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St. Mawr: A Critical Study

David Cavitch

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ST. MAWR: A CRITICAL STUDY

By

David Cavitch

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English

The University of New Mexico

1960

ST. LOUIS, MO. FEBRUARY 1907



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INTRODUCTION: KIOWA AND LAS CHIVAS

In summer even the despised automobile can conquer the steep and dusty road up Lobo Mountain to D. H. Lawrence's Kiowa ranch in New Mexico. Camping there within the cool woods that edge the spot of clustered cabins and the shrine and the alfalfa field, one feels the boding pine trees are the real inhabitants of the mountain. They belong there eternally possessing, and slowly their ineluctable pattern, cut and pushed back from the little circle of human activity, will settle in a deep piney green again over all that place and recapture an anonymity from the Lawrence legend, a privacy for the quiet ashes of the phoenix. High above the desert floor and miles from any city, one is quietly startled to discovery: the value of a genius is not in the man but in the truth.

It seemed to Lawrence that only a novel could discover the truth and reveal it in all the lovely shimmering of its unfixable relatedness. "The novel is the one bright book of life," he wrote.¹ In the novel we can see man alive in his wholeness, and not in just some rôle or separated part of himself, and the nearness of the whole man gives our own lives a kind of buoyancy. Fiction lays bare a man's affinities, and we are bolstered by that rare glimpse of truth. We are freed, for a while, from the constricting privacy

¹"Why the Novel Matters"; D. H. Lawrence: Selected Literary Criticism, Anthony Beal, editor (New York: The Viking Press, 1956); p. 105.

INTRODUCTION: 1907-1910

In summer, even the hottest weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

and heavy rain, and the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

New series. The weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

of the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

They believe there is something in the weather

perhaps, but not perhaps in the weather

will settle in a hot place, but not in the weather

perhaps as much as the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

and the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

from any city, and in the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

a genius is not in the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

It seemed to be a very good idea, but it was not so

truth and reveal it in all the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

relationship. The weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

In the novel we see the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

just some of the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

whole was given out in the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

here a man's affections, and the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

of such. He and the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

1. The weather is not so oppressive as it is in the
Christianity, and the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the
of such. He and the weather is not so oppressive as it is in the

of human life. And lingering afterwards in our own privacy are the new affinities revealed to us by the image of another life. The following study of St. Mawr² is an attempt to enlarge through criticism a reader's vision of the life and art within it, to clarify the novel's revelation without violating its pure liveliness, to be as it were an X-ray but not an autopsy.

The ranch on Lobo Mountain is now the property of the University of New Mexico. It is open to the public, who may go there to visit the shrine where Lawrence's ashes are buried in concrete and then write their names and addresses in the "guest book" on a shelf against the white wall on which hang French official documents certifying the identity of the cremated corpse and the purity of the ashes---dated 1935. From the doorway one can look back down the cleared slope onto the roofs of the cabins and deeply beyond them into the Taos valley with the mountains near Santa Fe rising like a blue wall far across it.

Discounting the shrine and the distraction of visitors and caretakers and seminar students staying in the big house and a fellowship scholar staying in the little house, the ranch is as wildly beautiful as it ever might have been. Nothing really has gone out of it. But thirty-five years ago when Lawrence among the pine trees in the mornings wrote St. Mawr and brought the finished pages in to read aloud to Frieda and Brett over the table in the

²D. H. Lawrence, St. Mawr (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925). All quotations from the novel will be cited in the text by page references to this edition.

little cabin,³ the ranch was recreated as Las Chivas and became the embodiment of a vision. That fictional ranch with all its symbolic energy is what one foolishly looks for while standing on the slope of Lobo Mountain. It is not there, and was never there. It is in the novel only, and it is not a place to live but a truth worth coming to.

³Dorothy Brett, Lawrence and Brett, A Friendship (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1933); pp. 137-38.

little cabin, the room was not very large, but it was

the equivalent of a vision. The old man's eyes were

open, and he was looking at the old man with a

the slope of his nose. It was a very old man, and

It is in the novel only, and it is a very old man

with coming to.

At the highest point, the old man's eyes were

MILLERS FALLS

EZERASH

COTTON GUN

CHAPTER ONE: PROSE STYLE AS THE MEANS OF
DISCOVERY IN ST. MAWR

Style is what we touch feelingly in prose; it is the tissue we encounter in reading. It does not immediately arrest our interest but carries our attention forward, like the shapeliness that quickens our spirit. It is an elusive quality in any bit of writing, intriguingly hard to isolate. Though we seem to touch it we can't get at it. One is never quite able to point to style alone and say, "There now, this is the quality I have been talking about." In Herbert Read's study English Prose Style, the word is seldom used beyond the title page. The life of prose, Read says, is rhythm,¹ which may inhere in a phrase or sentence but achieves a unity only in the paragraph.² Style, he implies, is largely a matter of the rhythms which determine paragraph gestalten.³

Rhythm is not an a priori construction.... It is born, not with the words, but with the thought, and with whatever confluence of instincts and emotions the thought is accompanied. As the thought takes shape in the mind, it takes a shape....The metaphor is for once exact: thought has a contour or shape. The paragraph is the perception of this contour or shape.

¹Herbert Read, English Prose Style (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955); p. xi.

²Ibid., p. 59.

³Ibid., p. 62.

The writer has towards his materials, words, the same relation that an artist, say a modeller, has towards his material, clay. The paragraph is a plastic mass, and it takes its shape from the thought it has to express: its shape is the thought.⁴

Style appears elusively in the flashing shape of a conception. Ideally, the way a thing is thought of becomes the style in which it is expressed. Style is not the man; it is his thought. Lawrence's style is astonishing because he conceived of things in an astonishing way: in St. Mawr the sophisticated prose techniques are the mode of Lawrence's perception, the means of his discoveries.

Lawrence is an impressionist, perhaps the only impressionist who was not often enslaved conceptually by the narrowness of his own technique. Like no other novelist, he gives the reader a sense of participating in the events or situations described.⁵ Yet, with that impression, in St. Mawr, there is the unmistakable authority of an omniscient narrator coloring the illusion of our participation, guiding us as it were to passions and nuances we could not independently perceive or maintain. We seem to have the benefit of two concurrent points-of-view: the character's with whom we are sharing and the author's which is spoken in our ear.⁶ This double

⁴Ibid., p. 61.

⁵"An impressionist prose style is one that gives the illusion that the reader is participating in the events, scenes or actions described." Ibid., p. 155.

⁶"The writing catches the precise quality of her sensibility, the exact looseness and slanginess of her idiom....We seem to hear Lou's very tone and accent, the intimate slanginess, the sardonic terseness, the disenchantment and the underlying pain.

The writer has... the same relation... has pointed out... in a similar way... the change is... the change is...

Style appears... ideally, the way a thing is... it is expressed. Style is not... Lawrence's style is... in an astonishing way... one the mode of Lawrence's... Lawrence is an... who was not often... technique. Like no other... participating in the... that impression, in... of an omniscient... guiding us as it were... deeply perceptive or... concurrent points-of-view... shering and the... the writer's...

1934, p. 51.

The impressionistic... that the reader is... described. 1934, p. 100.

The writing... the exact... you a very... for example, the...

vision is not a stylistic "additive," a bit of extra flavor. It is part of the way Lawrence saw things and it accounts for much of what he saw. That it is also exactly the way he expressed those things argues for his integrity as an artist and the pure sensibility in his work.⁷

Lawrence cannot dissociate himself from the object of his thought; he must, like Keats, enter the emotional life of a sparrow and conceive of corn-pecking as an experienced event. But his empathetic association does not dissolve his self or obscure his identity. Unlike the emotional naturalist,⁸ Lawrence participates in the life-experience of objects about or imagined within him only in order to enlarge and purify his own identity, not to escape from it. He conceives by a kind of thought transference,

6(cont.) "The language is not, of course, merely imitative, not just a simple embodiment of Lou's thoughts and feelings. The ironic viewpoint and tone modulate into but are never quite identified with hers: we see her as she sardonically sees herself but her ironic view is enclosed within the larger irony of the detached observer. Her frustration, her cynicism, her as yet inadequate self-awareness, are presented as still reflecting the conventional values she is about to repudiate." T. W. Thomas, "Mr. Liddell and Dr. Leavis," Essays in Criticism; Vol. 5, No. 1 (January, 1955), 76-79.

⁷"We feel that he [Lawrence] is nearly always completely free of 'literature' and can be himself. We follow his mind working—and it speaks as it works. Or, at least, that is the impression we get." Bonamy Dobree, Modern Prose Style (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1934); p. 228.

⁸The term "emotional naturalist" is used here in the sense given it by Irving Babbitt. An interesting though rather artificial comparison between Lawrence and Babbitt on the subject of the emotions is made in Ralph N. Maud, "D. H. Lawrence: True Emotion as the Ethical Control in Art," Western Humanities Review, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Summer, 1955), 233-40.

a transference which never gets away, so that his conception takes the sophisticated shape of a personal experience objectively realized. In the following passage Lawrence the omniscient narrator is clearly the flexible control utilizing his character's point-of-view to vividly realize his own.

Since she had really seen St. Mawr looming fiery and terrible in an outer darkness, she could not believe the world she lived in. She could not believe it was actually happening, when she was dancing in the afternoon at Claridge's, or in the evening at the Carlton, sliding about with some suave young man who wasn't like a man at all to her. Or down in Sussex for the week-end with the Enderleys: the talk, the eating and drinking, the flirtation, the endless dancing: it all seemed far more bodiless and, in a strange way, wraithlike, than any fairy-story. She seemed to be eating Barmecide food, that had been conjured up out of thin air, by the power of words. She seemed to be talking to handsome young bare-faced unrealities, not men at all: as she slid about with them, in the perpetual dance, they too seemed to have been conjured up out of air, merely for this soaring, slithering dance-business. And she could not believe that, when the lights went out, they wouldn't melt back into thin air again, and complete nonentity. The strange nonentity of it all! Everything just conjured up, and nothing real. "Isn't this the best ever!" they would beamingly assert, like the wraiths of enjoyment, without any genuine substance. And she would beam back: "Lots of fun!" (40-41)

The paragraph is expository and exists solely to tell the reader how Lou Carrington felt about the kind of life she was leading. But the telling does not come straight from the author's mouth. It is accomplished impressionistically, as though we can conceive of Lou's feeling only by personally sharing it. The

impressionism of the passage is a mode of perception, and the rhythm of the paragraph is "born not with the words, but with the thought."

Words are the substance of our formed conceptions, however, and it is in Lawrence's diction that we first encounter his style. The idiomatic, slangy words and usage in the quoted passage are from Lou's vocabulary; they have the unmistakable accent of her sensibility. "Slid around the floor"; "this soaring, slithering dance-business"; "everything just conjured up"; these expressions convey Lou's perception in her own tones. Similarly, the repetition of thought-patterns and personal phrases establishes the illusion of an immediate thought process. Several elements are repeated rhythmically throughout the paragraph and resemble the recurrent phraseology of our own struggling conceptions. "She could not believe the world she lived in. She could not believe it was actually happening"... "she could not believe that..."; "it all seemed far more bodiless"... "she seemed to be eating"... "she seemed to be talking"... "they too seemed to have been conjured up"; "Barmecide food, that had been conjured up"... "everything just conjured up"; "complete nonentity. The strange nonentity of it all!"

Perhaps the most sardonically "placed" repetition is Lou's own mockery of the beaming young men. By the particular repetition of the word in the last sentence we feel we have ourselves participated in the perception of those blandly beaming faces and we are

impassioned of the passage is...
rhythm of the paragraph is...
thought."

Words are the substance...
and as in literature...
The idiom...
from his vocabulary...
sensitivity...
dance-dance...
convey his perception...
of thought-pattern...
of an immediate...
rhythmically...
physiology of our...
love the world...
actually happening...
seemed for more...
seemed to be...
"Harmless food...
continued up...
all!"

Perhaps the...
own mastery of the...
of the word in the...
passed in the...
passed in the...

satisfied that the stupidity of their expressions did not escape our sensitivity or our sweet revenge.

