t make for life. We can but fight for the life
that grows in us.

So that, personally, little magazines mean nothing to me:
nor groups, nor parties of people. I have no hankering after
quick response, nor the effusive, semi-intimate back-chat of
literary communion. So it was ridiculous to offer "the Crown"
in a little six-penny pamphlet. I always felt ashamed, at the
thought of the few who sent their half-crowns. Happily they
were few; and they could read Murry. If one publishes in the
ordinary way, people are not asked for their sixpences.

I alter "The Crown" only a very little. It says what I still
believe. But it’s no use for a five minutes’ lunch.127

After 1915 at least, part of Lawrence’s way of ‘fighting for the life that grows
in us’ was to offer the public novels that were, in part, ‘bombs’, rather than merely
abstract and idealized verbiage about politics and love. It is possible then, after reading
this introduction to ‘The Crown’, to gain some appreciation of the distance Lawrence
himself may have felt from Somers’s great desire to ‘do something’ in the masculine
world of politics. Little wonder then that Somers’s responses to both Struthers and
Cooley are at a deeper, more instinctual, level than that of mere attraction to, or
repulsion from, particular political creeds.

Somers, as a character, functions more at the level of a personified, anarchistic,
‘literary’ bomb-thrower, than as a receptor for abstract political ideas and other such
idealizations as the notion of ‘Perfect Love’. ‘See the childish mistakes we have made,
about love’128 writes Lawrence in ‘. . .Love Was Once A Little Boy’:

We have insisted that the "love" between man and woman must
be "perfect". What on earth that means, is a mystery. What
would a perfect Nilus Flux be? - one that never overflowed its
banks? or one that always overflowed its banks? or one that had
exactly the same overflow every year, to a hair's-breadth?

It is a pity that we have insisted on putting all of our eggs
in one basket: calling love the basket, and ourselves the eggs. It
is a pity we have insisted on being individuals only in the
communistic, semi-abstract or generalised sense: as voters,
money-owners, "free" men and women: free in so far as we are
all alike, and individuals in so far as we are commensurable
integers.129

129 Ibid.
It is just such life-denying abstract ideas, ideas which turn humans into 'commensurable integers', that Somers wishes to destroy by means of the explosive device of himself - 'black and primed inside'.

But the only 'revolution' which can be 'effected' by such explosives, wrote Lawrence in one of his essays on Verga, is in 'style'. So, like Verga, Lawrence came to 'instinctively . . . hate the tyranny of a persistently logical sequence, or even a persistently chronological sequence.' What was required Lawrence came to believe after reading Verga (and the belief eventually manifests itself in the style of Kangaroo) was:

. . . more looseness. We need an apparent formlessness, definite form is mechanical. We need more easy transition from mood to mood and from deed to deed. A great deal of the meaning of life and of art lies in the apparently dull spaces, the pauses, the unimportant passages. They are truly passages, the places of passing over.

So appalled by the tired syllogism of rational cause and effect in characterization had Lawrence become by 1922 that, in Kangaroo, he sought not to portray Somers as 'a sweet and reasonable creature', but rather as 'a passional phenomenon'. The question Lawrence put in his essay on Verga, an author he was translating on the sea-voyage to Australia, was this:

Is man a sweet and reasonable creature? Or is he, basically, a passional phenomenon. Is man a phenomenon on the face of the earth, or a rational consciousness? Is human behaviour to be reasonable, throughout the future, reasoned and rational? - or will it always display itself in strange and violent phenomena?

The answer to the question, as it is posed in Kangaroo, is patently obvious: 'strange and violent phenomena' are everywhere and Somers himself is a 'thought-adventurer' seeking that which lies beneath the surface of rational consciousness throughout the novel.

130 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 189.
134 It is evident too in the characterization of Aaron in Aaron's Rod.
135 DHL, 'Cavalleria Rusticana' in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of DHL, op.cit., p. 244.
Not surprisingly, Lawrence's response to the questions he poses in his Verga essay concurs with the answers provided by both the characterization of the protagonist and the overall structure of his Australian novel. He had come to the conclusion that:

Judging from all experience, past and present, one can only decide that human behaviour is ultimately one of the natural phenomena, beyond all reason. Part of the phenomenon, for the time being, is human reason, the control of reason, and the power of the Word. But the Word and the reason are themselves only part of the coruscating phenomenon of human existence... Thus, Lawrence's 'politics' in *Kangaroo* amounts to little more than a recognition that, like volcanic eruptions, human behaviour is one of the natural phenomena which is beyond all reason. Such human behaviour, like the characters in Verga's fiction, will occasionally just erupt for no apparent 'reason'. A person may thus well be transformed, like Somers, into a bomb, 'black inside and primed'.

Writing of Tolstoy in his essay on 'Cavalleria Rusticana', Lawrence asserted: 'As a true artist, he worshipped, as Verga did, every manifestation of pure, spontaneous, passionate life, kindled to vividness.' But Lawrence's characters, Cooley and Struthers, clearly lack such qualities. Only in the townspeople of Mullumbimby, observed during their bus-ride from Wolloona, and in the natural world of bush and sea and ramshackle dwellings, did Lawrence and his protagonist Somers see any manifestation of the 'pure, spontaneous, passionate life' of the Australian 'spirit of place'. Amidst the sham of the wordy abstractions and idealizations of social and political love espoused by Cooley and Struthers, all Somers wants to do is explode like a bomb.

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136 The influence of Verga may even be present in Lawrence's narrative technique of moving, increasingly, from direct to indirect speech to reveal Somers's thoughts as the novel progresses. Luisetta Chomel in 'Verga: A Note On Lawrence's Criticism', The DHL Review, Volume 13, Number 3, 1980, p. 279, claims Lawrence identified 'two levels of narrative' in the short stories of Verga's *Vita dei Campi*: 'the "muddled method" and the indirect speech. Indirect speech, he notes, is conducted by the author who reduces it to the essential facts, but this type of narration eventually alternates with passages in which the events are told as they are reflected in the minds of the characters. Verga's originality consists in the dynamic adaption of language to the mentality of the people, reproducing the muddle whirlings of the emotional mind (*Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers*, op.cit., p. 249-250). What Lawrence defines as "muddle method" can easily be identified with the *erlebte Rede*, the spoken language, which is the most conspicuous finding of the present stylistic researches on Verga.' Lawrence actually calls it 'the "muddled" method' (op.cit., p. 250). There appears to be a typographical error in the text of Chomel's article.

137 Ibid.

Yet, in *Kangaroo*, Lawrence was not prepared to sacrifice Somers as a martyr on the altar of abstraction and idealization. As he makes Somers remark to Jaz:

'. . .Sometimes I feel I'd give anything, soul and body, for a smash-up in this social-industrial world we're in. And I would. And then when I realise people - just people - the same people after it as before - why, Jaz, then I don't care any more, and feel it's time to turn to the gods.'\(^{139}\)

The novel's 'politics' thus do not extend to social action. As in this instance, they refuse the challenge of commitment, regularly retreating into the realm of misanthropic solitude. As a 'thought-adventurer'\(^{140}\) Somers is allowed to conjure up the 'thought' of political involvement, but then Lawrence chooses to allow his protagonist to largely ignore the political world in which he places him.

Verga, the author Lawrence was translating immediately before *Kangaroo*, chose a similarly 'illogical' path. Lawrence became his champion. In 'Cavalleria Rusticana' Lawrence wrote:

This activity of the mind is strictly timeless, and illogical. Afterwards you can deduce the logical sequence and the time sequence, as historians do from the past. But in the happening, the logical and the time sequence do not exist.

Verga tried to convey this in his style. It gives at first the sense of jumble and incoherence. The beginning of the story 'Brothpot' is a good example of this breathless muddle of the peasant mind. When one is used to it, it is amusing, and a new movement in deliberate consciousness. But at first it may be annoying. Once he starts definitely narrating, however, Verga drops the "muddled" method, and seeks only to be concise, too abrupt in the transition. And in the matter of punctuation he is, perhaps deliberately, a puzzle, aiming at the same muddled swift effect of the emotional mind in its movements. He is doing, as a great artist, what men like James Joyce do only out of contrariness and desire for sensation. The emotional mind, however apparently muddled, has its own rhythms, its own commas and colons and full-stops. They are not always as we should expect them, but they are there, indicating that other rhythm.\(^{141}\)

The more general parts of this statement (that is, those not applying specifically to Verga's story 'Brothpot') are as true of the style, 'the new show', of *Kangaroo* as they are of Verga's most famous work.

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\(^{139}\)DHL, *Kangaroo*, op.cit., p. 185.
\(^{141}\)DHL, 'Cavalleria Rusticana' in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of DHL*, op.cit., p. 250.
What also applies to *Kangaroo* is Lawrence's designation, in the same essay, of Verga as 'the Theocritus of the nineteenth century'.\(^1\)\(^4\)\(^2\) Theocritus was the first pastoral poet; and Lawrence was the first major modern pastoral novelist of the twentieth century. By the time he came to write both *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo* he had fused the tradition into the form of the modern pastoral travel-novel - a form of 'political' novel which tackled what Lawrence believed were more fundamental issues than those encompassed by conventional politics. Hence, at the close of his first two full-blown travel-novels, the oaten flute - the wood instrument which is both Aaron and Kangaroo - is shattered. In *Kangaroo*, the idyll of Harriett and Somers 'alone together' in rustic rural/coastal Mullumbimby is also shattered with the break-up of the beach below Coo-ee.

What remains with the reader after the final page is *Kangaroo* 's closing idyll - the passionate depiction of the Australian bush as pastoral garden. It is recognized as 'heavenly', the mythical perfect place, but Somers, 'black inside and primed' like a bomb, is perversely off to explode elsewhere, presumably in some even more paradisal location. And he is going with 'a woman at the back of him',\(^1\)\(^4\)\(^3\) a woman without whom he cannot imagine his restless quest for the self taking place at all. Moreover, *Kangaroo* is a novel that does, indeed, as Lawrence wrote of Verga's 'Brothpot', give 'at first the sense of jumble and incoherence.'

The final departure is thus a most perverse decision on the part of Lawrence's protagonist, but it is characteristic of Lawrence's novelistic non-endings,\(^1\)\(^4\)\(^4\) with their expectant sense of life still to be lived. But then such a denouement is all part of the 'flux', the restless fluidity, which is life. To change, and change again, is the hallmark


\(^{144}\)It is a state of flux (and of non-ending) which is reflected in the tension evident in the two varying published states of the close of *Kangaroo*. It is a tension which is also further revealed in the extended version of the novel's ending which has survived in manuscript form (See Bruce Steele's forthcoming Cambridge University Press edition of *Kangaroo*). And in this respect, both the form of *Kangaroo* and the characterization of its protagonist perhaps throws some extra light on what Paul Eggert has described as Lawrence's experience of authorship as 'a continuum: always subject to new stimulus, influence and experiment'. See Paul Eggert, 'Opening up the text: the case of *Sons and Lovers* ' in *Rethinking Lawrence*, op.cit., p. 51.
of Lawrence's attempt to mimic in the structure of his pastoral travel-novels, the sense of life lived as it really is, of experience continually revised and reassessed.
THE GOOD PLACE AS NO PLACE
KANGAROO AND THE PERSONAL POLITICS OF THE UTOPIAN PASTORAL TRAVEL NOVEL

Michael Wilding is right to emphasise the 'new show' of the politics of Kangaroo. He is also astute enough to examine Kangaroo within the context of William Morris's News From Nowhere. But sound as is Wilding's study, it does not seem to be alive to the possibility of a satiric purpose in Kangaroo. Satire and the pastoral have long been associated and a novel whose protagonist initially expresses 'a rabid desire not to see anything and not to speak one single word to any single body - except Harriett' and then spends an inordinate amount of time sightseeing and engaging in the most long-winded political discussions is clearly the butt of someone's sense of humour.

All, as Wilding notes, is certainly flux in Kangaroo, and this alone may account for the perversity of the above-quoted remark by the narrator about Somers's intentions, but the nature of the 'flux' of Kangaroo leads the reader into a world which is tantalizingly akin to the famous utopian/dystopian works of More, Defoe, Swift, Butler and William Morris. Indeed, like Samuel Butler's great nineteenth century satiric travel novel Erewhon, Kangaroo is a world of inversions.

When Richard Lovatt Somers looks towards the heavens he sees an inverted universe:

And now that night had settled over Sydney, and the town and the harbour were sparkling unevenly below, with reddish-seeming sparkles, whilst overhead the marvellous Southern Milky Way was tilting uncomfortably to the south, instead of crossing the zenith; the vast myriads of swarming stars that cluster all along the Milky Way, in the Southern sky, and the Milky Way itself leaning heavily to the south, so that you feel all on one side if you look at it; . . . the wonderful southern night-sky, that makes a man feel so lonely, alien: with Orion standing on his head in the west, and his sword-belt upside down, and his dog-star prancing in mid-heaven, high above

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1 See, for example, 'City Troubles: Pastoral and Satire' published as Chapter 6 of Laurence David Lerner's The Uses of Nostalgia: Studies in Pastoral Poetry, op.cit., pp. 130-149; and also Hallett Smith, op.cit., p. 42.
2 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 15.
him; and with the Southern Cross insignificantly mixed in with the other stars, democratically inconspicuous. . . .

Just as the stars are tilted uncomfortably in the world of Kangaroo, Somers's attitude towards democracy is similarly skewed in the novel. In the opening chapters, he rails against a culture and a landscape in which even the stars above conspire to confirm that 'The instinct of the place was absolutely and flatly democratic'.

Like Higgs, in Erewhon, Somers the conservative protagonist - that most English of Englishman, as he is depicted at the start of the novel - stumbles upon what is, apparently, the most democratic place on earth and finds it both horrific and puzzling. And as in Erewhon, the apparent complacency of the society encountered provides the basis of Lawrence's political satire in Kangaroo.

Presumably well aware of the difficulty of straightforwardly subverting his readers' implicit faith in the 'motherhood' qualities of democratic political philosophy, Lawrence can only hope to attack democracy through the oblique fictional shafts of satire. It is a difficult task and one that requires Lawrence to adopt an ironic tone and narrative voice deft enough to lightly send up his protagonist (and to treat him as something of a wayward child) just as Swift does with Gulliver, Morris with 'The Guest', and Butler with Higgs.

The later scenes involving Somers with Kangaroo and Struthers are relevant to the satire only in that they are the sting in the tail. In keeping with the narrator's early statement regarding Somers's desires, Lawrence reminds his readers, at regular intervals, that Somers has no genuine interest in either Cooley or Struthers and that their political opinions are largely irrelevant to the views of the novel. Lawrence's purpose in devoting so much space to them is to expose the monstrous mechanistic abstractions which lie underneath the thin veneer of both democratic and anti-democratic political behaviour in Australia.

This is the dilemma of the satiric thrust of Lawrence's utopian travel novel. It needs to spend an inordinate amount of time explaining that which it detests. Morris in

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News From Nowhere is forced to recall in some detail the horrors of pre-revolutionary life in Britain when his real focus is the rural anarchistic future; Butler must make reference, through continual asides and comparisons, to Victorian England for the politics of his referential Erewhon to have satiric force in exposing the humbug of the moral culture he wishes to question; and Lawrence too spends more time delineating democracy and its perversions in Australia, as they are expressed in the views of Struthers and Cooley, than giving voice to the new political show which the novel seeks to adumbrate. This poses some risk, as it had previously done for Swift and Butler (and to a lesser extent Morris), of mistaken intention on the part of readers of these novels. Kangaroo thus must spend a considerable time showing how these ultra-democratic Australians appear to be able to get along quite well without the necessity of rule, before it all quite literally blows up in their faces. Yet, even though the narrator very early conveys a sense that things are winding down, reverting to a state of mindless primitivism, there is much warmth and gentleness in Lawrence's presentation of ordinary Australians' relationships with one another.

Lawrence goes to some effort, however, to indicate that Jack, Kangaroo and Struthers are clearly Australians of a different kind to the inhabitants of Mullumbimby who possess, in a more endearing form, precisely that unaffected take-it-easy-she'll-be-right working class attitude encountered in the novel's opening scene. His purpose in thus characterizing Kangaroo, Callcott and Struthers is to illustrate what happens when Australians forget their unconsciously happy-go-lucky democratic natures and become infected by the desire to 'politicise' (that is to abstract and idealize) the relationship between individuals. The novel, however, finally rejects both good and bad manifestations of Australian democracy and argues for the necessity of establishing a more vital and wholesome concept of the individual self before relations between individuals in society can be truly freed from alienation.