Part of the vividness of Lawrence's impressionism can be ascribed to his effective punctuation. He uses the colon like a close-up shot in a newsreel: suddenly zooming to things. Lou's associations are, quite naturally, as sudden as life, and the sentences evoke her mental experience. The punctuation helps to indicate the feel of experienced perceptions, rather than the ideal relations among finished thoughts. Lawrence's use of the colon helps to portray the abruptness with which Lou's conceptions form and shift about within her mind. And always that abruptness conveys the impression of something quickly noticed, understood, or "brought out." One feels in the structural connectives a leap to graphic configuration, like a "focal pop." We participate in the quickness of Lou's multiple realizations.

The speed and contour of her conceptions seem to determine the shape of the paragraph, as though Lawrence's own mind were only an interlocutor. Sometimes his thought is more deeply submerged in the point-of-view of a character and the ironic double vision turns into a steady glow of unequivocal inner life.

Lou arrived in town, at the dead end of August, with her maid and Phoenix. How wonderful it seemed to have London empty of all her set: her own little house to herself, with just the housekeeper and her own maid. The fact of being alone in those surroundings was so wonderful. It made the surroundings themselves seem all the more ghostly. Everything that

...that the ...
...of our ...
...of the ...
...to his ...
...a close-up shot in a ...
...associations and ...
...scenes evoke her ...
...the lack of ...
...relations among ...
...helps to portray the ...
...and shift about within her ...
...ways the impression of ...
...brought out. ...
...to graphic configurations ...
...the thickness of ...
...the speed and ...
...the shape of the ...
...an interluster. ...
...in the point-of-view of a ...
...turns into a steady ...
...last ...
...against ...
...wonderful ...
...of all her ...
...to herself, ...
...her own ...
...those ...
...made the ...
...all the ...

had been actual to her was turning ghostly: even her little drawing-room was the ghost of a room, belonging to the dead people who had known it, or to all the dead generations that had brought such a room into being, evolved it out of their quaint domestic desires. And now, in herself, those desires were suddenly spent: gone out like a lamp that suddenly dies. And then she saw her pale, delicate room with its little green agate bowl and its two little porcelain birds and its soft, roundish chairs, turned into something ghostly, like a room set out in a museum. She felt like fastening little labels on the furniture: Lady Louise Carrington Lounge Chair, Last Used August, 1923. Not for the benefit of posterity, but to remove her own self into another world, another realm of existence.

"My house, my house, my house, how can I ever have taken so much pains about it!" she kept saying to herself. It was like one of her old hats, suddenly discovered neatly put away in an old hatbox. And what a horror: an old "fashionable" hat! (165-66)

This moment in a soul's turning away from a familiar world grown oddly meaningless and ghostly is set deep within Lou's naive perception. The paragraphs seem to emerge luminously from Lou's own consciousness. Her feeling is simple and ingenuous, and so the tone-commentary of the omniscient narrator would be out of tune with her.

The differences in the two quoted passages illustrate the nature of an organic change in Lawrence's prose style between the beginning and the end of St. Mawr. His style changes in a complementary development as the sensibilities of his characters change. The satirically effective double vision of the earlier pages is gradually shed and a passionate naivete, a poetic and

had been...
even...
of a...
had...
that...
over...
hence...
were...
that...
pale...
eggs...
birds...
the...
one...
is...
G...
1928...
but...
world...

"My...
I...
the...
one...
nearly...
a...

This moment in a...
oddly meaningless...
perception. The...
own consciousness...
as the...
of time with her...
The difference in the...
nature of an organic change...
the beginning and the end...
complementary development...
change. The...
pages is gradually...

aspiring intensity echoes over the later pages when Mrs. Witt has crumbled into dying and Lou has found the dedicated wholeness of her life.

It was autumn, and the loveliest time in the Southwest, where there is no spring, snow blowing into the hot lap of summer; and no real summer, hail falling in thick ice, from the thunderstorms: and even no very definite winter, hot sun melting the snow and giving an impression of spring at any time. But autumn there is, when the winds of the desert are almost still, and the mountains fume no clouds. But morning comes cold and delicate, upon the wild sunflowers and the puffing, yellow-flowered grease-wood. For the desert blooms in autumn. In spring it is grey ash all the time, and only the strong breath of the summer sun, and the heavy splashing of thunder rain, succeed at last, by September, in blowing it into soft, puffy yellow fire. (186-87)

Particularly in the growth of Lou's character Lawrence commands the full range of his flexible style. As Lou grows, Lawrence can come to identify with her more fully and his voice need no longer be kept jealously separate from hers: it can be lost in hers. In the concluding dialogue with her mother, Lou speaks with a visionary passion that is a little startling. She seems entranced, and her words are directed far beyond her mother's hearing. They are the praises of invocation, ministers to the mountain-top and the sky around it.

There's something else for me, mother.
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 this 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. I don't know what it is, definitely. It's something wild, that will hurt me sometimes and will wear me down sometimes. I know it. But it's something big, bigger than men, bigger than people, bigger than religion. It's something to do with wild America. And it's something to do with me. It's a mission, if you like. I am imbecile enough for that!--But it's my mission to keep myself for the spirit that is wild, and has waited so long here: even waited for such as me. Now I've come! Now I'm here. Now I am where I want to be: with the spirit that wants me. (221)

There is this quality of invocation in much of Lawrence's best prose.⁹ He writes as one serving the magic of words, rapt by their potency. The emotional heightening of his prose is often the ecstasy of artistic creation,¹⁰ objectified in the yearnings of his characters. The artist embracing his own expansive identity orders his feeling into an intelligent representation of feeling. Lawrence's method of realizing things was to look upon objects from a point beyond himself; and so even his most passionate paragraphs have the suggestion of an "other" sensibility, an experimenter to discipline his ecstatic moments.

⁹ Harry Moore refers to "the element of incantation" that characterizes Lawrence's later prose. Harry T. Moore, The Intelligent Heart: The Story of D. H. Lawrence (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1954); p. 66.

¹⁰ "Language so passionate and breathless as Lawrence's ultimately describes the ecstasy of art, not of passion." Alfred Kazin, "Lady Chatterley in America," The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 204, No. 1 (July, 1959), 36.

This controlling sensibility is most often the point-of-view of a character, such as Lou's point-of-view in the passages previously quoted. Occasionally the character may be a ficelle designed specifically to articulate an impression. In order to characterize Las Chivas, Lawrence creates a New England woman whose life-history on the ranch successfully evokes a sense of the untameable natural spirit Lou finds there. But there are also passages of descriptive prose in which the "other" sensibility is an illusion created solely by his language.

But beyond the pine-trees, ah, there beyond, there was beauty for the spirit to soar in. The circle of pines, with the loose trees rising high and ragged at intervals, this was the barrier, the fence to the foreground. Beyond was only distance, the desert a thousand feet below, and beyond.

The desert swept its great fawn-coloured circle around, away beyond and below like a beach, with a long mountain-side of pure blue shadow closing in the near corner, and strange bluish hummocks of mountains rising like wet rock from a vast strand, away in the middle distance, and beyond, in the farthest distance, pale blue crests of mountains looking over the horizon, from the west, as if peering in from another world altogether. (204)

It was mentioned above that the way Lawrence saw things accounts for much of what he saw. He did not dwell upon his creative passion as an object of romantic interest; his own feelings were, at least in his novels, vested in imagined lives. He confronted his feelings as the yearnings and leathings of his characters. So the lives of his characters reveal patterns

This controlling mechanism is... a character, such as... quoted. Occasionally... specifically to... has China, however... history on the... natural spirit... descriptive prose... created solely by his...

But beyond the... beyond, there... to see... the loose... as... famous... only... left...

The... collected... before... side of... near... of... a... some... more... looking... as it...

If... accounts for... creative passion... feelings were... He confronted his... his character...

and forces corresponding to the shapes and pressures of his creative impulse. Laurentian characters do not contain their lives: they bob or rest upon the flow that sends life through them. The center of interest in St. Mawr, as in almost all of Lawrence's fiction, is the interplay of life-forces, the fitful in and out of impulses that take possession of a person. This life-force is the hero of St. Mawr, not any horse or young American woman.¹¹ The flow of it can be thought of as a stylistic innovation; for the interplay of forces is not only what he portrays but also the method of his portrayal, the style which is his thought. It accounts for the peculiar quickness of his prose.

To a purist, Lawrence's style could seem to be the unfortunate result of a couldn't-carelessness.¹² His diction is colloquial, even slangy; his sentences are fragmentary; his paragraphs held together by refrains; his punctuation heretically personal. Yet the curious anomalies of his style are the sources of its

¹¹"In every great novel, who is the hero all the time? Not any of the characters, but some unnamed and nameless flame behind them all." D. H. Lawrence, "The Novel," Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine, and Other Essays (London: Martin Secker, 1934); p. 109.

¹²This position is maintained in all seriousness in Robert Liddell, "Lawrence and Dr. Leavis: The Case of St. Mawr," Essays in Criticism, Vol. 4, No. 3 (July, 1954), 321-27.

precision and vitality.¹³ His prose is like speech created out of vivid experience, and not a literary language. With it, he can evoke such a sense of intimacy with his characters' hidden lives that a gesture, even a narrated fact, stirs one with the energy of life's current escaping.

Luncheon was still several miles away. The party hastened down to the horses. Lou picked a few sprigs of ling, and some harebells, and some straggling yellow flowers; not because she wanted them, but to distract herself. The atmosphere of "enjoying ourselves" was becoming cruel to her: it sapped all the life out of her. "Oh, if only I needn't enjoy myself," she moaned inwardly. But the Manby girls were enjoying themselves so much. "I think it's frantically lovely up here," said the other one—not Flora—Elsie. (93)

The irregular device at the end of the paragraph is eloquently indicative of Lou's concentration of scorn and her continuing, underlying pain.

There seems to be no limit to the sense of energy Lawrence's language can convey. His style becomes an instrument for the quick of life.

¹³"Lawrence writes out of the full living language with a flexibility and a creative freedom for which I can think of no parallel in modern times. His writing seems to have the careless ease of extraordinarily fluent and racy speech; but you see, if you stop to cast a critical eye back over the page, that everything is precisely and easily right--the slangy colloquialism, the flippant cliché given an emotional intensity, the "placing" sardonic touch, and, when it comes (as it so marvelously can at any moment), the free play of poetic imagery and imaginative evocation, sensuous and focally suggestive." F. R. Leavis, D. H. Lawrence: Novelist (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956); p. 281.

Lou gave a loud, unnatural, horrible scream: she heard it herself, at the same time as she heard the crash of the falling horse. Then she saw a pale gold belly, and hoofs that worked and flashed in the air, and St. Mawr writhing, straining his head terrifically upwards, his great eyes starting from the naked lines of his nose. With a great neck arching cruelly from the ground, he was pulling frantically at the reins, which Rico still held tight. --Yes, Rico, lying strangely sideways, his eyes also starting from his yellow-white face, among the heather, still clutched the reins.

Young Edwards was rushing forward, and circling round the writhing, immense horse, whose pale-gold, inverted bulk seemed to fill the universe.

"Let him get up, Carrington! Let him get up!" he was yelling, darting warily near, to get the reins. --Another spasmodic convulsion of the horse.

Horror! The young man reeled backwards with his face in his hands. He had got a kick in the face. Red blood running down his chin!

Lewis was there, on the ground, getting the reins out of Rico's hands. St. Mawr gave a great curve like a fish, spread his forefeet on the earth and reared his head, looking round in a ghastly fashion. His eyes were arched, his nostrils wide, his face ghastly in a sort of panic. He rested thus, seated with his forefeet planted and his face in panic, almost like some terrible lizard, for several moments. Then he heaved sickeningly to his feet, and stood convulsed, trembling. (94-95)

It is apparent that the impact this passage has upon our emotions is not the effect of isolable devices but of a whole quality of perception. We are aroused by the vitality that

informs his conceptions. The energy of the passage is the energy of Lawrence's thought. The discipline of his style is the discipline of his immediate intelligence, and it enlarges the language of literature.

The creative freedom with which Lawrence wrote is one aspect of the total imaginative freedom of his conceptions. He displays "the quality of seeing things sharply, clearly, immediately, apparently for the first time."¹⁴ Ramon Sender, the Spanish novelist, has remarked, "At his best, Lawrence is like the first man on earth."¹⁵

And his prose is like wind upon damp mornings.

¹⁴Roger Dattler, "Elements of D. H. Lawrence's Prose Style," Essays in Criticism, Vol. 3, No. 4 (October, 1953), 413. Mr. Dattler speculates that the sources of Lawrence's quality of perception are 1) his youthful experience of the dark mines and his associations with perception-freshened miners, and 2) his early discipline of housework.

¹⁵A remark made in a conversation with Professor E. W. Tedlock, Jr. and transmitted by him to a group of students including the present writer.

CHAPTER TWO: THE RHYTHMIC INSTRUMENTS OF PLOT AND THE PLOT OF ST. MAWR

The power by which we multiply distinctions may properly help to illuminate a unity. The subtle interrelatedness of a work of art can hardly be perceived except by making categories with which to analyze its wholeness. But the categories are, after all, only figures of thought, and the wholeness of St. Mawr will not be encompassed by them. Some matters discussed in the preceding chapter under the heading of prose style might be discussed as well under the heading of narrative technique—a category is but a lens to focus our understanding. But by narrative technique one means the craft of story-telling, and so it is different from prose style, which is like the sound of a story-teller's voice.

A novelist, though, does more than tell us a story, which is a mere "narrative of events arranged in time sequence."¹ He tells us a story with a plot. E. M. Forster in his critical study of the novel²—a piece of criticism far more delightful to read than most novels are—distinguishes plot from story by the way we anticipate the progress of the narrative. If we ask of the

¹E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927); p. 51.

²Ibid.

novelist "and then?--and then?" we are attending to the story; if we ask "why?" we are moving away from the story and entering that web of causality called plot. "Plot is also a narrative of events," Forster writes, "the emphasis falling on causality."³

A plot cannot be told to a gaping audience of cave men or to a tyrannical sultan or to their modern descendant the movie-public. They can only be kept awake by "and then--and then--". They can only supply curiosity. But a plot demands intelligence and memory also.⁴

Plot, the causing of what has had to happen, has a rhythm. Causality appears in fiction in a pulsing way, sometimes hardly showing under a dazzling round of experiences, sometimes drawing us into an agency of mystery-solving. The rhythm of a plot is articulated by the repetition and variation of the incidence of causality.⁵ In a novel everything has some bearing on everything else,⁶ but we feel that some things have more bearing than other things, and in different ways upon their different objects.

³Ibid., p. 130.

⁴Ibid., pp. 130-31.

⁵This definition of plot rhythm is formulated as a corollary to Forster's statement, "Rhythm in fiction may be defined as repetition plus variation." Ibid., p. 240.

⁶"The novel is the highest example of subtle interrelatedness that man has discovered. Everything is true in its own time, place, circumstance, and untrue outside of its own place, time, circumstance. If you try to nail anything down, in the novel, either it kills the novel, or the novel gets up and walks away with the nail." "Morality and the Novel," D. H. Lawrence: Selected Literary Criticism, p. 110.

novelists "and the...
if we ask "why" to the...
that web of causality...
of events," Foster writes, "the..."

A good example...
audience of...
action or...
movie...
events of...
can only...
demand..."

Plot, the...
Causality appears...
showing under a...
us into an...
articulated by...
causality.⁵ In a...
else,⁶ but we...
things, and in...

⁵ Ibid., p. 100.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 100-101.

⁷ This definition of...
to Foster's...
fiction plus...

⁸ "The novel is...
that man and...
circumstances...
If you try to...
novel, or the...
and see Novel..."

The repetition and variation of the felt amounts and qualities of "bearing" pronounce the rhythm of causality.

The rhythm of a plot is important because it keeps the illusion of causality from becoming lifelessly consistent. A novel in which everything that happens is directly the outcome of some prior event or condition would strike us as a "thin" book, stupidly far from the truth of life. Causality must not presume too steadily upon our interest: or we will suspect the author of living not quite in this odd world. Rhythm gives the weave of plot an interesting unpredictability, a satisfying liveliness.

The instruments of rhythm are the basic elements of plot: character and setting are recurrent and various. A plot in which no character appears twice, in which every action proceeds from someone not encountered before (if such variety could reveal a plot), would be as unrhythmical as the inside of a cloudbank. The recurrence of familiar characters establishes a connectedness among incidents--and leads us to think that experience is partly caused by the people who have it, that twitterings really are connected to little birds.

Setting, and there is setting even in a microscope peep-sight, vegetates in our consciousness. It must grow distinct there by recurring familiarly. And both setting and character must display variety in their recurrence or we lose interest in them. After a time or two the microscope's round beam of light loses its perfect surprise.

But there are refinements for the expression of character and setting which have such special uses that they may be considered as distinct rhythmic instruments in the plot: theme, symbol, and motif are flexible devices for expressing the apparent causality in man's experience of his world and himself. A symbol, for instance, may seem to cause men to kneel down, to stand at attention, to cower in fear, to indulge, to abstain, to climb Mt. Everest. It is the nature of a symbol to arouse a feeling which gives it power over men's lives. But a man's awareness of and response to symbolic significance is still an expression of his character. Sir Galahad was not actually impelled by the Holy Grail, but he certainly seemed to be.

A theme is also an expression of character. It is attitude raised to the level of a preoccupation, either the novelist's or his characters' preoccupation. But in either case, it is simply a fairly rigid attitude which leads characters to experience their world in peculiar ways. A motif is an aspect of the human condition, of man's "setting" in the universe. What is thought to be true of experience generally, is a motif in the development of the plot. Nearly all imaginable motifs in fiction have also been expressed in proverbs.

With these analytical concepts in mind it might be well to review the plot of St. Mawr before trying to bring into consciousness the "feel" of its rhythms. Lou Witt, an "emancipated" American, has discovered at the age of twenty-five that she is

But there are two main reasons for this. First, the
reading which have been made, and which are not
as distinct rhythmic features as in the case of the
motif are found in the same way. The second reason
is man's experience of his world. The rhythm of the
instance, say, as in the case of the first, the second
to cover in fact, the rhythm of the world, the rhythm
It is the nature of a rhythm of the world, the rhythm
power over the world. The rhythm of the world, the
symbolic significance of the rhythm of the world, the
Sir Galahad was not necessarily rejected by the world, but he
certainly seemed to be.
A theme is also an expression of man's world. It is
raised to the level of a universal, the rhythm of the
his character, the rhythm of the world, the rhythm of
a fairly rigid world. The rhythm of the world, the
world in particular, the rhythm of the world, the
of man's "reading" in the world, the rhythm of the
of experience generally, the rhythm of the world, the
Nearly all symbolic motifs, the rhythm of the world, the
in general.
With these analytical concepts in mind, it is not
review the plot of the story, the rhythm of the world, the
near the "plot" of the story, the rhythm of the world, the
analysis, the rhythm of the world, the rhythm of the world, the

quite lost and does not know what to do with herself. Her marriage with Rico, Lord Carrington, has degenerated into an anxious wearing on one another's nerves. So they live together in a kind of "friendship", in a little house in Westminster. Rico does society portraits and his paintings are becoming fashionable. But Lou and Rico are not the sort who really fit in with the haut monde, even though they are tired of drifting. And Lou seems just inexplicably at odds with herself.

Lou's mother turns up in London soon after Lou's marriage, bringing with her a couple of horses and an Indian groom called Phoenix. Mrs. Witt is an annihilating female, an American Gorgon with sardonic snakes. She must ride in Rotten Row in the mornings, to see the world, and Lou must accompany her. One day, at the stables near their house, Lou is shown a great bay stallion, St. Mawr, and immediately it casts some spell over her. St. Mawr seems like a god, demonish with a great burning life in him, looking at her from out of another world. The horse must belong to her; she must buy him. Rico will ride St. Mawr for her, and the little Welsh groom Lewis will care for him.

They are somewhat two of a kind, St. Mawr and Lewis: neither of them will have anything to do with the other sex. They keep to themselves, in some inviolable potency.

Rico cannot manage St. Mawr. The horse rears and plunges in the Park one day and the authorities declare him a public menace. The fiasco is another occasion for bitter sniping between mother

exists long and hard... with him, but... on one occasion... ship, in a little... and his painting... not the sort who... they are... adds with her...

Lee's mother... bringing with... Phoenix. Mrs. Lee... with artistic... to see the... attaches near... St. Mary, and... seems like a... looking at her... to her; she... the little...

They are... of them... its progress... these cannot... in the Park... The friends...

and son-in-law, which ends in a sore weight upon Lou's distraught nerves. She must escape this tension, this battle of wills that is the mainspring of everybody's round of life. Only deep within the dark fiery eyes of St. Mawr was there an intimation of a freer, more splendid world than this miasma of cleverness and "Lots of fun!" The pure animal wildness had gone out of man and left him nothing but nerves and a brittle mind. A dark, wild world beyond "attitudes" beckons from St. Mawr to her.

At the end of the London season Lou and Rico go down to Shrewsbury, where Mrs. Witt has rented a country house, just beside a graveyard. During a riding party one day, St. Mawr shies from a dead snake and Rico, fiercely restraining him, pulls the horse down upon himself. The terrified stallion kicks a young man in the face and breaks Rico's ribs and ankle. St. Mawr's "breck" looms large in Lou's imagination as a spectacle of evil. The fiercely restraining mind of man would destroy all natural feeling, all wild and spontaneously flowing inner life. And so our natural impulses turn perverse and the whole world is enveloped in a flood of desperate meanness.

Lou's vision of evil coincides with Mrs. Witt's lapse into a despair of life. Funerals just outside her drawing-room window had roused her to a fear that death too might only be another unreality, merely the last of many. She longs for something positive, at least in death.

and now-in-law, with a wife and two children, was

settled in a comfortable home in the city.

It was the first time since his marriage that

he had been able to find a home of his own.

He was, more anxious than ever, to see

"John of John." The name of John was

left his mother, and he was now a

world of his own, and he was now

At the end of the day, he was

Shrewsbury, where he had been

a governor, and he was now

a good man, and he was now

down upon himself. The first time

the face and hands of John

looks large in John's eyes, and

thoroughly respectable, and he

all wild and ungentlemanly, and

inquiries were made, and he

flood of despair's moment.

John's vision of all that was

into a despair of life, and he

window had passed, and he was

another creature, and he was

thing possible, and he was

When Rico and his Shrewsbury friends scheme to geld St. Mawr—to kill the wildness in him—neither Lou nor her mother can bear the suffocating pettiness of people any longer. Mrs. Witt, with Lewis riding St. Mawr, takes the horse away to safety by starting immediately for America. Riding cross-country with Lewis and dejected past all allegiance to her social self, Mrs. Witt makes one last effort of enormous futility: she proposes to the odd little groom who maintains such an isolate composure. After he stonily rejects her, her spirit collapses on its own emptiness.

Lou leaves Rico convalescing in the care of his adoring Flora Manby and joins her mother in London. Together, Mrs. Witt wearily and Lou numb with ceaseless pain, they go to America. Lou wants only to be at rest, to get her wholeness back.

On Mrs. Witt's Texas ranch, St. Mawr is roused in his life as a stallion and he is left behind while Lou, her mother, and Phoenix go on to New Mexico. But nothing can heal Lou's feverish soul until she discovers a primitive little ranch high in the mountains above Santa Fe. It is an untamed place, untameable in its cycles of life and death, blossoming and withering in undistorted naturalness. It is a place to preserve the integrity of her spirit. She buys the ranch and moves there with Mrs. Witt and Phoenix, intent now upon serving "the spirit that is wild, and has waited so long here: even waited for such as me."