Curiously, as products of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Butler, Morris and Lawrence all lean on pastoral modes of expression in the delineation of the politics of their utopian travel novels - Butler's sheep farmers are literally
pastoralists, Morris's post-revolutionary anarchists are devoted disciples of medieval pastoral pursuits and Somers and Harriett become for a time exponents of a life of pastoral solitude, 'alone together' in Mullumbimby. Kangaroo may not be a novel that fits entirely comfortably within the utopian tradition, but one needs to be at least aware of its claims to kinship to such a tradition if its real political interests are to be appreciated.

To do so, however, it is necessary to be aware that the novel's genuine (that is non-conventional) political concerns and the presentation of topographical details are often subtly interwoven. This is perhaps best exemplified by the passage from early in the novel which presents an image of suburbia as 'a child's drawing' with 'the little square bungalows dot-dot-dot, close together and yet apart, like modern democracy, each one fenced round with a square rail fence.'

It is also evident during the bus-ride home to Mullumbimby, after a long and extraordinarily fulsome depiction of the idealized social behaviour of the passengers, where elements of the same metaphor are transformed into a very quirky utopian pastoral image of Australian life:

> All the miles alongside the road, tin bungalows in their paling fences: and a man on a pony, in a long black overcoat and a cold nose, driving three happy, fleecy cows...

So salubrious is the democratic polis suggested by the idyllic presentation of the Mullumbimbians in this passage, and in the description which precedes and follows it, that Somers is said to be 'so tempted to commit himself to this strange continent and its strange people.' But, oddly, the description of the Australian viewed by Somers and the other passengers is redolent of some healthy animal (a black sheep-dog with a cold nose, perhaps) and the cows themselves appear to be on the verge of evolving into some new Australian species of deeply contented sheep.

Despite such quirky utopian pastoral description and the enthusiasm with which the idyllic quality of Australian social behaviour is presented in the depiction of the bus-ride, the scene does not serve to explicitly foreshadow the fuller presentation of

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a viable social ideal, either of 'responsible gentleness' or of some society in the distant future capable of accommodating and cohering individuals who recognize their own 'innate, sacred separateness.' Indeed, Lawrence's narrator immediately reports that such idyllic behaviour makes Somers 'feel sad underneath, or uneasy, like an impending disaster.' As this thesis has earlier explained, although the democratic behaviour of the Mullumbimbians is found 'fascinating' by Somers, it is also simultaneously said to make 'his spirits sink.' But what the reader also needs to keep in mind, is that Somers's contention that '...you can't go on with a soft, oh-so-friendly life like this here. You've got to have an awakening of the old recognition of the aristocratic principle, the innate difference between people', is punctured by both Harriett's reply and Somers's immediate recognition of his own pomposity:

'Aristocratic principle!' she shrieked on the wind. 'You should have seen yourself, flying like a feather into the sea after your hat. Aristocratic principle!' She shrieked again with laughter.

'There you are, you see,' he said to himself. 'I'm at it again.' And he laughed too.

The novel then leaves Somers and Harriett ensconced in Coo-ee, enjoying cosy rural domesticity, drinking 'coffee made with milk' and eating 'buns.'

Whatever utopian character the novel possesses, then, is to be found in the fact that even though the idyllic image of Australia's democratic social life (epitomized in the description of the bus-ride) takes a severe battering during the 'Jack Slaps Back' and the 'Row in Town' chapters, enough of it survives for the narrator to declare, in the novel's final chapter, that Somers is now 'thankful for the amorphous scrappy scattering of foundationless shacks and bungalows.' The novel's pastoral utopianism is thus transferred, finally, from the realm of a salubrious social polity to that of topography:

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
... the frail *inconspicuousness* of the landscape, that was still so clear and clean, clean of all fogginess or confusion; but the frail, aloof, inconspicuous clarity of the landscape was like a sort of heaven, bungalows, shacks, corrugated iron and all.\(^{14}\)

The implication is that Somers now shares the narrator's appreciation of the positive elements of the anarchic character of Australian life as they are manifested topographically and architecturally, but not necessarily socially.

Northrop Frye has argued that:

\[\ldots\text{the typical utopia contains, if only by implication, a satire on the *anarchy* inherent in the writer's own society, and the utopia form flourishes best when anarchy seems most a social threat. Since More, utopias have appeared regularly but sporadically in literature, with a great increase around the close of the nineteenth century. This later vogue clearly had much to do with the distrust and dismay aroused by extreme laissez-faire versions of capitalism, which were thought of as manifestations of anarchy.}\]^{15}\]

The novel *Kangaroo* begins with Lawrence presenting precisely the situation of a conservative Englishman, Somers, horrified at the anarchic character of Australian democracy. But where Lawrence differs from most utopians is that he is extremely ambivalent about the notion of anarchy - even more so than William Morris who paradoxically posits an almost medieval anarchic communitarian society as a solution to the anarchy of laissez-faire capitalism.

Although he creates a protagonist in *Kangaroo* who initially regards anarchy as an anathema, by the 1920s Lawrence had, with some ambivalence, come to the view that an anarchic 'smash-up' in the industrial world might be what is required to get humanity back to the state of 'natural' man, alive to both the natural environment and the irrational, subconscious self. As a product of such thinking, *Kangaroo* is thus neither in form nor content a conventional novel. Part of its unconventionality is that Lawrence's power as a debunker of the mechanised and abstracted thinking associated with industrial civilization projects itself through the slightly ridiculous facade of the

\(^{14}\text{Op.cit., p. 405.}\)

conservative Englishman, Somers. It is a combination still capable of alienating readers.

The complaisance of both Somers and his narrator, as well as most of the citizens of Australian democracy, combined with the earnestness of their author's intentions, are used as weapons against the reader's unthinking acceptance of such basic and dearly held notions that democracy is a 'good thing' per se. In this, Lawrence is not some incipient fascist but, rather, the arch-enemy of the life-denying, abstract and claustrophobic social forces which emanate from an industrialized and mechanised social consciousness (a mental-spiritual consciousness) which has created a civilization that imprisons the unique qualities of each individual's natural impulses and prevents them making contact with their true selves, the 'dark god' within them.

It is a risky political position. And, often, all it succeeds in doing is alienating critics and social thinkers. That too is part of Lawrence's idiosyncratic integrity. Kangaroo contains many stylistic and philosophic oddities, but it is in its conception and treatment of what constitutes the 'political' that it makes its greatest claim to being 'a new show'. This political 'newness' is evident in many ways, not least in the way the 'romance' of politics is presented by means of a straightforwardly described protagonist who nonetheless is an unlikely fellow of working-class origin with literary and philosophical interests and apparently of independent means. Somers's credibility is further strained by the fact that he is quite unbelievably depicted\footnote{The initial interest Kangaroo shows in Somers is based solely on Somers having published an essay on democracy in an 'absurd international paper published at The Hague, that they said was run absolutely by spies and shady people.' See Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 123.} as being courted by important extraparliamentary political figures while moving within a novel which, although it utilizes masses of realistic description, has its narrative continually disrupted in a manner akin to the alienating techniques now more commonly associated with a group of post-war German artists and a German playwright like Bertolt Brecht.

It is for these reasons that Kangaroo is a pioneering political novel, as well as for its lack of interest in conventional political philosophies. In breaking new ground and trying to squeeze in much that was new in terms of the fictional expression of
inherently 'political' views, however, Lawrence leans heavily on the one fictional genre which had hitherto allowed authors maximum freedom - the book of imaginary travels. For, despite its abundant claims to verisimilitude, Lawrence's depiction of Australian society is far more imagined than 'real'. In its way, Kangaroo provides Lawrence with as much of the context of an Australian 'nowhere', in which to play off a very personal political investigation and diagnosis, as does Samuel Butler's New Zealand Erewhon. Indeed, if the excitement of the young Lawrence's tribute to Erewhon conveyed in Jessie Chambers's reminiscences is anything to go by, Lawrence may have had Erewhon dimly in mind while writing Kangaroo: 'It begins like a travel book. You'd never dream it was a satire. It's so fresh, so romantic, such a sense of a new country.' And like Erewhon, Kangaroo combines elements from the tradition of utopian fiction with that of the imaginary voyage, but with the difference that Lawrence, in his idiosyncratic way, modifies the tradition of each.

As in the case of works such as Gulliver's Travels and Erewhon, the directness of the narrative style of Kangaroo simultaneously convinces the reader of the probability of the events, while leaving little doubt that Gulliver's, Higgs's and Somers's adventures are respectively intended as an ironic comment on the political, social and personal vices of human life. All three books reflect, in varying ways, a quest for self and social knowledge, and the device of the journey is an integral part of the narrative's significance, as well as the means by which the satirist chooses to position and distance his mirror. Along with the device of the journey, once Somers and Harriett have entered Mullumbimby, Lawrence introduces (as do Swift, Butler and Morris) that other central element of both the pastoral and picaresque traditions (and often the travel book as well), the love romance.

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17E.T. [Jessie Chambers], DHL: A Personal Record, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980, p. 120.
18It is there too, in more muted form, in News From Nowhere, particularly in the gentle darts aimed at characters, like Old Hammond, who (like Morris himself) are interested in such anti-social activities as antiquarianism and reading books.
19See especially the chapter Harriett and Lovatt at Sea in Marriage', but the strength and importance of the marital relationship between Harriett and Somers (smooth though it rarely is) is nonetheless emphasised throughout: 'He had nothing but her, absolutely.' (Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 202)
It is perhaps also worth noting that the 'thought adventure' which Lawrence conceived in *Kangaroo* has strong links with such an unlikely work as *Gulliver's Travels.*²⁰ Swift referred to this work in progress in 1721 as 'a History of my Travells.'²¹ In 1723 he wrote to Charles Ford noting, 'I have left the Country of Horses, and am in the flying island. Where I shall not stay long and my last two Journeys will soon be over.'²² As Swift's language indicates, he is not simply speaking about the imaginary journeys Gulliver undertakes. They are Swift's journeys too, and Swift would appear to be referring to the writing of *Gulliver's Travels* as a form of 'psychological voyage of discovery.'²³ If Swift's purpose was to put his misanthropic tendencies to the literary test and laugh at them in the form of Gulliver's response to the Houyhnhnms, then it is not all that dissimilar to Lawrence putting his own desires for 'action in the world of men' to the fictional test in *Kangaroo.* And, of course, we need to be as wary of identifying Lawrence with Somers as we do Swift with Gulliver.

As Maximillian E. Novak has shown, even Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe* (Swift's pioneering predecessor in the fictional travel-book tradition) 'has his utopian and anti-utopian visions, particularly in the second part, but aside from the events of

²⁰In this context see the work of John Robert Lowe who, in his 'D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo*: an approach to some of its problems' (unpublished M.A. Thesis, Monash University, 1989, p. 279), has made an equally surprising and self-confessed 'very tenuous' connection between *Kangaroo* and Jonathan Swift's *Tale of a Tub*: 'Swift gives this work a mock dedication to Lord Som(m)ers, 1651-1716, former Lord Chancellor. This is supposedly written by an ignorant bookseller, who has learned that Somers is a worthy person: is there a similarity to the Digger's approach to Richard?' This suggestion might be scarcely worth mentioning, but for two things. The Lawrences had, a short time before, travelled the area of the map with which Swift illustrated Gulliver's final voyage. Actual features of the coasts of Western and South Australia are named on this. Also, when Lawrence wrote his introduction to *Pansies* seven years later, he followed a reference to Swift immediately by one to kangaroos. Was there an association of ideas?

²¹Some slightly stronger evidence that Lawrence may have Swift in the back of his mind while writing *Kangaroo* is provided by the fact that Swift is mentioned in the second part of *Mr Noon* (ed. Lindeth Vasey, *op.cit.*, p. 118), the last novel Lawrence undertook, albeit unsuccessfully, before arriving in Australia. This mention of Swift is not recorded in Rose Marie Burwell's, 'A Catalogue of *D.H. Lawrence*'s Reading From Early Childhood'. Burwell does mention a reference to *Gulliver's Travels* in one of Lawrence's letters from 1924. The other references to Swift in Burwell are to less famous works, which may indicate a considerable degree of interest in Swift on the part of Lawrence.


dream and vision', like Lawrence in Kangaroo, 'he keeps the marvellous more firmly within the arena of human hopes and fears.'24 It is not that Swift is unconcerned with such hopes and fears, it is just that he exploits the fantastic elements of the travel-book tradition more forcefully than either Defoe or Lawrence.

Another similarity between Gulliver's Travels and Kangaroo is the 'shifting nature'25 of their protagonists (and their narrators), the flux of their views. For example, in Kangaroo, Somers's hostility to neighbouring is later compromised by his allowing himself to be politically courted by his neighbour, Jack Callcott. The impulses to political commitment and pastoral retirement are similarly placed in edgy contradiction within the character of Somers. An attempt to explain this psychologically would be as fruitless as attempting to 'explain how the disturbed misanthrope of the fourth part' of Gulliver's Travels 'could have written the first three parts'; for, evidently, it was as easy for Swift as a practitioner of eighteenth century fiction as it was for Lawrence as a modern novelist, to permit his 'narrator to approximate the mental and psychological state of a key character at the point in time when the narrative begins, without necessarily intervening along the way to explain the shifting nature' of the narrator's [or the protagonist's for that matter] character.26

Yet Kangaroo does not appear to have ever been considered as a species of satiric utopian/dystopian travel book. Obviously, it is not a work which lends itself to consideration of what Northrop Frye regards as the typical utopia, 'the rational city or world state', but Kangaroo does have some claim to be considered as a utopian satire with a strong link to the pastoral tradition.27 It is the sort of utopian satire 'where political rituals are seen from the outside, not to make them more consistent but simply to demonstrate their inconsistency, their hypocrisy, or their unreality. Satire of this kind holds a mirror up to society which distorts it, but distorts it consistently.'28

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Unlike the very personalized satiric portraits of *Aaron's Rod* (portraits which greatly annoyed a number of Lawrence's acquaintances), *Kangaroo* does not satirize recognizable individuals. Lawrence's satiric approach in *Kangaroo* is less personal and more generalized: Australian democracy is pilloried in the character of Callcott, fascism in the person of Kangaroo, socialism in that of Struthers, Celtic 'mystery' and 'treachery' in Jaz and Australian habits and customs generally in the various unnamed denizens of Mullumbimby. Most of the novel's personalized satire, however, is directed at D.H. Lawrence himself, via the persona of Richard Lovatt Somers. Julian Moynahan hesitantly uses the term 'self-lacerating' to describe the satiric thrusts of Lawrence's 'irony' in his presentation of Somers. But Moynahan also makes it patently clear that he finds such 'irony' unappealing, particularly because he believes that it is 'sometimes presented by Lawrence without detectable irony'. For this reader, however, one of the most appealing features of *Kangaroo* is how single-mindedly it ridicules and satirizes Somers's various schemes and delusions. Moreover, it is frequently Harriett who punctures Somers's pomposity. At other times it is the narrator who, on one occasion, declares that Somers is a virtual self-satirist: "'Fool that I am, fool!" he said, mentally kicking himself.' Given such a statement it is difficult for the reader not to join in the fun by concurring when Somers himself declares: "...I am a detestable little brat...all round.""\(^{34}\)

In the earlier chapters of *Kangaroo*, however, the satire is engendered more by the way in which two essentially opposing views of Australian democracy are mirrored

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\(^{29}\)See John Lowe, *op.cit.* for an interesting discussion of this in his chapter on Jaz (pp. 144-167; and especially p. 151).

\(^{30}\)These are usually depicted by means of their occupation. They include the sanitary, the white mustached librarian, the Zane Grey book-borrower, the barber and the bus-driver. All are given a gentle and good-natured satiric treatment and, as I have demonstrated in Chapter 6, "'Saturday Night in Arcady'": Elements of the Modern Pastoral Novel in *Kangaroo*, it is Lawrence's 'pastoral' use of dialect which helps to achieve this gently satiric humour. Only the Dickensian portrait of the hansom-cab driver in Sydney contains any of the savagery saved for the depiction of Somers, Callcott, Kangaroo and Struthers. Jaz's portrait seems to me to hover uncertainly between the two kinds of satire.


\(^{32}\)Contrary to Moynahan's suggestion, I feel that it is Harriett who is the character it would be more reasonable to describe as most often 'presented by Lawrence without detectable irony'.


in the attitudes of the narrator and Somers. Later in the novel, however, the ridicule of this Australian 'democratic' society is softened and the satirical emphasis is thrown on Somers's bitter account of English war-time society in 'The Nightmare' chapter. The shift of emphasis indicates the close connection between this latter 'kind of satire and utopian fiction, the connection being much closer in the final parts of the book where the 'niceness' and 'gentleness' of the Mullumbimbians is contrasted with the social and individual horrors practised both in the 'old world' of 'The Nightmare' chapter and the new world of political intrigue inhabited by Callcott, Struthers and Kangaroo.