Plot summaries make one fact apparent, so apparent as to seem a truism. A plot summary never has the aura of fiction; it is

When this was said, the speaker turned to the
the Hill the village of the...
the reflecting pool...
Lewis riding to...
immediately for...
defected...
one last effort...
little group who...
sternly reject...
has leaves like...
Flora Hardy and...
vestly and...
has wants only...
On Mrs. Wile's...
as a satisfied...
Phoenix go on...
soul until...
mountains above...
the vision of...
for the...
her spirit...
Phoenix, where...
has walked...
Pilot...
a train. A pilot...

only a description of events. We do not feel we are in touch with that imagined world we are trying to reconsider briefly. In a summary, character and setting seem to us just so many empty names of persons and places, and we do not feel the presence of those characters and places in our imagination. The "fiction" has been left out of our quick sketch. Fiction begins with the transformation of the appearances of events into an appearance of felt experiences,⁷ and a summary does not accomplish that transformation for us. The sense of significant experience alone gives human substance to characters' names and the potency of environment to described settings. The transformation to fiction can occur effortlessly, on the simplest conversational level, whenever one begins to say, "There we were, standing at attention in the middle of the parade-ground, when it suddenly began to rain and the day turned dark and windy and biting cold." A military report upon such an occasion would be, like the summary of a plot, simply a description of events. The soldier telling of his ordeal, however, transforms those events and, as long as his story is a true one, also his experiences of them into one semblance of experience. He creates an "image of life"; he is engaged in ordering reality.

⁷"The appearances of events in our actual lives are fragmentary, transient and often indefinite, like most of our experiences--like the space we move in, the time we feel passing, the human and inhuman forces that challenge us. The poet's business is to create the appearance of 'experiences,' the semblance of events lived and felt, and to organize them so they constitute a purely and completely experienced reality, a piece of virtual life." Suzanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form, a Theory of Art (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953); p. 212.

Whether his experience was an actual or an imagined one has in itself little to do with the fictional nature of his story. If his experience was actual the soldier will perhaps be less able to pick from it those elements which are expressive of experience and separate from them those elements which are emotionally mute, so that in fact his story may be less fictional if his experience was real but only because of his difficulty with artistic selection of detail. The fictional nature of his story depends entirely upon his creation of an appearance, an illusion, a semblance of experience—a defined and ordered piece of virtual life.⁸

But a piece of virtual life might very well not strike our fancy. (You can show a horse water but you can't make him drink, as the saying goes.) One mark of a good literary artist is the economy with which he wins his reader over into the realm of abstracted life which is his novel or short story or simple anecdote. He must create a setting and characters to inhabit it—and they must be easily and quickly believable so we can get on with the entertainment. The way he wins our acceptance of them seems often to be a childishly simple ruse. "Once upon a time there was an old woman who lived in a shoe" is an absurdity which no one is in-observant enough to accept as a picture of reality. Yet, for decades children and adults also have been led into the virtual world of fantasy by that fairy-tale device, "once upon a time."

⁸Langer, loc. cit.

Whether his experience was in fact or not, it is
itself little more than a story. The
the experience was not a story, but a fact.
with from the fact that the experience was
separated from the fact that the experience was
that in fact his experience was not a story, but a fact.
fact but only a story, and the fact that the experience was
of fact. The fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
upon the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
experience was not a story, but a fact. The fact that the experience was
But a story of fact, and the fact that the experience was
fact. The fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
as the experience was not a story, but a fact. The fact that the experience was
seemingly with the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
abstracted from the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
He must create the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
must be seen as a fact, and the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
understanding. The fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
to be a story, and the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
old woman who was a fact, and the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
observed and the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
between children and the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.
world of the fact that the experience was not a story, but a fact.

2
January, 1911

Any man who enjoys a reputation for telling funny stories has many similar devices which he uses to put his audience into the "spirit" of his joke. "A friend of mine in Pittsburgh says there's a fellow over there who...." It is difficult to establish exactly what such devices achieve in the mind of the listener without dealing at great length with non-literary considerations, but it is apparent simply because of the prevalence and the seeming necessity of them that they serve somehow to separate the actual from the virtual world which is about to unfold, that they are in effect the creative word which is in the beginning of a new world. They serve a more-than-literal purpose, for their effect is not simply to "place" the story they introduce but also to turn on in the audience the kind of awareness that hears fiction. They allow the suspension of disbelief; they "cause" the aura of semblance.

The proems and invocations at the beginnings of classical literature are essential to the works they introduce because they formally lead mortal intelligences into a serious make-believe, and not because they win the favor of the gods. In modern novels the initiating devices are more complex than Once upon a time, or Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son. Partly because the novel is so "realistic," the novelist must find some realistic referent for his creative pronouncement. His task is extremely complicated, for he must perform the delicate magic of transformation as though he were an engineer.

In St. Mawr the initiating device is a refinement of Once upon a time. Lawrence establishes the authenticity, the virtual quality, of his characters and setting by originating them in a foregone time. At the beginning of St. Mawr we are told things that have already happened and their priority is the instrument of our initiation to the fiction. We are first told the pastness of what has happened so that we can come to perform the more difficult make-believe of accepting a pretended present time. Lawrence uses a sense of time-already-having-passed to establish the authenticity of the present. Time is an inescapable element of man's setting, and by showing some part of time to have already passed the fictional setting is given an aura of reality.

The first page of St. Mawr is voiced in the past perfect tense and the striking economy of that grammatical turn is that it builds up in the reader an expanding anticipation of the present all the while he is being historically informed. We can seldom listen to a bit of alluring gossip without wondering what has become of the roué or the cocotte. The past can remain interesting only if the present is seen to be significant with it, and history itself would be an enervating study if we could not at will scratch the itch in our minds with a composing glance about us. At the beginning of St. Mawr, the echoing insistence upon a time that is prior to the unrevealed present, fashions in the reader an anticipation of that present, an anticipation which amounts to an acceptance of a virtual reality.

Lou Witt had had her own way so long that by the age of twenty-five she didn't know where she was. Having one's own way landed one completely at sea.

To be sure, for a while she had failed in her grand love affair with Rico. And then she had had something really to despair about. But even that had worked out as she wanted. Rico had come back to her, and was dutifully married to her. And now, when she was twenty-five and he was three months older, they were a charming married couple. (7, *italics mine*)

The variation of tenses within the completed past keeps the quoted passage from becoming archival. Lawrence here depends, as he often does, upon a juxtaposition of tenses to enliven his exposition with a sort of time-coupling spontaneity of impression, as in:

Rico had come back to her, and was dutifully married to her. And now, when she was twenty-five and he was three months older, they were a charming married couple. (7)

The transposition of sentence-time does not, however, weaken the illusion of priority. Our anticipation of eventually slipping into a current time is sharpened by our immediate fascination with the past.

The illusion of priority, effected primarily through the action of the past perfect tenses, is maintained for the first seven and one-half pages of the novel, but after the first page of it the illusion becomes so subtle that the reader is hardly sensible of having remained in the past until his awareness is quickened by the transition which lifts him out of it. The

exposition of the past, accomplished in those first several pages, establishes the disharmonies which are to support the movement of the plot. The exposition is the full first cadence of plot rhythm, the first coherent "period" of causality.

St. Mawr opens upon a view of serious trouble; there is some unbalance in life which really seems to matter to Lou and which evidently must be resolved. Yet that unbalance seems to be only a vague violation of Lou's young hopefulness, a dissatisfaction with the feelings of life, a matter largely of "nerves"; Lou is "at sea." She doesn't "belong." Her affair with Rico had made her "ill." Then Rico had been "got," but their marriage disintegrates strangely; it cannot be said to have really failed: it had hardly happened. Rico is very intent upon being an artist,⁹ a society artist, and is unstably "sudden" in all his modes of unsuccess.¹⁰ And obtrusive as a Greek chorus at a poker game, there is Mrs. Witt, whose single vocation for some fifteen years past has been to demonstrate the fecklessness of the rest of mankind.

⁹For a detailed discussion of Lawrence's attitude towards those who would be an artist, see "Note: Being an Artist," F. R. Leavis, op. cit.; pp. 373-81.

¹⁰"He was anxious for his future, and anxious for his place in the world, he was poor, and suddenly wasteful in spite of all his tension of economy, and suddenly spiteful in spite of all his ingratiating efforts, and suddenly ungrateful in spite of all his burden of gratitude, and suddenly rude in spite of all his good manners, and suddenly detestable in spite of all his suave, courtier-like amiability." St. Mawr, pp. 8-9.

exposition of the fact, accompanied by a...
established the distinction...
the plot. The...
the first...
...
unbalance in this...
evidently...
a vague...
with the...
"at sea." The...
her "ill." When...
strangely it cannot be...
happened. Also...
arise, and in...
and...
Wife, whose...
to demonstrate the...

9 For a detailed...
those who would be...
F. E. Lewis, op. cit., p. 11-12.

10 "He was...
in the...
his...
ingratitude...
burden of...
manners, and...
like..."

Mrs. Witt, who is "full of uncanny energy," begins the present action; she is a kind of "efficient cause" in the movement of the plot. In our experience of reading through it, the transition to present time is marked by a gentle relaxing of our anticipatory tension, a feeling of having emerged to some newly-bright spaciousness.

Some time after Lou's marriage, Mrs. Witt reappeared in London, from the country, with Phoenix in tow, and a couple of horses. She had decided that she would ride in the Park in the morning, and see the world that way. Phoenix was to be her groom.

So, to the great misgiving of Rice, behold Mrs. Witt in splendidly tailored habit and perfect boots, a smart black hat on her smart grey hair, riding a gray gelding as smart as she was, and looking down her conceited, inquisitive, scornful, aristocratic-democratic Louisiana nose at the people in Piccadilly, as she crossed to the Row, followed by the taciturn shadow of Phoenix, who sat on a chestnut with three white feet as if he had grown there.
(14)

The importance of Mrs. Witt in the whole of the novel is not limited to her role as a rhythmic figure in the plot development, yet she has such a significant role in that capacity that the impetus to each major advance in the plot of St. Mawr is an action by or within Mrs. Witt. It is her tastes, her behaviour, her musings, her depth of bitter experience and, for a time, her fierce hope to make life still count that form the apparent edge of an expanding Necessity. The whole quality of value-perception

which grows to a moral passion in Lou has its origin in her mother's "shattering sort of sense"; for in both the relationship between mother and daughter and in the actual tone-building of the fiction, Mrs. Witt's perceptions foreshadow and add resonance to her daughter's. Lou's initial and profound response to the flaming life-integrity in St. Mawr would not be as artistically sound if Mrs. Witt had not already demonstrated at large the shortcomings of humanity.

Mrs. Witt, like many other people, always expected to find the real beau monde and the real grand monde somewhere or other. She didn't quite give in to what she saw in the Bois de Boulogne, or in Monte Carlo, or on the Pincio; all a bit shoddy, and not very beau and not at all grand. There she was, with her grey eagle eye, her splendid complexion and her weapon-like health of a woman of fifty, dropping her eyelids a little, very slightly nervous, but completely prepared to despise the monde she was entering in Rotten Row.

In she sailed, and up and down that regatta-canal of horsemen and horsewomen under the trees of the Park....Mrs. Witt seemed to be pointing a pistol at the bosom of every other horseman or horsewoman, and announcing: Your virility or your life! Your femininity or your life! She didn't know herself what she really wanted them to be: but it was something as democratic as Abraham Lincoln, and as highbrow as Arthur Balfour, and as taciturn and unideal as Phoenix. Everything at once. (14-15)

which grows to a number of feet in height, and
mother's side, and is a very common sight
ship between mother and daughter, and is a very
of the line, and is a very common sight
resonance to her father's, and is a very common sight
to the family, and is a very common sight
tically sound, and is a very common sight
large the abundance of the family.

and, while the family is
always, and is a very common sight
mother and father, and is a very common sight
years or older, and is a very common sight
in to the family, and is a very common sight
large the abundance of the family.
Pioneer, and is a very common sight
family, and is a very common sight
was, and is a very common sight
did completion, and is a very common sight
house, and is a very common sight
her, and is a very common sight
years, and is a very common sight
because the family, and is a very common sight
Hester, and is a very common sight.

in the family, and is a very common sight
regards, and is a very common sight
under, and is a very common sight
seems to be, and is a very common sight
the person, and is a very common sight
horror, and is a very common sight
on your, and is a very common sight
the family, and is a very common sight
ventured, and is a very common sight
as described, and is a very common sight
highlighted, and is a very common sight
two and, and is a very common sight
of, and is a very common sight.