Like Kangaroo, Jonathan Swift's 'A Voyage to Laputa', Samuel Butler's Erewhon and William Morris's News From Nowhere are also examples of contemporary attacks upon the machine society. But Kangaroo is different in that it is not an attack on the machines themselves but the kind of political thinking and social conditioning induced by the mechanisation of the modern world. After the attacks launched by Somers on the attitudes associated with Australian democracy, the delineation of the horrors envisioned by such extraparliamentary figures as Struthers and Cooley, and the nightmare of an English industrial war machine which spends an inordinate amount of time looking up people's arses and crushing the life-giving qualities out of its citizenry, Mullumbimby is as an almost exclusively apolitical world.

It is in this sense that Lawrence's utopian satire becomes pastoral. For the real social ideal of Kangaroo is not a dictatorship on the lines of Cooley or Struthers, but a simplified society. And the quickest way to such a utopia for Lawrence in Kangaroo is the presentation of Mullumbimby as a society possessing an absolute minimum of social structure. It may be winding down relentlessly but as, the narrator points out at the close of the opening chapter, 'you can get on for a quite a long time, without "rule". For quite a long time the thing just goes by itself. As Northrop Frye has argued:

This conception of the ideal society as simplified, even primitive, is of far more literary importance than the utopia

35 See Northrop Frye, op. cit., p. 40, whose phrasing I have partially appropriated.
36 DHL, Kangaroo, op. cit., p. 19.
itself, which in literature is a relatively minor genre detached from political theory. For the simplified society is the basis of the pastoral convention, one of the central conceptions of literature at every stage of its development.  

'In the Renaissance', as Frye goes on to point out, 'when society was so strongly urban and centripetal, focused on the capital city and on the court in the center of it, the pastoral established an alternate ideal which was not strictly utopian, and which we might distinguish by the term Arcadian. The characteristics of this ideal were simplicity and equality: it was a society of shepherds without distinction of class, engaged in a life that permitted the maximum of peace and of leisure. In this respect it is important to note both that not one character, except for Cooley's servant-waiter, is ever presented as actually working and also that even though Cooley undoubtedly has wealth he fraternizes with the likes of Callcott and Jaz, who would appear to be decidedly below his station.

Frye also notes that:

In most utopias the relation of the sexes is hedged around...; in the pastoral, though the Courtly Love theme of frustrated devotion is prominent, it is assumed that making love is a major occupation, requiring much more time and attention than the sheep, and thus more important than the economic productivity of society.'

Here too it is difficult not to notice, when reading Kangaroo, that for someone who is supposedly a writer, Somers devotes far more time to his relationship with Harriett than to affairs of the pen. In fact, he is never once depicted as writing anything at all.

There are also other ways in which, in Frye's terms, Kangaroo could be said to be 'allied to the utopia', the 'pastoral' and 'the spirit of satire'. As Frye explains:

The Arcadia has two ideal characteristics that the utopia hardly if ever has. In the first place, it puts an emphasis on the integration of man with his physical environment. The utopia is a city, and it expresses rather the human ascendency over nature, the domination of the environment by abstract and conceptual mental patterns. In the pastoral, man is at peace with nature, which implies that he is also at peace with his own nature, the reasonable and the natural being associated. A pastoral society might become stupid or ignorant, but it could

39 Ibid.
hardly go mad. In the second place, the pastoral, by simplifying human desires, throws more stress on the satisfaction of such desires as remain, especially, of course, sexual desire. Thus it can accommodate, as the typical utopia cannot, something of that outlawed and furtive social ideal known as the Land of Cockayne, the fairyland where all desires can be instantly gratified.

This last is an ideal halfway between the paradisal and the pastoral and is seldom taken seriously. The reason is that it does not derive from an analysis of the writer's present society, but is primarily a dream or wish-fulfillment fantasy. In the fourteenth-century poem called The Land of Cockayne, roast geese walk around advertising their edibility: the line of descent to the shmoos of 'Li'l Abner' is clear enough. The same theme exists in more reflective and sentimental form, where it tends to be an illusory or vanishing vision, often a childhood memory. This theme is common as a social cliche and in the popular literature which expresses social cliches: the cottage away from it all, happy days on the farm, the great open spaces of the west, and the like. . . .

Spenser's Faerie Queene, already alluded to, is an example of the sort of courtier-literature common in the Renaissance, which had for its theme the idealizing of the court or the reigning monarch. The literature was not directly utopian, but its imaginative premises were allied to the utopia. That is, it assumed that for mankind the state of nature is the state of society and of civilization and that, whether man is in his nature good or bad, life can be improved by improving his institutions. The pastoral, though of no importance politically, nevertheless kept open the suggestion that the state of nature and the state of society were different, perhaps opposing states. The pastoral was allied to the spirit of satire [and it is in this sense that Kangaroo could also be considered partly 'satiric' in intention] which, as in Erasmus' Praise of Folly and Cornelius Agrippa's Vanity of the Arts and Sciences, called the whole value of civilization into question.40

Based on this line of descent, it is possible to see the grounds on which I tentatively posit Kangaroo as 'allied to the spirit' of utopian pastoral satire. While the novel is neither conventionally utopian or satiric in its 'imaginative premises', in Frye's terms it is linked to both the utopia and the spirit of satire because it calls into question 'the whole value' of political civilization. Moreover, many of the other comments within the above-quoted extracts from Frye's article can be seen to apply directly to Lawrence. Where he does not meet a criterion which Frye establishes, however, is that, in Kangaroo and many of his other works, Lawrence does make the pastoral a political issue. Although Frye is correct in suggesting that pastoral has little practical

political importance (apart from perhaps adding a little extra ideological bolster for a ruling class wishing to obfuscate the real nature of class society), to apply such an insight to Kangaroo would be to ignore the fact that politics for Somers is not a matter of particular practical aims. As Wilding has suggested, Somers's desire for political engagement is more a search for 'some general emotional, religious, sexual commitment' which he is unable to find in the realm of conventional politics and that the 'lack of political detail in the novel is the direct result of this initial assumption of Somers-Lawrence.'

Unable to embrace the Marxist utopia and equally distressed by the common nineteenth and early twentieth century 'belief in the utopianizing tendency of the productive process', Lawrence had nowhere new to go but back to the Garden of Eden. As with Birkin and Ursula in Women in Love, all that can be done is to break all connection with society and seek utopia by '...wander[ing] away from the world's somewhere, into our own nowhere.' It is really only in these terms that it is possible to place the flowering of the bush as pastoral garden at the end of Kangaroo. And it is noteworthy that this recognizable location (no matter how symbolically charged is Lawrence's description of it) is one of the very few locations in the novel that remains unnamed. Lawrence is thereby able to accentuate its utopian (no-place) connotations. Significantly, however, Somers and Harriett do not embrace such a utopia, and the novel depicts them wandering away from the good place, no matter how paradisal it may be. Therefore the evocation of the bush as pastoral paradise in Kangaroo is not, finally, a desertion of commitment to experience within the real political world.

Lawrence tarred communism and fascism with the same brush because he believed they shared a common assumption that to increase control over our environment is to increase control over our destiny. As Northrop Frye argues, 'the refusal to accept this assumption is the principle of modern utopian satire':

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41 Michael Wilding, op.cit., p. 160.
42 Northrop Frye, op.cit., p. 43.
Whatever utopian thought and imagination has survived this state of affairs in democratic literature has been much more affected by pastoral or Arcadian themes than by the utopian conception of the rational city. The assumption that a more desirable society must be a greatly simplified one marks the influence of the pastoral tradition.

We do find in fact a type of utopian satire based on the theme of cyclical return: contemporary civilization goes to pieces with an appalling crash, and life starts again under primitive conditions like those of some earlier period of history. The best story of this type I know is Richard Jefferies' *After London*. And even in the nineteenth-century industrial utopias, with their clicking machinery and happy factory crowds and fast-talking interpreters, an occasional one, such as W.H. Hudson's *A Crystal Age*, takes a different tone, and reminds us that ideals of peace, dignity, and quiet are too important to be squeezed into a few intervals of bustling routine.44

Such lesser known works are loosely within the tradition of Morris's *News From Nowhere*. But that *Kangaroo* could have some relationship with this tradition has for too long been ignored. Moreover, the area in which *Kangaroo* has actually played a small part in furthering this tradition has also, to my knowledge, gone unremarked.

Like the fourth book of *Gulliver's Travels*, the political sections of *Kangaroo* represent a conservative opposition to the pastoral conception of a natural society. And as has happened to Swift *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*, the views Lawrence expressed on this matter in *Kangaroo* and elsewhere, have been frequently been misunderstood and used against him. But Lawrence is not simply arguing for a return to a state of mindless primitivism, although at times, in the heat of *Kangaroo*'s polemic, he may appear to be perilously close to such a position. Like Swift, Lawrence understood that a 'natural society, if it could be attained at all, would only be attained by some kind of animal like the Houyhnhnms' (or the whales or the icy cold fish, silent and alone, in *Kangaroo*), creatures possessing a natural 'reason' not needing the discipline of repressive political and social institutions. The Houyhnhnms and the fish

or whales can 'live in a genuinely pastoral or piscatorial world', but 'human beings have to put up with the curse of human civilization.'

Moreover, Lawrence's atavism was not simply a desire to see mankind relapse into some mindless primitive state (the final depiction of Callcott is corrective enough to such an impression), but rather a wish that mankind could retrace its steps to the point in the development of civilization where things had started to go wrong, to the point where our machine culture began to deny our natural selves and humankind became dominated by a repressive life-denying rationality. And the presentation of this very old pastoral theme of the unity of man and physical nature is one of the few areas in which Kangaroo is fundamentally consistent. Elsewhere inconsistency, as part of the entire flux of the novel, is everywhere apparent, for, as in Morris's socialist/anarchist News From Nowhere, Lawrence's presentation of this ancient pastoral theme has a strong pseudo anti-intellectual and anti-social quality. In this, too, it is part of a very long pastoral tradition in England.

Nevertheless, in its presentation of this tradition, Kangaroo goes much further than News From Nowhere and is in many ways akin to Marvell's 'The Garden'. Like Marvell, Lawrence half-comically, half seriously, edges toward a notion of individual and solitary fulfilment in which 'one is detached from society and reaches a silent incorporation into nature which the poet symbolizes by the word "green."' Similarly, on the evidence of Kangaroo, one cannot help but feel that Lawrence half-concurs with Marvell that this solitary apotheosis was the genuine paradisal state, 'before a blundering God [or his modern industrial representatives] turned Eden into a suburban development of the City of God.' For all that, like most pastoral, Kangaroo affirms the joys of genuine love, and the reader is left with the clear impression that, despite his

45 Northrop Frye, op.cit., p. 43
47 Ibid.
grumbling, Somers would not do without Harriett for all the joys of solitary bliss in the pastoral world.48

Finally, it is in this sense that Kangaroo, for all its overt concern with society and politics, is one of the most personal of all literary political exercises. Lawrence was not only jesting when he made his avowal that he believed in ' "Art for my sake". '49 Northrop Frye argues that 'in most utopias the state predominates over the individual',50 but Lawrence dreamed in Kangaroo of a world in which utopia amounts to little more than the flowering of the natural self within an idyllic natural environment. The book is social in outlook only in that its author is using a literary form as a forum within which to wrestle with his own personal political dilemmas - dilemmas which happen to be similar to those which other literary politicians (conscious or unconscious arcadians and pastoralists one and all) have been wrestling since time immemorial. In Kangaroo, there is thus as strong an element of realism as humour in the remark that Richard Lovatt Somers (like Lawrence himself perhaps) is 'struggling with the problem of himself, and calling it Australia.'51

It is in this sense that the world of the novel Kangaroo is literally a Utopia - a no place (albeit a pastoral one) - to which Somers travels. The purpose of the literary form which Kangaroo takes, like Plato's Republic or More's Utopia or Defoe's Robinson Crusoe or Morris's News From Nowhere or even Swift's Gulliver's Travels, is not simply 'a future ideal but a hypothetical one, an informing power and not a goal of action.'52 We need to see Kangaroo less as a descriptive political work and more as a constructive species of literary imagination in which Lawrence is communicating a limited utopian vision to his readers, not sharing a power or fantasy

48The same is true for Alvina Houghton who, in The Lost Girl, is left by Lawrence's wishing and willing with all her heart that Ciccio will not desert her in a solitary wilderness which, though flowery and at times almost paradisal, is ultimately terrifying.
49DHL to Ernest Collings, 24/12/1912 in The Letters of DHL, Volume 1, op.cit., p. 491.
50Northrop Frye, op.cit., p. 37.
51DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 25.
52Northrop Frye, op.cit., p. 36
dream with them." But it is a literary work that was probably far more constructive for Lawrence himself than it is for his readers.

David Cavitch has expressed it as well as anyone:

For D.H. Lawrence writing was part of a unified effort to expand and perfect the entire arena of human experience. He allied his art with polemical attempts to engage other people in constructing, or at least considering, some form of comprehensive order that would make the world less difficult to live in. For many of his adult years he hoped to lead a vanguard of personal followers into a new world of psychically liberated, sensual experience by guiding them into accepting their non-rational selves and trusting the fundamental good nature of one another. He brought that effort and other themes of his life into his writing to make them subjects of direct analysis and experimentation; always recognizably autobiographical or self-dramatizing, his art directs our attention to his beliefs and his pursuit of "ultimate marriage," or a utopian retreat, or a theocratic state, or to his constant search for relationships in which spontaneous passions flow easily among people. He brings the reader forcibly into his works as well, for his characteristic mode of writing invites the reader's heated participation in the author's dialectics. "Whoever reads me will be in the thick of the scrimmage," he warned, "and if he doesn't like it - if he wants a safe seat in the audience - let him read somebody else." (Collected Letters, p.827)

Lawrence believed that the key to greater self-realization is the body's natural wisdom of its immediate desires and aversions. The person who achieves a subtle awareness of his unconscious sympathies would fulfil his individual self through profound, active relations with other individuals, with nature and, possibly, with a reorganized society.54

'But one sheds ones sicknesses in books', wrote Lawrence in 1913, 'repeats and presents again ones emotions to be master of them.'55 And it is indeed true that, in Kangaroo, we are sometimes confronted with the presence of an author who has despaired, who is sick and tired, of humanity and is placing these feelings before the reader by means of Somers's responses. This despair was largely the product of Lawrence's response to the war, a cataclysm which, he felt, had finally unbalanced the human impulse. He came, increasingly, to see human beings as the product of this unbalanced civilization - as social rather than natural creatures, perpetuating in their beings the illnesses of society.

In contrast to this world presented in 'The Nightmare' chapter (a world which the novel shows extends even as far as Australia) the political heart of *Kangaroo* focuses attention on the hope that in the recesses of individual consciousness humans can encounter their natural selves, their dark gods. This the novel claims is the key to the reclamation of our essential, natural, beings. Yet, as David Cavitch has recognized, there was some ambivalence even in Lawrence's quest for the self:

Though Lawrence preached and pursued the goal of self-realization in individual separateness, he accepted his uniqueness often with misgivings and dread. His aspiration to full psychic liberation and sensual spontaneity was full of dangers, as he of course knew. He understood the necessity of "bitter and wincing realization," but he was nevertheless hampered by his own resistance to the process of self-acknowledgement. He could not, like Walt Whitman, freely throw his arm around the shoulders of his fellowman and walk down the open road, exulting in "the dear love of comrades." One understands his sympathy with fascism or his nostalgia for the emotional richness of the past only as symptoms of his aversion from self-knowledge and responsibility. In glorifying types of suppressions he could lull his fears of sensual liberty by indulging in a fantasy of bygone life or by subjecting present experience to tyrannical control. Lawrence was affected by these diversionary, ego-protecting impulses all through his creative life, but after the tremendous advance of his art and insight in *Women in Love* the conflict of purposes within him grew more extreme. Near the precipice of a new world of psychic experience - a world that could be sheer horror - he grasped at straws among a swirl of defensive illusions: fascism, subordination of women, adventurous flight, and male errantry.56

Lawrence has Somers grasp at all these straws in *Kangaroo* only, finally, to reject them all. As in the 'Introduction' to *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*, Lawrence's response to these diversions was to eventually ignore them and to suggest, rather, that "... one's got to go through with the life down there. . .".57

But none of these utopian diversions, pastoral or otherwise, ever amounted to much of a genuine social programme for Lawrence. 'Rananim' was only something he ever wanted to attempt with a handful of souls. At any rate there was little hope for this political programme (based, as it was, largely upon the notion of separate, self-aware

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56 *Op.cit.*, pp. 120-121. I disagree with Cavitch on this last point. I do not feel, particularly when one considers the merciless fun that is made of 'fascism, subordination of women... and male errantry' in *Kangaroo*, that (in 1922 at least) Lawrence himself felt much like seriously grasping at any of them.
57 *DHL*, 'Introduction' to *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*, *op.cit.*, p. 325.
individuals freeing themselves from the tangle and oppression of rational thought engendered by our industrial civilization) ever being of much significance to a genuinely inclusive, rather than exclusive, social group or class. It is clearly something much more suited to being worked out by Harriett and Somers 'alone together' by the shores and bush of Mullumbimby. The pastoral idyll is thus presented with the same ambivalence in Kangaroo as it was in The White Peacock.

For Lawrence Eutopia - the good pastoral place - is really literally a Utopia, a no-place. As it is expressed by the narrator (presumably giving voice to something closer to Lawrence's views than those expressed through the character Somers) in the final chapter of Kangaroo, Harriett had:

... expected so much of Australia. It had been as if all her life she had been waiting to come to Australia. To a new country, to a new, unspoiled country. Oh, she hated the old world so much. London, Paris, Berlin, Rome - they all seemed to her so old, so ponderous with ancient authority and ancient dirt. Ponderous, ancient authority especially, oh, how she hated it. Freedom, she wanted a new freedom, silvery and paradisal in the atmosphere. A land with a new atmosphere, untainted by authority. Silvery, untouched freedom.

And in the first few months she had found this in Australia, in the silent, silvery-blue days, and the unbreathed air, and strange, remote forms of tree and creature. She had felt herself free, free, free, for the first time in her life. In the silvery pure air of this undominated continent she could swim like a fish that is just born, alone in a crystal ocean. Woman that she was, she exulted, she delighted. She had loved Cooee.58

Such hopes are smashed, along with the beach at Mullumbimby, by the cyclonic rains.

The narrator questions the durability of the idyll:

And now - and now - was the freedom all going to turn into dirty water? All the uncontrolled gentleness and uncontaminated freedom of Australia, was it going to turn and bite her like the ghastly bite of some unclean-mouthed reptile, an iguana, a great newt? Had it already bitten her?

She was sick with revulsion, she wanted to get out, away to America which is not so sloppy and lovey, but hard and greedy and domineering, perhaps, but not mushy-lovey.

These three days of dark wetness, slue, and wind finished her.59

Even here the political idyll of the niceness and gentleness of the people of Mullumbimby is rejected and the novel soon, after the final pastoral idyll of the bush in bloom, provides the only answer Lawrence could ever provide - escape to somewhere else, ever-questing, ever searching for the good place of the pastoral/utopian vision: a place where human beings can be at peace with nature and hence at peace with their own natures.

Even though Lawrence provides, with the closing image of the bush in bloom, an adumbration of the charms of such a place, the novel Kangaroo perversely leaves us with the quintessential utopian pastoral impulse, as it was expressed in his review of Tomlinson's Gifts of Fortune, Lawrence believed lay behind all travel writing:

We travel in order to cross seas and land on other coasts. We do not travel in order to go from one hotel to another, and see a few side-shows. We travel, perhaps, with a secret and absurd hope of setting foot on the Hesperides, of running our boat up a little creek and landing in the Garden of Eden.

This hope is always defeated. There is no Garden of Eden, and the Hesperides never were. Yet, in our very search for them, we touch the coasts of illusion, and come into contact with other worlds.

This world remains the same, wherever we go. Every ship is a money-investment, and must be made to pay. The earth exists to be exploited, and is exploited. Malay head-hunters are now playing football instead of hunting heads. The voice of the gramophone is heard in the deepest jungle.

That is the world of disillusion. Travel, and you'll know it. It is just as well to know it. Our world is a world of disillusion, whether it's Siam or Kamchatka or Athabaska: the same exploitation, the same mechanical lifelessness.

But travelling through our world of illusion until we are finally and bitterly disillusioned, we come home at last, after the long voyage, home to rain and the the dismalness of England. . . .

But behold, in the morning, England, England, in her own wan sun, her strange, quiet Englishman, so silent and intent and resourceful! It is the coast of illusion, the other world itself.

This is the gist of the Hints to Those About to Travel. You'll never find what you look for. There are no happy lands. But you'll come upon coasts of illusion when you're not expecting them.

And all the same, far off, there is that other world, or one of those other worlds, that gives the lie to those realities we are supposed to accept.60

The good place was certainly no-place for Lawrence. He never found it, nor probably ever genuinely expected to find it. But in the last sentence of the above-quoted passage we find evidence of the indefatigability of Lawrence's utopian imagination, that ideal which for him always lay half-way between the paradisal and the pastoral.

Utopian thought has always been imaginative, has always had its 'roots in literature', and Lawrence's imagination, like all literary imaginations, 'is less concerned with achieving ends than with visualizing possibilities.' But his is a much more personal utopian vision than that of most authors. Most argue from the social model to the individual, but Lawrence's argument runs from the individual to society. As he expressed it in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, written just before *Kangaroo*:

> The whole of life is one long blind effort at an established polarity with the outer universe, human and non-human; and the whole of modern life is a shrieking failure. It is our own fault.

*Kangaroo*, moreover, provides us with both the disillusion and the illusion. It holds up the mirror to our 'ideal' democratic industrialized world and bitterly outlines it shortcomings while reflecting back to us some possibility of what both it and us *might* be.

In *Kangaroo*, Lawrence had Harriett and Somers sail their boat up a little creek in Mullumbimby. And even though, metaphorically speaking, he'd previously caught a glimpse of 'head-hunters' in the bush in West Australia, even though he'd heard the 'voice of the gramophone' in suburban Sydney, Somers still manages for a time to touch the 'coasts of illusion'. There was even some brief hope in the political philosophy of Kangaroo, until Somers clearly saw 'the same mechanical lifelessness'. But, for all that, the vision of 'the other world itself', nature unspoiled, is enough to inspire a vision of mankind as natural, unspoiled and alive to its own naturalness. It is Lawrence's assumption that a more desirable world must be a more natural and simplified one which marks the influence on his writing of what, though others have

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termed it the nature or naturist tradition, is a fundamentally pastoral impulse.

Whatever label we attach to it, however, it's not much of a practical political programme. It is plainly utopian: a species of wish-fulfilment that may come to pass when 'all of the factories have fallen down again.' But it still puts a world to shame. And because it does, Lawrence, the 'Dreamer of dreams, born out of...[his] due time', will never be simply 'The idle singer of an empty day' depicted in Morris's *The Earthly Paradise*. For, although not Marxist, his attitude is nonetheless plainly revolutionary. Unlike Marx, however, Lawrence places little hope in the role of the working class into which he was born.

Instead of a revolutionary social class he saw an amorphous, repressed and deformed 'mob'. He looked more to nature for real 'revolutions'. His symbol of hope as always is the miraculous rainbow. But it is the earth itself to which *Kangaroo* looks for convulsions and revolutions. Such is the power of place, that the only genuinely revolutionary hope he saw in Australia was the 'Volcanic Evidence' of the chapter of that name, or the tidal wave Somers wishes would swamp the suburban Sydney which has loused over 'the continent of the kangaroo'.

So, finally, despite the beauties of Lawrence's depiction of some aspects of the Australian landscape and its 'spirit of place', despite the hopefulness the novel expresses that if only we try hard enough and ignore the trauma of conventional politics we will be able to commune with our own dark gods and get back to our natural selves, *Kangaroo* is a most unsanguine utopian pastoral quest romance. The reader travels with the hope that Somers and Harriett and their boat - 'the good ship Harriett and Lovatt' - will run up a little creek and land in the Garden of Eden. But the hope is always defeated. The good place is quite literally no place. Getting there - travelling rather than arriving - was, for Lawrence, clearly the best part of it all.

*Kangaroo*, then, despite its pastoral and utopian hopes, is the expression of the very personal politics of a disillusioned man. But realist that he was, despite his

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idealisms, Lawrence creates a character who, steeled by the healing respite Mullumbimby has provided, is better prepared to deal with the realities of life.

Escape is an illusion. The Perfect Place is an illusion. Pastoral retirement is an illusion. And the political delusions of Kangaroo, Callcott and Struthers are a mirage. Even the quest for the dark god of each individual soul - 'my individualism' as Lawrence expressed it his last work, *Apocalypse* - 'is really an illusion.'

Having punctured all these bubbles, what then remains? Only the repeated insistence that the business of living is to make connection with the numinosness of the natural and human worlds. So all of Lawrence's preaching about making 'connection' with the universe in *Kangaroo* reduces, finally, to a kind _joie de vivre_, an insouciance, a simple delight in the joys, epitomized in the walk in the bush behind Mullumbimby, of being alive. It is a delight that Lawrence expressed most brilliantly in *Apocalypse*:

> For man, the vast marvel is to be alive. For man, as for flower and beast and bird, the supreme triumph is to be most vividly, most perfectly alive. Whatever the unborn and the dead may know, they cannot know the beauty, the marvel of being alive in the flesh. The dead may look after the afterwards. But the magnificent here and now of life in the flesh is ours, and ours alone, and ours only for a time. We ought to dance with rapture that we should be alive in the flesh, and part of the living, incarnate cosmos. I am part of the sun as my eye is part of me. That I am part of the earth my feet know perfectly, and my blood is part of the sea. My soul knows that I am part of the human race, my soul is an organic part of the great human soul, as my spirit is part of my nation. In my own very self, I am part of my family. There is nothing of me that is alone and absolute except my mind, and we shall find that the mind has no existence by itself, it is only the glitter of the sun on the surface of the waters.

> So that my individualism is really an illusion. I am part of the great whole, and I can never escape. But I _can_ deny my connections, break them, and become a fragment. Then I am wretched.

> What we want is to destroy our false, inorganic connections, especially those related to money, and re-establish the living organic connections, with the cosmos, the sun and earth, with mankind and nation and family. Start with the sun, and the rest will slowly, slowly happen.66

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It is a pantheistic approach to life and the achievement of Lawrence in both *Kangaroo* and so many of his other works, is that (even while he detailed the difficulties in page after page of masterful prose) he never gave up the hope that somewhere, someplace, he would establish 'the living organic connections, with the cosmos, the sun and the earth, with mankind and nation and family.'

*Kangaroo* is a book which devotes itself fictionally to this intensely personal political quest. Lawrence devoted both his life and his literary career to living it. The problem for Lawrence was that he was born into a world of advancing industrial monopoly capitalism which could lend little positive support to the pastoral impulse behind his utopian dreams.

The truth of W.B Yeats's remark that 'wherever men have tried to imagine a perfect life, they have imagined a country place and not a landscape 'where there are great wheels turning and great chimneys vomiting smoke', made of Lawrence's personal pastoral politics a crusade against an entire civilization. For six weeks in 1922 he took refuge from his actual struggle with the social world and tackled it fictionally - 'wrestling with the problem of himself, and calling it Australia.' But, like his protagonist Somers, he was not abandoning the struggle permanently. The utopian pastoral framework of *Kangaroo* is much more a reflection of 'someone on sabbatical leave from society' rather than of 'someone aloof from it.'

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THE LITERARY FORM OF Kangaroo
A CASE OF CRITICAL GENRE BLOCKAGE?

A great deal of the literary abuse to which Kangaroo has been subjected has stemmed from the unwillingness of critics to accept the novel's unconventional structure on its own terms. Indeed, it is the form of Kangaroo, much more than its politics, that has been the subject of most of the critical attention the novel has received. Literary critics have often dismissed the novel as chaotic and self indulgent, and some have suggested that it is the worst of Lawrence's novels. Others have more kindly dismissed it because it was written in little more than six weeks and therefore could not possibly be regarded as one of Lawrence's major novels.

For instance, Anthony West has declared that 'technically Kangaroo is a shocking mess'.1 Australia's great poet, A.D. Hope, in a notorious essay, dismissed the novel with such adjectives as 'ignorant', 'slapdash', 'shoddy', and 'sloppy', as well as remarking on 'its messy and careless structure'.2 And Richard Aldington, who went on to write the preface for the Penguin edition of Kangaroo, declared in an earlier work that the novel suffered from 'a carelessness of "form" which goes almost beyond Aaron's Rod'.3

Despite such statements, and despite its outward and avowed disregard for the standard conventions of narrative form and structure, Kangaroo remains a carefully structured work and, in fact, takes much of its shape from the traditions of a relatively old literary genre: the pastoral of solitude. As for the disruptive narrative incursions in such chapters as 'Bits' and 'Volcanic Evidence, these owe much to Lawrence's handling of traditions of picaresque, travel literature generally, the traditions of American (rather than English) Romance he had identified in the essays which make up

Studies in Classic American Literature, and to Herman Melville's Moby Dick in particular.

It is true that, in 1922, many readers would have been surprised by a work of fiction that looks back to writers such as Fielding by addressing the reader directly and describing itself as 'a gramophone of a novel'. Even more than this, Lawrence's contemporaries would presumably have been taken aback when the opening of the chapter 'Jack Slaps Back' roundly declares:

Chapter follows chapter, and nothing doing.
. . . you know that Harriett is brushing her hair in the sun, and Kangaroo looking at huge sums of money on paper, and Jack fishing and Vicky flirting and Jaz bargaining, so what do you want to know? We can't be at a stretch of tension all the time, like the E string on a fiddle. If you don't like the novel, don't read it.4

Such narrative intrusions appear to have struck the Times Literary Supplement reviewer as unorthodox, for he or she describes Lawrence's book as 'experimental, masterful, challenging the rules and his readers'.5 Yet it has taken most subsequent critics a long time to fully grasp the significance of this early insight. Part of the difficulty has been that Kangaroo is a more subversively experimental novel than either Joyce's Ulysses or Finnegans Wake. In both these works the massively inventive puns, allusions and word-play serve to announce the experiment Joyce is conducting, whereas the nature of Lawrence's fictional experiment in Kangaroo requires him to subvert literary conventions while still working, to a much greater extent than Joyce, firmly within them. Joyce is more open with his readers about the experimental nature of his Ulysses and Finnegans Wake; Lawrence works more surreptitiously, and does not so obviously make his readers aware that an experiment is being conducted throughout the novel.

As Lawrence himself remarked, Kangaroo, although a 'queer show', was the sort of novel that 'even the Ulysseans will spit at.'6 We know that Lawrence had only

6DHL to S.S Koteliansky 9/7/1922 in The Letters of DHL Volume 4, op.cit., p. 275.
had the opportunity to read extracts of Joyce's *Ulysses* before he began *Kangaroo*, but his statement makes it clear that he saw *Kangaroo* as a very different sort of fictional experiment to that which he envisaged Joyce had previously undertaken. That Lawrence realized that, for most readers, these experiments would appear less obviously avant-garde than those of Joyce, however, is what I believe provoked his assumption that 'the Ulysseans will spit at it.' After all, Lawrence's intrusive narrative techniques in *Kangaroo*, and the use of digression to further narrative in unexpected ways, had been firmly established in English literature by Laurence Sterne in *Tristram Shandy* almost 200 years earlier.

Lawrence's familiarity with and 'love' for Sterne's novel had been expressed as early as 1913. Moreover, readers of Lawrence only find the narrative intrusions of *Kangaroo* surprising because the second part of *Mr Noon* remained unpublished until 1984 and hence has not been widely read. While the long-published first part of *Mr Noon* contains some narrative digressions and outbursts, these are much less startling than those found in the second part. The former are mainly admonitions along the lines of 'beware, gentle reader!' a topos familiar to readers of Fielding and other works of eighteenth century fiction.

The confrontationist narrative style of 'Mr Noon Part Two', however, surpasses even the more aggressive outbursts of *Kangaroo:*

No, gentle reader, please don't interrupt, I am not going to open the door of Johanna's room, not until Mr Noon opens it himself. I've been caught that way before. I have opened the door for you, and the moment you gave your first squeal in

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7 Whether he had taken these opportunities, however, is difficult to say. His letters from Taos express real interest in obtaining a copy of the novel (*The Letters of DHL Volume 4*, op.cit., pp. 306, 319, 324, 330) before finding that, once it was obtained, it 'wearied' him (op.cit., p. 344). I suspect, however, that in order to make the comment that 'the Ulysseans will spit at' *Kangaroo* Lawrence must have read some extracts or reviews of the novel or, at least, to have spoken to someone who had.


9 DHL, 'Mr Noon' in *A Modern Lover*, Martin Seeker, London, 1934, pp. 169-312. The same topos also appears in *Aaron's Rod* (op. cit., p. 161): 'Don't grumble at me then, gentle reader, and swear at me that this damned fellow wasn't half clever enough to think all these smart things, and realize all these fine-drawn-out subtleties. You are quite right, he wasn't, yet it all resolved itself in him as I say, and it is for you to prove that it didn't.'