Mrs. Witt's damning expectations from a world which has never risen to fulfill them result in a dominant attitude, a thematic pre-occupation. And the pre-occupation is with "integrity," only a less profound integrity than that which Lou perceives in St. Mawr. The progress of this thematic pre-occupation from mother to daughter is an illuminative as well as a unifying rhythm; it adds to the validity of Lou's young impressions by lighting them with Mrs. Witt's trustworthy vision. Mrs. Witt's ache for an "everything at once" is a feeling which participates like a metaphor in Lou's anguish of self-discovery after she has seen St. Mawr.

But now, as if that mysterious fire of the horse's body had split some rock in her, she went home and hid herself in her room, and just cried. The wild, brilliant, alert head of St. Mawr seemed to look at her out of another world. It was as if the walls of her own world had suddenly melted away, leaving her in a great darkness, in the midst of which the large, brilliant eyes of that horse looked at her with demonish question, while his naked ears stood up like daggers from the naked lines of his inhuman head, and his great body glowed red with power.

What was it? Almost a god looking at her terribly out of the everlasting dark, she had felt the eyes of that horse; great, glowing, fearsome eyes, arched with a question and containing a white blade of light like a threat. What was his non-human question, and his uncanny threat? She didn't know. He was some splendid demon, and she must worship him.

She hid herself away from Rico. She could not bear the triviality and superficiality of her human relationships.

Looming like some god out of the darkness was the head of that horse, with the wide, terrible, questioning eyes. And she felt that it forbade her to be her ordinary, commonplace self. It forbade her to be just Rico's wife, young Lady Carrington, and all that. (23)

Lou's self-discovery is also the occasion of our discovery of her; that moment is the beginning of our intimacy with her private self.¹¹ When St. Mawr becomes for her the clarifying symbol of what is gone out of life, Lou grows as a fictional character from a slightly offensive, unexplained and "mixed-up" girl into an emotionally articulate, sensitive person. As she suddenly gives order and meaningful complexity to her own inner life, she reveals what we as readers can immediately accept as soul rather than only nerves. Her emotional responses to the outside world can now have noticeable, even proportionate, justification, and therefore only now can Lou become, at least for us, truly alive with secret energies.

Her aura of aliveness--her power to respond, not merely to react--is attributable to her new rôle as a causer of her own experience. The attractiveness of fiction is its consistent suggestion that man is at least partially free, able to decide within himself and to attempt action. Lou comes alive for us when she

¹¹"The hidden life is, by definition, hidden. The hidden life that appears in external signs is hidden no longer, has entered the realm of action. And it is the function of the novelist to reveal the hidden life at its source." E. M. Forster, op. cit.; p. 72.

demonstrates an ability to shape her future. St. Mawr has given her a new moral dimension, and new questionings rise out of it. Her first significant free act is to conceal those questionings from an outer world which would scoffingly gloss them over and leave her once again emptied and at loose ends. What Lou cannot willingly communicate in Westminster is, for a while, the measure of her vitality to us, for we are the secret sharers of her consciousness, where content is potency. St. Mawr's revelation of a purer mode of existence is a preciously guarded bit of effective knowledge; and for us Lou's consciousness is a deeper, firmer, more perilous and private place because of the secrecy.

She kept it utterly a secret, to herself. Because Rico would just have lifted his long upper lip, in his bare face, in a condescending sort of "understanding". And her mother would, as usual, have suspected her of sidestepping.
(40)

All the subsequent complications of the plot are buoyed with import by the revelation's continuous pressuring against the intractable world and the remnants of Lou's former consciousness. The revelation is "truth" and we impute an efficacy to truth: we assume its efficacy as an aspect of man's setting, a universal motif. In St. Mawr we await our reassurance. The total rhythmic pattern of St. Mawr may have for us just that symbolic significance: we enact emotively the victory of our insights over a stubborn externality. For the while a world seems to adjust itself to our wretchedly incommunicable intimation of "the way things ought to be."

demonstrates an ability to... her a new... Her first... from an... leave her... willingly... of her... awareness... a... knowledge... more... (4)

All the... imports by the... The revelation... we assume... motif. In... pattern of... we must... externally... wretchedly... be."

The Westminster episodes establish the basic conflicts in the complication of the plot. St. Mawr arouses a new moral awareness in Lou that will inevitably destroy her, or be itself destroyed by the moral-deadening effects of society England, or will entirely transform her life. A purer mode of life seems possible for Lou and at the same time forbidding in its aspect. As the scene narrows from London to Shrewsbury, the motivational complex of the story seems to tilt from a broad axis to a deep one, from synthesis to analysis. The change of rhythm accompanying the change of scene is a modulation to a simpler and tighter weave of causality. The basic conflicts of the plot become clearer and richer with implication as Lou leaves London and some of the static of life is tuned out.

The tilting deepwards of the plot as the scene changes to Shrewsbury is also attributable to the added weight of a new motif, the imminence of death. The motif enters the rhythm of the plot when Mrs. Witt is discovered sitting at her drawing-room window looking out upon the graveyard from which she is served "funerals for lunch," (42) The view from her window and the entrancing "boom! boom! of the passing-bell" uncover to her a new relatedness in life and lift her to seeing that the imminence of death can make life seem very unreal. Mrs. Witt's absorption with death is not an immediately completed involvement: she grows only slowly to recognize her desperation in the face of death, and the progress of her pre-occupation and silently despairing

The Westchester...
complication of the...
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final surrender to it is one of the most beautifully represented experiences in Lawrence's fiction. As Mrs. Witt withers in a horrible understanding of the futility in her annihilating dominance of people, which was the only bright edge she still waved toward life, Lou grows through her mother's despair and up away from it: so the plot of the novel rises like a great blossoming stalk.

All the five instruments of plot rhythm--character, setting, theme, symbol, and motif--are expansive in St. Mawr. At each recurrence each discloses more of itself and rises to a higher level of meaning. This principle of expansion is immediately apparent in the development of the characters. But it operates also in the career of the expanding symbol¹² St. Mawr. In the horse

¹²The concept and function of an "expanding symbol" are discussed by E. K. Brown, Rhythm in the Novel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950); pp. 33-59. Brown's discussion is based on the remarks about rhythm made by Forster in Aspects of the Novel and is developed by analysis of the symbol Vinteuil's music in Remembrance of Things Past and of the symbol hay in Howard's End.

"The expanding symbol is a device...appropriate for rendering an emotion, an idea, that by its largeness or its subtlety cannot become wholly explicit. The fixed symbol is almost entirely repetition; the expanding symbol is repetition balanced by variation, and that variation is in progressively deepening disclosure. By the slow uneven way in which it accretes meaning from the succession of contexts in which it occurs; by the mysterious life of its own it takes on and supports; by the part of its meaning that even on the last page of the novel it appears still to withhold--the expanding symbol responds to the impulses of the novelist who is aware that he cannot give us the core of his meaning, but strains to reveal now this aspect of it, now that aspect, in a sequence of sudden flashes." pp. 56-57.

final answer to it is not yet known.

experiences in various fields.

horrific unendingness of the suffering.

dominance of people, which has been the

waves toward life, from a dark

away from it: so the girl of the

nothing still.

All the time the number of

them, symbol, and motif--

renewance with absolute hope of

of meaning. This principle of

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12. The concept and theme of

expressed by E. A. Brown, Symbolism

of various kinds, 1930, pp. 1-10.

on the remarks about the

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Symbolism of Things, and of the

"The expanding symbol is

repeating in itself, in

cannot become really

repetition; the expanding

and that variation as

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symbol responds to the

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this sense of it, new

pp. 55-57.

St. Mawr Lou discovers what seems to be fire at the core of life. Because it is only in him that she sees the quick of it, St. Mawr becomes the image of the conception itself, the symbol of life flowing in a pure flame of integrity. What happens thereafter to the horse St. Mawr assumes some of the significance of the symbol. Because St. Mawr is the image of a conception of life, the adversities he suffers as a horse participate in his symbolic meaning also and become images of evil threatening to distort or quench the "great burning life in him, which never is dead." Once the image of St. Mawr has acquired for Lou and the reader a substantial symbolic identity, the subsequent events in his animal career become dramatizations of moral conflict in the very nature of human life. Rico's harsh restraining of him is not just meanness to an animal; it is action committed against a life-symbol, a momentarily sacred object. Rico's peculiar kind of destruction of life, his particular and active evil, is expressed dramatically by his treatment of St. Mawr.

When Rico and Flora scheme to geld St. Mawr their plot seems like a hideous betrayal of some excellence once in themselves, for everything that happens to the horse has come to have the dramatically representative energy of a mythic event. The plot of St. Mawr achieves extraordinary intensity and richness simply because so much of it takes place on the symbolic level; so much of the apparent causality is established in terms of the description and life-history of an unruly stallion. It is effective

technique, for the career of the symbol St. Mawr opens up depths and nuances of inner life in all the characters.¹³ It allows a profundity in the motivational complex of the novel that no other technique could maintain with similar compactness. Moral values can be authentic and intense apparent causes in the plot of St. Mawr because those values are not merely sentiments expressed by characters: they are participants in the drama. Lou's vision of evil after St. Mawr's "break" is imaged forth to Lou herself and to the reader in terms of the double rôle of St. Mawr: he is concurrently horse and symbol, a dangerous animal and also the image of a painfully forming conception, real object and real vision. Because as a fictional element he operates on both levels at once, the moral values which comprise his symbolic identity share the objectification and independent vitality of his animal rôle. The truths which Lou comes to understand seem to have an objective life of their own--simply because they are embodied, symbolized, and so they take on the autonomy of self-willing, free participators in the plot.

¹³It opens up, in fact, startling nuances in the inner life of the reader also. When St. Mawr "makes his break" the descriptions of the behaviour of a terrified horse are strangely luminous. Literally, they are detailed and simple--one can see St. Mawr; emotively, they force the reader into a momentarily "phantasmagoric" quality of perception (to use a Lawrence term). "The writhing, immense horse, whose pale-gold, inverted bulk seemed to fill the universe" is a horrific image, charged with obscure significance. The helplessness and defencelessness of something so strong and pure as St. Mawr communicates tonally with certain of our instinctive fears.

F. R. Leavis speaks of St. Mawr as a "dramatic poem."¹⁴ The dramatic representation of poetic material is the result of this objectification of moral values as embodied, causative agents. If St. Mawr and Las Chivas and Rico and Lewis and "people" did not all have symbolic identities, the values they represent dramatically could be expressed only as sentiments. St. Mawr would then be, if it would be at all, a dreary novel of ideas.

But Leavis's implication that "the 'drama' in the ordinary sense" ends when Lou leaves Rico¹⁵ is a misleading observation. The drama in St. Mawr is not a domestic one. At no time is the reader terribly interested in what will become of the Carrington Marriage. At no time does the conflict in the "drama" (in any sense) seem to be an opposition between Lou and Rico. Lou and Rico simply do not exist as substantially as that for one another. The marital trouble is only a skirmish, hardly a conflict. The absorbing and central conflict is within Lou alone, in the painful splitting apart and final coalescing of her spirit. It is dramatized as a conflict which extends over the exterior world among symbolic figures. But apart from our fascination with the infinite variety in people, our interest in these figures is not for their intrinsic worth but for their symbolic expressiveness, their amplification of the spiritual conflict within Lou. We are not really

¹⁴F. R. Leavis, op. cit.; p. 279.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 303.

vitally concerned about anything except what happens to Lou, and even then we are happy to sacrifice her social existence for the severe freedom of her inner life.