10 Op.cit., pp. 196, 203, 312. The same topos also appears in *Aaron's Rod* (op. cit., p. 161): 'Don't grumble at me then, gentle reader, and swear at me that this damned fellow wasn't half clever enough to think all these smart things, and realize all these fine-drawn-out subtleties. You are quite right, he wasn't, yet it all resolved itself in him as I say, and it is for you to prove that it didn't.'

11 Lawrence himself points out in *Mr Noon* (op.cit., pp. 204-205) that it is a device that has been used 'for this last two hundred years.' This passage is quoted in more detail at Footnote 13 of the previous chapter. See also DHL, *Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, Heinemann, London, 1961, p. 20, where the same uneasy, bantering tone and the use of the 'dear reader' phrase occurs again.
rushed the private detective you had kept in the background. Thank you, gentle reader, you can open your own doors. I am busy apostrophising Jupiter Tonans, Zeus of the thunder-bolt, the almighty Father of passion and sheer desire. I am not talking about your little messy feelings and licentiousness, either. I'm talking about desire. So don't interrupt. Am I writing this book, or are you? Let me tell you, even if, gentle reader, you happen to be a wonderful, chirping, gentle, soft-billed gosling of a critic, gentilissimo, I am writing this book, and it is not being chirped out by you. That is the mistake you make, gentle critic. You think I ought to write down what you chirpingly dictate to me. But you're wrong you fluffy little thing. I am writing this book myself, and nobody is chirping it out to me like a piece of dictation. . . .\textsuperscript{12}

As the second part of \textit{Mr Noon} was the last 'novel' Lawrence attempted to complete, albeit un成功fully, before undertaking the writing of \textit{Kangaroo}, it can be seen that the narrative intrusions of \textit{Kangaroo} are the hallmarks of a period in Lawrence's life when he was drawn to narrative digressions and sometimes abusive attacks on his readers in his longer fiction. Lawrence may have been attracted to such a style by a desire to emulate the great Sterne whom he loved, but the curious style which emerges both in \textit{Mr Noon} and \textit{Kangaroo} is more likely the product of a real crisis in Lawrence's literary career, a period when he was no longer completely sure, after the humiliations of the censorship concerning \textit{The Rainbow} and other works, for whom he was writing. Evidence of this is perhaps found in the fact that the only novels to emerge prior to his leaving Europe were \textit{The Lost Girl}, re-written from a much earlier work, and the interesting, though puzzling, \textit{Aaron's Rod}.

If, however, the narrative style of \textit{Mr Noon} was the result of an attempt to imitate the master whom he loved, then Lawrence succeeded in being more abusive to (and contemptuous of) his readers than Sterne would ever have dreamed of attempting:

And so, gentle reader-! But why the devil should I always gentle-reader you. You've been gentle reader for this last two hundred years. Time you had a change. . . .

And remember, gent - damn it all. I'll begin again. Remember, you giming, snarl-voiced hell bird of a detestable reader that you are, remember that the fight doesn't take place because little Jack Horner ate all the pie, or because little Bo-Peep didn't mend Jack's socks, or didn't cook his dinner. Remember, you bitch, that the fight is over nothing at all, if it isn't everything. Remember that Jack and Jill are both decent people, not particularly bad-tempered, and not mean at all.

Therefore you sniffing mongrel bitch of a reader, you can't sniff out any specific why or any specific wherefore, with your carrion-smelling psycho-analysing nose, because there is no why and wherefore.13

Similarly, the intrusion of material from *The Bulletin* and other contemporary newspapers into *Kangaroo* also looks much less surprising when one is familiar with some of the unusual techniques Lawrence employed just a few months earlier in the aborted *Mr Noon*. Instead of merely extracting individual newspaper articles for inclusion in his prose, Lawrence has the audacity to extract criticisms from reviews of his novel *The Lost Girl* and discuss their merits during the detailing of Mr Noon's life:

Now my critic in the *Observer* of December 1920 says I am out on the quest of some blotched lily of beauty, some *fleur du mal*, like the defunct Aubrey Beardsley. We live and learn, and I am very pleased indeed to shake hands with the *outré-tombe* Monsieur Beardsley. On the other hand, I am told that I am not like Swift. I am not out on the search for truth. So the infernal Dean can call me a Yahoo if he likes. I parade with my spangled lily down the avenues of time.

Yet, gentle reader - don't bite then, don't bite... . . .

Pray excuse the unbecoming word *let-down*, gentle reader. That's what it is to come of humble origin: these abominable hyphenations rear their flattened heads from among the nettles of the unchastened vocabulary. How a *Times* critic dropped on me for using the word *toney*! I'm sure I never knew it wasn't toney anymore to say toney. Because once it was quite toney. I'm sure. Perhaps I even meant then. But now I'm being almost modern, so I shall eschew *toney*, and yet not eschew *let-down*. I tell you, gentle reader, it was a let-down.14

As an example of experimentation with *form* in the novel there is much more show than substance here. It is the sort of 'daring' that readers and critics often mistake as revolutionary in Joyce. We belittle the truly experimental qualities of *Kangaroo*, however, if we reduce them to matters of mere word-play. *Kangaroo* is much more insidiously experimental than that.15

Yet, nevertheless, one would expect that a novel like *Kangaroo*, with so outwardly defiant a narrative attitude, with a chapter provocatively entitled 'Bits', a novel that elsewhere includes large slabs of journalism extracted from the contemporary

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15 The contempt Lawrence felt for most of the decidedly less than revolutionary modernist forms, forms which he considered little more than word-play, can perhaps be sensed in the irony of the above quoted lines: 'But now I'm being almost modern' (*Mr Noon, op.cit.*, p. 118)
Australian press, particularly a novel written in the same year *Ulysses* was published, would have alerted a greater number of critics to the fact that its quirks are not the result of mere carelessness. Surprisingly, only a handful, like the anonymous *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer, the fine critic John Worthen and the equally fine Australian writer, Michael Wilding, have done so. These three are among the few critics to have recognized the experimental qualities of Lawrence's *Kangaroo* and they form a tiny minority in the mass of passing criticism to which the novel has been subjected. Significantly, all three have made detailed studies of the novel instead of merely proffering a few cursory broadsides as most Lawrence scholars have been wont to do.

Yet both groups - the majority, who regard the novel as disorganized and the minority, who regard it as experimental - have, I believe, overstated their cases for, curiously, *Kangaroo* is both more and less 'formless' and 'adventurous' than has generally been recognized. As Anthony Burgess has suggested of *Women in Love*, *Kangaroo* (on a first reading) - as with *The Rainbow* and *Aaron's Rod* - impresses us 'with a sense of formlessness, of episode following episode without generation of a movement that may lead to a conclusion.' 'Later readings', however, 'show that there is no excess, no irrelevance, no self-indulgence. There is a relentless motion with no sense of contrivance.'

Where *Kangaroo* is radical is in its jettisoning of the artificial plot which has sustained the nineteenth century novel. With this jettisoning, Lawrence - along with Joyce, Ford Madox Ford and Hemingway - is faced with the problem of narrative point of view. Whereas Joyce, in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, maintains the point of view of a central character, in *Kangaroo*, though we remain mostly with the protagonist, Somers, there are 'sudden rapid cuts' to other points of view and there are occasions when we are not entirely sure whose point of view is being presented. Rather than being 'modern', this technique, as Burgess notes, is 'old fashioned', but it nevertheless 'permits a critical approach necessary to Lawrence's method': Somers 'is

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17 Michael Wilding, 'Kangaroo: "a new show"' in *Political Fictions, op.cit.*
18 Anthony Burgess, *Flame into Being, op.cit.*, pp. 41, 100. I have leaned very heavily on the two points Burgess makes on these pages for the next two paragraphs.
too mercurial, exasperatingly shifting in his sentiments, to be entrusted with the entire narrative.\textsuperscript{19}

What is radical in this 'old-fashioned' approach in \textit{Kangaroo} is that, as in \textit{Women in Love}, Lawrence is trying to demonstrate that in portraying human reality the novel can present life lived direct and momentaneously. What is truly revolutionary in \textit{Kangaroo}, however, is that Lawrence took this radical approach a stage further and tried to demonstrate some sense of what he terms 'the momentaneous life of the continent'\textsuperscript{20}: to infuse the novel with a sense of the way Somers experiences both place and people, direct and immediate, with all the 'flux' that Wilding sensed as the novel's dominant characteristic.

This is achieved by Lawrence representing aspects of his own personality and views as both a narrative voice - philosophizing, confiding and sometimes outrightly arguing with his 'dear reader' - and as a character who is alternately wise, hopeful, irascible, sensitive, comical and often downright ridiculous. It was a technique of characterization that Lawrence began to first develop with the figure of Birkin in \textit{Women in Love}. But as a technique of narrative it only begins to find its fullest force prior to \textit{Kangaroo} in the fiction and non fiction of \textit{Aaron's Rod} and \textit{Sea and Sardinia}.

\textit{Aaron's Rod}, \textit{Kangaroo} and \textit{The Plumed Serpent} have frequently been grouped together and referred to as 'leadership novels'. It has been an unfortunate practice for it has divorced these novels of Italy, Australia and Mexico, respectively, from their relationship to such non-fictional works as \textit{Sea and Sardinia} and \textit{Mornings in Mexico}.\textsuperscript{21} The result has been that too few critics have been willing to recognize \textit{Kangaroo}'s claims as a travel-novel, as a work that in a great many respects is deserving of consideration less as a novel about leadership and more as a sort of antipodean equivalent to \textit{Sea and Sardinia}.

\textsuperscript{19}Op.cit., p. 41. Burgess is, in this instance, referring to Paul Morel, not Richard Somers. I have appropriated his words because they also seem a fitting description of one of Lawrence's narrative techniques in \textit{Kangaroo}.

\textsuperscript{20}DHL, \textit{Kangaroo} op.cit., p. 315.

\textsuperscript{21}Lawrence usually managed to squeeze at least one travel-book out of each continent he visited. \textit{Kangaroo}, given the circumstances of its incredibly speedy composition, surely has at least some claims to being a combined novel/travel book of Australia.
More than twenty years ago, David Cavitch recognized the travel-book elements in *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo* - but, of course, all Lawrence's books can make some claim to this status, as Richard Aldington recognized when he extracted the passages he chose for the 1935 collection entitled *The Spirit of Place.* What is different in *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo* is that, structurally at least, they are nearly all travel-book. After the initial suffocating start in the sticky web of marriage relations in the English Midlands, Aaron's tale is structured around a series of journeys. Even when the novel was stuck back in the English Midlands it focused, after some preliminary indoor familial Christmas festivities, on a journey down to the local pub and back again. *Kangaroo*, too, although overtly beginning with the image of the travellers Harriett and Somers, for a time gets caught in 'sticky aerated waters' of Australian suburbia and neighbouring. From then on, like Aaron's tale, it's one journey after another - a ferry ride to Manly, a tram ride to some fictional and un-named (though realistically described) Narrabeen, a train ride to Mullumbimby, a train-ride to Wolloona and a bus ride back, and even a horse and sulky ride to an unnamed Loddon Falls. As has previously been shown, these fictional journeys parallel, *mutatis mutandum*, the movements of Lawrence and his 'queen bee' in the non-fictional *Sea and Sardinia*. Seen in this light, the requirement that *Kangaroo* must somehow conform to what many critics presume to be the 'rules' of narrative structure in conventional fiction appears must less urgent and appropriate. Perhaps it is special pleading to argue that *Kangaroo* warrants consideration as a travel-book - it certainly would do much to diffuse many of the attacks to which it has been subject down the years - but it is not only special pleading.

When *Kangaroo* is freed from having to fulfil certain artificial novelistic conventions, it is possible to open up its artistic practices to clearer critical inspection. Once it is granted that the narrative techniques and characterization of the novel are not the result of mere carelessness, it is possible to get past the view that *Kangaroo* is 'internally a chaos' and to provide some estimation of the sort of task in which

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Lawrence was engaged. Consideration of Kangaroo's claims as a travel-book is one way for the critic to meet the text on its own terms rather than requiring it to fit, comfortably or uncomfortably, within some imagined categorization of what is and is not a novel. It also helps to shed light on what Lawrence was attempting in the other works of his 'middle period'.

Indeed, as Cavitch pointed out in his D.H. Lawrence and the New World, 'As Rawdon Lilly or as Lovatt Somers, the Lawrence persona pursues through travel and writing the same investigations of life that engaged Lawrence in England, Italy and Australia while he wrote the novels.'24 This does not mean that as critics we should ignore the trap of equating Somers with Lawrence, but it does mean that we have to be more open to what I see as the highly adventurous way in which Lawrence is melding traditions of romance, picaresque, pastoral, and even fiction and non-fiction, in the novels of his middle period. And, in attempting to do so, it is necessary to take some critical risks. For, in general, too few critics have been willing to accept both the flux and the multifariousness of the 'novel', to recognize that in order to appreciate Kangaroo we have to be brave enough to blur categories which literary criticism too often likes to keep well and truly apart.

For example, in Kangaroo, Lawrence begins by encouraging the reader to identify the protagonist Somers with the author himself (after all they are both writers, both English, and both have written essays on democracy) and then, in the same chapter, has the narrator announce that Somers is wrong, before subjecting him to the most merciless ridicule by a wife who is disturbingly like the real Frieda von Richthofen. Who is meant to know best? The omniscient narrator who keeps running out of plot ('Chapter follows chapter, and nothing doing')25 and is presumably the voice of the novelist? Or the protagonist who is regularly reminded of his failings by both the narrator and his long-suffering wife?

The reader of *Kangaroo* is thus confronted with a dilemma of Swiftian dimensions and one that was posed in Swift's imaginary travel novel, *Gulliver's Travels*. Like Gulliver himself, Richard Lovatt Somers is as much the butt as the voice of Lawrence. The difficulty in *Kangaroo*, however, is that the reader cannot avoid the sneaking suspicion that Somers (even though he is never precisely Lawrence himself) is nevertheless often a wry-self portrait of his creator. Moreover, it is extremely difficult to distinguish Lawrence, the non-fictional first-person narrator of *Sea and Sardinia*, from that of the fictional Lawrence persona, Somers, in *Kangaroo*.26 Both have great similarities to Lawrence himself. It is just that one happens to be Lawrence's impression of himself as D.H. Lawrence on safari in Sardinia, and the other is D.H. Lawrence's impression of Richard Lovatt Somers on surfari, rather like D.H. Lawrence himself, in Australia.

As Michael Cavitch has recognized, Richard Lovatt Somers is:

... a restless figure who is impelled by whim or the slightest occasion to abandon one living-place after another. Yet he believes in the imminent possibility of a stable personal and societal life, and he would like to assume a leading role in a movement or party to initiate the new order. With his cronies he tirelessly discusses love, marriage, and social reconstruction based on manly love and leadership. At *Kaffeklatschen* in Florence or political meetings in Sydney, the fascinating but stagy dialogues give the reader an impression of overhearing the author's recent conversations with acquaintances. Like Lawrence, the persona recognizes that his social impulse is frustrated by his skepticism and his terrible insight to other people's motives for action. Regarding his own motives, each persona is continually subject to criticism and ridicule from his indomitable wife, as Lawrence was often challenged by Frieda in their notorious conflicts. The reader is urged to recognize the similarities between the fictional and the real couple by the unmistakable, deliberate caricature in the descriptions of man and wife. In all, the thinly veiled disguise thrown revealingly about himself keep us mindful that the fiction we are reading is chiefly the fictionalized immediate experience of the author, as Lawrence wishes it to be known.27

This is the immediate tension the reader experiences in *Kangaroo*.

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26 In this light, the remark of W.J. Keith is of interest: 'we find DHL praising [George] Borrow for the very quality that the Victorians had mistrusted. Jessie Chambers reports: "Lawrence greatly admired George Borrow...He said that Borrow had mingled autobiography and fiction so inextricably in *Lavengro* that the most astute critics could not be sure where the one ended and the other began."' (*The Rural Tradition: William Cobbett, Gilbert White and Other Non Fiction Prose Writers of the English Countryside*, Harvester Press Ltd., Great Britain, 1975, p. 112.)

But there is also the tension between the novelist and his relation to his material. Although, both Aaron's Rod and Kangaroo contain some of Lawrence's best writing in the realistic manner of Sons and Lovers, the reader is continually alerted to the fact that the realism is something more than conventional by the way the author continually intrudes to break the spell of pure fiction to insist upon the actuality of his personal hand in the contrivance of novel. In Kangaroo, as Cavitch has noted of Aaron's Rod, Lawrence also 'joshes the reader and frets about the difficulty of getting his diverse characters assembled and his story under way.'28 Both novels are continually undercut, and achieve their lightness of tone, by the intervention of the authorial voice which constantly alerts the reader to the differences between life and the representation of life in art. And so, in this way, after the opening chapters, both Aaron's and Somers's often unlikely experiences are made fictitious by the author's continual impositions upon the consciousness of the reader.