The transformation of a single person, with all the habit-tearing and far purpose and uncertainty attendant upon such a change, is the real subject of St. Mawr. The rhythmic sweep of the plot, and there is a decided sweep to the way things happen in the book, carries us from the opening scene of vague unrests, "nerves," and ambiguous failings steadily towards a moment of triumphant and dedicated wholeness. It is a moment that feels, even to the reader, unmistakably like a victory. It is, and a fiercely satisfying one to Lou. Lou's wholeness, her integrity, is what the battle has been fought for. The conflict of values which has been represented dramatically with symbolic figures ends only with Lou's spiritual "deliverance" on the mountain-top ranch.

Now I've come! Now I'm here. Now I
am where I want to be: with the spirit
that wants me. (221)

Lou Witt is a twice-born woman, and the quickening plot-rhythm of St. Mawr is the movement of her nativity.

But that is matter better looked at through another category.

CHAPTER THREE: WHAT ST. MAWR IS, AND THE WAY THINGS ARE

St. Mawr is a novel of sensibility. In its relation to the rest of literature it can be placed in "the great tradition" of the English novel, as a concept of that tradition is established by F. R. Leavis.¹ St. Mawr is a novel of psychological realism in which the central concern is the growth of an individual, the development of a character's point-of-view through suffering and personal crisis. Lou's sensibility is what the book is about.

One nearly feels like insisting that this is so, for the story of Lou Witt does not immediately display its familial similarities to Emma and The Portrait of a Lady, which are so distinctly novels of sensibility. St. Mawr seems to contain too much tumult for that soft-spoken epithet, its philosophy seems heretical, and it seems unadvisable to leave Lou Witt in the company of Emma Woodhouse and Isabel Archer. Yet the differences between those pillars of a tradition and St. Mawr are the result of Lawrence's unique conception and portrayal of character. The similarities, on the other hand, are those irrefragable

¹F. R. Leavis, The Great Tradition (New York: George W. Stewart, Inc., 1949).

relations which make Art stand still.² We do not immediately place St. Mawr in line with other novels of its kind because we do not see Lou Witt as we are used to seeing a protagonist in fiction or "an interesting person" in life.

We come to know Lou Witt and all of Lawrence's "good" characters by feeling the life-force that possesses them and comes through to us (cf. above, page 11). But we are not acquainted with them:³ we hardly know Lou visually at all. Her image is not made up for us out of habits and quirks and appearances but of some human material more honest than all that: out of her character and not her personality. What little personality she had at the beginning of the novel is quickly lost, broken like a putrefying shell around her real self. And Lou, taking a kind of stand in character, voices her own and Lawrence's scorn for the world's grim fascination with psychic appearances.

Always this same morbid interest in other people and their doings, their privacies, their dirty linen. Always this air of alertness for personal happenings, personalities, personalities, personalities. Always this subtle criticism and appraisal of other people, this analysis of other people's motives. If anatomy presupposes a corpse, than psychology presupposes a world of corpses. Personalities,

²"History develops, Art stands still." This motto is made use of in the Introduction of Aspects of the Novel: Forster, op. cit., p. 39.

³Lawrence has written more pages on Ursula Brangwen, for instance, than Tolstoy devoted to Natasha, but Ursula is a dark and elusive creation and Natasha a captivating creature whom we know and poignantly watch grow old.

which means personal criticism and analysis, presupposes a whole world-laboratory of human psyches waiting to be vivisected. If you cut a thing up, of course it will smell. Hence, nothing raises such an infernal stink, at last, as human psychology. (45)

We cannot expect therefore to approach Lou's sensibility through the screening of her social image—as we are, for the most part, made to see Emma and Isabel. We are more directly in touch with Lou's privacy, for Lou looks at herself directly from within herself.

Lawrence takes notice of the common outer-perceived qualities of a person only in his satiric view. His "bad" characters have deliciously soured, unforgettable "personalities." We seem to stand next to Rico and Flora Manby and Laura Ridley and see them. We watch them and smirk amusedly: "they are such obvious personalities! hybrid psyches!" In Lawrence's work generally, a personality is an inadequacy of character, and in St. Mawr we do not encounter one in Lou Witt.

But there is something else we do not encounter in St. Mawr and the omission of it creates the greater obstacle to a quick recognition of St. Mawr's place in the tradition. A novel of sensibility is one in which the central figure grows to recognize a value system that is independent of his own whims and preference and which has the divine power to order life into a rather comprehensive clarity.⁴ But the novel of sensibility has always seemed,

⁴This definition has been formulated with particular reference, within English literature, to Emma, Daniel Deronda, Middlemarch, Great Expectations, The Portrait of a Lady, The Longest Journey, The Rainbow, and the archetype of them all: Wordsworth's "poem of sensibility," The Prelude.

for some odd reason, to be a novel of social fusion as well, a novel in which the protagonist learns to assimilate or at least to cope with the values upholding society. The recognition of value he achieves generally supports the sentiments of active Christian acceptance of a righter-than-I-am world. It is mankind that always seems to come out on top and man's society that is reordained: justified to the reader. Characteristically but not essentially, in a novel of sensibility the impersonal continuity of society seems to be the perennial cross that young heroes learn to kiss. Lou Witt, however, does no such thing.

Lou Witt does not accept the burden of society and the values which support it. She just drops her cross and rather wearily walks away from it. And the reader must grant her a triumph in her freedom to do this. To see St. Mawr as psychological realism and not just comic or pastoral criticism of society, one has to allow the view that if society does not nourish the individual life then let society be scrapped. St. Mawr demands from the reader his recognition that value systems support our separate realities and value systems can possibly exist and be coherent apart from current society's hand on them. In St. Mawr mankind does not come out on top, and one has to be willing to be shown that it did not deserve to, or else Lou will appear absurd. The reader must grant her complete freedom to be herself, even though her freedom is a weapon against society and her values are the expression of an intense inner life which is inimical to

social norms and "life-adjustments." Few readers can grant such freedom in life, and so there are critics who cannot grant it even in fiction.

If we find ourselves feeling that a vicious horse, be he never so beautiful, 'represents deep forces of life that are thwarted in the modern world', we should surely ask ourselves three questions: Is this a respectable feeling? What are these (vaguely named) forces of life? Isn't it, perhaps, just as well that they are thwarted in the modern world?⁵

This appalling critical statement demonstrates exactly the kind of anti-life values Lawrence was trying to destroy. The critic's utter failure to encounter the fact of Lou's consciousness illustrates an inability to step outside the value systems which support his own—and which may support ours.

Granting Lou her freedom then to do as she must, St. Mawr is clearly a novel of sensibility. Its similarities to Emma, for instance, are surprisingly distinct. In both novels we encounter two concurrent points-of-view and enjoy the irony of seeing usually as the principal sees but also seeing much more. Emma Woodhouse, like Lou Witt, must suffer to escape the ennui of having had her own way too long and for no purpose.

The real evils, indeed, of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little

⁵Robert Liddell, "Lawrence and Dr. Leavis: The Case of St. Mawr," Essays in Criticism, Vol. 4, No. 3 (July, 1954), 325.

social norms and... freedom in... even in the...

It is true that... the... modern world... the...

This... anti-life... after failure... trust... support...

Granting... is clearly a... for... counter... seeing...

From Woodhouse... of having... The... own...

Report... 19...

too well of herself: these were the disadvantages which threatened alloy to her many enjoyments.⁶ (cf. first paragraph of St. Mawr, quoted on page 26, above)

Emma goes through the rhythm of a "conversion" to a new wholeness and captures an integrity of character she did not have before. There is a necessity for her to recognize her real desires and identity underneath the artificial image fashioned by her ego. For both Emma and Lou, this development of sensibility is a matter of their relation to the rest of society. Emma must learn that the world is not peopled with figments of her imagination, counters to be moved around however she wishes. Lou discovers that the people she knows are hardly more substantial than just that; they are "non-entities." But for each principal the realization comes only after a painful end to her egoism, of remaining bound up in her own whims. The destruction of the old ego causes the personal crisis in both characters and for both of them the ego-destroying agent is a vision of evil. Lou's vision is of an evil active in the very nature of man; Emma Woodhouse is tormented by a vision of her own "insufferable vanity" and "unpardonable arrogance."⁷

⁶ Jane Austen, Emma (New York: Frank S. Holby, 1906); Vol. I, p. 2. Further references to this edition will be cited by volume and page numbers in the text.

⁷ Emma's vision of evil occurs in chapter 47 (IX; pp. 238-56 in the cited edition), which is just before the conclusion of the novel. Lou Witt's corresponding experience occurs comparatively early in St. Mawr (pp. 68-76). This positioning of a common

Her own conduct, as well as her own heart, was before her in the same few minutes. She saw it all with a clearness which had never blessed her before. How improperly had she been acting by Harriet! How inconsiderate, how indelicate, how irrational, how unfeeling, had been her conduct! What blindness, what madness had led her on! It struck her with dreadful force, and she was ready to give it every bad name in the world. (II, 247)

The vision of evil has a liberating effect upon the sensibilities of both, and each young woman is re-born to a purer, larger self. They are freed from their egos and are able to live within a new subjective reality, in which they see the possibility of their individual fulfillments. In each case, the entry to a new subjective world is accented by an initiation to a new outer reality as well. Emma marries; Lou ends up on a mountain top in New Mexico. Jane Austen transforms an individual soul within society--she succeeds in Christianizing Emma--while Lou Witt is plucked out of a decadent society and shown her own integrity apart from it. St. Mawr is a novel of sensibility with a heretical opposition to the tradition motif of social fusion.

7(cont.) critical moment indicates the different emphases and problems of the authors. For Jane Austen it was a matter of making the crisis occur: its validity when it did occur would be immediately recognized and its outcome pleasingly predictable. Lawrence had to establish the authenticity of his character's uncommonly-felt experience and demonstrate at great length its general significance. A wide community of experience and belief among readers was not at Lawrence's service in 1925 as it was there for Jane Austen in 1816.

The motif of social fusion is abhorrently rejected by Lawrence, and not simply left out of his novel. Part of Lou's vision of evil is her horror at man's perverse attempts to heap up life upon life in a widening and sticky accumulation of idealities. It is mankind's rage for individual and social immutability that at last destroys the natural man.⁸ Society's wish to make life stop its perilous unfolding appears to Lou in all its guises like a "smooth-faced, evil rider...riding mankind past the dead snake, to the last break." (100)

Mankind no longer its own master. Ridden by this pseudo-handsome ghoul of outward loyalty, inward treachery, in a game of betrayal, betrayal, betrayal. The last of the gods of our era, Judas supreme!

People performing outward acts of loyalty, piety, self-sacrifice. But inwardly bent on undermining, betraying. Directing all their subtle evil will against any positive living thing. Masquerading as the ideal, in order to poison the real.

Creation destroys as it goes, throws down one tree for the rise of another. But ideal mankind would abolish death, multiply itself, million upon million, rear up city upon city, save every parasite alive, until the accumulation of mere existence is swollen to a horror. But go on saving life, the ghastly salvation army of ideal mankind. At the same time secretly, viciously, potently undermine

⁸F. R. Leavis speaks of the universal motive Lou perceives as a "determination to eliminate every element of danger and wildness from life." D. H. Lawrence: Novelist, p. 301.

the natural creation, betray it with kiss
 after kiss, destroy it from the inside, till
 you have the swollen rottenness of our teeming
 existence. (100)

Lou's vision clarifies what Lawrence considers to be insanely wrong with her contemporary civilization. That clarification, however, is neither the beginning nor the end of her growth. The development of her sensibility is achieved in the span of a revelation not of evil but of good. Lou's vision of evil is merely a casting off of old values in the midst of her reach toward new ones. The imminence of new values was demonstrated to Lou and to the reader as early as her moment of self-discovery (cf. above, pages 30-31), and her conversion to them is from the first a positive turning towards a new reality rather than a simple withdrawal from the old. Before Lou comes to understand the nature of evil, she responds to the beckoning mystery of St. Mawr. Her response to the horse and the "great burning life in him" is the beginning of her crucial experience.

In his dark eye, that looked, with its cloudy brown pupil, a cloud within a dark fire, like a world beyond our world, there was a dark vitality glowing, and within the fire, another sort of wisdom. She felt sure of it: even when he put his ears back, and bared his teeth, and his great eyes came bolting out of his naked horse's head, and she saw demons upon demons in the chaos of his horrid eyes.