Novels, Lawrence is continually reminding us in Aaron's Rod, Mr Noon and Kangaroo, are not life and a writer can't realistically express the subconscious thought of a character like Aaron and fire 'it all off at any listener, as these pages are fired off at any chance reader.'29 The traditional novelistic illusion of episode following episode leading on to a conclusion is simply not an issue in Kangaroo or Aaron's Rod. As in Sea and Sardinia, Lawrence's protagonists go places, see things and make remarks about what they see, think and feel. The only real difference is that in the novels a so-called authorial voice regularly frets about the difficulty of keeping it all going.

This poses real difficulties for the critic interested in delineating the precise nature of Lawrence's realism. On the one hand, he produces passages of prose - usually descriptions of places the author has recently seen (often that very morning in the case of Kangaroo) - that are among the finest the realistic tradition in English can offer. At the same time the constant narrative intrusions are continually alerting the reader to the fact that the realistic is not reality. As I have tried to show in my book D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul, Lawrence is utilizing the conventions of realistic prose in a

29 DHL, Aaron's Rod, op.cit., p. 159.
highly complex and often deliberately 'symbolic' way. Moreover, the 'pastoral' places of Kangaroo, no matter how realistically described, are always subject to an idealizing tendency because of their positioning within the novel.

Furthermore, as I have also noted in *D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul*, the 'realistic' descriptions of Thirroul and its environs penned by Lawrence almost as he experienced them are different from those descriptions of that same landscape which were written later in New Mexico. The former descriptions heighten the sense of Kangaroo as the record of life as it is really lived. Any lack of realism is determined less by what they include in their descriptions of actual places and more by what they leave out - a brickworks here and a cokeworks and locomotive depot there. But their claims to documentary realism are reduced by the fact that Lawrence will for no absolutely essential reason move an actual house called 'Verdun' (this residence was, and is, located in Roxborough Avenue, Thirroul) so that it takes a place in an otherwise highly realistic (it is almost a documentary depiction of Station Street, Thirroul, circa 1922) of an unnamed street near the station in Mullumbimby. Such techniques, as I have shown in an earlier chapter, often help to sharpen the novel's pastoral focus, but they are also literary slights of hand which make it impossible for the ordinary reader (that is one not intimately familiar with the landscape described) to sort out fiction from realistic description. Similarly, it is just as impossible for an ordinary reader to determine what is realistic description in Lawrence's *Sea and Sardinia* and what is not.

There is simply little or no pretence of narrative infallibility in either Lawrence's non-fiction or fiction of the 'middle period'. He is nearly always at pains to make his readers aware of the subjectivity of conventional realistic description. Furthermore, when this exposure of the subjectivity of the narrative structure becomes overt, as in *Aaron's Rod, Mr Noon and Kangaroo*, the reader is embroiled in an almost Brechtian contract with the text. But as Brecht hadn't yet fully developed his theory of dramatic estrangement (his first plays *Baal* and *Drum In The Night* were, like Kangaroo, written in 1922) it is more fitting to view what I see as Lawrence's techniques of fractured 'symbolic' realism in Kangaroo as a manifestation in literature of some of the
techniques that were happening contemporaneously in the art world of the time, particularly during the post-war Dada period in Weimar Germany. Where Lawrence makes it harder for critics than Brecht ever did is that, in Kangaroo, we have an acknowledged master of the realistic tradition in English twentieth century literature discarding most vociferously (and thereby quite overtly shattering) the notion that literature should seek to create the illusion of reality while at the same time, and in the same work, producing the most masterful realistic prose.

When I attempted to show in D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul 30 that the realistic natural description of the earlier sections of the novel does not function in the persistently symbolic manner of the final chapter - where the distance Mexico provided enables Lawrence to respond to the landscape of Thirroul in a way that is simultaneously, realistic, emotional and imaginative - I was then but dimly aware of the full significance of the allusiveness of Lawrence's techniques of narrative realism in Kangaroo.

I had been alerted to Kangaroo's allusions to Herman Melville's Moby Dick by Andrew Peek's article,31 but was (like Peek himself, I suspect) ignorant of the full significance of this. Since then, however, L.D. Clark has been able to throw much greater light on the extent of Lawrence's debt to Melville in Kangaroo. In doing so, he has made it possible to open up the obvious tension between realism and romance in Lawrence's Australian novel and to, once and for all, make sense of Lawrence's perplexing remark that Kangaroo was a 'romance'.

Perhaps it is not surprising that it has taken someone like Clark, someone who has edited the Cambridge edition of The Plumed Serpent, to place Kangaroo in a much wider context than simply as one of Lawrence's supposedly lesser novels. Clark is thus able to position Kangaroo - along with The Lost Girl, Aaron's Rod, Mr Noon and The Plumed Serpent - as a work which, to a very large extent, grows out of the autobiographical and critical writings Lawrence was producing between 1917 and

1923. In doing so, Clark recognizes, more fully than any previous critic, Lawrence's indebtedness to Herman Melville.

Even in terms of the unconventional narrative structure of *Kangaroo*, Clark cogently argues that:

\[ \ldots \text{Lawrence takes his cue from Melville for narrative tone and form. Somers and Lawrence's narrator persona are complementary halves, as Melville and Ishmael are: making fiction resemble autobiography, setting up a dialectic between narrator and protagonist. Point of view for both Lawrence and Melville is dictated by the necessity of the moment, not by aesthetic theory. Also like Melville, Lawrence wrote in whatever style he thought expedient, from journalese to philosophical discourse, each author quoting from any stray source that might contribute to larger purpose. In *Kangaroo* as in *Moby Dick*, the casual sequence of narration goes with insistence that form is tentative and exploratory. The following quotations from *Moby Dick* would be perfectly at home in *Kangaroo*: 'Out of the trunk, the branches grow; out of them, the twigs. So, in productive subjects, grow the chapters'; or 'This whole book is but a draught - nay, but a draught of a draught. Oh, Time, Strength, Cash, and Patience.' Besides these stylistic and structural elements to demonstrate the proximity of Lawrence's methods to Melville's, such remarks as the following about Melville show how clear-sighted Lawrence was and how much he was willing to risk in emulation of his classic American forerunner in search of a romance-like form for the novels of the pilgrimage period, for analogous things have often been said about Lawrence: 'Nobody can be more clownish, more clumsy and sententiously in bad taste, than Herman Melville, even in great book like *Moby Dick*. He preaches and holds forth because he's not sure of himself. And he holds forth, often, so amateurishly.'\]

In short, Clark's contention is that 'Lawrence's principal reliance' for both 'the intrusive narrative voice' of *Kangaroo*, and the 'loose structure defended by disclaimers of any structure whatever', was Melville's *Moby Dick*: a book which (like *Kangaroo*) has a 'notoriously digressive structure and constant commentary by a voluble narrator.'\[33\] This is the first real breakthrough in critical commentary on *Kangaroo* since Michael Wilding's pioneering efforts in recognizing *Kangaroo* as a 'new show'. Moreover, Clark's belief that, because it was 'quite a while' since Lawrence had read any of the English classics, it is far more likely that his source for


the peculiar narrative voice of his middle period is the classic Americans who 'absorbed his analytic attention at the time' is a very compelling one.34

Reference to the classic Americans also enables us to open up a clearer understanding of the risks Lawrence knew he was taking in employing what I term 'symbolic realism'. Despite possessing a solid sub-stratum of realistic and almost documentary (though fictionalized) rapportage of Lawrence's and Frieda's daily experiences in Australia, *Kangaroo* - like *The Lost Girl* - makes bold use of the unreality of romance, 'taking its departure from Cooper and Hawthorne'. The opening sections of both *Kangaroo* (the anatomy of 'neighbouring' in suburban Sydney) and *The Lost Girl* ('the caustic satire of Midlands life in Bennett-like realism'),35 are both dispelled by sudden transitions to the improbable. In the case of *Kangaroo*, Somers is improbably courted by some of Australia's most important extra-parliamentary politicians. In *The Lost Girl*, however, the improbable becomes almost bizarre when Alvina Houghton's virtual hijacking is effected after 'the arrival of the Natch-Kee-Tawara "tribe"', a group of most 'unlikely "American Indians" concocted out of Europeans of various nationalities',36 the style of whose depiction 'is often closely patterned on' Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*.37 Yet, in both *Kangaroo* and *The Lost Girl*, this 'shift into the obscure and fantastic is inconspicuously foreshadowed by such comments from the narrative voice'38 as 'What was needed was a Dark master from the Underworld'39 and 'There was a downslope into Orcus, and a vast, phallic, sacred darkness where one was enveloped into the greater god as in an Egyptian darkness.'40

Lawrence's study of the classic Americans had made him aware of the dangers involved in 'making bold use of the unreality of romance' and, thus, the frequent unreality of *Kangaroo*, *Aaron's Rod* and *The Lost Girl* is not simply the result of

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carelessness or a lack of structure. Lawrence is consciously emulating the classic Americans and is clearly aware that, as he wrote of American Romance, unrealistic narrative can appear childish if you overlook 'the symbolic meaning.' This is the mistake I believe is made by those critics who want to see the totemic figure of Kangaroo as a realistic figure presumably modelled on an actual Australian political personage. However, Lawrence's depiction of him as a sort of walking marsupial belly, offering cold fascistic comfort and a warm, cloying and, finally, sickeningly abstracted 'Love' (something also condemned in the Studies ) to the people of Australia, virtually cries out for a symbolic rather than a realistic interpretation.

A different example of the way in which Lawrence's 'symbolic realism' functions is provided by his utilization, in Kangaroo, of a description of one of his favourite symbols. By means of a realistic description of a rainbow, the reader is given a clear intimation that Somers will reject not only Kangaroo and all that he stands for, but also that he will eventually come to adopt a less prejudiced response to his experience of Australia as a place.

In the chapter 'Volcanic Evidence' Harriett asks Somers, "Who is there that you feel you are with, besides me - or who feel themselves with you?" Somers's answer, containing as it does a realistic description of the Lawrentian symbol of the rainbow (though expressed in a highly charge and symbolic context) gives a strong indication that both Somers and the novel will reject Kangaroo:

'No one,' he replied. And at the same moment he looked up and saw the rainbow fume beyond the sea. But it was on a dark background, like a coloured darkness. The rainbow was always a symbol to him: a good symbol - of this peace. A pledge of unbroken faith, between the universe and the innermost. And the very moment he said 'No one,' he saw the rainbow for an answer.

Critics who wish to interpret Kangaroo as a realistic political figure based on some real-life model fail to see that not only Somers and the narrator, but also Kangaroo himself, are frequently ironic fictional projections of their creator (and his

41 DHL, Studies in Classic American Literature, op.cit., p. 78. See also Bruce Steele's remark about Stevenson, Somerset Maugham and the 'romance' in "Kangaroo : Fiction and Fact' in Meridian, Volume 10, Number 1, May, 1991, p. 22 and note 20.
42 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 178.
delusions and demented schemes) and that the overall impression Kangaroo leaves the reader is like that of Moby Dick: 'autobiography at a remove just sufficient to transform it'\textsuperscript{43} into an odd amalgam of acutely realistic description, symbolic prose, philosophic discourse and tedious preaching. Extracting the one from the other, as I have shown in D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul, is difficult enough in the case of the former even if you possess highly specific and detailed local and historical knowledge of places, but when it comes to unraveling the realism and the symbolism of characters one has not only never known personally, but who may not necessarily even have existed in the first place, the task becomes a minefield. Kangaroo, the man, is thus as much a symbol as Melville's Moby Dick - both must be killed before either of their respective 'thought adventurers' can proceed.\textsuperscript{44}

Similarly, in the paragraph immediately following the one quoted above, Lawrence makes use of a presumably realistically described recollection of a vision of a rainbow he saw on the morning of his arrival in Sydney Harbour. It was raining on the morning of the 27th May when the Malwa birthed, as Bruce Steele has discovered,\textsuperscript{45} and so there is some likelihood that a rainbow did appear on that Saturday morning. But whether the rainbow Lawrence describes was or was not actual is irrelevant, for the primary function of the description is symbolic.\textsuperscript{46}

Many times in his life he had seen a rainbow. The last had been on his arrival in Sydney. For some reason he felt absolutely wretched and dismal on that Saturday morning when the ship came into Sydney harbour. He had an unspeakable desire not to get out of the ship, not to go down on to the quay and into the town. The having to do it was a violation of himself. When he came on deck after breakfast the ship had stopped, it was pouring with rain, the P and O wharf looked black and dismal, empty. It might almost have been an abandoned city. He walked round to the starboard side, to look towards the unimposing hillock of the city and the Circular Quay. Black, all black and unutterably dismal in the pouring rain, even the grass of the Botanical Gardens, and the bits of battlement of the Conservatorium. Unspeakably forlorn.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[43] L.D. Clark, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 199.
\item[44]\textit{Op.cit.}, pp. 199, 203
\item[45] See notes to the forthcoming Cambridge University Press edition of Kangaroo, edited by Bruce Steele.
\item[46] John Alcorn, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 56-57, suggests, and I suspect he is right, that Lawrence developed his personal 'rainbow-worship' after reading Idle Days in Patagonia, a work in which W.H. Hudson was himself wondering 'why 'the Incas were the only worshippers of the rainbow '\textsuperscript{49}.'}"
over it all, spanning the harbour, the most magnificent great rainbow. His mood was so miserable he didn't want to see it. But it was unavoidable. A huge brilliant, supernatural rainbow, spanning all Sydney.47

The purpose of this contextualized description of this huge rainbow is thus to metaphorically express the perversity of Somers's initially embittered response to his experience of both the Australia and the Australians he has encountered. The realistically depicted rainbow thus functions as a signal to the reader that from now on Somers will begin to respond less prejudicially, that he will now start to see what he formerly refused to see, and begin to respond to 'the continent of the kangaroo' - and 'the spirit of the place' and its people - on its own terms. Lawrence describes Somers's vision as 'A huge, brilliant, supernatural rainbow, spanning all Sydney.' This may indeed be realistic prose, but it is preternaturally heightened by Lawrence in order to milk its symbolic resonances.

Hunting for the real-life model of a character whose function in a novel is primarily symbolic results from a fundamental misunderstanding of the relation between romance and realism in pastoral writing. In this respect Kangaroo is akin to Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queene - a work which is, like Kangaroo, in some senses a political exploration with recurrent pastoral interludes, but in which the characters and landscapes depicted are primarily symbolic. And like Lawrence, Spenser - by the time he came to publish The Faerie Queene 48 - had already proved himself a master of realistic pastoral. In this sense, Spenser's The Shepheardes Calendar is the equivalent of Lawrence's The White Peacock, and both are examples of the surprisingly brutal realism of which these writers interested in the conventions of contrasting town and country were capable. Kangaroo - although it also deals, like Spenser's great work, with the question of leadership - is as much a novel of quest, of pilgrimage, as Spenser's The Faerie Queene.

47 DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 178.
48 This work is alluded to in Kangaroo (op cit., 143) as part of the domestic idyll in Mullumbimby when Harriet is busy 'wash[ing] her linen herself for the sheer joy of it, and loved nothing so much as thinking of getting it whiter and whiter, like the Spenserian maid'.
Indeed, despite the fact that leadership is (for a short time at least) an issue in *Kangaroo*, L.D. Clark is right to reject the term leadership novel for *Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo and The Plumed Serpent* as 'unrewarding' and to argue that it is wiser to group together 'all six novels between *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as "Pilgrimage novels"'. All of them, argues Clark:

... aim at rebirth of the human soul, through new access to the power of instinct, access gained only by pilgrimage from a wasteland to a land of regeneration: 'thought adventure' must be realised in geographical adventure.

And 'the novel of geographical adventure' is a term which provides a bridge between the idea of the travel-book, the 'thought adventure', and the trajectory of Lawrence's personal wanderings.

As Billy T. Tracy points out, what Lawrence found in the form of such different types of travel-writings as *Sea and Sardinia* and *Kangaroo* was the freedom he had so admired in his early reading of Charles Darwin, George Borrow, Henry Bates, George Dennis, Samuel Butler, Charles Doughty and W.H. Hudson. Indeed, when, near the end of 1913, the essayist Henry Savage asked him to describe his reading habits, Lawrence replied: 'I love travels and rather raw philosophy... books about Greek religions and the rise of Greek drama, or Egyptian influences - or things like that - love them.'

'Travels and rather raw philosophy' is an apt brief summation of *Kangaroo*. But it is also true that each of the six novels between *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, including *Kangaroo*, help to tell the story of Lawrence's search for a nourishing soil and a compatible culture, more fully than could be achieved by any conventional autobiographical works. In *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*, Lawrence was

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49 *Aaron's Rod* - which I put first because Lawrence began it first - *The Lost Girl, Mr Noon, Kangaroo, The Boy in the Bush* and *The Plumed Serpent* (See L.D. Clark, *op.cit.*, p. 194). It needs to be kept in mind that *The Lost Girl* may have been started before the war. Unfortunately, we do not know to what extent *The Lost Girl* is based on the pre-war manuscript returned to Lawrence but which is presumably no longer extant.

50 L.D. Clark, *op.cit.*, p. 194.


able to fashion the novel into a form almost as free as the travel-book *Sea and Sardinia*. Like Hudson in *Idle Days in Patagonia* (1893), Lawrence found, in *Kangaroo*, that he could abandon 'chronological continuity' and could open up the novel to receive whatever he felt like throwing in. Those elements that he did throw in are not that different from Hudson's own choice of a 'vision of savages', and various reflections on 'atavistic memory, and the symbolism of whiteness in *Moby Dick*.'

Lawrence admired the travel-genre, as Billy T. Tracy has noted, for precisely the same reasons as W.H. Auden:

> I want a form that's large enough to swim in,  
> And talk on any subject that I choose,  
> From natural scenery, to men and women,  
> Myself, the arts, the European news . . . .

It enabled Lawrence, in Tracy's words, to 'exchange his walking stick for a lectern.' And by throwing conventional form to the winds, Lawrence freed himself to remark on everything from the behaviour of the yokels in Mullumbimby to the consciousness of Australian fish.

In this respect Lawrence was, in *Kangaroo* at least, as much a naturalist, geologist and anthropologist and political scientist as Darwin and the other 'naturists' and 'travel-writers' discussed by Alcorn and Tracy. So what is it that holds *Kangaroo* together? What cements the 'rather raw philosophy' with the ramblings of the amateur natural and social scientists Lawrence has created in the form of both Somers and the narrator? John Alcorn provides a lead when he remarks that the story of the naturist travel book is in fact the story of the search for Eden. In this, Alcorn follows Lawrence in his remarkable review of H.M. Tomlinson's *Gifts of Fortune*, where a firm distinction is made between travellers and tourists:

> We do not travel in order to go from one hotel to another, and see a few side-shows. We travel, perhaps, with a secret and

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53 W.H. Hudson, *Idle Days in Patagonia* (1893), E.P. Dutton and Co., illustrated edition, New York, 1924; the quotations are from Billy T. Tracy, 'DHL and The Travel Book Tradition', *op.cit.*, pp. 280-281; see also John Alcorn, *op.cit.*, p. 56, where he discusses Melville's and Hudson's shared interest in '"whiteness" and its effect on the mind.'

54 W.H. Auden, from *Letters from Iceland* quoted by Billy T. Tracy, 'DHL and The Travel Book Tradition', *op.cit.*, p. 281.

absurd hope of setting foot on the Hesperides, of running our boat up a little creek and landing in the Garden of Eden.

And it is this aspect of travel-writing that links *Kangaroo* with the journeys of most utopian pastoral.

Lawrence's quest, like that of his contemporaries Borrow, Doughty, Synge and Hudson, was to stumble upon some paradisal place where mankind's more primitive consciousness, our instinctive naturalness, had not yet been corrupted. In both *The White Peacock* and *The Rainbow* he had shown that the English country garden - the ancient world of pastoral and agricultural pursuits - offered no refuge and no solutions for a twentieth century miner's son. Similarly, he eventually came to see that even the Italian preoccupation with the physical was just as limiting as the northern glorification of the mind.

Beautiful as were so many of the places Lawrence encountered, the people always disappointed him. Tracy has remarked that 'The real path back to the beginnings - as Lawrence learned first from the example of earlier travellers and later from his own experience - was through immersion in the spirit of place'.

Lawrence put great confidence in the ability of landscape to change a person. His belief in this power has the importance of an article of faith in his personal religion. "There are a lot of me's," Rawdon Lilly, that high priest of the Lawrence cult, insisted in *Aaron's Rod*. "I'm not only just one proposition. A new place brings out a new thing in a man" (AR 98).

As Tracy goes on to remark, 'Lawrence was not unique in attributing so much power to the spirit of place. His predecessors in the travel book tradition were alert to those moments when landscape transformed the consciousness of the observer. John Alcorn has even called the sensations of boundlessness and timelessness caused by a response to landscape "the central subject of naturist travel literature." But I believe Tracy has underplayed the importance of *Kangaroo* as the work by Lawrence which most conclusively shows the impact of place on character. New Mexico may have had the greatest impact of any place on Lawrence himself:

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59 *Ibid*. 

I think New Mexico was the greatest experience from the outside world that I ever had. It certainly changed me forever. Curious as it may sound, it was New Mexico that liberated me from the present era of civilization, the great era of material and mechanical development. 

But the moment I saw the brilliant, proud morning shine high up over the deserts of Santa Fe, something stood still in my soul, and I started to attend. In the magnificent fierce morning of New Mexico one sprang awake, a new part of the soul woke up suddenly, and the old world gave way to a new.60

But it is in Kangaroo that we witness the impact of the 'fern-age' transform both Somers's consciousness and his appreciation of 'the continent of the kangaroo'.61

The many pastoral patterns and variants employed in Kangaroo have been demonstrated earlier in this thesis, but what has been ignored until now is the way Lawrence utilizes a similar form of implicit contrast to make a distinction between the abstractions of civilization and the naturalness of the primitive in character and the primordial in landscape. Lawrence’s adumbration of an 'aboriginal', non-European presence or 'daimon' in the Australian landscape and character is tied up with his critique of the elements of European culture and democracy as they had been interpreted and transmuted in Australia. The realization of this 'aboriginal daimon', of the spirit of 'the continent of the kangaroo', within the novel is designed (just as traditional pastoral aims to reinvigorate the life of the court with the naturalness of the country) to help demonstrate the way to a more humane and vital civilization for the modern industrial world. His persistent use of this antithesis is again, as it is in traditional pastoral, implicitly didactic and calculated to convince the reader that one style of life (or form of consciousness in Lawrence's case) was superior. The very nature of this polemic sometimes tilted Lawrence to the sort of extremes so evident in the philosophical

60 DHL, "New Mexico" in Phoenix, op.cit., p. 142. Also cited by Tracy, op.cit., p. 288.
61 See also John Lowe, op.cit, p. 68, where readers are alerted to a passage from Thomas Hardy's The Return of the Native which may have influenced Lawrence's depiction of the fern-age in Kangaroo: 'The ferny vegetation round him, though so abundant, was quite uniform: it was a grove of machine-made foliage, a world of green triangles with saw-edges, and not a single flower. The air was warm with a vaporous warmth, and the stillness was unbroken. Lizards, grasshoppers, and ants were the only living things to be beheld. They seemed to belong to the ancient carboniferous period when the forms of plants were few, and of the fern kind, when there was neither bud nor blossom, nothing but a monotonous extent of leafage, amid which no bird sang.' (Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, intro. Albert J. Guerard Jnr., Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1961, Bk. 3, chapter 5, p. 241.)
sections of *The Plumed Serpent*. But in *Kangaroo* at least, it serves to provide the reader with a healthy understanding of the distressing irrelevance of political intrigue, especially when compared with the natural delights offered by the beauties of the Australian bush and the 'gentleness' of the inhabitants of Mullumbimby.

In trying to alert readers to the necessity of developing their internal resources in isolation, by communing with nature rather than becoming involved in the vexing world of 'politics and red hot treason', Lawrence is also highlighting for his readers the revitalizing, curative powers of landscape. For all the disturbing egoism of Richard Lovatt Somers's struggle with his European consciousness (as its 'aura' collides with 'the continent of the kangaroo'), and despite the misanthropy which emerges from Somers's 'wrestling with the problem of himself and calling it Australia', the struggle does at least serve to make the reader more aware of the vital regions outside the egoism of the self.

It is more in this sense that *Kangaroo*, as Michael Wilding avows, is a 'new show' in terms of the development of the political novel. But although I have no major quarrel with anything Wilding has written about *Kangaroo*, much of what he perceives to be its revolutionary political 'newness' is attributable to the way it draws on older traditions and literary practices and fashions them, by means of a peculiar approach to characterization and narrative, into a sort of modern semi-autobiographical utopian pastoral travel novel. This term is as infelicitous as Polonius's 'tragical-comical-historical-pastoral', but I've chosen to use it because it provides a means of opening the multifariousness of *Kangaroo* to closer critical inspection.

Yet, just as the work of L.D. Clark has shown that underneath the superficially adventurous narrative of *Kangaroo* is a very strong reliance on the techniques utilized by Herman Melville in *Moby Dick*, beneath the seemingly 'radical' intrusive narrative voice and loose structure is a bed-rock of very 'old fashioned' structural contrast: the patterns and variants of pastoral romance. In this respect it is instructive to compare

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what is often presumed to be the adventurous narrative of *Kangaroo* with Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1593) - one of the most famous pastoral romances.

Like other pastoral romances, the narrative of *Arcadia* is 'intricate, digressive and episodic', offering 'a wide variety of tales' in a manner akin to the way *Kangaroo* draws on anecdotes from the *Bulletin* and *Daily Telegraph* and also utilizes Lawrence's own reminiscences of war-time England. By adding numerous non-pastoral episodes and saturating the narrative with argumentation, as does Lawrence in *Kangaroo*, Sidney's romance experiments with the fusion of pastoral landscape with other kinds of action. And, as Michael Squires has argued, in a passage with much relevance for Lawrence's *Kangaroo*, 'of special interest in both Sidney's romance and the pastoral novel is the full interaction of pastoral and realistic elements, of stasis and flux, an interaction that forms a hallmark of the pastoral novel.'

Squires here concurs with Elizabeth Dipple who argues that Sidney's Old *Arcadia* 'moves instantaneously from literary stasis to the dynamic flux of realistic examination, from the timeless world of pastoral to the world of hopelessly flawed character and action'. It is also instructive to make parallels between what 'Water R. Davis has identified as the 'structural geography' of Sidney's Arcadia with the similarly schematic landscapes of *Kangaroo*. In his *A Map of Arcadia*, Davis shows that Sidney's art is heavily dependent on a series of concentric circles within which the characters move:

The outermost circle of the romance setting is the polar opposite of the inner circle: it is urban, complex and sophisticated; it is turbulent, the realm of warfare and death... a naturalistically drawn version of the world men live in.

In *Kangaroo*, the world of such a circle is represented by two locations, one in and one outside Australia. The England of 'The Nightmare' chapter is the realm of 'warfare

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63 Michael Squires, *op.cit.*, p. 32.
64 *Op.cit.*, pp. 32-33
65 *Op.cit.*, p. 33; Squires is citing Elizabeth Dipple, 'Harmony and Pastoral in the Old *Arcadia*, *ELH*, 35, 1968, p. 320. It should be noted that there are three forms of the *Arcadia*. The Old *Arcadia*, written between 1577 and 1580; a revised version known as the *New Arcadia*, published in 1590; and the revised and unrevised versions published together as the *Arcadia* by Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, in 1593.
and death' from which the protagonist has fled and the outermost circle of the Australian scene has its parallels with Sidney in the naturalistic depiction of the urban world of Sydney, with its political scheming, rats and suburban detritus, the image of a loused over 'continent of the kangaroo'.

The 'contrasting locales' of Sydney and Mullumbimby also parallel the middle and inner circles of Arcadia: the middle circle of Arcadia itself ('the mean between inner and outer circles' which in Kangaroo is depicted as Mullumbimby and its environs - 'The place was half and half')67; an inner circle (in Kangaroo represented by the house Coo-ee with its idyllic beachfront location and in Arcadia is 'Basilius' pastoral retreat'); and, finally, a pastoral 'centre' (which in Kangaroo is the image of the bush as pastoral garden which closes the novel and in Arcadia is represented in the various subplots as 'two lodges, an arbour, and a cave').68 Moreover, Kangaroo also resembles Sidney's Arcadia in that two characters are 'shipwrecked' in a strange new country, eventually fall deeply in love (in Arcadia with princesses, in Kangaroo with landscape), assume various pastoral disguises (in Kangaroo it is the assumption, for a time, of the 'disguise' of an interest in political involvement), and then later achieve some 'harmony of soul' in the arcadian milieu before, finally, returning to the larger world.69 These correspondences - rough though some of them may be70 - with such a venerable pastoral text are yet another example of how what is frequently presumed to be a 'new show' in Kangaroo is not exclusively attributable to the 'modernism' of Lawrence's technique. Indeed, some of the perceived 'daring' of Lawrence's technique in Kangaroo is attributable less to Lawrence's inventiveness and more to some modern critics' unfamiliarity with the structure, patterns and variants of pastoral in some of the

67DHL, Kangaroo, op.cit., p. 86.
68Michael Squires, op.cit., p. 32. As is indicated by the quotation marks, I have leaned heavily on Squires's paraphrase of Davis for this paragraph.
69Ibid.
70Unfortunately, we cannot be sure that Lawrence had read Sidney's Arcadia. There is no reference to Sidney in Burwell's catalogue of Lawrence's reading. And we must always be careful in ascribing to any writer the influence of Sidney's Arcadia. After all, as Richard A. Lanham (The Old Arcadia, op.cit., p. 183) reminds us, Sidney's Arcadia is a volume of which it has been said: "all have heard of... some few possess, but that nobody reads."
older works of what, for better or worse, has come to be seen as traditional literary canon.

The extent to which Lawrence was consciously imitating sixteenth century English pastoral romances in *Kangaroo*, however, remains a moot point. What is undeniable, however, is that the freedom provided by adopting a form akin to the loosely digressive and episodic structure found in early pastoral prose romances was something Lawrence certainly appears to have found congenial as he dashed off *Kangaroo* at lightning-speed in Thirroul in 1922. But as there is no evidence that Lawrence had read *Arcadia* and thus was directly influenced by it when writing *Kangaroo*, all we can reasonably say is that for Lawrence 'pastoral' seems to have been as much a habitual way of thinking as a consciously adopted literary technique. It seems to be more like a characteristic way of responding to personal experience, enabling Lawrence to bind and cohere the 'looseness' or 'formlessness' that accompanies his efforts to jettison plot, as it is traditionally understood. As Alastair Niven has remarked of *Kangaroo*:

> The shapelessness of the novel, verging occasionally on incoherence, has led the majority of critics to label it a failure, but it is pertinent to wonder whether any other form would have conveyed so much immediacy of reaction... Lawrence's intention in this novel [is] not to give a fully-rounded interpretation of the Australia he visited but something more exploratory, more rough-hewn and more like the experience of life as we actually feel it.

That this intention was undertaken by a writer who, in Anthony Burgess' words, was a miner's son who 'chose to make himself a countryman' meant that, for Lawrence - and hence Somers - 'the experience of life as we actually feel it' was habitually refracted, consciously or unconsciously, through a pastoral literary prism.

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71 Although it appears to have gone completely unremarked, Lawrence does not once mention feeling ill in his letters. The stay in Thirroul may well have been one of the few entirely uninterrupted 3 month periods of good health he experienced after 1915 and, I feel, this well-being is reflected in the extraordinary speed at which *Kangaroo* was composed. I am at least one critic who is grateful that Lawrence did not always find it this easy to write novels; he complains only once of coming to a halt and this appears to have lasted little more than a couple of days. Had he been blessed with similarly prolonged periods of physical well-being 'Lawrence Studies' would be quite literally one of the world's largest indoor sports.


Thus, as I have attempted to show, despite the fact that Lawrence regularly disrupts the narrative flow, *Kangaroo* remains a highly patterned and structured work. Astute critics, like Worthen and Wilding, and more recently John Lowe, have recognized that the narrative structure of the novel is far less chaotic than a generation of earlier critics believed. But Worthen and Wilding, while rightly stressing that the *Kangaroo* is more consciously experimental than was previously thought, still place slightly too much stress on the novel's formally, rather than politically, experimental qualities.\(^74\) Certainly, it is an adventurous work. Yet beneath its open and confrontationist narrative style is a highly conventional series of contrasts. In fact, the technique Lawrence has employed is to overlay one of the most traditional of literary structures with an openly confrontationist narrative voice. Yet even the technique of identifying the narrative voice of the novel with 'the spirit of the place' was, in 1922, not so daring that it was without precedent; and for someone like Lawrence who had recently made (and was continuing) his investigation of the impact of 'The Spirit of Place' on American Literature, who had previously made an intensive study of Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, and who had also read a number of works by W.H. Hudson, even this technique was probably as much the product of conscious literary emulation as of a 'modernist' Lawrentian breakthrough.