Why did he seem to her like some living background, into which she wanted to retreat? When he reared his head and neighed from his

deep chest, like deep wind-bells resounding, she seemed to hear the echoes of another darker, more spacious, more dangerous, more splendid world than ours, that was beyond her. And there she wanted to go. (40)

From their first encounter St. Mawr has a symbolic significance for Lou, and the new level of life which she eventually achieves is got at through the influence of the symbol. The horse arrests her deepest awareness by stirring her with a sense of something made clear.

She paused, as if thinking, while her hand rested on the horse's sun-arched neck. Dimly, in her weary young-woman's soul, an ancient understanding seemed to flood in. (22)

Behind the image of St. Mawr there is a core of unformulated meaning which Lou gropes for as she struggles to discover what in the world is real, what in human life is valuable. Her contact with life had been, on all sides, a nightmarish intimacy with mere "attitudes." St. Mawr awakens her to the wild and dangerous but absolutely compelling reality of living.

Now she realized that, with men and women, everything is an attitude only when something else is lacking. Something is lacking and they are thrown back on their own devices. That black fiery flow in the eyes of the horse was not "attitude." It was something much more terrifying, and real, the only thing that was real. Gushing from the darkness in menace and question, and blazing out in the splendid body of the horse. (25)

St. Mawr is "like a god" (23) because he is in fact an image of divinity, of life so unwaveringly real that it seems sustained by more than only chemistry. He is actually sacred to Lou:

deep chest, like a great bell, and the
and seemed to have the same old, old
more subdued, more intimate, more
solid than ever, than ever before.
there she wanted to go.

From their first meeting he, with his
for her, and the new level of life was
is got at through the influence of a woman, who
her deepest awareness of suffering with a sense of
made clear.

The power, as it were, of the
located on the surface of the world, in
in her being, in her being, in her
understanding of the world, in her
Behind the scene of the world, there is a
meaning which has given for the world, in
in the world is real, there is a
contact with life, in the world, in the world
with more "objective" than "subjective" in the world
dangerous for the world, in the world, in the world

For the world, in the world, in the world
everything is in the world, in the world
thing else is in the world, in the world
and they are in the world, in the world
devoted, devoted, devoted, devoted, devoted
of the world, in the world, in the world
something else is in the world, in the world
the only thing that is in the world, in the world
the world, in the world, in the world
blazing out in the world, in the world
horror. (25)

St. Mary is "the world" in the world, in the world
of divinity, of life, of life, of life, of life
by more than only divinity, by more than only divinity

"He was some splendid demon, and she must worship him." (23)

His god-like mightiness consists in his special power to express a conception of life which Lou is not yet able to sustain without the suggestion of his image. Her conscious mind cannot free the import of St. Mawr from the physical fact of him. The symbol St. Mawr is an image that points to a conception, and until Lou can get at that conception without his suggestion the horse will remain a sacred object, a symbol of "life" as life is yet to be understood by Lou. When the symbol delivers its meaning, its own career is ended and St. Mawr is merely a horse again. The conception of life which was his symbolic identity eventually expands far enough into Lou's consciousness to demand a larger symbol. The growing richness of her conception must have a more various and serviceable image.⁹ St. Mawr is actually relieved of his meaning, and, his holy office completed, he quite properly shows interest in a black Texan mare and is quietly dismissed from the novel.

The value system which Lou grows to recognize and which has power to order her own life into meaningfulness is no simple creed.

⁹This discussion of the origin, function, and career of a symbol is based on an understanding of the process of "symbolic transformation," as it is dealt with at length in Suzanne K. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art (New York: The New American Library, 1956). Chapter Six, "Life-Symbols: The Roots of Sacrament," is particularly pertinent.

The triumph of Lou, the thing that really gives her moral stature as well as intellectual acumen, is that she does not bring her intimations to the level of consciousness and keep them there as "beliefs," idly, as a sort of moral badge. Her new moral dimension introduces a compulsion to act in accord with a principle of reality. She must live from her truth, not merely live with it. The values once embodied deep within the image of a horse are re-embodied in a way of life. Ultimately, Lou's own life assumes symbolic significance in her eyes, and that is a very special state of consciousness. It is the religious level of existence.

Lou's recognition of what is absolutely real and truly noble, the dangerous and unviolated flowing of life, demands her absolute devotion. To preserve the purity of her own spirit she turns away from the static ideals of mankind and the falsifying forms of modern life. Social existence cannot contain her, it offers her no place to be in constant touch with an ultimate reality. So her life becomes a dedicated separateness: each act of it is to originate in a passion of service to the power which sustains life. The isolated ranch in New Mexico becomes for her a kind of natural temple where her flame can burn inviolably within the greater flame of the world's spirit.

"I am not a marrying woman," she said to herself. "I am not a lover nor a mistress nor a wife. It is no good. Love can't really come into me from the outside, and I can never, never mate with any man, since the mystic new man will never come to me. No, no, let me know myself and my role. I am one of the eternal

The testimony of the... as well as intellectual... institutions to the level of... "beliefs,"... introduction a... reality. The... The values once established... re-established in a way... symbolic significance... state of... Joe's recognition of what... the dangerous and... devotion. To preserve the...

away from the... of... her no place... So her life... to originate... life. The... natural... Greater lines of...

...a... a... into... never... men will... equals...

WILLIAMS FAIRBANKS
EXPERIMENTAL
COTTON COMBING

Virgins, serving the eternal fire. My dealings with men have only broken my stillness and messed up my doorways. It has been my own fault. I ought to stay virgin, and still, very, very still, and serve the most perfect service. I want my temple and my loneliness and my Apollo mystery of inner fire. And with men, only the delicate, subtler, more remote relations. No coming near. A coming near only breaks the delicate veils, and broken veils, like broken flowers, only lead to rottenness."

She felt a great peace inside herself as she made this realization. And a thankfulness. Because, after all, it seemed to her that the hidden fire was alive and burning in this sky, over the desert, in the mountains. She felt a certain latent holiness in the very atmosphere, a young spring-fire of latent holiness, such as she had never felt in Europe, or in the East. "For me," she said, as she looked away at the mountains in shadow and the pale-warm desert beneath, with wings of shadow upon it: "For me, this place is sacred. It is blessed."
(195-96)

Lou's turning--in both her spirit and her mode of life--is the fulfillment and continuation of a vision of reality. She foresees her life at Las Chivas as "service," which is a kind of redeeming of self into another object. The other object in this case is her conception of what constitutes the core of life. For Lou, there is at the very center of reality "a wild spirit," and this spirit compels her worship. Her whole existence becomes an act of worship, "the most perfect service." The world is a gesture of her soul, the representation of her conception of reality. She has become--and the phrase might still be redeemed by service--at one with her universe. The unity of her life at

Las Chivas is her own larger symbol to clarify an intimation of "the way things are."

One really feels like asking, after such pronouncements, "Well! just how are things, after all?" We know how things were at last for Emma Woodhouse. They were, in a word, civil. But for Lou Witt the quality of living is more like a struggle: not the sort of struggle Moll Flanders or Becky Sharp knew, but the sort the little New England woman, in her defeat against the wildness of Las Chivas, almost understood to be at the heart of every matter. The history of Las Chivas is Lawrence's emblem of creation. In the portrayal of the ranch he has written a kind of De Rerum Natura: poetic, philosophical, in its scope and completeness utterly astounding. The natural flow of life, untinkered with by man in his horror of dissolution, is an evolutionary cycle of creating and destroying. There is a relentless destroying at the base of all natural life that keeps creation new, and the unfolding of creation from one level of existence upwards to another is paid for in the expense of bitter struggle: or the unfolding is thwarted in sordid reversion to a lower, older level. The ecstatic burst of energy in each red flower is soon consumed by the same creative destroying as in human weariness. Past love, past hate, encompassing love and hate and all the energies of nature, the cyclic process continues, revealing the ever-new and unfixable creation. Man's ideals of Love and an unchanging God have no more to do with the creative pulse of life than

Lee Chiao is not even more so, and in fact is more so, in the way things are.

One really feels like saying, after all, "well,

just how are things, after all?" a long way from the

land for them, however. They are, in a way, still

born with the quality of being in the world, and the

sort of energy that is in the world, and the

the little bit of energy that is in the world, and the

of Lee Chiao, almost entirely, and the little bit of

The history of Lee Chiao is a history of a man, and

the portrait of the man is a portrait of a man, and

History, good, bad, and ugly, is the story of a man,

eternally changing. The history of Lee Chiao is a

man in his history of himself, and in the history of

creating and destroying. There is a history of Lee Chiao

base of all natural life that is in the world, and the

feeling of emotion from one level of existence to the

is held for in the moment of time, and the history of

is found in the history of a man, and the history of

eternity is in the history of a man, and the history of

the same history, and the history of a man, and the history of

past history, and the history of a man, and the history of

history, the history of a man, and the history of

and history, and the history of a man, and the history of

God have no more to do with the history of a man, and the history of

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numerals may be said to cause a quantity. The infinite quantity is beyond any ideation: it is a continuous revelation of existence.

The little New England woman understood her God of Love had been conquered by the shaggy, shrieking demons of the mountains and the desert sky.

Nay, it was a world before and after the God of Love. Even the very humming-birds hanging about the flowering squawberry-bushes, when the snow had gone, in May, they were before and after the God of Love. And the blue jays were crested dark with challenge, and the yellow-and-dark woodpecker was fearless like a warrior in warpaint, as he struck the wood. While on the fence the hawks sat motionless, like dark fists clenched under heaven, ignoring man and his ways.
(211)

And for a while the woman liked it better that way. It was "more awful and more splendid." (209) But it really hurt her in her soul that the old New England God was dead, and she could not recover her hope in a world that was not ultimately all for love. So she failed in her ranch. And the untameable livingness of Las Chivas reverted into a sordid undergrowth.

The strength that Lou brings to it is a new impulse of creativity, sustained by a vision. And the necessity of that vision--of a vision to any endeavor--is Lawrence's great theme. ✓
In St. Mawr the theme has its simplest and most general expression.

Every new stroke of civilization has cost the lives of countless brave men, who have fallen defeated by the "dragon," in their efforts to win the apples of the Hesperides, or the fleece of gold. Fallen in their efforts

to overcome the old, half-sordid savagery of the lower stages of creation, and win to the next stage.

For all savagery is half sordid. And man is only himself when he is fighting on and on, to overcome the sordidness.

And every civilization, when it loses its inward vision and its cleaner energy, falls into a new sort of sordidness, more vast and more stupendous than the old savage sort. An Augean stable of metallic filth. (214)

The great affirmation of Lawrence's art¹⁰ is that his art is shaped upon and takes the shape of an inward vision (which is the "cleaner energy"). He demonstrates the queer fact of human consciousness as an intricate growth impelled by a force that is both within it and surrounding it. The energy of one's subtlest moments is the energy of creation, and man is somehow linked in the quality of his existence to the unfolding of the universe.

It is something like that relatedness of man and world that E. M. Forster refers to in speaking of "prophecy" in

¹⁰ "The power of the [Lawrence's] affirmation lies, not in any insistence or assertion or argument, but in the creative fact, his art; it is that which bears irrefutable witness. What his art does is beyond argument or doubt. It is not a question of metaphysics or theology--though no doubt there are questions presented for the metaphysician and the theologian. Great art, something created and there, is what Lawrence gives us. And there we undeniably have a world of wonder and reverence, where life wells up from mysterious springs. It is no merely imagined world; what the creative imagination of the artist makes us contemplate bears an unanswerable testimony." Leavis, op. cit., p. 293.

fiction.¹¹ In a prophetic novel there is a voice, like "song arising in the halls of fiction," which summons infinity to attend each character.¹² Lou Witt is not a prophetic figure: she simply does not feel big enough to the reader, as for instance all the Karamazovs feel big to us. They stand up in their Russian village and are seen like giants against the horizon. Lou Witt does not loom large at all, but St. Mawr is a prophetic novel. In Lawrence's thought individual characters are important only as vehicles for great, impersonal life-forces. In St. Mawr the characters are not attended by infinity, but the life within them is. One feels the life which flares up or dies out in that fictional world is part of a larger fire in which it burns and which in fact it is. And the brightness of it--the human integrity of it--has something to do with the fulfillment of creation.

Something unknown, but a relatedness that is overwhelmingly real.

¹¹Forster, op. cit., pp. 181-212.

¹²Forster, loc. cit.

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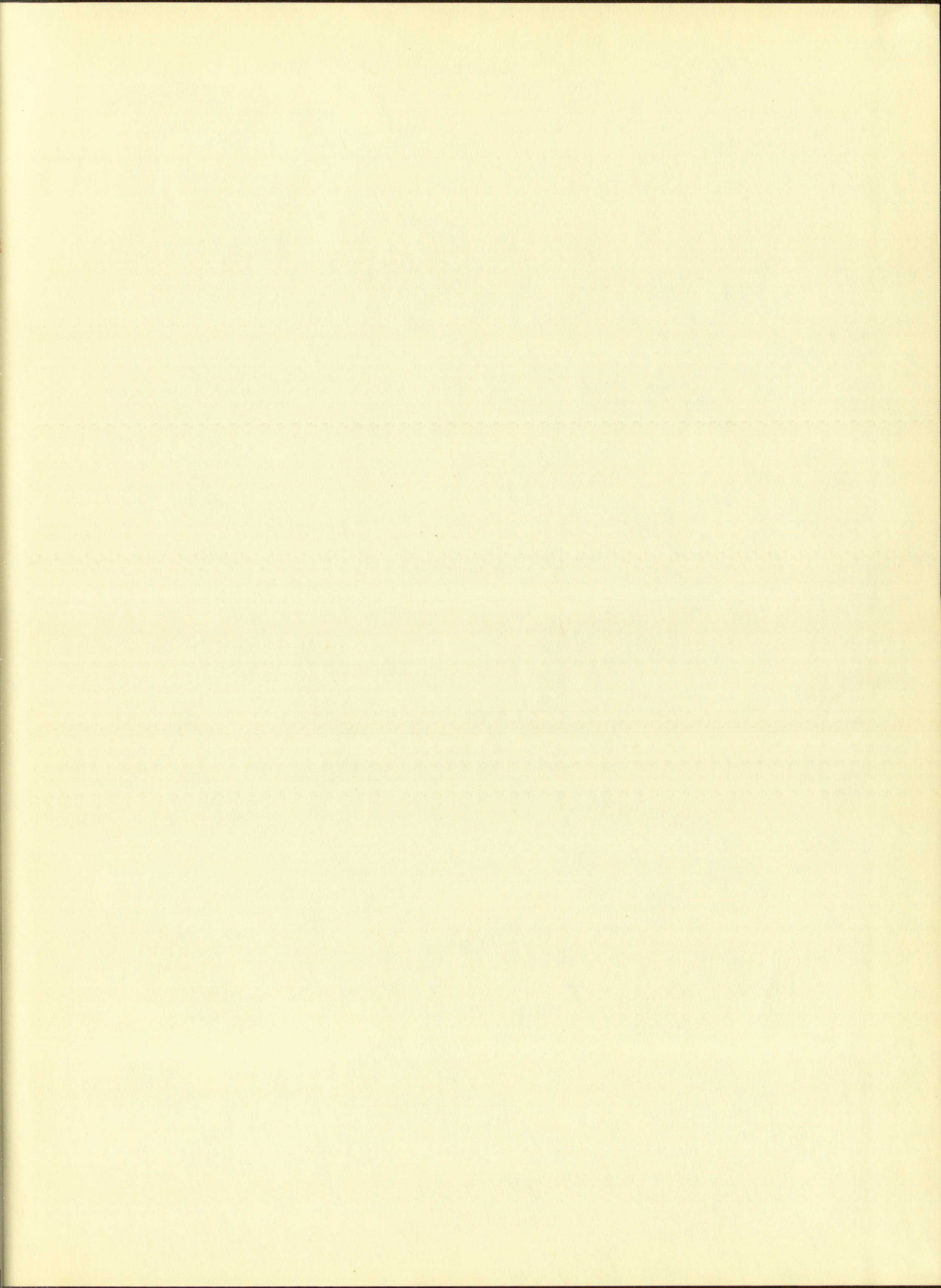
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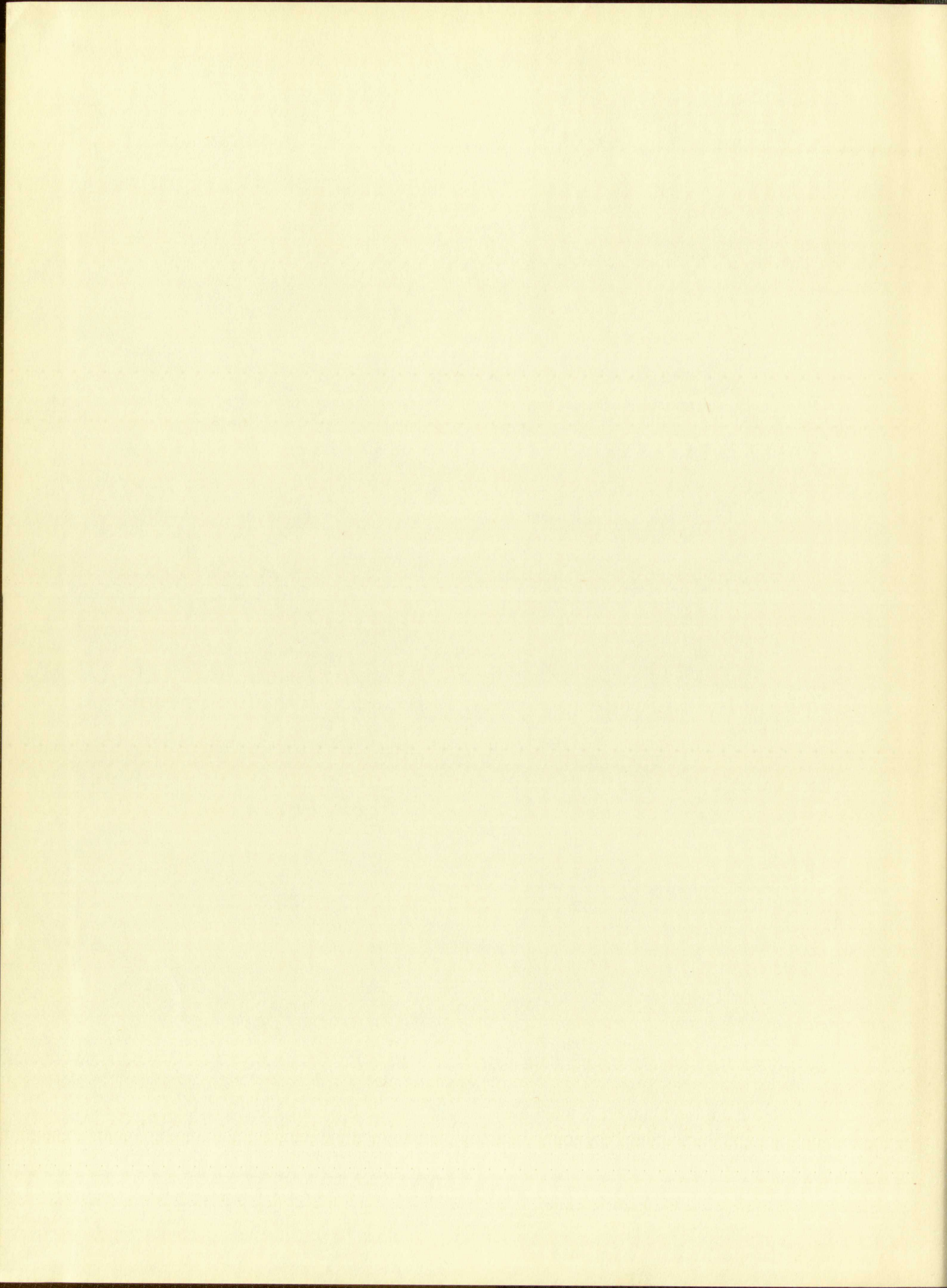
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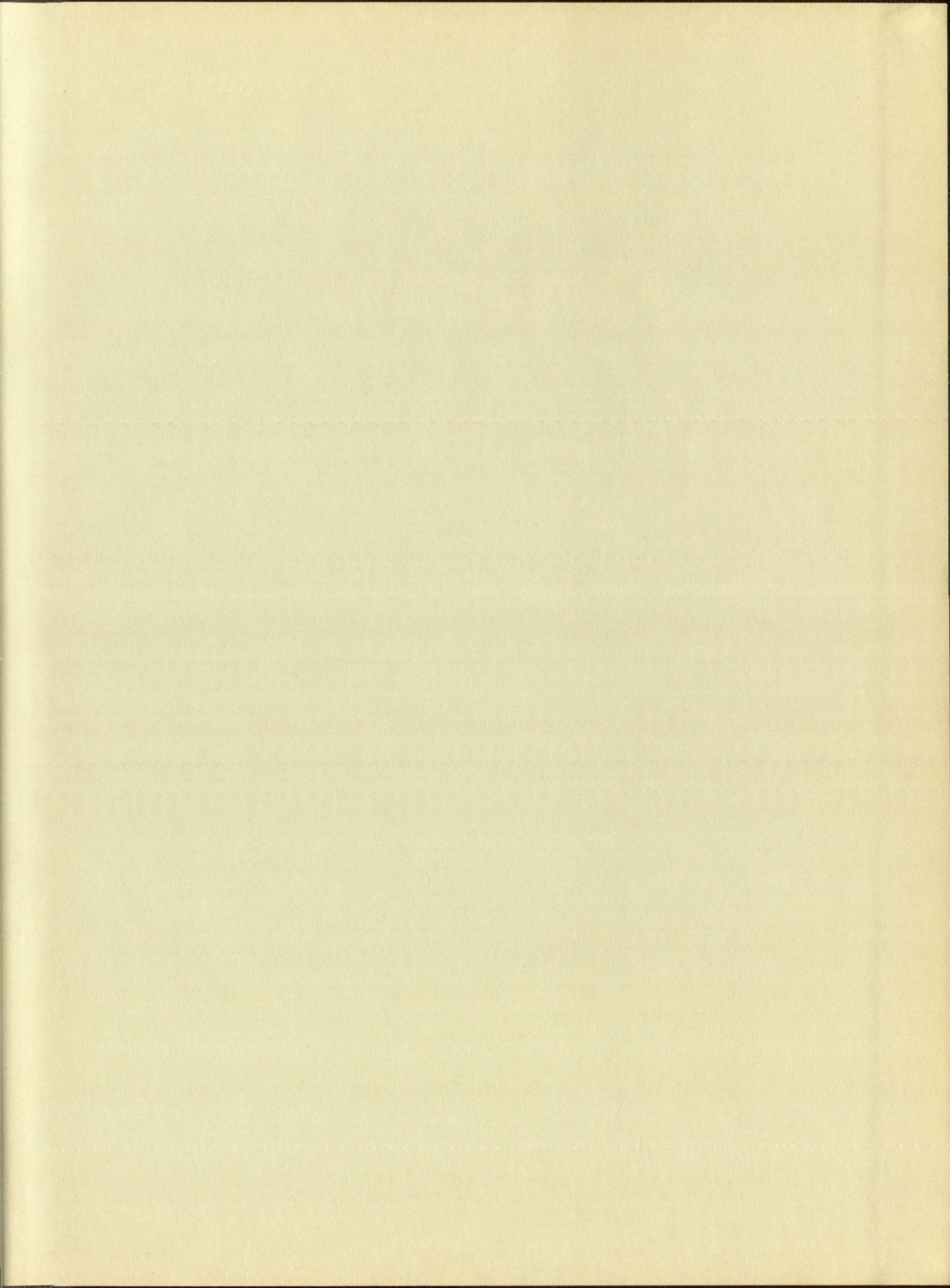
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