Moreover, as I have attempted to show, if Lawrence's manipulation of the device of a narrative voice which identifies itself with 'the spirit of the place' and his play with the loose set of tropes which characterize the modern pastoral novel are made the focus of an examination of *Kangaroo* then it takes on a unity, and a seriousness and a centrality of purpose, which explores deeply, and in an intensely satisfying, and relatively orderly manner, the competing attractions of urban political commitment and retirement into rural-coastal solitude. Furthermore, it is the conventional pastoral contrasts of old world and new world, city and country, which enable this theme to be given its fullest expressions.

\(^{74}\)Perhaps this has been done only in the heat of polemic and to correct previous imbalances in the way *Kangaroo* has been interpreted. This over-emphasis, slight thought it is, nonetheless has the effect of deflecting interest away from the other, more conventional, elements in *Kangaroo* which I have tried to highlight in this thesis.
CONCLUSION
This thesis has demonstrated that even in a novel like Kangaroo, a work in which the author has moved away from depiction of the landscape in which he grew up (a landscape with which he would become again preoccupied in the period after the writing of The Plumed Serpent), D.H. Lawrence was continuing his pioneering and highly original contribution to what a small, but increasing, number of critics are coming to see as Lawrence's primarily pastoral art of the modern novel - an art informed by (despite its peculiarly Lawrentian twists, turns and inversions) a centuries old English vision of the dialectics of town and country.

In a more general way, the thesis has also demonstrated how Lawrence, via both the adventurous form and the revolutionary political content of Kangaroo, managed to preserve 'essential pastoral values while fully accepting the burden of civilized consciousness which the developed society and culture of his time imposed.' While frequently conjuring forth an idyll of pastoral retirement, the viewpoint Lawrence most often adopted is that such a retreat from the modern industrial-political-social world is not a satisfactory solution to the problems he identified. In Kangaroo, as in his 'Introduction' to the Memoirs of Maurice Magnus, the view Lawrence finally took was that 'one's got to go through with the life down there - get somewhere beyond it'. But this was a decision that was always made within a particular locus amoenus, a conclusion reached, as in Kangaroo, after a healing experience within an idyllic pastoral environment.

The thesis has argued that, like most pastoral literature, Kangaroo has a political focus - although not a conventional one. An author presumably cannot continue to passionately diagnose an illness affecting an entire civilization, as Lawrence did in his first seven novels, without making some attempt at finding a cure. It is all very well to

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1 Julian Moynahan, op.cit., p. 34.
suggest, as Birkin does in *Women in Love*, that there is no longer a perfect place to be found within or without Europe and that the only true idyll lies in a perfected relationship between the sexes, but given the wildly romantic natures of those Lawrentian beings involved in the struggle to achieve harmonious relationships in various English and European places, such characters are bound to seek utopia in untried landscapes and situations. Seemingly dissatisfied with such a quest, in *Kangaroo* Lawrence assays an extra-parliamentary (though still conventional) party political road to the health of society and finds it wanting. Not only is the taking of such a path an intrinsic part of the problem of society itself, but such attempts at political action in the world of men negatively impinge on Somers's social and sexual relationships with his wife and mar his enjoyment of an idyllic non-European landscape. Despite the charms and lure of the pastoral *locus amoenus* he discovers in Mullumbimby - "'It's the loveliest thing I've ever known'" - Lawrence sends his protagonists scurrying off once more, fleeing 'the horrible tyranny of a fixed milieu', no matter how idyllic that milieu may be.

We are left only with the rationale of the opening line of Lawrence's great travel book, *Sea and Sardinia*: 'Comes over one an absolute necessity to move.' As always, in his quest for the perfect place, getting there was the best part of it all. His 'secret' and, self-confessedly, 'absurd hope of setting foot on the Hesperides, to (in the case of *Kangaroo*) run Somers's and Harriett's 'boat up a little creek and land... in the Garden of Eden', was a form of 'wish-fulfilment' that informs and invigorates the travel element in nearly all of his novels from *The Rainbow* to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. To paraphrase the words of Poggioli, it is on the quicksands of this wishful thought that the pastoral ideal of Lawrence's major novels shifts. For Lawrence, the road to the perfect place, and the place where it was tested, was always as much a literary as an actual one. In *Kangaroo*, as this thesis has demonstrated, this literary quest takes the form of what can only be described, with breathtaking inelegance, as a modern

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politically satirical utopian (American) Romantic pastoral travel novel. It is not a
categorization I imagine would have delighted Lawrence. Not only is it even more
infelicitous than Polonius's 'tragical-comical-historical-pastoral', it reduces Kangaroo
to, in Lawrence's words, 'a stupid fixed thing like a lamp-post.'

But I have been willing to risk such infelicity, and such reductionism, in order
to try to understand the way in which Kangaroo participates in various fictional forms.
To attempt to do so is to 'be better able to see the various possibilities' that Lawrence
explored 'as well as those he avoided.' It has not been an attempt 'to impose a unified
genre where none was intended.' It is rather to see the way in which 'any great literary
work quite naturally goes beyond the seemingly established bounds of genre and marks
off its own territory.'

Although I am no fan of Derrida, I suspect he intended to mean something
similar to this when he declared, in language which would have horrified Lawrence,
that:

... a text cannot belong to no genre, it cannot be without or
less a genre. Every text participates in one of several genres,
there is no genreless text; there is always a genre and genres,
yet such participation never amounts to belonging. ...This
axiom of non-closure or non-fulfilment enfolds within itself the
condition for the possibility and the impossibility of
taxonomy.

In identifying Kangaroo as a novel underpinned by a great many of the
elements of both traditional pastoral and the more modern pastoral novel identified by
Squires, I have simultaneously attempted to be open to the many other genres, forms
and traditions which impinge on the text - the influence of the travel book, the English
Romantic tradition, satire, the utopian imaginary journey, American Romance, along
with some very personal Lawrentian notions of self and place. I have done so in order

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6William Shakespeare, Hamlet, op.cit., II. iii. 403-404.
8Maximillian E. Novak, 'Gulliver's Travels and the Picaresque Voyage: Some Reflections on the
Hazards of Genre Criticism' in The Genres of Gulliver's Travels, ed. Frederik N. Smith, University of
Narrative, ed. W.V.T. Mitchell, University of Chicago Press, 1981, pp. 51-77; also cited by Novak,
op.cit., p. 35. Presumably, the language is nearly as bad in the original French.
to make it clear that prose fiction and picaresque - along with satire, pastoral, the travel book and the romance - share the condition of being mixed forms and so 'to expect generic purity' from a literary work, like *Kangaroo*, which combines so many elements 'is to hope for too much.'

I have subtitled the thesis a 'semi genre-based exploration' because to view a work like *Kangaroo* 'too much in terms of genre' would be to attempt to subvert its undeniable originality. For *Kangaroo*, as Michael Wilding has so perceptively shown, is a type of 'new show', and a politically revolutionary one at that. It is for these reasons that this thesis is titled 'Place, Pastoral and The Politics of the Personal', in an attempt to position Lawrence's employment of pastoral patterns and variants as only a part (although a part which provides a focus for opening up the text) of a very complex literary work. Just as Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe* 'moved prose fiction in the direction of a realistic portrayal of human nature under extreme circumstances', and just as Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* made possible a type of satiric fiction based on very artfully constructed systems of fantasy', in *Kangaroo* Lawrence pushed the modern novel into a new political domain, adventurous in form and radical in content, by using it as a basis to explore the competing attractions of political commitment and pastoral retirement.

Derrida, if he is saying anything useful at all, is reminding us in his 'The Law of Genre' article that 'the concept of genre' - and consequently the idea of the pastoral genre employed in this thesis - 'contains its own antithesis or the seeds of its own deconstruction.' He seems to be suggesting that writers may transgress or transform the genres within which they are working. But it is hardly a momentous insight, for surely this transgression or transformation of genres is part of a long established dialectic, and one that has always readily adapted to, and often seized upon, the

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12 Louise K. Barnett, 'Deconstructing *Gulliver's Travels* in *The Genres of Gulliver's Travels*, *op.cit.*, p. 231. A more traditional Marxist might eschew the term 'deconstruction' and argue that any genre (as does capitalism itself) contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Just as the members of the organized working class are the grave-diggers of capitalism, the conventions of any given genre are also its potential grave-diggers. The classic text upon which to base such an analysis would, of course, be *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, *op.cit.*
tensions present in any given form. If to obliterate generic boundaries entirely is the essence of postmodernism then *Kangaroo* cannot quite be labelled a postmodernist novel; for, although Lawrence found a form in *Kangaroo* that provided him with a maximum amount of generic freedom, it is not a novel that deconstructs genres, but rather one which merely emphasises 'their existence by overstepping them.'13

The difficulty for the critical reputation of *Kangaroo* is that, to use words which Dr Johnson claims categorized the critical reception of *Gulliver's Travels*, for most of the last seventy years critics have been 'lost in wonder; no rules of judgement were applied to a book written in open defiance of truth and regularity.'14 Most critics have thus failed to consider the novel's narrative 'voice' as an expression of the narrator's sympathy for the 'instinct of the place'.15 They have accused the novel of shapelessness, when, in fact, the narrative line and perspective of the novel have been very consciously shaped by this 'good humoured-take-it easy-she'll-be right-mate' attitude which the novel's opening paragraph declares 'belongs to a good Australian.'16 They have failed to see that this is Lawrence's technique for realizing the 'spirit of place' and that the extracts from *The Bulletin* in the 'Bits' chapter, with their 'concise, laconic style',17 serve momentarily to take the place of (and in their own way to further) the corresponding 'Australian' style of Lawrence's narrator.

Similarly, the selections from *The Bulletin* included in the 'Bits' chapter, as Lawrence's narrator specifically states, are not 'mere anecdotage.'18 One of them, for instance, is said to capture 'the whole spirit of Australian labour'19 and, taken together, the extracts serve to represent the entire 'momentaneous life of the

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continent.' It has been argued that they are deliberate inclusions and not evidence of the desperate measures to which a novelist bereft of ideas for plot development will resort. The thesis has contended that, if anything, the extracts from *The Bulletin* and many of the other apparently 'disruptive' segments of the novel serve to further our understanding of the sort of influence 'the spirit of place' has on the white Australians who dwell within it.

Perhaps it is not only coincidence that with the emergence of the critical tools of deconstruction and postmodernism some critics, such as a Marxist like Michael Wilding, have been able to more fully appreciate Lawrence's simultaneous creation and violation of conventional fictive structures in *Kangaroo*. Whereas today it is the fashion for critics to present opposing critical views of a text without subjecting it to a monolithic reading, Lawrence was both exceedingly unfashionable and formally adventurous in creating (in 1922) a character like Somers possessing opposing impulses and located within the most fluid of narrative structures.

Moreover, there can be little doubt that Lawrence was highly conscious of the experiment with form he was undertaking in *Kangaroo* - all his letters from Thirroul mention the *form* and not the content of the novel he is writing and he does call it a 'romance', although I would emphasize that which Lawrence neglected to say: that it is a romance that takes a primarily pastoral form. And while *Kangaroo* may threaten 'on every page to come apart at the seams', it has been the contention of this thesis that it is the novel's links to the pastoral genre that primarily assist it in holding together in such a way as to challenge 'the attentive reader, urging him not to surrender' to either the impulse to political commitment or pastoral retirement, but rather to play along with the author's rather 'discomfiting rhetorical game.' The many additional genres identified by the thesis - the travel book, the utopian/dystopian satire, the American romance, the imaginary voyage, the love romance, the mystery intrigue - that Lawrence employs are 'the hoops' which the reader either enjoys (or is annoyed at being forced to 'jump

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21 Frederik N. Smith, *op.cit.*, p. 246.
through') as a means to the end of a 'fuller understanding' of Lawrence's diagnosis of what is wrong with contemporary society and politics.\textsuperscript{22}

On the road to this end, the reader hovers 'between laughter and something else', never entirely sure on a first reading what precisely is satire and what is not in Lawrence's depiction of place and character in \textit{Kangaroo}. The structural fluidity of the combination of genres employed, the incessantly shifting attitudes of the protagonist, the more subtle flux and the doubtful overall status of the views of the narrator - and their relation to those of Lawrence himself - serve to indicate that, apart from the employment of the many pastoral patterns and variants identified in the thesis, one of Lawrence's 'most active fictive techniques is \textit{bewilderment}.\textsuperscript{23} Satire, the travel book, the imaginary utopian journey, American romance: all these genres are utilized and explored through the fleeting, though often recurring, adoption of a particular style - thereby creating a form which displays a gallimaufry of literary allegiances within the superstructure of a dominant pastoral genre. His methods, to appropriate the phrase Lawrence used when describing the Weltanschaung he believed informed \textit{Studies in Classic American Literature}, were 'new, if old'.\textsuperscript{24}

But in this the reader is 'caught in a paradox'. The 'borrowings from the language', 'tone' and techniques of 'various genres', along with the narrative's 'repeated violation of generic convention', and the flux of the protagonist's opinions and attitudes, conspire to make it difficult for the reader to 'confidently' interpret 'the text' of \textit{Kangaroo}.\textsuperscript{25} But such difficulty, such flux, Lawrence is arguing, provides a realistic impression of the complexity of life, and it is by this means that novel attempts to give some fictive impression of how life is really lived.

It is precisely this attempt which determines the integrity of Lawrence's 'new show': the difficulty we experience in fixing its genre, despite all the evidence of its pastoral patterns and variants, 'is parallel to the difficulty we should experience in

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{24}DHL to Benjamin Huebsch 30/9/1919 in \textit{The Letters of DHL Volume 3}, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 400.
\textsuperscript{25}Frederik N. Smith, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 253-254.
arriving at a neat definition\textsuperscript{26} of the essence of most things, particularly of the state of being human and the competing impulses which necessarily are active within any creatures who are simultaneously both individuals and truly social beings.

The flux which Michael Wilding has identified as central to \textit{Kangaroo}'s attitudes, and the novel's gallimaufry of generic allegiances identified in the preceding pages, are thus the keys to understanding a novel that even Lawrence himself knew would puzzle his contemporaries. Perhaps it is only now - some sixty years on and in an age we self-consciously categorize as postmodernist - that \textit{Kangaroo}'s critical day is beginning to dawn.

\textsuperscript{26}\textit{Op.cit.}, p. 258.
This bibliography attempts to include not only all works consulted in the compilation of this thesis but all the writings by Australians, published and unpublished, on either Lawrence, *Kangaroo*, Wyewurk or Thirroul known to the author of this thesis. Material by non-Australian writers is included only when it is felt to be either especially good, relevant or simply interesting. The source for nearly all the material is my own files collected over a period of some 15 years. On just one or two occasions, a full reference has not been given to a particular article or manuscript because a clipping has been filed without full publication details. The purpose of including even such incomplete references is to provide as full a bibliography as possible in order to make it possible for some future researcher to attempt to chart the reception of both *Kangaroo* and Lawrence's Australian stay by Australian writers and Australians generally. I believe such a project would make an excellent and manageable Honours Thesis. Nevertheless, it should be understood that the bibliography which follows is by no means complete. I find that early reviews of *Kangaroo* and *The Boy in the Bush* can be occasionally stumbled upon when browsing through the many obscure journals and newspapers printed in Australia during the 20s and 30s - and I expect to continue to find more. The bibliography is also limited by my vast reservoir of ignorance when it comes to languages other than English. It should be noted that Japanese studies of *Kangaroo*, in particular, seem to be a particular area of growth in the Lawrence Industry at the moment. *Kangaroo - Studies in D.H. Lawrence*, ed. Yasue Arimitsu, Lecturer, Department of Intercultural Studies, Tezukayama Gakuin University, Asahi Shuppansha (Penguin), 1990 (339 pages with an additional 54 page bibliography) is but one example. Fortunately, the bibliography (except for the critical comments) is largely in English. I was delighted to be presented an inscribed copy of this work when Ms Arimitsu visited me in Thirroul recently to make the obligatory pilgrimage to Wyewurk. Of course, I can't read a word of it (apart from the bibliography) and even embarrassed myself by attempting to flick through it upside down and back to front in the presence of my new-found Japanese acquaintance. I would therefore recommend that potential students of both Lawrence criticism generally, and the reception of *Kangaroo* in particular, consult both Ms Arimitsu's work along with *D.H. Lawrence: An Annotated Bibliography of Writings About Him*, compiled and edited by James C. Cowan, De Kalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1982-1985. This latter work is the most impressive Lawrence bibliography in terms of its coverage of languages other than English that I have seen.

**EDITIONS CONSULTED**

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